

# **The Pathos of Patriotism: Nativism and the Nationalist “Faciality Machine” in Huang Chun-ming’s *Sayonara, Zaijian!***

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article offers a new reading of Huang Chun-ming’s nativist literature classic, *Sayonara, Zaijian!* My central contention is that this novella about Japanese sex tourists in Taiwan actually portrays the paradoxes and problems inherent in what Deleuze and Guattari describe as “an abstract machine of faciality (*Visagéité*)”. Therefore this article offers a reading of Huang’s novella that focuses on how “face” appears in both its personal-affective and social dimensions, the two interlocking in a way that represents the unspoken anxiety and uncertainty of being “Taiwanese.” To gain some purchase in these dimensions I consider why Deleuze and Guattari speak of the “black hole” of face and the “white wall” of signification, and why faciality is like a “defendant, a subject, [who] displays an overaffected submission that turns into insolence. Or someone is too polite to be honest.” As I understand the authors, the machine of faciality forever tries (but fails) to enforce conformity by judging what is fit for one’s “face” (the idea of the good citizen [liang-min], the righteous man, the obedient

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student, etc.). The subject of the nationalist faciality machine is, moreover, equipped with a set of emotional reactions and potent affects that generate the illusion of normative “facial” identity through the fellow-feeling of being, say, a normal, patriotic Chinese subject opposed to the “face” (appearance) of the other/foreigner. In this paper I follow Deleuze and Guattari’s suggestion that face always remains a fragile affective tension that always on the brink of humiliation, loss of control, and pathos; however, my suggestion goes further in claiming a history of national humiliation is satirized in this work as machine that converts individuals into mere (allegorical) “faces,” representatives of one collectivity or another, showing us how it generates patriotic discourse and even unleashes patriotic pathos in bursts of “nationalistic zeal.”

**KEYWORDS:** Huang Chun-ming, Deleuze and Guattari, affective nationalism, *visagéité*, nativism

He would see faces in movies, on T.V., in magazines,  
and in books.

He thought that some of these faces  
might be right for him.

—Talking Heads, “Seen and Unseen”

What chooses the faces is not a subject[;] it is faces that choose  
their subjects.

—Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 280

The above two quotes highlight the tensions inherent in the notion of “face” explored herein: the illusion of choosing a face (or “look”) on the one hand, and the disturbing reality that it is faces that choose us on the other. Such uncertainty about the subject (or “object”) of face is, I claim, a central theme of Taiwanese writer Huang Chun-ming’s brilliant 1973 novella, *Sayonara, Zaijian!*, a first-person black comedy about international sex tourism and Chinese cultural nationalism.<sup>1</sup> Our narrator, Mr. Hwang, a Taipei *sarariman* and former school teacher who is fluent in Japanese, works as an interpreter for an international company that tasks him with returning to his hometown to escort a group of Japanese businessmen on a night of whoring in the local brothels. Although a fairly common business practice in East Asia, this onerous professional duty involves a serious loss of “face” for Hwang because, he informs us, just prior to receiving the assignment he had flown into what he admits was “a fit of nationalistic zeal,” sharply criticizing the Japanese before his co-workers (Huang, “Sayonara” 211). To make matters worse, while undertaking the assignment he finds himself beginning to feel the pangs of sexual desire for an indigenous girl he meets in one of the village brothels. Out of spite, however, he sets out to deceive his foreign colleagues and the locals in his hometown, finally “erecting a false bridge between those seven Japanese and a Chinese youth” (209). This, in brief, is the plot of one of the most representative works of the “nativist literature movement” (*xiangtu wenxue yundong*) of the 1970s, a novella which is both supremely local and “Taiwanese,” and yet surprisingly cosmopolitan insofar as it seems to stage Mr. Hwang’s personal drama of lost face as an allegorical re-enactment of the

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper I adopt the Mandarin convention of writing surnames first, hence Huang Chun-ming instead of Chun-ming Huang. In addition, Taiwanese proper nouns are left in their local spellings, but quotes, titles, and terminology are Romanized using the Hanyu Pinyin method.

Cold War tensions between Japan and Taiwan.<sup>2</sup>

Written during the high point of the patriotic tsunami unleashed when Taiwan lost the Tiao-yu Tai (Senkaku) Islands to Japan in 1972, nationalism looms large as a key theme of this work.<sup>3</sup> The nationalist fervor surrounding the work is important for another reason, however, for this was the exact moment in Taiwanese history when the people became keenly aware of the ineffectualness of the single-party Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) regime. The protagonist, who is clearly a supporter of so-called “Free China,” is from rural Chiao-hsi, a small hot spring village which turns into an uncanny space of discomfort when it is “invaded” by the lascivious Japanese businessmen.<sup>4</sup> It’s all too easy to read this allegorically, and to see Hwang-kun as the disaffected, de-recognized Taiwan which, backed into its tiny island corner, must continue to “lose face” and yet continue to do business with a world that only wants to exploit it for profit. At a more human level, however, our *sarariman*’s return to his hometown as a pimp for the Japanese carries with it certain awkward undertones, implied weaknesses, and an overall sense of poisonous nostalgia for the narrator and, we assume, contemporary readers as well.

Nevertheless, the Nativist “village return” plot offers certain romantic imaginative possibilities for the patriotic narrator, particularly since women are involved and the village is his hometown—that place where identity should be most comforting and secure, but where foreigners from the city come as despoilers of home. Seeing a chance to defend his own against the Other, this bitter “return to roots” theme reflects the tectonic geopolitical

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<sup>2</sup> The nativist literature movement defined itself partly in opposition to so-called “Western” literary influences which, by the 1970s, were closely associated with famous young Taipei writers like Pai Hsien-yong, Wang Wen-hsing, Yu Kwang-chung and others. According to one prominent nativist author, Wang Tuo, “in order to put a stop to this trend of the blind Westernization of literature and scholarship, and in order to concern ourselves with the life of Taiwan’s farmers and laborers, we (viz, Taiwan’s *xiangtu* writers) advocate the development of our own national literature. We suggest that literature must be bound with the soil and with the people. This is the essential spirit of *xiangtu wenxue*” (qtd. in Haddon 69).

<sup>3</sup> The Tiao-yu Tai islands controversy began in 1972, when the United States formally returned the tiny Pacific islands to Japan, despite Taiwan’s claim that they were (and are) legally a part of the Republic of China.

<sup>4</sup> Hot spring (*onsen*) culture was brought to Taiwan by Japanese colonialism, though it is unclear how (or when) therapeutic soaking in hot springs (*pao wenquan*) became so intimately tied to the sex trade. The daemon that made me compose this article emerged while living in Hwang-kun’s hometown, Chiao-hsi, during the 2008-09 school year. Doing field research in the area the author discovered that, in addition to being a hugely booming tourism and housing market, the hot spring village still supports a large red light district where pimps call out to male passersby: “looking for a lady?” (*yao zhao xiaojie ma?*).

shifts taking place in East Asia in the 1970-80s.<sup>5</sup> According to one scholar of modern Taiwanese literature, Chen Fang-ming, this emphasis on the local landscape can be attributed to the gradual collapse of the Nationalist *grand récit*, for:

When the entire system of [Kuomintang colonial] dominance was beginning to fall apart, Taiwanese authors began to use the political fissures to articulate their concern for the territory of Taiwan . . . Huafeng in the case of Wang Zhenhe, Yilan in the case of Huang Chun-ming, Jiling in the case of Wang Tuo, Lugang in the case of Li Ang, Yunlin in the case of Song Zelai, and Meinong in the case of Wu Jinfa: all of these native places became literary forces in the fashion for return that characterized the literary scene of the 1970s. (37)

Historic events like the loss of its United Nations seat and, subsequently, the debacle over the loss of the Tiao-yu Tai islands, led to disillusionment with the United States as a trustworthy ally and certainly helped contribute to Taiwan's turn from the "imagined community" of Kuomintang "Free China" inward toward the nativist-nationalist world of Taiwan.<sup>6</sup> Thus the proliferation of these localist literary worlds would seem then to represent more than just a "fashion for return," as Chen says, pointing also to an imaginative subversion of the weakened police state world of the capital (Taipei). For this shift away from the urban, rapidly modernizing epicenter characterizes the "nativist literary criticism war" (*xiangtu wenxue lunzhan*) of the 1970s also re-orient us back toward new national aesthetic values of the local variety—a move that dramatically altered the "face" of Taiwanese culture.<sup>7</sup> As Chen emphasizes, "nativist literature's rise was simply a matter

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<sup>5</sup> For an analysis and retrospective of 1970s "localist discourse" (*zaidi lun*), see Chiu Kui-fen. Chiu characterizes this discourse in terms of its spirit of "roots-seeking" (*xungen*) and the "orphaned mentality" (*guer xinqing*) of much of the writing, suggesting, as it were, some connection to the Roots-Seeking Literature (*xungen wenxue*) of 1980s in China (91-95). For a more detailed study of the political culture of the Taiwanese Nativist movement, see Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang's seminal *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance*.

<sup>6</sup> Chen's list of nativist authors and their local literary worlds also calls to mind other, similar literary movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—especially the 1970s "Village Prose" writers of the Soviet Union and the "roots-seeking" literature of China in the 1980s. Parallels with these and other, similar movements should be the subject of future comparative research.

<sup>7</sup> "Modernist literature" was identified as "foreign" (Western) and became the literary bogeyman of the nativist movement. According to the neo-Confucian philosopher Tu Wei-ming "the nativization

of taking advantage of the instability of the colonial [Kuomintang] regime in order to regain attachment to the native soil and, thus, to retrieve lost memory” (38). With the fissures in state power, the pathos of Chinese patriotism turned into a kind of pathetic fallacy, one which sparked an even deeper pathos of nationalism seeking to “retrieve lost memory” from the Martial Law Era.

Although prior to 1946 a Japanese colony, Taiwan was also one of the most developed regions in East Asia prior to the start of WWII and treated as a showpiece for Japan’s project of imperial expansion. For this reason many elderly Taiwanese still remember the colonial era with fond nostalgia, complicating the understanding of the country’s postcolonial relationship to Japan. However, for the mainland Chinese Nationalists who arrived in Taipei after the war many of them victims of Japanese atrocities on the mainland or victims of Chiang Kai-shek’s violent conscription practices, such a Japan-centric cultural memory is still unacceptable. Instead, the bedrock of Nationalist history education teaches us that the “Resistance to Japan War” (*kangri zhanzheng*, WWII) and the atrocities that took place in Nanjing and elsewhere must be taught in Taiwan’s high schools.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, after the war Chiang Kai-shek’s KMT administration sought to expand economic ties with Japan and link itself more closely to the anti-communist coalition of nations led by the United States during the Cold War. By the mid-1970s, with Chiang Kai-shek dead and the Republic of China ousted from the United Nations, the “Nativist resistance” would push the Martial Law nation inward, asking it to take a close, uncomfortable look at its recent past. Works like *Sayonara* represent such a contradictory inward gaze, however, what looks back is a confusing mass of contradictions and competing representations of what Taiwan is supposed to look like—what kind of “face” it is supposed to wear, both for itself and for the outside world that now denies it exists.

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movement, as exemplified by the ‘native-soil literature’ (*xiangtu wenxue*) debate of the 1970s, seriously challenged the legitimacy of imported Western categories in analyzing local sensibilities. Intent on rejecting ‘modern literature’ with a distinctive American style as an authentic expression of Taiwanese consciousness [and] the reality of Taiwanese society” (1127). It is never clear what these “Western categories” are, but he appears to mean modernist and postmodernist experiments with form.

<sup>8</sup> For a relatively up-to-date survey of education reform under the Nationalist government during Martial Law era in English, see Tu Cheng-sheng.

In this article I offer a reading of Huang's novella that focuses on how "face" functions in both the personal-affective and social dimensions, the two interlocking in a way that represents the unspoken uncertainty and anxiety of being "Taiwanese." To get some handle on these dimensions I rely on what Deleuze and Guattari call an "abstract machine of faciality (*visagéité*)" (168). This mechanistic faciality is, according to the authors, the producer of both emotional lack and excess, both dark absences and white, uninscribed presences. The authors speak of the "black hole" of face and the "white wall" of signification, suggesting that faciality is like a "defendant, a subject, [who] displays an overaffected submission that turns into insolence. Or someone is too polite to be honest . . . At every moment, the machine rejects faces that do not conform, or seem suspicious" (115). As I understand them, the abstract machine of faciality is the product of an assemblage of power which forever tries (but fails) to enforce conformity by constant self-comparison with alleged norms (the idea of the good citizen [*liang-min*], the righteous man, the obedient student, etc.), a verbal self-intrusion that helps one remain affixed to the White Wall of signification. In this manner the faciality machine equips the subject with an arbitrary set of emotional responses—phobias, arousals, and other generic affects—especially where "foreigners" are concerned, and adherence to these responses offers the illusion of shared "structures of feeling" a group emotional affinity for appearing to be, say, a "patriotic Chinese," a "true American," or "normal citizen."<sup>9</sup> However, Deleuze and Guattari's speculations on "faciality" suggest that it always remains a fragile and ungovernable emotional construct, one that forever teeters on the brink of humiliation or uncontrollable pathos. In addition to this, I speculate, it works this way for both individuals as well as nation states—for "face" is often what incites patriotic speech, affects posturing, invites outbursts instead of empathic social intercourse. Indeed, one could go so far as to say that, at the geopolitical level, given the complex, traumatic shared historical relationship between Taiwan, China, Korea, and Japan, the abstract "machine of faciality" explains the virility of anti-Japanese or anti-Chinese riots, the breakdown of

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<sup>9</sup> Raymond Williams's "structures of feeling" in *Marxism and Literature* offer a good starting point for discussions of affective nationalism in literature, for he defines these as "characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feelings against thought, but thought as felt and feelings as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity . . . with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension" (132). Surely such interrelated, interlocking feelings of continuity in tone or impulse are what is at stake in the Chinese idea of "face."

cross-cultural communication, and unstable international relations. For this and other reasons I find it curious that traditional readings of Huang's novella pay so little attention to how loss of "face" is the motivating device of the work, especially when critics try to stake out some postcolonial or nationalist reading of the work that claims Hwang-kun's deception of the Japanese is a simple, reasonable defiance of Japanese "neo-colonialism" (see Yip; Xiao). Here I argue almost the exact opposite of this—i.e., that our narrator, Mr. Hwang, is an all too obvious parody of the "pathetic" patriot and that the story sets him up as the undesirable outcome of the machinery of face. If we ignore this parodic dimension we miss out on subversive potential of the work, fail to see how it deconstructs the rote "structures of feeling" embodied in the zealous Chinese nationalist.

### **I. Facing the Nation (Without)**

*Sayonara, Zaijian!* pretty obviously imagines the acute tension between nationalism and late capitalism, showing us Taiwan from the perspective of a patriotic office stooge—someone for whom the Japanese are the epitome of cunning and cruelty, but someone who must also listen to his boss and do what he is told. Alongside this we also have consumerism, sex tourism, petty office politics, and Asian pop culture icons that exploit the built in "inner contradictions" of a man formed by a society that emphasizes social cohesion and conformity. For instance, while he and the seven Japanese businessmen are on their way to Chiao-hsi, on the northeastern coast of Taiwan, our narrator reflects on his feelings about the work assignment he is on:

Actually, it wasn't simply a matter of doing a little pimping; if that had been all there was to it, I could easily laughed at myself then and there and let it go. I could surely have managed that without any damage to my principles. The problem was, not long ago, a newspaper article had spurred me into attacking the Japanese in front of this group of people [his co-workers] in a fit of nationalistic zeal. Now I was expected meekly to take a group of seven Japanese men out whoring with some of my countrywomen. (Huang, "Sayonara" 211)



Hwang realizes that he has lost face before his colleagues, and the problem, as he himself sees it, isn't that he has the job of a pimp, but rather that his co-workers know that he is an anti-Japanese zealot who now has to work as a pimp *for the Japanese*. His professional responsibilities as the smiling face of the company, an interpreter and symbolic representative of this larger organization, means that he must "abandon face" (be shameless), leave off his "nationalist zeal," and accept the professional posture of "just following orders." At the very outset, then, Hwang—and, we suppose, the average Chinese nationalist reader—experiences an acute sense of dissatisfaction at his loss of face and stature within the office hierarchy. This is particularly awkward because these men did, we later learn, commit war crimes during the terrible devastation of Nanjing during WWII. Forced to kowtow to the enemy, the dramatic tension of the novella centers on how the former school-teacher will "save face" and reclaim his sense of personal and ethnic pride—how he will use his linguistic skills to "teach a lesson" to the locals and the Japanese alike.

In everyday Mandarin "face" is expressed primarily in two ways: a) as a "loss of face" (*diu lian*) based on a casting off (*diu*) of the protective façade which shields identity from embarrassment, or b), works as a "mask" of social respect (*mianzi*).<sup>10</sup> The former (*lian*) is often associated with shameful reactions, perceived faults, insults, or even minor embarrassments like stepping in dog poop. For example, when one is too careless or indifferent to this façade, one is considered "shameless" (*buyao lian*), or literally "not wanting face"—which implies we should want *lian*, or non-shame. Meanwhile the more abstract, mask-like *mianzi* can be thought of as the social façade of face, for it appears in interesting verb compounds like "love of face" (*ai mianzi*), which is to say pride, or "giving face" (*gei mianzi*), or paying respect another's social stature or station. As byproducts of both traditional Confucian culture and nationalist education in Taiwan, these two senses of face govern everything from group food consumption to gift culture, student-professor relations, and Taiwan's infamous no-holds-barred, melodramatic legislative politics. Indeed, the more virulent the public display of pathos in Taiwan the more likely it is to be tied to "face," its loss, or transgressions with or without respect to it. A bedrock of traditional Confucian discourse can be

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<sup>10</sup> The two terms for "face," 臉 (*lian*) and 面子 (*mianzi*), seem to differ chiefly in their degree of abstraction.

found beneath this precarious back and forth of faciality, for adherence to the face-rituals (*li mao*) of “politeness” guarantee the possibility of establishing a name for oneself and earn a fixed reputation in the world.<sup>11</sup> Thus according to one local communications scholar, Jia Wenshan, “[the] two ideas of Confucian naming crucial to understanding the Chinese concept of face include: 1) the society is a network of positions, places and relationships that are all fixedly named, and 2) in order to change or reclaim the reality, the proper name has to be rectified. Thus, from the perspective of naming, face is the position one nominally occupies and [*mianzi*] is a way to make one’s name more widely known” (6). This tying together of face, name, and reputation forms a knot of identity that is much more evident in Taiwan, China, Korea, Japan, and countries where conservative Confucian intersubjective rituals govern a great deal of daily social life. In addition, the Chinese feeling for fixed networks of relations and ritually coded modes of etiquette makes the machinery of “face” (Jia calls it “facework”) particularly effective, centering as it does on the ethics of “name-rectification” (*zheng ming*) and the overvaluation of surnames.<sup>12</sup>

Our Confucian-nationalist “faciality machine” thus manufactures and regulates ritual affects, outward appearances, and codes of emotional signification for the sake of achieving publicly-acknowledged rectitude. This is why Deleuze and Guattari describe faciality as “the Icon proper to the signifying regime, the reterritorialization internal to the system. The signifier reterritorializes on the face,” bringing it to life across this singular surface because “the face is what gives the signifier substance” (115). In contrast to the multiplicity of becomings the authors identify with rhizomatic immanence, then, the abstract machine of faciality brings off a forcible re-organization or “rooting down” of a transcendental national ego—a pathos-driven (pathological) nationalist reterritorialization of face that emphasizes “native

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<sup>11</sup> The Chinese for “politeness,” 禮貌 (*limao*), literally means “ritual-appearances.”

<sup>12</sup> As *The Great Learning* emphasizes, social relationships always work on the basis of external considerations which lead inward, and thus the great princes of old, “Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts.” For a more detailed study of the psychological origins of Chinese “face” from a Taiwanese perspective, see Huang Kuang-kuo’s *Feeling and Face: the Chinese Person’s Game of Power* (*Renqing yu mianzi: zhongguo ren de quanli youxi*) (Beijing: Renmin UP, 2010).

soil,” family trees, and racial lineages.<sup>13</sup> One the molecular level one can see this process in Hwang-kun’s attempt to deterritorialize Taiwan as a Japanese space and reterritorialize it as a Chinese one—with the added irony that he does this while working for the Japanese as a pimp. His patriotic pathos backfires, however, revealing his hypocrisy to the villagers, as when Hwang-kun is mortified to hear the brothel worker, Ah-xiu, declare “aren’t you originally from Chiao-hsi? . . . All the older people in our place recognized you” (Huang, *Sayonara* 237). This embarrassing moment of facial recognition brings with it an abrupt loss of face, illustrating again how the machinations of faciality make men like our narrator, a former middle school teacher (and thus someone with much *mianzi* in Taiwan), constantly concerned with their social standing or *mianzi*. However, the scene also demonstrates the way in which the signifier (recognition by Ah-xiu) “reterritorializes on the face,” becoming an emotional fabric that binds him in place, marking him as “someone from here.” Thus he immediately begins to wonder how he will tell his father “the job I’d gone to Taipei for was bringing Japanese to the hot springs to whore around” (239). Besmirching the family name in this way he imagines his shame is so deep that not “even plunging into the Yellow River could wash the stains away” (239). Here it is important to note that Hwang’s name literally means “Yellow,” so the Deleuzian re-territorialization of face,

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<sup>13</sup> In *A Thousand Plateaus* the authors describe how rhizomic multiplicity also relies on a process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, however, it is much different. As an example they refer to the relationship between certain species of orchid and wasps that inadvertently pollinate them:

How could movements of deterritorialization and processes of reterritorialization not be relative, always connected, caught up in one another? The orchid deterritorializes by forming an image, a tracing of a wasp; but the wasp reterritorializes on that image. The wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid’s reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen. Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome. It could be said that the orchid imitates the wasp, reproducing its image in a signifying fashion (mimesis, mimicry, lure, etc.). But this is true only on the level of the strata a parallelism between two strata such that a plant organization on one imitates an animal organization on the other. At the same time, something else entirely is going on: not imitation at all but a capture of code, surplus value of code, an increase in valence, a veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp. (10)

The orchid/wasp relationship is an interdependent “becoming together,” and/or “aparallel evolution” on several planes at once—in some sense circular, in another mutually dependent, and in yet some other sense it is a self-intertwining and dis-entangling. Unlike trees, which are rooted, branching, singular organisms, the orchid is rootless, part wasp, part rhizome, and thus a “multiplicity.” In short, the rhizomatic exists simultaneously on the plateau of deterritorialization (the wasp being used for reproduction) and that of reterritorialization (the wasp seeing the orchid as object of copulation), not just on one or the other plateau, off or on, either/or, as with machinic *visagéité*.

family name, and national identity I describe here is neatly expressed in this nominal loss of face (*mianzi*) in the sacred waters of Yellow China (that is, the Hwang Ho, Yellow River).

Meanwhile, the Japanese men, the “Seven Samurai,” who “penetrate” Hwang-kun’s village to have their fun, though for all concerned it is an awkward and disorienting experience. On the night of their merry-making at the Chiao-hsi brothel, shortly after he is recognized by the brothel manager, Hwang does his patriotic best to use his fluency in Japanese to help the “local girls” earn as much money as possible from the foreign businessmen. In the process, however, he unexpectedly finds himself developing a fondness for a shy aboriginal girl whom the Japanese take no notice of:

The girl with the tattoo, who had been standing the farthest from the room, was now sitting beside me and seeing to my needs enthusiastically. It occurred to me that I had a moral responsibility here, since her friendly attitude toward me had sprouted at a moment when her self-esteem was at its lowest and I’d said, “I want you. Now won’t you come in?” She had been moved by that. For someone like me who feels keen hostility toward Japanese, having to play the pimp in order to keep my job, making arrangements for them to whore around in with my own countrymen, had created immense inner conflicts. If I hadn’t had the capacity to mask my feelings with a happy exterior—like a clown—I’m sure I couldn’t have withstood the bitter struggle. Under conditions like these, how could I have any desire for a woman? (Huang, *Sayonara* 231)

Hwang’s sense of feeling like “clown” is couched in situational irony brought about by the abstract machine of faciality, for at the precise moment that he is primarily concerned with his own face, he discovers an opportunity to “save” the face of the aboriginal girl and thereby reclaim a bit of his own in the process. That is, keenly aware of his own “capacity to mask” his feelings with a “happy exterior,” he also claims an inauthentic ethical responsibility toward the shy aboriginal “girl with the tattoo on her face” (印記 *yinji*; Huang,

*Shayounala* 49).<sup>14</sup> Denying he could have any “desire for a woman” at a time like this, Hwang-kun claims he is acting on a moral impulse by choosing the girl as his mate for the night, since all is mere showmanship to mask his true, immensely conflicted feelings.<sup>15</sup> But Hwang’s rationalization seems a bit too contrived we sense, for by “acting out” his apparent sexual desire for the girl he masks it as a “moral responsibility” toward the embarrassed, abnormal native woman. And so the man who guides the Japanese “invaders” is himself virtually an invader for, as we will see later, his desire for the indigenous Other is almost as strong as his desire to maintain *mianzi* before the foreign Other.

Chinese nationalism is a peculiar phenomenon in a number of ways, but contemporary scholars agree that its emphasis on humiliation and self-deprecation in the international arena is one of its most salient features. As Frank Dikötter has pointed out, in China, “public admission of national weakness and sensitivity are considered to be clear proof of the nation’s own moral superiority. Feelings of self-deprecation, complaints about an exaggerated sensitivity and a sense of internal vengefulness have characterized [Chinese] cultural nationalism” (600). Another scholar of Chinese nationalism, William A. Callahan, even claims that “national humiliation joins all Chinese in a performance that is both critical and self-critical. China needs to not only ‘other’ Japan and the West, but ‘other’ itself by way of a thorough self-criticism: National humiliation is necessary for national salvation” (207). From both angles, our narrator embodies (facializes) internal vengefulness (his “immense contradictions”) and humiliated victimhood. For as an abject “other” of the Japanese, Hwang-kun is able to “perform” and justify his nationalism by means of self-*effacement* and

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<sup>14</sup> Despite Japanese colonial regulations against the practice, facial-tattooing was common well into the 20<sup>th</sup>-century in Taiwan, and “according to the aesthetic conception of the Atayal this was considered as ‘beautiful.’ Through it, one’s own people could be distinguished from the enemies, and after death it was this sign by which the ancestors would recognize you and allow you to enter ‘paradise’” (Rudolph, 136-37). A word about diction is in order here since Huang uses the word *yinji* (which is close to “inscription” in meaning and is often confusing even to some native Taiwanese readers), rather than *wenmian* or *cimian*, to describe Ah-Zhen’s facial tattoo. Huang’s word-choice is revealing because it suggests he sees Ah-zhen as generically “inscribed” rather than as a ritually tattooed member of a particular ethnic group (the Atayal people). One assumes this is because he is ignorant of local culture, though it could just as well be another projection of his own anxieties about face onto her body.

<sup>15</sup> The Chinese original reads “created immense inner *contradictions* [*jida de maodun*] in my mind” (*Sayonara* 42). Below I return to this connection between face and “inner contradiction” in the context of Hwang-kun’s relationship with Ah-zhen.

“exaggerated sensitivity.” Paradoxically, to redeem his name and “face,” as a patriot he must humiliate himself so that he can humiliate the Japanese in their turn. Thus, telling us the story of how he fooled both the naïve, local Taiwanese and belittled the Japanese businessmen he was expected to serve, Hwang’s humiliation and loss of face is redeemed through us, his readers. Thus shame not only figures prominently in the relationship our narrator imagines between himself and the Japanese, it is the key to his relationship with the reader, for as our narrator puts it: “I know that my close friends would be surprised if I did this thing, and having grown accustomed to hearing their praises, what would I do once their vision of me lost its luster?” (Huang, “Sayonara” 212). In a sense, we stand in for these fictional close friends, becoming the “white wall” on which he can re-inscribe his sense of face, for maintaining this “vision of me” (that is, his vision of their vision of him) becomes Hwang’s primary goal.

Seeking to reclaim face and do his job at the same time, our Deleuzian re-territorialization of Taiwan is set in motion: Hwang-kun pretends that undermining the dialogue between his Japanese and Taiwanese interlocutors is a cunning act of patriotism, one that belatedly re-inscribes Taiwan as proudly Chinese. However, this re-inscription is actually based on a self-serving attempt to save and reclaim face. For example, near the beginning of the novella he bemoans the way the Japanese look down on Taiwan, so Mr. Hwang brags to his office-mates that he will “show them [the prostitutes] how to bleed those Japanese” (214). He then goes on to explain why this is patriotic: “you know that the price of women is a gauge of national development—the cheaper the women, the more backward the place” (214). This chauvinistic logic is imbued with a certain malignant irony, for Mr. Hwang is actually suggesting that, in the international libidinal economy, the *unprofitable* exploitation of his countrywomen’s bodies is a source of national humiliation. Seeing through his hollow posturing, afterwards a female colleague asks if his solution is, then, still to “take them to have their kicks in Chiao-hsi?” Making a virtue out of necessity, Hwang’s social re-organization of face produces monstrous hypocrites, but this example demonstrates how this logic “performs the facialization of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus” (Deleuze and Guattari 181). Thus for Hwang-kun, not only are Taiwan’s women’s bodies overlaid with the mechanics of faciality, the village and

national landscape itself are faced with unworthiness in the face of the Japanese Other.

As we move forward in the story the focus on symbolic/allegorical face becomes ever more apparent. In the closing scene, on the day after their sexual escapades in Chiao-hsi, we see Hwang and his Japanese clients lethargically returning to Taipei on a train. Just as their journey gets underway the group meets a college student from National Taiwan University who is preparing to go to graduate school (to study Chinese literature) in Japan. The student's curiosity is instilled by a father who believes Japan is "good place," and whose dream it is to "find a way to send him to Japan for advanced study," and who believes (like many Taiwanese) that Japan is a great country. Hwang, still disgusted by the Japanese, decides to use the occasion to torture his Japanese guests once again, and to finally "erect a false bridge between those seven men and a Chinese youth" (209). Hwang-kun (as the Japanese call him) lies to the young man and tells him that they are distinguished college professors from Japan. He then lies to the businessmen and pretends the student wants to ask them awkward questions about their participation in World War II, and specifically the explosively contentious destruction of Nationalist capital, Nanjing. At this point it is no longer simply a matter of Hwang using his linguistic talents to shame the men into confessing their sins and admitting their war crimes. Rather, again, it is really a matter of Hwang using the boy, just as he used the prostitutes, to undermine and shame the Japanese.<sup>16</sup> As Hwang explains through his (false) Japanese interlocutors, "They say it is understandable that your father has good feelings about Japan, because people of his age grew up under a Japanese educational system that kept them ignorant. But someone of your generation shouldn't have such thoughts" (247). Indeed, "such thoughts," basically non-hostile ones toward the Japanese, are misguided and should not be spoken of publically (on a train) in order to maintain/protect Taiwan's sense of face. Thus, *Sayonara* is very much about the attempt to emphasize a certain type of public discourse that will change the face of Japan/Taiwan inter-cultural communication.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> According to Chen Fangming, the term "economic colonialism" was coined by the prominent Nativist writer Wang Tuo to describe the KMT state's relation with the United States and Japan during the 1970s. See note 5 above. Hwang uses the term several times in his descriptions of the Japanese attitude toward Taiwan.

<sup>17</sup> It is perhaps significant that this multi-lingual "conversation" occurs on a train, for the Taiwanese railway system was originally constructed by the Japanese imperial regime and is therefore a strong symbolic reminder of the island's modern development. Enabling the short trip from Taipei to the

In Benedict Anderson's well known definition, the nation is always "imagined as a community because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each [sub-community], the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (50). Such "deep, horizontal comradeship" is always difficult to imagine in the case of Taiwan, a country that regards itself as the Republic of China but has been literally de-territorialized as merely "Taiwan" since 1971, when it was officially de-recognized by the United Nations and its seat given to the People's Republic of China. As mentioned at the outset, faced with a nearly absolute marginalization from the outside world (the international community) and the death of Chiang Kai-shek four years later (1975), Taiwan underwent an identity crisis which brought about the highly creative and inward-looking shift to "nativist literature movement." Huang's novella is thus both a byproduct of that identity crisis and an allegorical depiction of its hobbled, increasingly broken, schizophrenic sense of "horizontal" community. Hwang-kun's own love of *mianzi* can thus be read as a byproduct of a nationalist "pathos of patriotism" reliant on humiliation and an increasingly aggravated sense of Taiwan's ethnic multiplicity (symbolized by the indigenous girl, Ah-zhen, but also the Japanophile student at the end). My reading of Chinese cultural nationalism through the logic of *visag  t  *, of abstract faciality, is thus an attempt to go beyond Fredric Jameson's much contended reading of twentieth century Third World literature in terms of national allegory.<sup>18</sup> For

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coastal countryside, the train setting itself embodies the unspoken force of modernity to penetrate into rural backwaters like Chiao-hsi.

<sup>18</sup> In his controversial essay "Third World Literature in the Age of Multinational Capitalism" Jameson argues that authors from developing nations like China tend to construct self-consciously "allegorical" works that represent the collectivity via stories of local "types" found in characteristic relationships to the collectivity. The primary example he uses is Lu Xun's character Ah-Q in *The True Story of Ah-Q*, a satirical buffoon with a persecution complex who eventually becomes a convenient scapegoat and executed for being a revolutionary. For Jameson this kind of work is "qualitatively different" from its contemporaneous Western counterparts insofar as it is determined to depict "a social and a historical nightmare, a vision of the horror of life specifically through History itself, whose consequences go far beyond the more local western realistic or naturalistic representation" (Jameson, "Third" 71). As other critics have noted (Ahmad 9-10), however, Jameson's article stakes out a universalizing Marxist-humanist standpoint to evaluate non-Western literature; but what interests us here is that the Jameson incorrectly analyzes a specifically *modernist* Chinese work from the so-called Third World to illustrate how different it is supposed to be. Jameson's reasoning is that, although Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* also addresses a particular representative social "type" (the Victorian housewife), Lu Xun's character is much more the product of nightmarish historical events which represent or give face to the nation. However, *Ah-Q* both criticizes the imperialist powers which produce the nightmare and the Chinese who help perpetuate it—i.e., by ridiculing the "foreign devils" and native intellectuals whom he calls "amateur overseas Chinese" (*yeyu huaqiao*)—but ultimately only makes himself lose face. This self-demeaning



although allegorizing the “nightmare” of national history through local types like Mr. Hwang, *Sayonara, Zaijian!* also depicts and throws into doubt a social order which is based on mechanical games of “face” played with foreign and domestic Others. According to Deleuze and Guattari, it is not the individual but this mechanism which “assumes a role of selective response, or choice: given a concrete face, the machine judges whether it passes or not, whether it goes or not,” so that, for example, “a defendant, a subject, displays an overaffected submission that turns into insolence. Or someone is too polite to be honest” (177). Hwang-kun, who suffers from a severe case of existential bad faith in his nationalism, is nevertheless caught up in the gears of a judgmental “faciality” that makes him appear overaffected (even to himself) and “too polite to be honest.” Most mechanically of all, however, is his auto-erotic affection for Ah-zhen, the indigenous sex worker whose face he imagines he saves. The novella thus comes to embody the very dynamics of *visagéité* and affected desire that Deleuze and Guattari scrutinize in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*—the creation of artificially discriminating “subjects” who act out the struggles they have been mechanically programmed to struggle with through face.

*Sayonara* plays out a curious symbolization of intercultural anxiety, depicting that anxiety as the indefatigable attempt to signify and hold on to face, to “maintain appearances,” and lay down strata that will reterritorialize Chinese space. This is not a national allegory per se, but some symbolization of the extra-linguistic component of politeness rituals (*limao*) that are deeply rooted in a bipolar tradition of self-suppression and ethnic chauvinism.<sup>19</sup> As I

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manner seems to go under Jameson’s radar when he writes that Lu Xun’s work shows us the “allegorical nature of third-world culture, where the telling of the individual story and the individual experience cannot but ultimately involve the laborious telling of the collectivity itself” (“Third” 85-86). If we follow Jameson’s argument through to its logical end we see that a sense of humiliation is central to the Third World’s “nightmare of history” which cannot be forgotten outright, and must instead be neurotically repeated in works like *The True Story of Ah-Q*. As he explains, in the West the issue of “political commitment is recontained and psychologized or subjectivized by way of the public-private split,” but, in Third World works like *Ah-Q* or (presumably) *Sayonara*, what stands for “psychology, or more specifically, libidinal investment is to be read in primarily political and social terms” (Jameson, “Third” 71-72). The significance of the private/public split, Jameson emphasizes, is that Western narratives tend to be understood in terms of “Freud versus Marx” (individual psyche vs. the mind of mass society)—“Third World” desire is translated into an experience of modernity that is always social and/or political in orientation; in short, faciality is central to the national allegory since race and “face” are so often read as synonyms. Despite its weaknesses, though, Jameson’s reading of *The True Story of Ah-Q* gives us a picture of the larger importance of “libidinal” representations of national feeling and desire for the other.

<sup>19</sup> By “ethnic chauvinism” (*minzu youyue gan*) I mean the obsessive recreation of those Confucian and nationalist “structures of feeling” that reassure the subject and convince him of his ethnic superiority.

argue further below, whether it is a national allegory or not, this work imagines an anti-hero who is trapped within the Deleuzian “machine of faciality” that keys chiefly on patriotic pathos, projecting a singular, organized face onto the various, deeply divided and distorted territories of Taiwan (which may have broken off from some larger East Asian geopolitical “Body without Organs”). Moreover, the way the nationalist “grand narrative” is portrayed ironically as a hollow rhetorical edifice makes it hard to gauge Huang Chun-ming’s own distance from the attempt to identify “Taiwaneseness” over against a foreign Chinese nationalism.<sup>20</sup> It is perhaps a minor point, but my interpretation is that, behind all his rhetoric and linguistic deceit, the story conveys a strong, disturbing sense of the pathos attached to the Confucian-nationalist “faciality machine.” Granted, what “we” non-Chinese readers are likely to find interesting about this work is different from “native” readers, but the work nevertheless satirizes precisely this idea of the native “Chinese reader,” who is desperate to maintain face—even it means maligning the practice of translation or lying to his audience for the sake of personal one-upmanship. Language (Japanese-Chinese) thus becomes a tool in the war to substantiate and realize face, but to see this we will have to take a detour into what affect theory can say about self-effacement, shame, and the pathos of “face.”

## II. Effacing the Nation (Within)

Despite its sometimes opaque or even dubious assumptions about the body, recent work in affect theory can be useful to literary studies like this one if considered broadly as an approach which tries to interpret “those feelings that function beneath the threshold of conscious recognition and semantic legibility, those inarticulate, subliminal sensations . . . that operate across the boundaries between mind and body, action and passion, self and other” (Abel, qtd. in Figlerowicz 11).<sup>21</sup> As this paper contends, there is a

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See footnote 29 below for further reference to recent “ritual propriety” (*Li*) scholarship. What seems significant in the Chinese context is that politeness is never thought of in terms of “feelings” but is, rather, very much a formal, even mechanically practiced rite which may produce feelings.

<sup>20</sup> Given his distinctly patriotic tone it appears our narrator can only imagine himself affiliated with Chinese culture and regards the name of the country, Taiwan, never appears in the story. This is ironic considering the name has indigenous roots in the word *Taiyan*, meaning “sea people,” or land of foreigners!

<sup>21</sup> Ruth Leys offers a thorough-going critique of the “turn to affect” in her 2011 *Critical Inquiry* article. She points out many ill-adapted insights from the biological and behavioral sciences which were

patriotic pathos of face at work below the threshold of language in Huang's and many other East Asian texts which address issues of national pride and ethnic difference. Here we are talking about a discursive regime built atop the smiling visage of Generalissimo Chiang, one of the worst fascist tyrants of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century. Certainly a society built around a cult of personality like this will generate certain "structures of feeling" which will differ radically from that of the European or American bourgeois liberal subject. Molecular in origin, faciality will produce skins that are thin and vulnerable to criticism for its militarist idolatry. Thus, for instance, the average Western reader will likely have trouble feeling much of anything when Hwang-kun, in the section titled "Japan's Longest Day," inflicts acute embarrassment and shame on his foreign colleagues by making them admit their participation in war crimes during WWII. The satisfaction our narrator derives from this triumph of face can hardly be articulated verbally, for it derives from a cleverly mistranslated conversation that is intent on bringing history to life on the face of his Japanese interlocutors. The neurotic *jouissance* of his adventure is he agitates himself into a state of patriotic guilt, shame, and passion. Affect theory is helpful here, in explaining this desire for face, for prior to becoming language, "[shame] can be a switch point for the individuation of imaging systems, of consciousnesses, of bodies, of theories, of selves, an individuation that decides not necessarily an identity but a figuration, distinction, or mark of punctuation" (Sedgwick 22). "Ordinary" speech rendered false and misleading by reverse-translating, *Sayonara* deftly portrays the inner anxiety of excess ethnic individuation where one can be "Chinese," "Taiwanese," or even "Japanese" depending on who has the "right" face or perspective.

For historical reasons Japan itself is an all too obvious affective "switch point" for national shame in Taiwan/China. At the end of WWII, Chiang Kai-shek's defeated Nationalist (Kuomintang, KMT) forces, in retreat from the Chinese People's Liberation Army, were permitted to establish their single-party dictatorship on the soil of Japan's former colony, Formosa. Thus one defeated army departed and another arrived, unfortunately bringing with it shootings, mass arrests, and the violent social unrest associated with the

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poorly adapted to studies in the humanities and, moreover, doubts the claim that a certain number (or kind) of "affects" can be identified in a rigorously scientific way.

“White Terror” (*baise kongbu*).<sup>22</sup> At the beginning of 1947 a nearly five decade period of military rule, later known as the “Martial Law Era” [*jiayan shidai*], began. During this entire period Taiwan was in a “state of exception” where the normal laws and principles of democratic rule were suspended, purportedly for the sake of protecting the social order from certain unseen communist enemies.<sup>23</sup> Spatially it became a site of suspicion and uncertainty, a place where no small amount of shame could be attached to one’s family background or place of origin. Thus the setting of *Sayonara* is crucial, for as mentioned earlier, the rural/urban and local/foreign dyads are conspicuous markers of a nationalist “reterritorialization” that seeks to supplant Japanese with Chinese imaginative space. In addition to these we could add local-traditional/international-popular culture, for in the story each of the four sections of the novella are named after four different post-war Japanese films. Structurally, the story is bounded by these Japanese works, but in addition they form a kind of frame for the events unfolding in space within the story.

The first section of the novella, named after the film trilogy *The Human Condition*, was filmed between 1959-61 and portrays the survival of a progressive socialist, Kaji, in the authoritarian world of World War II Japan. The second section, entitled *The Seven Samurai*, refers of course to Akira Kurosawa’s 1954 masterpiece about a group of swordsmen who come to the rescue of a village that is ravaged by a band of rapacious marauders. The third section, *Yojimbo* (1961), also by Kurosawa, is the tale of a *ronin* who wins the confidence of two competing groups of marauders and convinces them to murder one another. Sanjuro, the cunning hero, brings peace and safety to the village by dividing and conquering the villagers’ enemies by making them fight against one another. The final section of the novella, *Japan’s Longest Day* (1967), is based on the true events leading up to Japan’s surrender at the end of WWII, namely, the dithering of the courts while the

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<sup>22</sup> It should be remembered that the term “White Terror” comes to us from Western revolutionary history, particularly France and Russia, where it was used to describe militant reactionary (or fascist) violence on a large scale (as opposed to left-wing revolutionary on a large scale, i.e., a Red Terror).

<sup>23</sup> There is no space to discuss it here, but in Agamben’s genealogy of modern governmentality he defines the “state of exception” as “an anomic space in which what is at stake is a force of law without law (which should therefore be written: force-of-~~Law~~)” (39). Taiwan during the Martial Law Era was certainly such an anomic space where arbitrary military force stood in for the force-of-~~Law~~, but it may also be that Taiwan’s current isolation from the international community makes it an even more literal “state of exception.” For example, both the PRC’s “one China” policy and the United States foreign policy with regard to Taiwan focus on its “exceptional” status, and “strategic ambiguity” has been America’s official policy toward Taiwan for the past two time now.

people of Japan suffered. In the story, it is the seven Japanese businessmen's "longest day" because they are worn down by Hwang-kun's prolonged, discomfiting interrogation of their past. Thus all of the filmic subsections of the story put a different "face" on the story, making it a sequence of visage-tropes keyed to episodes of Japanese history and popular culture.

The filmic analogues to the licentious Japanese men in Huang's story are Kurosawa's swordsmen in *The Seven Samurai*, but here the pairing is problematic because in the film we actually do see a depiction of brotherhood and camaraderie, not to mention a sincere attempt to help the villagers prepare and fortify against an invasion from marauding bandits. Moreover, the men in the story are virtually indistinguishable as a group, whereas in the samurai film the men take on distinct personalities. By contrast, Hwang-kun evidently identifies with Toshiro Mifune's rakish, unkempt hero in *Yojimbo*, Sanjuro, who pretends to be incompetent while actually hatching a clever, two-pronged attack against his adversaries.<sup>24</sup> Evidently Hwang-kun feels his own deception is comparable to that of the wily *ronin*, a trickster figure who pits the enemies of a small town against one another in medieval Japan. If that is the case it implies that the Taiwanese and Japanese are Hwang-kun's adversaries in this game of face, and in our pop culture allegory, the simple village in need of rescue is China. Moreover, in the parodic, penultimate "Yojimbo" section of the story, our hero imagines that—against the "seven samurai" sex tourists—it is *he* who possesses the phallic "sword" with which to vanquish his nation's enemies.<sup>25</sup> Metaphorically, of course, this "sword" is his mastery of the Japanese language—the language of the colonizers—but Hwang-kun seems unaware that in acting as a *ronin* village-savior he is also putting himself above or beyond the local people, for Sanjuro, like the lone gunman figure Kurosawa borrowed from American detective fiction and the

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<sup>24</sup> Kurosawa acknowledged his debt to the American detective novelist Dashiell Hammett in writing *Yojimbo*, and the novel *Red Harvest* features a cunning detective, the Continental Op, who plays various gangsters off one another to their own detriment. See Gary Giddins.

<sup>25</sup> The dynamics of phallogocentric interracial desire and the economic exploitation of women are dealt with in Elliott Shieh's "Masculinity and the Economy of Desire in Some Postcolonial Fiction from Taiwan" (46-51). In Shieh's view sexual desire functions negatively, as a symbol of patriarchal oppression on the part of both the "Seven Samurai" and Hwang-kun. His analysis of the threatened masculinities is thus quite astute, I think, but what still gets left out of the account is the particularity of the women who are sexual "objects" in this story about nationalist pathos and "prostitution" (e.g., Ah-zhen). Certainly Hwang-kun and the seven Japanese are all exploiters of local women, so the ethical would seem to trump the ethnic—i.e., whether the men are from China, Taiwan, or Japan. However, the enigma within this economy of desire is, nevertheless, the pricelessly embarrassed girl Ah-zhen and her otherworldly, "pure face."

Western film genre, is a representative of nothing but himself.<sup>26</sup> In short, Hwang does not acknowledge his close ties to Japanese culture, nor does he register the degree to which it informs his identity except in the seemingly ironic subheadings for each section.

Read in this way, Japanese popular culture is an inherent yet unremarked part of the story's "nativism." However, as formulated by Fredric Jameson, such "pastiche" mash-ups and surface intertextuality is something along the lines of a capitalist-induced "pop history" representation. Pastiche art emerges, he famously claims, is a byproduct of our "slowly becoming aware of a new and original historical situation in which we are condemned to seek History by way of our own pop images and simulacra of that history, which itself remains forever out of reach" (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 25). This certainly sounds like what we have in *Sayonara, Zaijian!*, Hwang-kun filtering out real History by going at it through "pop images and simulacra" from Japanese film culture; however, what his text really does is organize itself around the face of the Japanese samurai film star.<sup>27</sup> The figure of this conquering, wily, phallic figure occupies a big sector of the East Asian "geopolitical aesthetic," and (like the American cowboy gunman) is an inescapable icon for men who wish to imagine themselves in positions of power. Thus for a young Taiwanese male of the early 1970s, the face of Toshiro Mifune would likely appear as a "natural" ego-ideal—the very embodiment of the patriarchal, capitalist-driven Japanese machine of faciality that forever tunnels into Hwang's patriotic "Chinese" face. Flexible, indeterminate, adaptive to circumstances, the capitalist *visag  t  * thus rivals and outdoes its nationalist counterpart, competing for subjects in a schizoid desiring process that creates "figures" of distinction but not identity/subjectivity per se. However, in contrast to Jameson's postmodernist simulacra-History which, he claims, brings with it a "waning of affect" in the West, the nationalist machine of faciality still generates an overabundance of

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<sup>26</sup> Sergio Leone's 1964 "Spaghetti Western" remake of this film, *A Fistful of Dollars*, is a testament to how powerful the figure of the lone warrior resonates across international popular culture. Both Leone and Kurosawa pay tribute to the Loner, an individual man capable of survival in a dystopian and lawless world—i.e., the "wild West" or the feudal "warring states" periods. Strictly speaking *Sayonara, Zaijian!* is thus a highly intertextual parody which cannot be understood unless its pop cultural roots are unearthed and carefully studied under the microscope of comparative formal analysis.

<sup>27</sup> For a dated though more detailed discussion of Taiwanese postmodernism in English, see Liao Ping-Hui.

pre-programmed pathos, affective intensities, and fixed responses for living through “the nightmare of history.”

It is no accident, for example, that everyone in the story possesses but also loses “face,” i.e., that everyone is both victim and perpetrator, both dishonest and polite, both product and producer of the faciality machine. (Everyone, that is, except perhaps Ah-Zhen who is “barred” from this drama of face, ironically because of her physical face). Hence, for example, struggling with his “immense inner conflicts,” *sarariman* Hwang endeavors to use his linguistic skills to help the women earn more money and to mock the erstwhile sexual “warriors” from Japan. Signification follows from face. However, his cunning, seemingly “patriotic” use of language leads critics like June Yip to claim it “make[s] Mr. Hwang realize for the first time that his bilingualism puts him not in a position of submission and ambivalent loyalty but in a position of power” (162). Relying on James McGuire’s understanding of the “forked tongues” which are apparently common to many postcolonial writers, Yip regards Mr. Hwang’s bilingualism as enabling because he succeeds in tricking the men into spending more money and, ultimately, admitting their guilt in participating in WWII war crimes. However, I think Yip’s claim that Hwang-kun “scores a minor victory by finding, through his bilingualism, the subversive potential in a difficult predicament” is a bit problematic for at least two reasons. First, although Hwang is certainly in a position of power, it is unclear who he is supposed to “score” a victory for in this case. Is it for himself or for Chinese culture? Second, as mentioned above, he “scores” his victory in a game that cannot be played by the Taiwanese or the indigenous “girl with a tattoo.” Indeed, if we wish to talk about a “position of submission” in the story we must look to the silent interlocutor Ah-zhen. Let us carefully consider how Hwang-kun imagines himself in relation to her:

My thoughts went round and round without ever coming together. Then they turned to Ah-zhen, the girl with the tattoo. I was sure that if I summoned her that evening, she’d be happy to come and would be nicely submissive. Beginning to get aroused, I abruptly recalled that I’d be doing it along with the Japanese, and my anger was rekindled. *Should I not call her then? As self-debasing and simple as she is, she must certainly think that I want her tonight. If I don’t call her she will be hurt, and this hurt will go*

*beyond just the missed chance to earn some money. I thought and thought about it. (“Sayonara” 235)*

Although he continues to agonize about it throughout the night, Hwang never does call the “self-debasing” Ah-zhen to his room because, we are told, he is too embarrassed and concerned about *her* “face” to act on his desire for her. Here, as an aboriginal girl she is clearly fetishized as nationalism’s Other, “the girl with the tattoo,” at whom the chauvinist gaze of our male narrator is directed. Thus, the second problem with Yip’s reading of the *Sayonara* is that she does not take into consideration Hwang’s contradictory relation to Ah-zhen. Not surprisingly, this seems to have eluded mainland Chinese critics as well. According to Xiao Cheng, for example, we can see a direct appeal to nationalist feelings in *Sayonara*, *Zaijian!* and presumably this can be attributed to Huang’s own nationalist values. She points, for example, to a moment in the story when, in a “sarcastic, ironic way,” Huang lets us see how a “sex worker uses the vulgar Taiwanese the Japanese businessmen cannot comprehend to curse the Japanese as ‘bitch-raised,’ using all [his] strengths and talents to promote national feeling and protect national dignity” (Xiao 272). As is often the case in Chinese, the subject is omitted or ambiguous, but the author’s assumption appears to be that Hwang-kun = Huang; the nationalist author is the one who makes the Japanese lose “face” in this drama of patriotic one-upmanship. Ah-zhen and her self-debasing, tattooed face are never mentioned because she complicates such simplistic readings, forces the reader to wonder if any of the “faces” are authentic and really worth sympathizing with in the story.

What is so significant about Ah-zhen is not that she has no “voice” in the story, but rather that she has no “face”—or, is effaced—as the one who is outside of power. That is, in contrast to Hwang’s Chinese face, Ah-zhen’s exotic, aboriginal face is inked with a unique decorative pattern that draws attention to her Otherness, or what Deleuze would call her “becoming-animal” (as opposed to his becoming-machine), for in “paintings, tattoos, or marks on the skin embrace the multidimensionality of bodies. Even masks ensure the head’s belonging to the body, rather than making it a face” (Deleuze and Guattari 176). As such she is the only character in the story who occupies a position outside the faciality machine for being characterized by her shy “sense of inferiority” and “otherworldliness,” key features in the narrator’s eroticized description of Ah-zhen. Mixing memory with desire, the



story then suggests that nationalism is simply the empty posturing of “facility,” an attempt to exploit and control the tensions between people of different ethnic backgrounds. Yet, it is not enough to say that Ah-zhen’s demure nature is socially constructed, for in the minds of non-indigenous viewers it is her facial peculiarity that makes her have no face, makes them disregard her, but it is also precisely what makes Hwang-kun want her. In the case of Ah-zhen, we can now see why she is the only character who is metonymically reduced to “faciality” as “the girl with the [facial] tattoo,” for her face is irredeemably marked as a racially *outside* the machine of faciality which, like a foreign coin, ensures her “multidimensional” value as body. Unlike her one-dimensional nationalist, her exergue-face makes un-effaceable so she cannot experience the angst of becoming the white wall of signification. Yet, always already ritually inscribed, she is pure, “nicely submissive” in a way that underlines the East Asian male’s weakness for weak women: they do not have to worry about faciality (*mianzi*) because they are, in fact, “pure face.”

In their important re-reading of Deleuzian “faciality” Catherine Malabou and Adrian Johnston observe that “when face becomes expressive because of passions, it transcends its social role and stops playing its identificatory part. Affects interrupt or suspend the normal behavior of and meaning of face. It loses its autonomous existence to become a ‘pure’ affect” (46). In the grip of strong emotions, face no longer registers who one is (patriotic *sarariman* Hwang), but rather what one immediately appears to be—i.e., as distinguished by (a blushing smile, a mortified gaze, a crying face, etc.) as Sedgwick explains above. We see this particularly in the figure of Ah-zhen, whose “self-debasing and otherworldly” (*zibei he danchun*) nature is registered through blushing, making embody, as pure affect, that other “faciality” Malabou and Johnston talk about. Indeed, when Hwang-kun tells us he “had a good look at her face, one side of it was covered with an aboriginal tattoo,” he is careful to note the shift in her appearance when he tells her “I want you, won’t you come in.” At this moment he carefully notes “the expression on her face—she was both startled and pleased—and in that instant her mind seemed to be cleared of many of its contradictions” (*Sayonara* 228). The girl’s face undergoes Malabou and Johnston’s “suspension” of sociality when we see that “clearing” of the mind which is registered as pure affect. However, it seems impossible to separate Ah-zhen’s

“purity” from the narrator’s desire to see her as “pure” (i.e., pure submissiveness), i.e., to see her merely as the abject, totally powerless face of the Other within. Thus it would seem that a “horizontal” imagination of the nation must needs flatten out the landscape, efface the markers of difference, and suspend the social face of the native. Similarly, in the final section of novella, Hwang-kun upbraids the Taiwanese student on the train and tells him that whenever he meets “foreigners who are so concerned about China, *you should lie* and say you’ve been to the [National Palace] Museum” (Huang, “Sayonara” 250, emphasis added). It is better, then, to be shameless (*bu yaolian*, not wanting face) and lie to foreigners if it means your nation will stand to gain face.

“To screw foreigners is patriotic,” Geremie Barmé once observed of modern Chinese people, for history is supposed to teach us how badly the foreigners have screwed us in the past.<sup>28</sup> History is thus an ongoing nightmare that is *recalled for the other, in the face of the other*, so Hwang-kun tells the Taiwanese student “if that sort of thing [lying to foreigners] embarrasses you, then why not go there someday to take a look yourself?” (250). Although our young Taiwanese has apparently been raised by a Japanese-educated father (with a weak sense of Chinese national identity), he is advised to visit the National Palace Museum in Taipei in order to “develop” his face. Indeed, the advice really boils down to: undertake to represent yourself (to yourself and to “others”) as the correct embodiment of Chineseness, just as Hwang-kun thinks he does. As Malabou and Johnston would put it, his “I becomes an ‘icon,’ that is, nobody in particular, a non-substantial instance, just like in a close-up, where the actor disappears as an individual to become ‘the’ face” (49). Malabou and Johnston could easily be describing “the” face of our patriotic hero as he stands before foreigners, disappearing behind the quirks and expressions of nationalism, upholding the facade that is nevertheless imbued with the spirit of the “actor.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Barmé’s article offers an excellent overview of neo-nationalism in late 20<sup>th</sup>-century China (PRC), but he also discusses the roots of modern Chinese nationalism in the section “Self-Hate, Self-Approbation” (219-22).

<sup>29</sup> This then raises the question of whether ritual politeness (*limao*) is a pathological structure or moral behavior unique to the Chinese. In either case, *mianzi* and *limao* are probably both byproducts of *Li*, or “ritual propriety.” For a good explication of *Li*, see Geir Sigurðsson’s recent book *Confucian Propriety and Ritual Learning*.

### III. Conclusion: Facing the Nothing

Finally, apart from whether it is explained as a byproduct of the Confucian-nationalist “faciality machine” or some other theoretical framework, Huang’s “Goodbye<sub>1</sub>, Goodbye<sub>2</sub>!” keys on powerful, unspoken structures of pathos, politeness, shame, and self-abnegation that transcend the original (and more so, the translated) text itself. What matters is that one recognize and try to come to terms with the affective mechanisms operative as “face” in trans-cultural East Asian works like this one. That being said, what the post-colonial and Marxian stories fail to account for is how history and culture are informed not only by native/colonizer and Third/First World relations, but also by more intimate inter-regional, intercultural rivalries that transcend language and are in some ways unique to this section of the globe. That is, in late-twentieth and early-twenty-first century Japan, Taiwan, and China the interaction between multinational capitalism and Confucian-nationalism produces a mechanics of faciality which must be studied from the standpoint of bodily reactions like the ones we find in Huang Chun-ming’s work.

Our Deleuzian “faciality machine” is an assemblage that allows us to see how the work lays bare the subconscious dimensions of power based on a crude but still virulent strain of 19<sup>th</sup>-century nationalist essentialism which equates racial destiny with national identity.<sup>30</sup> “Faciality,” as racial identity, generates what is a very ambivalent code of signification (Dikötter and Callahan’s “discourse of humiliation”)—one able to displace a sense of personal dignity into an indignant social identity which is always under attack. And so an ethnic teleology is born—although humiliated by *waiguo ren* (lit. “foreign-nation people,” or foreigners) in the past, we must maintain face and bide our time, for China will one day reterritorialize the planet in the “Great Unity” (*shijie datong*) described by patriotic Confucians such as Kang Youwei in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. What is finally peculiar about this Chinese machine of faciality is that it is reliant on *how the Other, and especially foreigners, make us feel about ourselves* (especially the Japanese, but also Westerners), and how *their* faces affect or challenge our personal sense of dignity and self-

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<sup>30</sup> Certainly non-Taiwanese novels like Mishima Yukio’s *Confessions of a Mask*, Mo Yan’s *Red Sorghum Family*, and Murakami Haruki’s *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* also deal with the individual’s destructive relationship with the nationalist machine of faciality, however those works operate against a less inward, “nativist” cultural backdrop.

regard.

Huang's story brings this confusing, pathetic (pathos-driven) sense of "faciality" to the surface, parodying its extremes and revealing the mechanisms that generate the unconscious bows of students, the empty smiles of prostitutes, and the artificial gestures of politeness we find in nationalists and businessmen. More importantly, perhaps, the author gives us a glimpse of how this complex assemblage is related to the "libidinal economy" of late capitalism—to its international sex trade where women and food must be proffered in order for men to form business agreements. In Hwang-kun's own milieu, the Chinese-Japanese-Taiwanese business world, expensive alcohol and prostitution are regular components of the molecular organization which (alongside things like samurai movies) disciplines the *sarariman's* body, keeping it stimulated with steady streams of alcohol and libidinal fantasies about submissive, exotic females. Hwang-kun's "victory," finally, is that he turns this farcical *onsen* (hot spring) ritual into a ritual of excoriation, a stressful and humiliating ordeal for both the Japanese and himself. Never quite violating the dictates of the *visag  t  *, Hwang nevertheless conjures up the nightmare of history to make his interlocutors bleed out their shameful, wartime past and thus reveal their true "face." But he goes even further than this, indirectly forcing the "native" folk to learn a lesson about how "to screw foreigners is patriotic." In this sense "building a false bridge" is exactly what the nationalist machine of faciality is all about—becoming a Sanjuro who can bring his enemies up against one another (the enemy without and the enemy within), or maintaining dignity while revealing the weaknesses of others. Huang Chun-ming's great gift, in *Sayonara, Zaijian!*, is to give readers a feel for these "immense inner contradictions" and the paradoxical emotional stakes involved in being Chinese in Taiwan, of being both something and nothing, reterritorialized by one's own belief in the signification of an ego-ideal that is basically constructed from patriotic pathos and self-resentment.

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