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Singing Along with Childhood: Japanese Colonial Memory, Taiwanese Elders, and Japanese Song Class

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Acknowledgments

I dedicate my thesis to my grandfather, Tai Wu Te. A-Gong (grandfather). I will try my best to return to our hometown, Pingtung. I am sorry for being annoying. I love you and I will always miss you. I also want to thank the entire Tai family in Pingtung for their support.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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In Taiwan, many Taiwanese elders suffered from tumultuous political changes throughout their lifetime due to Japanese colonization (1895-1945) and the Kuomintang (KMT) dictatorship (1949-1991). They were born and raised to become Japanese, but their childhood was heavily disrupted as the KMT imposed Chinese nationalism. These political tensions are reconciled during the Japanese singing classes taken by many Taiwanese elders in recent years. Through these classes, I show how singing Japanese songs has become the primary means of (re)connecting during their final years. This thesis explores how these songs heal trauma caused by intense political changes. My research applies Tia DeNora's (2013) concept of "music as asylum" to scrutinize the process of healing and political reconciliation among the class attendees. I argue that the Japanese singing class fosters the recollection of the elders' collective Japanese memory as a musical asylum that reimagines an optimistic childhood to ease the pain and loneliness elders experience in the present.

My case study focuses on the Japanese singing class at Canan Presbyterian Church, Pingtung City, Taiwan. I identify this class as their asylum because singing Japanese songs encourages elders to perform their early memories; the Presbyterian church, which has a prominent public image of pro-democracy, provides a secure space to speak Japanese. Singing and speaking Japanese as a group also relieves elders' pain and loneliness. My master's thesis contributes to understanding the political oppressions in Taiwan not merely as the past but as a presence consistently affecting Taiwanese peoples' lives. Thus, I not only want to show the elders' expression of history and memory via performance as a healing, but I also argue that memory is continually shaped by ongoing experiences, and that the body and music are containers of the past, present, and future.

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Introduction

Why do Taiwanese[1] elders love to sing Japanese songs, even though Japan colonized Taiwan for fifty years (1895-1945)? Since 1997, approximately forty elders gathered in Canan Presbyterian church, Pingtung, Taiwan, every Wednesday and Friday morning to sing Japanese songs (Photo 1). They sang Japanese songs, spoke Japanese, and recalled memories of Japanese occupation in class. The Japanese song class is a common, widespread activity among elders in Taiwan. In Pingtung city alone, there were three Japanese song classes held by different organizations when I was conducting my ethnographic fieldwork in the summer of 2019.

Singing Japanese songs for funerals was a common activity for attendees in this song class. They recalled feelings of childhood happiness through Japanese songs and also faced death with these songs. A day before my grandfather's funeral, there were around ten of his classmates from Canan Presbyterian Church's class. They were in their seventies, eighties, or nineties, and they came to my house to say goodbye to my grandfather by singing Japanese songs. They stood still in front of his coffin and sang his favorite Japanese children's song 夕燒小燒[2] (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) (Appendix 1 and

[1] The term Taiwanese used in this paper refers to Taiwanese people who or whose ancestors moved to Taiwan before 1945. The elders liked to refer themselves as Taiwanese and called people who moved to Taiwan after 1945 as Chinese. While they also called people in China as Chinese, I use "mainlander" to refer to people who moved to Taiwan after 1945.

[2] This song was composed by 中村雨虹 (lyrics) and 草川信 (melody) and published in 1923 (川崎洋 1998: 146–47). The title of this song can be written in 夕焼小焼 or 夕焼け小焼け in Japanese (川崎洋 1998: 146–47; Wakai 2008: 169). The title 夕燒小燒 is actually not the correct Japanese title. 夕燒小燒 is written in Traditional Chinese characters. I use this Chinese version because the textbook in the Japanese song class uses this version. Although no sources show whether 夕燒小燒 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) was collected in textbook or not, many of the elders knew this song and said they learned this song from school.

Photo 2), a song he learned in his childhood that talked about returning home at sunset. He often sang this song when he took me home after school when I was a kid.[3] My grandfather loved to sing the last sentence, "烏と一緒に帰りましょう (Let's go back home with crows together)", with a *Bon Odori-like dance.*[4] During the funeral, one grandmother tried to stand still and sing despite her trembling hands and slouched body. Like many others, her voice was not perfect, and some of the other participants could not even sing on pitch. They could not sing farewell at Hoping Presbyterian church, my grandfather's church, because the pastor did not allow these secular songs to appear in the Christian funeral.[5] Still, they came because they knew that these songs and the Japanese song class comprised the most pleasurable moments of my grandfather's last few years.

Singing the Japanese songs in Sunday church services was also a part common practice for the attendees of this class. At the end of a Sunday sermon in the Canan Presbyterian Church during the summer of 2019, I heard 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) again. The elders in the Japanese song class wore white and sat in the choir loft, as their choir sang for the Sunday service once a month, leading the congregants to sing the songs before the sermon. By the end, after the pastor gave the prayer, Teacher Lee[6], the

My grandfather's teacher asked them to sing this song on the way home, and a grandmother also told me her teacher led them to sing after they finished the school.

[3] Typically, the primary school recesses after 4 pm in the afternoon.

[4] A Japanese traditional dance people will dance in *Obon* festivals.

[5] My grandfather was not a congregant of the Canan Presbyterian Church, so his funeral was held in another Presbyterian church. As the pastor in that church did not think these Japanese songs could function as hymns, he refused to let these elders sing in the funeral.

[6] In agreement with my research collaborators, I share the last name of the participants listed: Teacher Lee, Deacon Wang, Deacon Lee, and Accompanist Chen. Because some of the elders do not want their real name, two grandmothers (Grandmother Chen and Lim) are pseudonyms, and I also identify my other

instructor of the Japanese song class, sat in front of the piano and played the intro of 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk), with which all the attendees were familiar. They recognized the song immediately and stood up to sing in unison without hesitation.

The elders sang the two verses of 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) as Teacher Lee played it with a slightly faster tempo than usual. The elders sang the song loudly, to the point that it sounded more like shouting. Due to their health condition and age, they could not control their breath and volume well as they shouted out the first sentence, "夕焼小焼で 日が暮れて (the dusk full of the sky, and the sun goes down)". As the music proceeded, these elders concentrated heavily on their singing; many elders stared forward, pronounced the words clearly, and sang accurately on each pitch. All of them had memorized the lyrics. Even though some elders were too tired to stand the whole time, they sat in their seats and remained immersed in the music.

Another grandmother, who had lost most of her vision, closed her eyes while singing "山のお寺の鐘が鳴る (the bell of the temple in the mountain rings)", and because her gums were receded, she could hardly pronounce the words correctly. Despite this, she sang very loudly. While singing the lyrics "お手々繋いで皆帰ろ (hold our hands tight and all return home)," a younger grandmother who was in her seventies held and waved her hand. Both of them had smiling eyes as they sang the last sentence of the first verse,

research collaborators using their approximate age in place of their name. The change of age does not impact the historical background of each elder.

“烏と一緒に帰りましょう (let’s go back home with crows together).” Some elders were tapping their chairs with the beat, and then they moved on to the next section.

夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) was a song the elders learned in school when they were receiving Japanese education during Japanese occupation (1895-1945), and three of the elders told me they often sang this song when they were walking home from school. At the end of the two-hour-long Sunday service, they sang like kids who had finished their schoolwork and were ready to go home. They transformed into the children they sang about in the second verse of the lyrics, “子供が帰った後からは (after kids return home).” They increased their volume and the two elders who were holding hands with each other waved their hands even more emphatically. They no longer stood still at their seats; some elders slightly shook their bodies with the rhythm, and a few elders turned their heads back to look around at the other congregants. They looked like children fidgeting and waiting for the bell to ring at the end the school. In the last sentence of the lyrics, “空にはきらきら 金の星 (the sky is twinkling golden stars)” they raised their pitch and volume to give a perfect ending to this song and the sermon. They looked satisfied by this dramatic conclusion, and then they walked to another corner in the church hall and sat down to wait for the Japanese singing class after the Sunday service.[7] Other congregants, however, did not pay as much attention to this song as the elders did. For example, on the other side of the church hall, a group of teenagers were already immersed in their phones.

[7] This Japanese song class was held in every Wednesday and Friday morning, and held after the Sunday service when they were in charge of worship choir once a month.

In this thesis, I study how singing Japanese songs became an important practice for Taiwanese elders to recall happiness from their childhood. This happiness came from the collective memories of the Japanese occupation, and their desires to recall and transform those memories, making the Japanese songs a musical asylum. I use Tia DeNora's (2013) concept of "music as asylum" as a framework to demonstrate that this Japanese song class is an asylum for elders to seek wellbeing and escape from the pain and loneliness of their adult memories and daily lives as elders. According to Tia DeNora, asylum is "a place for fantasy, daydreaming and recovery of personal time and rhythm" (DeNora 2013a: 55) and a place that utilizes collaborative play to "remake or renegotiate social worlds" (ibid.: 55).

To address the loneliness, pain, and memory in this asylum, this study will focus on elders' bodily performance. This approach also echoes theorizations of remembrance via bodily and musical performance from memory studies (Connerton 1989; Shelemay 2006) and empowerment through physically sensing and making music from music therapy (Sutton 2002). I apply Deborah Wong's theory about bodily performance (Wong 2004).[8] Bodily performance refers to elder's voice, singing, talking, dancing, body appearance, and body gesture. In this class, elders not only feel pleasure by listening and singing music, but also feel pleasure from physically being in the space and sensing the familiarity constructed by other elders' presence and performance.

[8] Later, I will explain in detail how Wong's theory about bodily performance applies itself to Japanese song classes.

Based on Tia DeNora's concept of asylum, asylum allows people to escape from pain. Therefore, pain always accompanies asylums; the existence of asylums is only possible because of a person's previous painful experiences. I will discuss the pain and loneliness that these elders faced and the healing processes that occurred through crafting their identities across multiple nationalities and performing memories in the asylum. This thesis has seven sections. The first section explains the historical background to show the pain that the attendees encountered; the second section talks about my positionality, which presents my relationship with the attendees, and my experience of my grandfather's pain and its mediation through this Japanese song class. The next section is the literature review, which indicates how this study is in conversation with music therapy and memory studies. Fourth, I review the historical background of this Japanese song class to show how Canan Presbyterian Church became an asylum or haven for Taiwanese elders. Fifth, I answer why did these elders join in this class, and I focus on how did different historical experiences, which determined by different ages, impact their motivations. Sixth, I describe a day in the Japanese song class, showing how elders negotiated their complex identities resulting from their colonized and oppressed history to construct an asylum. Lastly, I discuss how this asylum heals elders. I want readers to understand the pain and loneliness of elders and to know why collective memory and music can construct an asylum for them to cope with reality.

Historical Memory: Pain and Loneliness

In this section, I focus on the collective memory of Taiwanese elders through their historical backgrounds to explain their pain and loneliness, as well as their obsession with Japanese culture. According to Maurice Halbwachs (1950), individual memory, which an individual had experienced in the past, and collective memory, which members of the same community remember, mutually impact each other. Halbwachs says that collective memory, which can also be called historical memory, is not history, but rather a representation of history which responds to current thoughts and experiences (Halbwachs 1950:64). The collective memory of these elders is also a generational memory (Wydra 2018) because the collective memory that these elders share is related to their long-term experience of colonization and dictatorship. I believe that their shared experiences, including pain and loneliness, constitute the collective memory of their generation via remembering. Since these elders are seeking comfort and happiness from the music that they learned during the Japanese occupation, the collective memory of happiness and pain play an important role in this asylum.

I first want to contextualize the history and impact of Japanese occupation and the KMT party. Fascination with Japanese music and culture have a long history in Taiwan, beginning with Japanese colonization in 1895. The Republic of China (ROC) took over Taiwan in 1945 after the fifty-year Japanese occupation, establishing the Kuomintang party (KMT). Taiwanese people resisted this regime and, while the relationship between Taiwan and China remains tumultuous, the Japanese experience has become a third party in this China-Taiwan tension, providing the Taiwanese people with a way to portray

difference between Chinese and Taiwanese peoples. Hence, unlike Korean culture which emphasizes colonial violence to strongly oppose Japanese colonization, many Taiwanese people focus on the modernizing forces brought forth by Japanese occupation (Ching 2001: 8).

According to this triangulated identity (Taiwanese, Chinese, Japanese), reactions to Japanese colonial legacy are a continuous response to local politics and cultural productions (Liao and Wang 2006: 2); it is a byproduct of the KMT dictatorship. Thus, the collective memory of Japanese occupation continues to be a constructed and reconstructed memory (Lee and Lee 2020: 4). Because of this fascination with Japan, although Japanese colonization ended seven decades ago, its cultural impact did not disappear but remained strong under the long Chinese assimilative process of the ROC regime.

The pain and loneliness of Taiwanese elders came from social changes and rapid shifting politics resulting from the Japanese occupation. While these elders received a Japanese education before the end of Japanese occupation,[9] they became Chinese after the ROC took over Taiwan. After democratization started in the late 1980s,[10] they again encountered that the Taiwanese identity and their dictatorial experiences have been

[9] Most of my interlocuters who received Japanese education were born in the late 1920s and received elementary and middle school education in the 1930s. They were educated to be loyal Japanese subjects at school (Y. Chen 2001: 4). Teacher Lee even told me that once he said "restoration" to refer the takeover by the ROC, a grandfather corrected him because the grandfather thought he was either Japanese or Taiwanese, but definitely not Chinese. Another grandfather once also told me, "we were Japanese, and now we are Taiwanese."

[10] The process of democratization started from the lifting of martial law in 1987 (1949-1987). Following the termination of martial law, the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization and Communist Rebellion was abolished in 1991. The first direct election of the Legislative Yuan in Taiwan was held in 1992 (C. Sun, Lee-Chin, and Ritter 1992).

emphasized by younger generations. This was a tough process for these elders that involved colonization, World-War II, massacre, political suppression, discrimination, and inequality. Take language as an example: during Japanese occupation, these elders were fluent in Hokkien[11] and Japanese; however, when the ROC government came, they were forced to learn Mandarin. Many elders told me how hard they worked to learn Mandarin in their adulthood to have a stable job. Many of them are still not fluent in Mandarin today, and many elders avoided speaking Mandarin in their elderhood. Furthermore, this language problem even currently impacts their communication with their grandchildren, whose first language was Mandarin. Nowadays, these elders face loneliness because their descendants can only speak Mandarin, and many of their descendants migrated from Pingtung city to bigger cities or foreign counties for more job opportunities. Their descendants also have a different interpretation of these elders' memory of Japanese occupation and KMT dictatorship.[12] Last but not least, they feel pain when their health conditions do not allow them to maintain their social relationships, and as their friends and relatives pass away.

It is important to explain the reason that I use "pain" to describe the experience of socio-political change. To speak about the experience since Japanese occupation, I consider that elders were traumatized from this history, especially the 28 February 1947

[11] Hokkien is one of the native languages in Taiwan. The Hokkien ethnic group is the biggest ethnic group in Taiwan. However, Hokkien was devalued by Chinese assimilative policy from KMT dictatorship from 1946 to 1989. Nowadays, many Hokkien youth cannot speak Hokkien. For example, my family is Hokkien, but I cannot speak Hokkien fluently.

[12] This will be addressed in the next section.

Taiwan Uprising (228 Uprising)[13] and the White Terror Period[14] during the KMT dictatorship. According to Judith Herman, traumatized people frequently avoid speaking about the trauma or immediately deflect attention from it (Herman 1992: 1). She also points out that witnesses are subject to the dialectic of trauma (Herman 1992: 2). Although these elders survived the 228 Uprising and the White Terror Period, they still witnessed this cruel time.

Furthermore, many elders' reactions to this history were the same as Judith Herman's observation. I remember that my grandfather refused to speak about the experience of dictatorship. In his memory, the 228 Uprising and the White Terror Period were silenced and ignored. My grandfather even changed the memory of the 228 Uprising when he told me the story of the physical places related to the 228 Uprising. While I was a child, he told me the small park beside my elementary school was the home of *My Neighbor Totoro*,[15] and *Totoro* would appear at midnight. He even told me that he could bring me to the park at midnight. However, after I grew up, I finally found out that that place was the execution grounds to kill people who were involved in the 228 Upspring. For himself, for me, or for both, he had changed the meaning of that infamous place and invented a happier story for it.

[13] The 28 February 1947 Taiwan Uprising: the resistance of Taiwanese evoked by the exploitation and unequal treatment from the ROC government. This uprising failed and led a massacre of local Taiwanese people.
[14] White Terror Period: the sequential suppression of political dissidents after the 28 February 1947 Taiwan Uprising.
[15] A Japanese animated film released in 1988, directed by Hayao Miyazaki (宮崎駿). Totoro is the imaginary creature which will appear and play with children at night.

Although the elders were possibly traumatized, I do not use trauma to describe their experiences because they do not identify themselves as traumatized. My grandfather never allowed me to call him traumatized because he still lived very well after those terrifying experiences and the word "trauma" had too negative a meaning for him, not to mention the other elders. Thus, I use the term "pain," which I borrow from their own words, to address this past.

Though some elders would say, "it was painful to see my husband lie in the hospital", even "pain" could be considered an over-interpreted term from their perspective. These elders, including my grandfather, use "pain" to talk about their physical health conditions and the death of their friends and relatives. In contrast, they seldom use "painful" or "pain" to address their past; instead, they used "tough" a lot when narrating their stories. However, many of the elders' verbally and physically expressed rejection and fear of the KMT dictatorship, revealing their unaddressed pain. I believe their silent reactions towards addressing pain is an indicator of pain.

When I asked Teacher Lee about his definitions of pain and toughness, he replied, "From my parents and many elders I knew, I think the pain did occur when their identities and lives were totally changed by the dictatorship, and the word "tough" was only used to describe the food shortages and living difficulties when they became adults at the same time as the end of Japanese occupation. The toughness was just physical, but the pain was spiritual."[16] I concur with Teacher Lee's explanation: while they already

[16] All of the conversations in this essay are translated from Hokkien. Except for one follow-up interviews with Teacher Lee on May, all of the interviews and conversations were recorded during the fieldwork in July and August 2019.

physically escaped those tough years, and I address both the past impact on their memory and the current difficulties they are facing in this research, I use “pain” to describe elders’ experience in order to study how they sought a kind of healing through the communal singing of Japanese songs.

I want to note that elders did not call these classes music therapy. For the congregants, this class was their regular worship meeting which entertained them with singing Japanese songs. For the non-congregants, it was a place for singing and learning Japanese songs. No one told me directly that this class healed past pain or cured the stresses of their daily lives. However, I saw how this class satisfied their Japanese nostalgia, recalled happy childhood memories, healed their loneliness, and blocked their pains from outside the class. Teacher Lee said, “Of course, they felt healed! They can sing what they like, and they have the company of their friends and community. They really forget their pain in class. This is healing.”

By using the word “pain,” I want to inform readers that the construction and recall of memories from Japanese occupation and the KMT party was not a smooth process but rather full of distress. This construction involved the confrontation of the experiences from colonization, war, and dictatorship in their early days, as well as the loneliness in their elderhood. Gluing together and rationalizing these fragmented memories is a difficult process of negotiation and re-narration.

お手々繋いで皆帰ろ **Hold Our Hands Tight and Go Back Home Together:**[17] **My Grandfather and Me**

In this section, I will explain how these elders recalled their memories, how they transmitted their memories to their descendants, and how this transmission impacted cross-generational relationships between elders and their descendants. Part of loneliness of these elders came from the generational gap. While these elders share the collective memory of their generation and have a cross-generational connection with their descendants, this phenomenon echoes with Harald Wydra's (2018) idea of generational memory. Generational memory is where each generation carries memories from their generation and binds memories together with the memories of previous and future generations. When memory is transmitted, it will be interpreted and reinterpreted depending on the generation.

This research started from my grandfather's enthusiasm for Japanese songs, the loneliness he faced in his elder years, and the generational gap between him and me. Also, I could not participate in this class if I were not my grandfather's granddaughter and a descendant of the Tai family. My grandfather was a member of the Japanese song class in Canan Presbyterian church for two years before he passed away in 2016. Because of my grandfather, the pastor and the teacher of the class allowed me to participate and attend classes.[18] Thus, my interlocutors understood me as my grandfather's grandchild.

[17] The lyrics of 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk). See appendix 1.
[18] When the teacher introduced me to the elders in the class, he said, "Do you remember grandfather Tai? She is his granddaughter, and she wants to study this class and Japanese songs, so please support her."

Some of them also established a relationship with me because of my family, the Tai family. My ancestors arrived in Pingtung city during the Qing dynasty and remained rooted in this small city for generations, so some of the attendees knew my relatives. Some elders asked me if I knew their friends or colleagues whose last names were also Tai, and most of the people they asked about were indeed my relatives. Thus, they treated me like their granddaughter or a nice young girl who had an established relationship with them.[19]

Since they had a strong relationship with my grandfather and my family, I usually started the conversation with the story of my grandfather and asked for their opinions and experience. My grandfather's story and his interactions with me always evoked elders' response. Thus, in this research, I want to start from my grandfather's story.

First, I study how my grandfather recalled memories, including what he remembered and he what he forgot or ignored. Wydra writes that recollection works to collect oneself as a unity, and this process of recollection not only includes concentration but also retrieval and renewal; furthermore, this retrieval often occurs through assembling fractured lives, accepting forgetting, and distorting memories (Wydra 2018: 24). I also have to admit, this memory of my grandfather is also a recollection of mine, that was already filtered as my generational time and interpretation.

My grandfather, who was born in 1926 and received a Japanese education until middle school, loved to sing Japanese songs, especially children's songs. He collected

[19] One time, a 92-year-old grandfather came to tell me that his father was a very close friend of my great grandfather. He even knew how many wives my great grandfather had, which I never knew before. He knew my family history more than I did.

Japanese music videos, and his favorite one was the collection of children's songs played by Sanrio characters that he bought from Japan. He loved Japanese culture so much. He traveled to Japan every year, and he loved to plant *sakura* trees in places he thought were special to him.

Before he began attending the Japanese song class, he always sang songs by himself in his room with the old video player because other family members were not interested in them, and my grandmother left us when I was four years old. He always said he was lonely because his grandchildren could not speak Hokkien or Japanese with him. Even though my sister and I learned Japanese and those Japanese songs from kindergarten,[20] neither of us could communicate in Japanese or feel pleasure from these songs.[21] We usually left him alone after watching a few music videos. He would sit in his armchair, close his eyes, and wave his hands in front of his chest like dancing *Bon Odori.*[22] He always played the video very loudly because he could barely hear. He sang out of tune, and his breath was not long enough to finish a sentence. He sang very loud, but he sang alone.

My grandfather joined the Japanese song class because of Teacher Lee. One day in 2014, Teacher Lee, who was a classmate of my father in elementary school, saw my

[20] The reason that my sister and I learned Japanese during kindergarten had nothing to do with my grandfather's story. The kindergarten I attended was a bilingual kindergarten which taught English and Japanese, and it was the only kindergarten which did not use Mandarin to teach foreign languages. My mother wanted us to learn English in an English-speaking environment, so she sent us to that kindergarten. My mother once told us another reason of letting us learn Japanese. She said, "I want you to understand your enemy, so you can defeat them in case they wanted to colonize or invade us again!" She saw Japan as an invader of China because she learned the history from a Chinese perspective education. However, when I mentioned this memory with her while I was doing this research, she said she never said that.

[21] We only learned and sang Japanese children songs during our kindergarten years, so we forgot most of those songs.

[22] A Japanese traditional dance people will dance in *Obon* festivals.

grandfather hanging around in the neighborhood, so he asked my grandfather if he wanted to join the class. My grandfather accepted the invitation, and after he joined, every Wednesday and Friday became the days my grandfather looked forward to the most. The Japanese song class gave him a chance to alleviate his loneliness by making new friends with other attendees who shared similar childhood memories.

I remember, one day my sister told me on the phone that my grandfather reviewed songs after class, just like a student. For his 90th birthday party, a group of his classmates came to my house and celebrated by singing Japanese songs. From the video clip, I saw my grandfather, sitting with his classmates, singing with his husky sound, sharing many songs that he had sung in his childhood (Video 1).[23]

Although Japanese culture and music were meaningful to my grandfather and he was already 19 years old when the Japanese left Taiwan in 1945, my grandfather never referred to himself as Japanese.[24] He barely told me his feelings about Japanese occupation and his interactions with Japanese people during occupation. He only told me three stories. The first one was that Japanese policemen were harsh and violent. The second was admiring the safe society that the strict Japanese governance created. He always said, "if you steal things, the Japanese will cut your hand!" (translated from Hokkien). The third one was that his Japanese friend gave him a *katana*[25] before leaving

[23] This video was about my grandfather singing 夕燒小燒 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) with his classmates. He was so concentrated on the music. This video was filmed by my mother.
[24] Other than identity change, another reason that he did not identify himself as Japanese was that his life during Japanese occupation was not full of happiness because of my great-grandfather's business failure. He always focused on the tough experiences of his family when I asked him his experiences during Japanese occupation.
[25] Japanese sword used by samurai.

Taiwan, but he did not share more about subsequent experiences with the katana and his friend. From these few stories, I only knew that he loved Japanese culture and had many happy memories with friends, while clearly knowing the violence of colonization at the same time.

While not identifying as Japanese, my grandfather's national identity simultaneously swung between Chinese and Taiwanese. After the four-decades-long dictatorship and Chinese assimilation of the ROC government, he believed that the future of Taiwan was union with China, and he also supported the KMT party. However, he barely identified himself as Chinese or Taiwanese.[26] In fact, he avoided all labels and kept silent about this topic, and the only political issue that he cared was the potential war between China and Taiwan. The only clear identification for him was as a person of Pingtung city. He had a great passion for Pingtung and wanted me and my siblings to stay in Pingtung. He always bragged about how great his family in Pingtung was, other big families in Pingtung, the anecdotes of Pingtung, and how hard he worked with his siblings to support the family again after his father's business failures. From his narration, I never heard him mention the political and historical context, nor any spiritual pain from identity changes. Although he never explained it, based on his controversial identity I believe that he put his story in a political vacuum because he did not want to let political memories pollute his childhood ones.

[26] I never heard him called himself as a Chinese or a Taiwanese. He was very careful about revealing any political stance that could potentially be interpreted as Taiwanese independence supporter. However, my parents insisted that he identified himself as Taiwanese, but was a practical Taiwanese who believe the unity with China was the only way to avoid war and earn profit.

Next, I will talk about how my grandfather's memory impacted me. I address the generativity, which is the concern for guiding the next generation, to show how my generation was impacted by these elders' generation (Wydra 2018: 10). My grandfather and I had a very similar preference for Japan, but my association was derived from mass media and his body performance. In fact, many people in my generation are familiar with Japanese cultures and products. When talking about the preference for Japanese culture in younger generations, Lee I-yun (Lee and Lee 2020) explains it as the result of generational embodied memories. Although the KMT party created a national historical memory to erase the memory of Japan and reconstruct the Chinese national identity in Taiwan's society, elders who experienced Japanese occupation still maintained their embodied memories of Japan. Lee argues that elders passed their embodied memories to their descendants. She interviewed people who were born between the late 1960s to the late 1980s about their perceptions of Japan. From the interviews, she discovered that elders' embodied memories had been inscribed in these younger generations' bodies via their daily lives. Lee also adds that the positive image of Japan is the result of the KMT dictatorship as well. While people are angry with the former KMT oppression, they tend to contrast life during Japanese occupation with life during the KMT dictatorship and believe life under Japanese occupation was better (Lee and Lee 2020: 153).

From my childhood, my grandfather left remnants of Japanese culture inscribed on my body and actions. For example, my grandfather required me to say いってきます(I am leaving!) and お帰り (I am back!) as a greeting when I left and returned home. I learned to eat *sashimi* since I was in kindergarten because he ate sashimi every week.

Sushi was for breakfast every weekend. The Japanese culture in my daily life was also strengthened by mass media.[27] I was born in 1991, and the 1990s were also the time when Japanese popular culture went viral in Taiwan (Lee and Lee 2020:183). My childhood was filled with Japanese anime, comics, drama, and popular music. It is not too exaggerating to say that these Japanese cultural products profoundly shaped my identity.

About generativity, the concern for guiding the next generation, Wydra further writes, "what later generations may consider "memory" is, from the viewpoint of contemporaries, an obligation, a readiness for action, and eventually, a responsibility" (Wydra 2018: 9). I want to emphasize that the "viewpoint of contemporaries" from the younger generation will not only cause the results that Wydra listed, but also impact intergenerational relationships. This idea is also tied to Wydra's idea of in-betweenness, that people from different generations will have different interpretations of memory depending on their generational relationship. My memories about Japan and my grandfather reflect Lee I-yun's argument about bodily memory (Lee and Lee 2020); however, it does not answer how the haunting Chinese, Japanese, and Taiwanese memories impacted my grandfather's life, and how his struggle was also passed on to our relationship. While my grandfather and I both had strong preferences for Japanese culture, my experience of Taiwanese local culture was totally different from my grandfather's. Since the local Taiwanese culture was oppressed by both the Japanese occupation and KMT dictatorship, my grandfather did not value his native culture even

[27] About the dissemination of Japanese cultural products, Koichi Iwabuchi provides a global view and deeper analysis in the article "Marketing 'Japan': Japanese Cultural Presence under a Global Gaze" (Iwabuchi 1998).

though he spoke his native language, Hokkien, every day. He did not speak Hokkien with me when I was a kid, and he also did not watch television programs spoken in Hokkien. He watched Mandarin language television channels.

Unlike my grandfather, I grew up in the post-dictatorship era, when the Chinese domination declined and local identity was revived. Although Chinese literature, history, and geography still dominated, local cultures and histories gradually became important in compulsory education. Meanwhile, as the Formosa Television started to broadcast in 1997, its Hokkien dramas soon became popular.[28] I remember that I sat in front of the television night after night to watch those dramas which demonstrated the Taiwanese Kong Fu gyms during the Qing dynasty and contemporary household lives in Taiwan.[29] However, my grandfather never watched these dramas with me.

The generational gap was not only caused by different cultural experiences and language barriers, but also by different senses of belonging. In my grandfather's life, he experienced three changes of identity, which were Japanese, Chinese, and Taiwanese. His identity was a result of the tensions between Japan, China, and Taiwan. While my generation grew up with an increasingly Taiwanese identity, he never understood what his grandchildren were searching for, and we did not know how he was identifying himself.

[28] Formosa Television is the television channel that was established in 1997 (Chen 2001: 4). It focuses on local Taiwanese culture and mainly broadcasts in Hokkien. It produces many Hokkien-speaking dramas which portrayed Taiwanese history and Taiwanese family lives, and attracted many audiences, including both Hokkien speakers and non-Hokkien speakers.

[29] I still could not speak Hokkien. I was watching the Mandarin captions instead of listening to Hokkien.

After the Sunflower Movement in 2014, Taiwanese identity strengthened amongst the younger generations. The oppressed experiences and trauma of these elders during the KMT dictatorship were highlighted as one of the reasons to advocate for independence of Taiwan. In contrast to the political fervor amongst the younger generations, many elders remained silent and avoided political issues. My grandfather was one of the silent elders, and I was one of the noisy youths. The differences between our political stances often caused conflict between us. He refused to answer any of my inquiries about politics and stopped me when I brought up these issues in conversation. He worried that my political stance would cause trouble. I was confused because he loved Japanese memories, but he refused to see how the dictatorship cruelly devalued him and distanced him from the cultures he grown up with, Japanese and Hokkien.

During 2014, the same year he attended the Japanese song class, I kept hearing my parents and sisters tell me how hard he worked on singing Japanese songs. He usually reviewed the song he learned from class, and never missed any class before he stopped going to the class because of his vision loss. My mother told me that Wednesday and Friday were his favorite days because he could make friends with the elders who shared the same current health conditions and the past cultural background. Teacher Lee also told me he knew my grandfather's political stance, so he avoided discussing politics with my grandfather. Teacher Lee and other elders also did not share political stances in class because many elders possessed different stances. After joining the class, my grandfather became more energetic because there were many elders who were older than him and were still active in class. This gave him more confidence despite his health condition.

Thus, this class was a space occupied by his childhood music, childhood language, and people with similar memories that avoided openly political discussions about the present. In this place, my grandfather was not only healed from loneliness and pain of his health conditions, but it also let him forget the conflicts of his identities and his political differences with his sometimes-impertinent grandchild.

Asylum, Memories, and Identities

In this research, I am in conversation with music therapy, memory studies, and post-colonial studies. I use Tia DeNora's concepts of "music as asylum" (DeNora 2013b: 262) and "crafting of self" (ibid.: 274) to argue that this Japanese song class is an asylum for elders to craft themselves amongst complicated national, historical and cultural identities. For DeNora, asylum is not merely a physical space but rather a conceptual one. Asylum consists of "situations, moments or environments that, albeit fleetingly, permit individuals to flourish, to have respite from a troubling world and to have space that can be appropriated for self-development" (ibid.: 262). To "flourish" is defined as the ability to distance away the pain and to feel creative, engaged, and well.

DeNora provides two forms of asylum: the first furnishes wellness for people in asylum, and the second helps people distance themselves away from pain or oppression. DeNora also questions who, why, and how people seek everyday asylum, as well as its relation to wellbeing, which is crucial for examining the politics of everyday existence (DeNora 2013a: 136). Applying DeNora's concept of asylum to the Japanese song class,

I want to show the struggle and healing processes in common people's daily lives under historical memory construction.

Music therapists provide many reasons for the power of music in healing. First of all, people become creative while making music, and creativity means self-empowerment for patients. According to Marie Smyth, healing is a process of "the rediscovery and re-establishment of the creativity of 'victim'…Creativity is central to the process. The ability to recreate a positive role and sense of future is essentially an act of creativity, of turning misfortune to advantage—of alchemy" (Sutton 2002: 76). Music can also reconnect mind and body while patients often will separate the mind from body to escape the pain. Julie P. Sutton explains that while traumatic experiences disturb the sense of body, making music lets people feel their body and make the process of assimilating the emotional impact of traumatized experience accessible (ibid.: 35). Music constructs a time and space to keep people from pain. Tia DeNora claims that music can temporally and spatially construct an asylum because musical activity can occupy people's time and space physically via embodied practice, spatial relations, and senses of touch (DeNora 2013a: 3).

Singing is a useful tool for music therapy. Music therapist Diane Austin claims that music helps people create their true voice. She says that people have to control their muscles to make sounds while singing, and by restricting the intake and release of breath, people can relocate their feelings within their body (Sutton 2002: 235). Music therapy can closely relate to ethnomusicology since music therapy is culture-centered. In particular, ethnomusicologist Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg links the choral education

and its function in music therapy with applied ethnomusicology from her research about the church choir formed by Hopevale people in Australia (Reigersberg 2010). Similarly, Li Sicong and Jane E. Southcott studied how singing of older Chinese American found wellbeing from singing together (Sicong Li and Southcott 2012).

I find studies about music and memory useful in understanding this asylum because these studies state that music carries memories, and memory is constantly being constructed and strengthened through ongoing musical practice. Tia DeNora argues that people articulate music with memory and emotional experiences, and music is able to bring the associated memory and emotion from an individual to collective level (DeNora 2013a: 4). She says the "point is that music's power to 'soothe' derives not only from the musical 'stimulus' but from the ways in which [her interviewee] appropriates that music, the things she brings to it, the context in which it is set" (DeNora 2000:42). Thus, she claims this "process of appropriation is what consolidates and specifies music's force" (ibid.:43). Talking about collective memory, Jonathan Ritter uses "'sound of memory' to draw attention to the ways the past may be acoustically rendered and referenced in the present" (Ritter 2014: 220). He considers music is an open space that allows the historical narrative to be transformed and presented by the public consensus of the present and past (ibid.: 220). Halbwachs also considers music as the only art that can carry the constantly changing collective memory because it is "unconnected to anything stable and thus is recaptured only by constant re-creation" (Halbwachs 1980: 186).[30]

[30] About the topic of music and collective memory, Craig Robertson also says that sharing a same musical experience that embody collective memory can provide temporarily coherence and resilience in a community (Robertson 2019: 124).

Ethnomusicologist Joshua Pilzer compiles music, memory, and trauma in his work of music performance of Korean comfort women (Pilzer 2012). He emphasizes that the wounds from past experiences are present, so people need to be cured rather than constantly providing testimonies of violence. He focuses on the current music practice of three Korean comfort women who are essentialized into victims of Japanese colonialism for nationalistic purposes. Rather than asking the grandmothers to provide testimonies of the violent past, Pilzer listens to their music and performance to learn how they drew fantastic fictions or re-narrated the past to forget the trauma through music. His work reminds readers that these people are not dead in the past but still living in their daily lives. His argument can not only be applied to Koreans, but also in Taiwan because Taiwanese elders' pasts are emphasized while their current needs for healing are ignored.

I also draw upon Pilzer's field methods. Pilzer's research reminds me that instead of asking questions about the past violent memories, elders are more willing to talk about music and their present lives. Although many of my interlocutors did not deem themselves as victims or traumatized people, the asylum function of music and their experiences of war, colonialism, dictatorship, and cultural discrepancy can still manifest through music and performance. Thus, I applied Pilzer's approach in my fieldwork: I paid attention to the elders' performance and perception of music, and I deemed their memory as an explanation of their current lives.

Because the asylum and memory come into being through musical activities, I follow Deborah Wong's (2004) emphasis of bodily performance in ethnomusicology. In her research about the Asian American body, she claims that the body is socially

constructed by performing experience and histories. She writes, “the body, power, and knowledge are thus directly linked, and the ‘anatomy’ of power is not abstract at all, but rather material, situated in bodies” (ibid.: 163). Wong also addresses the healing function of bodily performance: “healing ritual, almost always performed, is directed toward physiological change—‘real’ change, often conceived as material change” (ibid.: 167) Her statement led me to understand the meaning of elders’ body performance and to see the past, present, and future in elder’s bodily performance.

Post-colonial studies in Taiwan also discuss the collective memory of Japanese occupation. In 2020, the collection *Empire in Taiwan II: The Historical Memory of Japanese Period* (Lee and Lee 2020) indicates that people’s memory of Japanese occupation is the interpretation of history, and this interpretation is constructed by the present (ibid.: 4). According to Lee Cheng-chi and Lee Yu-lin (2020), the memories of Japanese occupation were constructed by two different reinterpretations after World War II. The first was the de-colonial process to erase Japanese memory and reconstruct a postwar Chinese identity promoted by the KMT party, and this process caused the discrepancy between national Chinese memory and the collective memory of Japanese occupation among those elders. In the late 1980s, the second construction began with the post-colonial process which reviewed the history of both Japanese occupation and the KMT dictatorship with a Taiwanese-based perspective. Thus, the Japanese occupation became a positive symbol to contrast with the KMT dictatorship.

In agreement with these scholars, I find that the reconstruction and recollection of Japanese imperial history and memory explains the present Japanese song class. For

Taiwanese people who were children during the Japanese occupation, the later KMT dictatorship and its democratization since the late 1980s[31] reshaped their memories of Japan. This perspective also helps me to locate my study in the correct time frame. Since the elders' Japanese song classes could neither be classified as a product of Japanese occupation nor of the KMT dictatorship, this research cannot follow the usual classification of Japanese occupation, KMT dictatorship, and democratization era. The focus on collective memory provides this research with a suitable theoretical framework.

The attention to individual memory and its impact on collective memory in *Empire in Taiwan II* also provides me with a helpful angle for studying the Japanese song class. According to Lee Cheng-ji, along with the democratization starting from the late 1980s,[32] testimonies and oral history studies increased because of the growing attention to the 228 Uprising, the conflict evoked by the exploitation and unequal treatment from the ROC government that was covered up for four decades (Lee and Lee 2020: 281). The increased publication about individual memory after the late 1980s again reconstructed the public's collective memory of Japan and negative impression of the KMT. I find this connection between the individual and the collective useful because Japanese song class is the place to reconstruct the collective memory of Japanese occupation via sharing individual memories.[33]

[31] See footnote 10.
[32] See footnote 10.
[33] More studies about memory of Japanese occupation can read the collection edited by Shozawa Jun and Lin Chu-mei (2017), and the collection *Japanese Taiwan: Colonial Rule and its Contested Legacy* (Morris 2015), which discusses the legacy and memory of Japanese occupation and its impact to Taiwan after the World War II.

To speak about the constructions of collective memory of Japanese occupation, it is important to consider the triangulated identity raised by Leo T. S. Ching in his work *Becoming "Japanese"* (Ching 2001). In this Japanese song class, the contradictions and negotiations of a triangulated identity are omnipresent, and this negotiation is the key of constructing this asylum. Leo Ching provides my research with a theoretical foundation to address the power dynamics among identities of Taiwan, Japan, and China. He says, "the triangulation between colonial Taiwan, imperial Japan, and nationalist China formed the terrain where contradictory, conflicting, and complicitous desires and identities were projected, negotiated, and vanquished" (ibid.: 8). Ching points out that the identity of the Taiwanese people is constructed from their struggles in both imperialist Japan and nationalist China, especially when the Taiwanese people encountered identity dilemmas from both the Japanese and the Chinese. On the one hand, while Japanese colonizers intended to reshape the Taiwanese people into Japanese people during *kōminka kyōiku* (Japanized education)[34] for war purposes, Taiwanese and Japanese people were still unequal. On the other hand, the economic, political, cultural, and social distance between Taiwanese and Chinese people increased after fifty years of separation, not to mention the subsequent violence after the World-War II.

Thus, he emphasizes the investigation of both sides, imperial Japan and nationalist China, to understand the construction of Taiwanese identity. He says, "I am arguing that the emergence of a relational and related Taiwanese identity and its various political

[34] A series of assimilative movements which started in 1936 aimed to spiritually transform Taiwanese people into Japanese in order to convince them to sacrifice for Japan.

possibilities are conditioned and delimited by the specific and changing conditions of Japanese colonialism and Chinese nationalism" (Ching 2001: 56). This triangulation is still applicable nowadays, especially when the threats from the People's Republic of China increased in Taiwan; the tension between Taiwan and China strengthened this triangulation. In the Japanese song class, this triangulation is also omnipresent.[35]

The relationship between social class and the emergence of Taiwanese identity is also important in my research. Both Leo Ching and Liao Ping-hui (2006) point out that Taiwanese elites in the colonial era played a mediating role, and they were the group who desired and benefited from modernization brought from the colonizers. Ching says, "What is called for here, then, is no less than the 'cultural enlightenment of the island,' spearheaded by the colonial elite—a cultural-political perspective shared by most colonial intellectuals in the twentieth century" (Ching 2001: 85). Fong Shiaw-chian also presents that Japanese colonizers reduced the hegemony in their ruling by polarizing the common Taiwanese people as "Chinese" with its folk culture and Taiwanese elite as "moderns" after Japanization (Liao and Wang 2006: 179). The hegemony from Japanese rulers was obscured while colonized peoples were separated by social class.[36] Chen Pei-feng (2006) emphasizes more intellectual resistance toward Japanese rulers than previous researchers do while also discussing the yearning for modernization.[37] Chen shows that

[35] More study about the construction of Taiwanese identity can read Evan Dawley's *Becoming Taiwanese: Ethnogenesis in a Colonial City* (2019), which also talks about the impact from Japanese occupation and ROC epoch.

[36] Study about the relationship between local elites of colony and colonizer can also read Jean Gelman Taylor's (2009) work *The Social World of Batavia.*

[37] My grandfather's grandfather sent the first son of each of his child to receive a university education in Japan, including law, agriculture, medical, and business. Instead of saying his grandfather identified himself as a Japanese, it was more like a strategy to make sure the family could stay prosperous in the

many intellectuals resisted the Japanese occupation while receiving Japanese education. Thus, receiving Japanese education does not mean these intellectuals did not resist the colonizers.

While many of my interlocutors were not from elite families but mostly received Japanese education until middle school, Chen Pei-feng's (2006) concern about common people is more helpful in my research than the previous studies I mentioned above. He studies common Taiwanese people's motivations for receiving education and argues that instead of accepting assimilation, the common Taiwanese people received Japanese education because they were enthusiastic about modernization. In other words, they deemed Japanese modern education as a way to modernize this island. Therefore, though my interlocuters are upper-middle or middle class right now, they should not be viewed simply as elite class or be assumed as supporters of Japanese colonizers during Japanese occupation.

Japanese education allowed for a social class transition for my interlocutors from lower or middle class to middle and upper-middle class. Chen Pei-feng's research points out that elementary schools accepted many lower-class students and the rate of education during Japanese occupation was high.[38] Thus, it was not only the elites that could receive education, but a high rate of middle- and lower-class people also received education. Furthermore, education provided access to success during Japanese occupation, and many

future.

[38] Although education was not compulsory until 1943, the rate of Japanese fluent speakers in Taiwan was already 32.9% in 1936 (Chen 2006:395). The rate of Taiwanese receiving education became 71.17% in 1944 (ibid.: 422). My grandfather was one of the oldest elders in the Japanese song class, and he received education in the 1930s, so I use data from the 1930s.

people who graduated from elementary or higher education earned skill-based jobs or governmental jobs, such as teacher or police officer.

Last but not least, ethnomusicology in Taiwan paved a way for my research. Although Hokkien popular music has more attention from scholars (Chiu 2011; Liu 2009; Chen 2006; Huang 2009; Tsuruta 2008; Huang 2006; Wang 2008, 2013, 2004; Yang 1998; Chen 2008; Ng 2000; Fang 2000; Su 2010), studies about Japanese music are also rich and provide me a historical data (Chung 2017; Chen 2010; Sun 2017; Hsu 2002; Li 1990; Hsieh 2002; Yu 2007; Sun 1997; Tsu 2005; Kao 2009).[39] Nancy Guy's (2008) work about historical associations with colonization in a Hokkien song is unique in its focus on contemporary musical activity. Nancy Guy therefore provides me with a helpful perspective to understand how collective memory can be constructed through listening to music. She delineates that the Hokkien song, "U ia¯hoe 雨夜花" (A Flower in the Rainy Night) becomes a shared symbol of Taiwan's bitter history and ties the memory of the past to the present via being performed in political events of democratization. She claims that music is able to create feelings of unity when audiences sense the same memory in the song together. Unique in treating memory and Japanese songs, Sun Man-lin (2017) in

[39] These studies mainly concern two spheres: music in education and Japanese popular music. In musical education, scholars discuss the modernized music pedagogy brought from Japanese rulers and the musical function of constructing Japanese identity. For example, Liu Lin-yu (2005, 2006), Chao Hui-hsuan (2011) and Lai Mei-ling (2002) study music pedagogy and textbooks in Japanese musical education. Yu Pei-yun (2007) and Chung Ai (2017) focus on the Japanese children songs to see the children culture in Japanese occupation. How music became a part of military training in *kōminka kyōiku*, the Japanization policies announced in 1936 to prepare for the World-War-II, is also important in this field. More studies can read Hau Kai-ling and Kao Pei-hsiu's works (Hsu 2005; Kao 2009). Studies about military body can see Huang Jin-lin's work *War, Body, and Modernity* (2009). Studies about Japanese popular music in Japanese occupation are fewer; Chen Jian-ming (2010) in his master's thesis focuses on the dissemination of Japanese popular music in this epoch.

her master's thesis interviews two elders about their memories of Japanese songs in Japanese occupation. Her work provides my study a rich source of the songs they learned in their childhood.

In this section, I review literatures with which I am in conversation in my research. These studies are Tia DeNora's music as asylum and music therapy, the music and memory studies, Leo Ching's triangulated identity, Deborah Wong's bodily performance, and the historical music studies of Japanese and Hokkien music. In the next section, I will jump into the field site. I will first talk about the history of the field.

How the Story Starts

This Japanese song class is a response from elders to the history they experienced. In this section, I will trace back the history of this class, the Canan Presbyterian Church, and the denomination: the Presbyterian Church in the Taiwan General Assembly (PCT), to which the history provides a clear political label. Readers will understand why this Japanese song class appeared in this church by seeing the history of Canan Presbyterian Church, the struggle of political transformations that the denomination encountered, and the formation of the triangulated identity in this denomination. I want to note that this historical background cannot be applied to every Japanese song classes held by other organizations or by other Presbyterian Churches with different populations.

This Japanese song class started in July 1997 when the Canan Presbyterian Church was arranging their Father's Day celebration. The teacher of the Japanese song class, Lee, who was still a college music instructor, led congregants who were fathers to perform

Japanese songs in the celebration because they had Japanese educational experience. Those fathers, who were in their sixties, engaged in performing Japanese songs. Teacher Lee said, "these grandfathers usually looked very serious, but they were so relaxed while singing these songs. I never knew they enjoyed such music that much." This success also motivated those elders, also including female congregants, to sing more Japanese songs. Since Teacher Lee's mother was one of the elders and he was also deeply impacted by Japanese culture from his parents, Teacher Lee agreed to lead the Japanese song class after every Sunday service. No one knew this class would become so popular amongst the elders over the following decades. Although many of these original attendees passed away, this class retains its original purpose and keeps attracting elders to join.

The class began by accident, but it was not a coincidence. It was pre-determined by two causes. The first one is the social class of congregants, and the second is the history of this church and the PCT. First, congregants in the class were mainly upper-middle- or middle-class people who possessed a clear and relatively positive memory of Japanese culture. Similar to Chen Pei-feng's (2006) study which points out the relation between education and social-class, the original attendees, who were in their late eighties and nineties at the time I did fieldwork (during Summer of 2019), received Japanese education till middle school, so they still possessed the memory of Japanese songs. While most of them were in the same social class, some were from wealthy families, and some came from poverty but earned a stable job after receiving education. Since Teacher Lee did not understand Japanese at the beginning, the elders taught him both Japanese songs and Japanese.

The Japanese song class in Canan Presbyterian church was so successful that another Presbyterian church invited Teacher Lee to open another class there. However, this class was not as successful as the class in Canan Presbyterian Church. Teacher Lee told me this was because the Presbyterian church was located in an area where more laborers and lower-class congregants gathered. These congregants lived relatively shorter lives than elders in Canan Presbyterian Church, so many elders who experienced Japanese education passed away before the class started. The attendees in the class were mainly people born in post-war era who could not speak Japanese. Also, some elders who were born during the Japanese occupation did not have a chance to receive Japanese education.[40]

The history of the Canan Presbyterian Church explained why these congregants of the same social class gathered together. The Canan Presbyterian Church presides in the northern side of the Pingtung city, a fifteen minutes' walk from the oldest area of Pingtung city. During the Japanese occupation, upper-middle class people mainly lived in the oldest area in the city, and the oldest Presbyterian church in Pingtung, the Pingtung Presbyterian Church, is also in the area. As the city expanded in the ROC era, the area of Canan Presbyterian church became another upper-middle- and middle-class region. As more people converted to Christianity, the Presbyterian church in the old area could not afford the expanded size of congregations, so a wealthy and faithful doctor, Lo Mau-lin, and his wife donated land to plant a new Presbyterian church. The doctor also brought

[40] Although the Japanese government provided free additional Japanese education for Taiwanese who could not attend elementary schools (Chen 2006: 392), Teacher Lee still encountered some elders whose family did not send their children to receive the Japanese education.

many of his friends to the new church, and these friends were mostly from the upper-middle class. Many of them were teachers, civil servants, doctors, lawyers, and bankers. Some of these congregants had a relatively clear Taiwanese identity. For example, one of the congregants was a lawyer and former Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) politician, and he was also one of the directors of the Presbyterian Chang Jung University.

The history of the PCT explains why congregants with similar nostalgia gathered in the Canan Presbyterian Church. The PCT is the oldest and largest denomination in Taiwan, and it is also well known for its clear political stance (Rubinstein 2006: 110). In the 1970s and 80s, the PCT was a pusher for Taiwanese self-determination and democratization, and it served as the protector of the activists of anti-dictatorship (ibid.: 110). The political involvement in the history of the PCT has a great impact on their current churches, including the Canan Presbyterian Church. They had this political stance for two reasons: its close relationship with the local Taiwanese, and the oppressive experiences on the congregation from both the Japanese colonization and the KMT dictatorship.

The primary congregation of the Presbyterian church are local Taiwanese, who were residents in Taiwan before 1945 and the descendants of these residents. Before the Japanese occupation started in 1895, the Presbyterian denomination had already established itself in Taiwan. The history of the Presbyterian church in Taiwan began in 1865 when the English missionary Dr. James Laidlaw Maxwell MD founded the first church in a southern city in Taiwan and the Canadian missionary Dr. George Leslie MacKay established the Tamsui church in the Northern Taiwan in 1871. Their

congregants were mainly local Taiwanese people. The first ethnic group that these missionaries contacted was the Hokkien, the primary ethnic group in Taiwan, and gradually extended to other ethnic groups like Hakka and Indigenous people. Although there are many mainlanders[41] in this denomination nowadays, PCT still possessed a strong image of local Taiwanese in Taiwan.

The educational institution established by the Presbyterian church built a close relationship between this denomination and Taiwanese intellectuals. Presbyterian missionaries established middle schools and seminaries in Taiwan, and these educational institutions, while few in number, provided important access to higher education for Taiwanese people, who were restricted from extensive Western-style education in the Japanese occupation (Rubinstein 2006:111). Because Presbyterian missionaries helped the Japanese government to stabilize its governance in the beginning of its occupation, Japanese colonizers did not interfere with Presbyterian church and their institutions until the execution of a stricter Japanese assimilation policy before the World War II (Zha 2007: 44; Lai 1984: 103). Before the strict Japanization began in the pre-World War II era, the Japanese government did not force these academic institutions to use Japanese as the main language, so these institutions still offered theological courses taught in Romanized Chinese (Zha 2007: 44). These institutions provided Taiwanese people a

[41] Mainlander in here refers to people and their ancestor who came to Taiwan with the ROC government after 1949. In my interlocutors, they often called mainlanders "Chinese" or "mainlander." Since I also mention the current China and Chinese who are citizens of People's Republic of China, I use mainlander in this essay to avoid confusion.

chance to have Western-style education, and a Presbyterian middle school[42] had even been deemed as a school owned by Taiwanese people (ibid.: 82).

The oppression on congregations and the denomination from both the Japanese and KMT party bonded the Presbyterian church with local Taiwanese people. The oppression resulting from Japanese rulers became severe since the eve of the World War II. Before then, the relative freedom in Presbyterian churches ignited hope for Taiwanese intellectuals who sought self-identification, urging Presbyterian educational institutions to establish a cultural and identity asylum for Taiwanese people (ibid.: 44). However, the increasingly intense politics on the eve of WWII and the Western missionaries' compromise to the stricter Japanese government doused this ambition (Zha 2007; Huang 1988; Lai 1984). The *kōminka kyōiku* (Japanized education), which started in 1936, aimed to spiritually transform Taiwanese people into Japanese in order to convince them to sacrifice for Japan, so it strongly conflicted with Christian doctrine because the official religion in Japan was Shinto and Japan's emperor was believed to be the god of Shinto. The colonial government forced churches to hang the Emperor's photo, pray to Shinto gods, and speak Japanese (Huang 1988: 140; Zha 2007: 98). Hence, the colonial shadow was deeply cast in the minds of both the local Christians and new generations of the local pastors.

After World War II, the next regime, the Republic of China, and its ruling party, the KMT, did not give full freedom to the Presbyterian church either (Huang 1988: 298, Rubinstein 2006: 116). In the 1950s, while Presbyterian churches were able to operate

[42] Tainan Presbyterian Middle School.

independently through local people and organizations, the Canadian and British Presbyterian branches were merged together into the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan General Assembly (PCT). Native languages and Romanized Bibles again became the target of political oppression (Huang 1988: 298). Additionally, many intellectuals who were killed in the 228 Uprising had a close relationship with this denomination (Huang 1988: 189, Rubinstein 2006: 115). For example, Mosei Lin, the politician who "disappeared" in this massacre, was the son of a faculty member in Tainan Theological College and Seminary (Huang 1988: 189-190). Another figure who was killed, Chen Cheng-po, was a close friend of Wu Dong Huang, the first General Secretary of PCT (ibid.: 189).

This political oppression within the Presbyterian community entailed the church's political confrontations with the government in the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1971, the PCT had announced their political advocacy three times: "Public Statement of Our National Faith" in 1971, "Our Appeal" in 1975, and "A Declaration of Human Rights by the Presbyterian church on Taiwan" in 1977 (ibid.: 342). Even today, the Presbyterian church remains influential in politics, and this influence shapes congregants' political stances.[43]

The social class of congregants and the history of the Canan Presbyterian Church and the PCT explains why these elders with similar backgrounds gather together, but why do they want to recall their childhood? Given such a shared social class of the congregants

[43] About the transformation of PCT's political stance can also read the work from Zheng Mu-qun, *Transforming into Taiwan Nation: the Presbyterian Church's National Identity* (Zheng 2017).

and both histories of the Canan Presbyterian Church and PCT, how do these socio-political backgrounds prompt the elders to yearn for recalling their childhood?

Motivations: I Like it Here Because I Can Sing Japanese Songs

What are the elders seeking from this class? They are desiring for a chance to grow and escape from their pain. While most of the elders came to class for similar reasons, singing the songs from childhood, the music and this class always gave them more. For some elders, this Japanese song class became the last performing stage of their lives. For others, they gained energy and confidence in order to cope with their diminishing lives.

Grandmother Chen (pseudonym), who was in her 97-year-old, was the queen of this Japanese song class. She was the oldest elder in the class, but she often brought her recently-made *origami* to class and was always ready to dance with the music. Her great health condition and positive attitude inspired attendees because she made every elder believe that it was possible to live to 97 years old if they were as active as this grandmother. One day, she danced to 七つの子(*Nanatsunoko,* Seven Little Crows) (Appendix 2 and Photo 3),[44] a children's song that most of the elders could sing. She had shown her *origami* version of 七つの子 (*Nanatsunoko,* Seven Little Crows) (Video 2)[45]

[44] This song was composed by 野口雨情 (lyrics) and 本居長世 (melody) and released in 1921 (川崎洋 2003: 22–23). 野口雨情 was one of the key figure of the children song movement in Japan, which was started by poetries to oppose the rigid music in textbooks in Japan (Yu 2007: 116). This movement also impacted Taiwan through music education in Japanese education. According to Liu Lin-yu, songs from this movement were collected in music textbooks in Taiwan (Liu 2005: 175). 野口雨情 also visited Taiwan in 1927 and 1939 to advocate children songs for encouraging Japanese learning and the integration between Japan and Taiwan via music (Yu 2007: 108). It is interesting that while this movement in Japan was started from the resistance of music textbooks, this movement became popular in Taiwan by the advocation of music textbooks (Yu 2007: 116).

[45] This video is about the 97-year-old grandmother Chen showing her *origami* of seven crows. In the video,

to Teacher Lee during the break of the class, and Teacher Lee decided to share it with all of the attendees after the break. It was a big crow with seven little crows in a nest, representing the lyrics, which depict a conversation between the singer and the mother crow, who has seven chicks. To admire the grandmother's work, Teacher Lee invited everyone to sing the song. Suddenly, Grandmother Chen stepped to the front of the classroom and began to dance (Video 3).

Grandmother Chen danced as both the singer and the mother crow, visually embodying the lyrics. Her hand gestures followed the lyrics, and they repeated when the same lyrics were sung again. The singer asked, "烏なぜ啼くの(crow, why are you crying)?" and Grandmother Chen waved her hands like a bird's flying wings. She next put her hands in front of her mouth and mimicked playing a trumpet, which represented the crying. The crow replied, "烏は山 可愛い七つの子があるからよ(because I have seven cute kids in the mountain waiting for me to feed them)". Grandmother Chen's hands outlined the ridge of the mountain, and she lowered her arms, drawing circles to imitate a parent patting their child's head. The crow mother continued, "可愛 可愛と烏は啼くの (they are cute, they are cute, so does the crow cries)," and again, "可愛 可愛と啼くんだよ(they are cute, they are cute, the crow cries)" and each time the elders sang the word "cute," the grandmother patted a child's head.

a younger attendee saw that I was recording the grandmother's origami, so she firstly counted the number of chicks in the nest and then called grandmother to demonstrate the mother crow's flying wing.

Grandmother Chen took gentle steps forward when the students repeated “山の古巣へ行って見て御覧 (the seven chicks were in the old nest in the mountain, go and take a look).” She outlined the mountain ridge once again, and then her hand reached out in front of her when she took four steps and bent her waist slightly like a teacher looking at her students to portray “go and take a look.” She circled her fingers around in front of her eyes when the crow said her chicks had cute round eyes, then patted the chick’s head again: “丸い眼をしたいい子だよ(their eyes are round They are all good kids!).” When Teacher Lee asked the attendees to play the ocarina for the final verse, Grandmother Chen repeated her dance again, this time with more improvised gestures and steps. In addition to her hand gestures from before, she added delicate twists of the wrists, raising her left arm high while simultaneously reaching out her right arm. She also reached out her right leg to pose in the way that reminded me of the women’s roles I had seen in Chinese opera.

Grandmother Chen smiled through the entire dance, and other elders replied with big smiles and crazy applause; they were all very happy. I saw a hunched grandmother watching the dance and laughing loudly. Because of this music and dance, they almost forgot their illnesses and returned to their childhood. Teacher Lee used this performance as an opportunity to encourage elders. He reminded everyone, “She is almost 100 years old! She can still dance!” Teacher Lee always mentioned her age to encourage the rest of the elders to be confident in their health and keep exercising and socializing.

Indeed, these elders all knew that the shadows of death were still around them. One time, Grandmother Chen danced in the Father’s Day celebration ceremony, and all of the

elders called me to the front of the stage and asked me to film her dancing. They said, "Hurry up! Record this, this is a great chance to record. Maybe we will never see it again!" No one knew if this was their last time they would be able to attend class. A few months after I left the class, Grandmother Chen's children stopped her from attending the Japanese song class because they thought it was too dangerous for her to ride her bicycle to the church. While this class was filled of laugh and happiness, it still could not eliminate the underlying fears of illness and death. A grandmother often told me, "I might not be able to come here very soon. I can't see the notation and lyrics anymore." Possessing such an awareness of their future, these elders only wanted to focus on the happiness. Just like that moment when Grandmother Chen was dancing, all pain was banished from the asylum.

To forget pain and loneliness and to sing the childhood songs were these elders' main goals; however, their motivations were different due to their age. Next, I will analyze the different motivations of elders by their ages. Although all the participants were elders, I slowly began to understand that their thirty-year age range, from the youngest in their sixties to the oldest in their nineties, represented different historical strata and demographics. Although the primary attendees were congregants of Canan Presbyterian Church, and many of them were upper-middle or middle class in their eighties and nineties, there were other elders of a different age, social-class, religion, and motivation in the class. Since Japanese songs entertained many elders across a range of demographics, the service was open to non-Christian elders in the neighborhood as a form of ministry. The class even expanded from once a week to twice a week, replacing

the sermon during the Wednesday morning elders' fellowship. As time passed, more and more newcomers joined because of their enthusiasm for Japanese songs. Under this situation, the age range of the elders extended from the sixties to the nineties.

Those who were the original attendees were mainly Canan congregants, and they were in their late eighties and nineties while I was doing fieldwork. Most of the people in their nineties received a complete Japanese elementary education or even higher education, and many in their eighties did not speak Japanese but remembered the experience of Japanese occupation and World War II. Based on my interviews, the elders in their late eighties and nineties preferred the songs that were prevalent in their childhood or teenage years.

Some of them sang these songs at school during the Japanese occupation.[46] For example, an 88-year-old grandmother told me that her favorite song was 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) because she always sang this song on the way home from elementary school. The grandmother really loved this song. The elders not only sang Japanese songs but also played the melodies on ocarinas. This grandmother only joined the class for only a few years and her fingers were not nimble, so she was unable to play ocarina. However, I always saw her singing along with the ocarina version of 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) (Video 4).[47] Not coincidently, this was also the first song that the elders performed at the Father's Day party thirty years ago.

[46] Music education in elementary education started in 1898, and music courses were required in elementary schools from 1898 to 1904. From 1904 to 1921, music courses were optional. In 1921, music courses were required at school again (Lai 2002: 39).
[47] This video is about the elders singing 夕焼小焼 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk) in the class.

Another ninety-two-year-old grandmother said that these songs reminded her of school and her best friends at that time, and she loved the children's song 月の沙漠[48] (*Tsuki no Sabaku*; Desert under the Moonlight) (Appendix 3 and Photo 4). I also found that a few of the elders who were in their nineties spoke Japanese with each other in the class. When I asked a grandfather why he came to the class, he leaned forward and stared at me like I asked a foolish question and then told me in Hokkien "Of course, I like it here! I am a congregant here, and I can sing Japanese song and speak Japanese here!"

The class also provided some elders of the same age a chance to "go to school," especially the grandmothers who did not have the chance to receive education in childhood because female children usually had to leave schools when families could not afford education for all their children. Two grandmothers told me that they did not receive Japanese education because their families could afford neither Japanese nor ROC compulsory education.[49] Both in their nineties, they had been congregants in this church for a long time before the class was established, and they actively attended many different community lessons the church hosted.

One grandmother told me, "I am happy to be able to learn in this class; it is good enough to have chance to learn." Another 91-year-old grandmother was a great student. Although her fingers were too weak to write, she still asked younger elders to take notes for her. One time during the break, she called me to her seat and asked me for the English

[48] This song was composed by 加藤まさお and 佐々木すぐる and released in 1923 (川崎洋 2003: 170–71).

[49] Many families which could not afford education for all of their children would first give up their daughter's education to pay for son's education. My grandmother was one of these girls.

pronunciation for the hymn we had just learned, “Everybody Ought to Know.” Her mouth was quivering, but she still tried hard to pronounce “everybody” with me. This song class was not a place for these women to recall their memories during Japanese occupation; instead, it was a place for them to compensate for the education they had not received. They did not possess rich memories of Japanese culture and the Japanese language; instead, their memories of Japanese occupation were mainly of their family lives and the war. Furthermore, Japanese for them was not a trigger for recalling beautiful memories from childhood, but a new “knowledge” that they did not have a chance to learn until now.

Most elders in their seventies and early eighties had different backgrounds and reasons for attending the class. Unlike those in their late eighties and nineties who were mainly congregants of the church, many in their seventies and early eighties were mostly non-congregants of Canan Presbyterian Church or non-Christians. The social class of these elders was also different: those in their nineties and late eighties remained upper-middle class, but the social classes of those in their seventies and sixties were more diverse. With regards to their motivation, I find that these elders’ motivation to join the class resonates with Lee I-yun’s idea of the transferring bodily memory. Elders in this age range did not receive Japanese education, but rather they remembered the Japanese occupation only through the memories of their parents, relatives, or teachers. The reasons for these non-Japanese speakers and non-congregants to join the class was the memory of their parents, their interest in singing, or their love for Japanese songs.

Compared with elders in their eighties and nineties who wanted to return to a time they had experienced, these elders understood Japanese culture as something for which they yearned but never experienced. Sometimes this yearning derived from missing family members or teachers. A grandmother in her seventies did not receive Japanese education; however, she said her mother always sang Japanese songs to her. She always treated a Grandmother Chen like her mother. When Grandmother Chen sang or danced in the classroom, she would accompany her and said, "my mother always danced when she sang!" Another grandfather told me that his elementary school teacher always sang Japanese songs at student reunion parties.

Some of these elders possessed a clear negative opinion toward the KMT dictatorship and positively remembered the Japanese occupation. A grandfather in his seventies did not hesitate to tell me his negative thoughts about the KMT. He also had a positive image of Japanese occupation. During my initial conversation with him, the first thing he told me was his Japanese name. He did not possess many memories about Japanese occupation because he was born on the eve of the World War II, but he believed that life during Japanese occupation was better.

In addition to the elders who attended the class in memory of family members or teachers, there was a group of elders who came because they loved to sing, and they were attracted by the Hokkien-language covers of Japanese *enka*.[50] group of grandmothers were all members of a choir that was formed by retired elementary school teachers.

[50] A sentimental musical genre in Japan, which usually being associated with traditional and authentic Japanese musical expression (Mitsui 2014: 75). Wajima Yusuke (2018) and Christine R. Yano (Yano 2003) also provide a deep analysis of the post war history of *enka* and its association with nationalism. About the Hokkien language covered Japanese *enka*, please see footnote 51.

Teacher Lee told me that they came to this class because their choir stopped gathering, and they trusted the quality and environment of this song class because it was formed by a church. While these students were not congregants of this church, they were all Christians.

Because many post-war Hokkien songs borrowed melodies and lyrics from *enka* to express local Taiwanese people' sense of loss in the urbanization and modernization during the 1950s and 60s (Chen 2008), these Hokkien-language covers of Japanese *enka* rooted Japanese melodies in the memories of elders who were younger than eighty.[51] A younger grandfather in his early seventies joined the class because he loved to sing Hokkien karaoke and fell in love with the old Japanese melodies. He showed me a long list of the songs he liked and said: "The melody of old Japanese songs is literally better than Mandarin popular music!" (Photo 5) A younger grandmother often told everyone that she had collected ten different instruments and loved to sing. She was Catholic, but she was not impacted by the music in Catholic church because that music was written in Indigenous styles and the singing was in Mandarin because the congregants in that church were mainly Indigenous people and mainlanders.

Lastly, the participants in their sixties had very little Japanese nostalgia. Many of them were still working so they did not come to the class very often. People in this age

[51] *Enka* was widely covered into Hokkien in the 1950s and 1960s. Mandarin also covered *enka* songs in the 1960s, but Hokkien and Mandarin covered *enka* songs were different in their lyrical contents and social contexts. Hokkien's choice of covering *enka* was a resistance against the Mandarin imposed as "national language," and *enka* in the 1990s were discovered as a music expressing the resistance and the "Taiwanness" (Chen 2008; Wajima 2018: The third page of introduction). About the Japanese impact in post-war Taiwanese popular music, including *enka*, can read *Modern Song: Chi Lu-Shyia and Taiwanese Ballad's Era* from Shi C.S. Stone (2014).

grew up in the 1950s, and their parents were gradually adopting Chinese culture, so the Japanese experience was more distant from them than for people in their seventies. They only learned Japanese culture via their parents and teachers, so only a few who loved to sing joined. Many Canan congregants who were currently in their sixties or almost that old chose to participate in another small group instead of joining the elder fellowship to sing Japanese songs.

One exception was Teacher Lee, who was 65 in 2019. I will discuss his guiding role in the class in more detail in the next section, which focuses on a day in the Japanese song class. He loved these elders and yearned for Japanese culture. His parents, who both received Japanese education, deeply impacted his perception of Japanese culture. His disappointment for missing the chance to study music in Japan also strengthened his enthusiasm for Japan, and his interactions with other elders in the church and class shaped his historical memory of Japan. Furthermore, his mother was his original motivation for holding the class. His mother was one of the first members of this class, and she was also a long-term congregant of Canan Presbyterian Church. To make his mother happy and increase her wellbeing, which later became a sense of mission to bring happiness to elders who had similar backgrounds, Teacher Lee continued leading this class for decades. His sorrow of missing the chance to study in Japan, his enthusiasm of Japanese culture, his love to his mother, and his mission to serve elders, were all reflected in his efforts in this class.

Although the congregants, who came from various ages and social classes, had different experiences under the Japanese occupation, they shared a positive image for this

colonial past that elevated it in their memories because it was the inverse of the KMT dictatorship. The social changes and rapidly shifting politics after the Japanese occupation had increased the loneliness in their lives, making their happiness of childhood more valuable. This sadness could be the experience of World-War II, the ceased Japanese life, the missing education, or the negative experience of the KMT dictatorship, and these reasons all led the Taiwanese toward the direction of triangulation. Thus, after revealing the motivations, I want to ask in the next section, how did they construct a space to fulfill their desires for Japanese memories?

Sounds and Scenes of the Asylum: A Day in the Japanese Song Class

In the previous section, I explained why elders wanted to sing Japanese songs. Now, I will delineate how the Japanese song class looked and sounded and will demonstrate how they constructed the asylum to immerse themselves in childhood memories. I theorized the construction of the Taiwan-Japan-China triangulation raised by Leo Ching and Deborah Wong's idea of the constructed body through performance because the tensions between these three cultures was embedded in the space, music, bodies, and language. In order to immerse readers into this musical context, I will present a chronological ethnography of one day in the Japanese class.

I did my fieldwork during the summer of 2019, and it is necessary to explain the political atmosphere at this time, as political tensions in Taiwan intensified due to the upcoming 2020 presidential election. President Tsai Ing-wen and the DPP - known for its emphasis on local Taiwanese culture and its political opposition of the KMT-imposed

Chineseness - tried to increase their approval rating after their disastrous loss in the municipal elections in 2018. In July 2019, the presidential candidate of the KMT party, Han Kuo-yu, called for revaluing Chineseness and the Republic of China in his campaign slogan, to compete with President Tsai. Meanwhile, as the Hong Kong Protests that had started in June became more intense in July and August, Taiwanese people became anxious as China's president, Xi Jingping, announced that he would employ his military power to unify Taiwan if necessary, on January 1, 2019. The conflict between Chinese and Taiwanese identities intensified with these political events, which made the summer in Taiwan stressful and uneasy. Society was divided by this political polarization, and domestic conflicts increased because many middle-age people supported Han Kuo-yu, while many younger people aligned with Tsai's policies.

To avoid any political conflicts in the church, the elders and Teacher Lee seldom discussed any political issues in class, maintaining the mental asylum for people with any political stance. Additionally, many elders tended to keep silent about politics, especially in public, due to the impact of censorship during the KMT dictatorship. However, I still heard some keywords related to the presidential election or Hong Kong protests in their conversations.

During this hot and anxious summer, at 8:50 am every Wednesday and Friday, many scooters and cars would squeeze onto the narrow and quiet street in front of the Canan Presbyterian Church. Younger elders would chat with each other while holding on to their scooters in the parking lot. Older elders got out of their cars with the help of church staff and walked with small, slow steps into the classroom, a small sanctuary adjacent to

the pastor's office. The bright white fluorescent lamp, the tiny space for each seat, the metal folding chairs, the long desk, and the wall full of elders' paintings, combined with those energetic and excited elders, created a scene that was exactly the same as in elementary school. Teacher Lee and the piano Accompanist Chen, who was Teacher Lee's piano student and just finished his undergraduate degree in Japanese, were also in the classroom preparing for the lessons. Accompanist Chen sat in front at the piano and practiced songs from the textbook while many elders surrounded Lee, asking administrative or musical questions. Other elders were busily chatting with one another, and they usually sat in the same spot and talked with other elders nearby. Everyone was speaking Hokkien except for a few elders in their nineties who conversed in Japanese. Speaking their native language, they seemed joyful in their asylum—a utopian classroom of their childhood devoid of politics, loneliness, illness, and family issues.

At 9 am, Deacon Wang rang the bell to remind the elders that the class was going to start. Teacher Lee asked Accompanist Chen to play a song they had already practiced for many times. These elders also sang this song in Hokkien, but the Hokkien lyrics were totally different from its Japanese version. Since this class also has a ministry function, Deacon Lee borrowed lyrics from the hymnbook published by the PCT to rewrite Christian Hokkien lyrics for each song (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan 2009) (Photo 6 and 7). They usually sang the same song several times, following the typical singing sequence— cypher notation, Japanese lyrics, Hokkien lyrics, and ocarina.[52]

[52] The ocarina pedagogy in this class originated from a moment when he saw a DDP politician playing ocarina in television, and he decided to use this instrument to train elders' finger muscles.

The pieces sung in this class were mainly old Japanese songs from textbooks, edited by the Teacher Lee and the church's Deacon Lee. They had edited fourteen textbooks (Lee and Lee 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019),[53] including old children's songs, military songs, old *enka*, and composed Taiwanese songs; English and Mandarin hymns were uncommon in this class. They picked songs based on the publication date of the song, melodies, or lyrical content, and Deacon Lee chose Hokkien lyrics from hymn books to put to the new melody. While knowing most of the elders enjoyed Japanese lyrics more, Teacher Lee and Deacon Lee used Hokkien lyrics to sing their faith to God and pass the Christian message to non-congregants. In fact, many non-Christian congregants were touched by Hokkien Christian lyrics as well.

When the elders started to sing, it was hard to stop them. Teacher Lee called out the next song immediately after they finished the previous one. Elders were so concentrated despite the discomfort their bodies had from sitting on the metal folding chairs. Some of them squinted their farsighted eyes in order to read the textbook clearly, and some even needed the help of book holders in order to see the text clearly or assuage the pain in their necks (Photo 8). A grandmother who always sat in her wheelchair would try her best to lean herself on the table and hold the textbook. Those that could not play the ocarina continued to sing aloud. No matter how bad their health conditions were, the elders possessed endless energy in singing. None of them left early or even moved from their seats. According to their physical demeanor before the class, it was hard to believe that these elders could sit in the class for three hours. The first half of the class usually lasted

[53] The class only used volume 11 to 14 while I was in the field.

around ninety minutes, but none of the elders ever said they were tired. Other than their physical appearance and their wheelchairs, these elders were just like any other energetic elementary students.

Teacher Lee treated them like children as well. He knew that the elders liked to be treated as kids that felt cared for. He raised his tone when talking in class, and he extended the rhymes to make himself sound like he was talking to little children (Video 5).[54] He called the elders "kids" and referred to himself as "teacher" when he admired them or needed their attention, but he switched to calling them "grandfather" and "grandmother" when he inquired about history or language. Through these utterances, he made the elders feel protected like a child but still maintained their dignity of being elders.

Teacher Lee wanted to provide space for elders to forget the pain and sorrow that existed outside of the class because he knew that these elders suffered from loneliness, missed their friends and family members, and worried about their health conditions. Thus, the mission for Teacher Lee became to give elders a short break from this pain. Understanding that the elders missed their childhood so much, he cautiously chose the conversation topics. During the class, he avoided any subjects that would evoke potential depression for the elders, such as disease, death, family struggles, loneliness, financial

[54] This video wants to show Teacher Lee's tone when he was teaching these elders. His tone always raised high and dramatic to attract these elders' attention and to let the elders who lost hearing to hear his voice. This tone and volume sounded like he was teaching little children. He also liked to ask questions, such as "好不好(Is it good)?", "可以嗎 (Is it okay)?"with his raising tone to attract elders to respond him.

troubles, and political issues. Instead, he kept conversations about Japan, childhood, and Pingtung in order to construct the asylum.

Teacher Lee always connected the lyrical content and background of the songs with their childhood experience, Japanese culture, or local news, because these were things related to happiness and distanced away from the pain of reality. For example, when he taught 散りゆく花 (*Chiriyukuhana,* Fragmented Flower) (Appendix 4 and Photo 9),[55] a song portraying women's loneliness in waiting for their lovers to return home from war, he mentioned that this song was inspired by many women's stories in World War II.[56]

While he often mentioned World War II, he seldom addressed politics and traumatic experiences; he always switched the focus to their childhood experiences or memories with families. For instance, he once asked a 92-year-old grandmother what she usually ate during the war, and the grandmother happily told everyone about the vegetables her parents usually cooked for her. Although she had not received education, she was the food expert in class. Another time, he narrated people's resiliency to protect their families during the war through a story that emphasized the power of normal people. He always talked about these stories as if they were events that had happened centuries ago. Though

[55] This song is originally composed in Hokkien 碎心花. The melody was composed by 鄧雨賢(Deng Yu-xian) and the lyric was written by 周添旺 (Zhou Tian-wang). This Japanese song class sang its Japanese cover version. The original Hokkien lyric was not collected in the textbook. The Hokkien lyric in the textbook is written by a congregant who is in his eighties in another city, Kaohsiung. The information of the Japanese version is very rare. I only found this song mentioned in a blog which shows that this song was covered in three Japanese versions 散りゆく花, 哀しき夜の花, and 悲しき夜の花 produced in Taiwan (一花一木一世界 :: 隨意窩 Xuite 日誌" 2018). 散りゆく花 is one of them. I find the version 哀しき夜の花 sung by 王幸玲(Wang Shing-ling), released by Lucky Record in 1969 ("王幸玲, 陳澤斌, 幸福男聲合唱團 - 懷かしい台湾のメロデー" n.d.).

[56] The original Hokkien lyric was not related to the war. The original lyric was about a girl being cheated and abandoned by her partner (Chen 2005: 80). The Hokkien Christian lyric of this song was written by Cheng Ching Yao, an 85-year-old congregant in another city, Kaohsiung.

most of the elders looked calm throughout these retellings, I noticed a grandmother who was in her seventies quickly wipe her eyes.

Even though Teacher Lee avoided mentioning the war in conversations, military songs were popular among elders. While we did not sing these military songs in the class during the summer 2019, Teacher Lee told me he did not hesitate to teach military songs because those songs were elders' favorites. In fact, they even performed military songs when they were invited to an annual ceremony memorializing a Japanese military doctor who donated his books to Pingtung county. He acknowledged that there might be some elders who did not prefer military songs, but he said that most of the elders loved them. He did not even need to teach the elders how to sing them because these they already knew them. He told me, "they had to sing these military songs every day, so all of them remember the song. At the beginning, they even broke into tears when they were singing, because those songs reminded them their childhood." Even though they had been forced to sing these songs as children, as elders, they found joy in re-remembering the past.

The first half of the class usually ended at 10:30 am. During the ten-minute break, some younger elders would hold older elders' arms and help them to the restroom, and others walked around the classroom to chat. A few elders surrounded Teacher Lee or the Accompanist Chen to ask musical questions. Sometimes the piano Accompanist Chen would join these elders and help some translate Japanese into Hokkien for elders who could not speak Japanese. The laughing sound along with Japanese and Hokkien filled in the entire space all the time.

Even during the break time, I still barely heard any Mandarin, which is the predominant language in Taiwan. While Hokkien and Japanese were spoken all the time in class, in the two months of my fieldwork, we only sang Mandarin lyrics two times and still sang along with Hokkien and Japanese lyrics. In fact, Mandarin had almost disappeared in this class, and also in the entire church, including the Sunday service. When I started to speak Mandarin to them, especially with my non-Hokkien accent, I was surprised by the sudden distance they showed me. I could feel how the sound of Mandarin disrupted the utopia and how Hokkien and Japanese brought them together. The tone and the rhythm of the languages, not to mention the content, evoked two totally different reactions.

Although it is unusual in Taiwan to not hear Mandarin, it is very common in this church because of its historical background. It is also very typical to hear Hokkien fill this space even though Hokkien is not as dominant as Mandarin outside of the church. What is unusual here is that these elders added Japanese into the space, putting Japanese in a prominent position. In Taiwan, to express a strong nostalgia for Japanese occupation is a sensitive topic. Although people usually admire Japanese culture and the infrastructures the Japanese left behind, clearly desiring the colonial time is controversial in the society. This reminiscence is critiqued by many people who strongly identify with their national Chinese identity and believe Japan was the invader of China. However, no matter what happened outside of the church, in this class, speaking and singing both Japanese and Hokkien strengthened the power of these elders to temporarily remove the constraints of Mandarin.

There was one other time I felt the linguistic exclusion between those elders and me. At one point, I asked a couple who were both in their nineties if they would agree to sign my IRB papers, and the grandfather was very interested in my university and my major and even said, “Wow! You are at the University of California; you must be smart!” Then he asked for a few minutes to read the agreement, so I left. After five minutes, I returned to their seats, and I quickly noticed he was mad. He said, “Miss Tai, sorry, we are not participating in your project, please don’t film or interview us.” I asked why, but he refused to answer. After the class ended, I went to the couple again and asked if they could tell me the reason. The grandfather refused to speak Hokkien, and he kept saying, 日本語をしゃべるか (Can you speak Japanese?) Although I understood his words, I was unable to reply to him in Japanese. I spoke Hokkien to answer, “I can understand Japanese, but I can’t speak it.” He then said, “日本語をしゃべなら教えます。” (If you speak Japanese, I will tell you.) then he switched to Hokkien, “I don’t talk to those who don’t speak Japanese.” I asked Teacher Lee why he responded this way, but he only told me the grandfather was a typical Japanese man, so he was stubborn and bad at explaining. I still did not get any answer from the grandfather and teacher. The only possible reason I could guess is that he was offended by the word “colonization” in the agreement to describe Japanese occupation because he always spoke Japanese in class.

Nevertheless, Japanese and Hokkien did not always dominate the elders’ minds. An 81-year-old grandfather even did not value Hokkien. He once told me that Hokkien should not be taught in compulsory school, and the school should teach more English to make children competitive in their future careers. Teacher Lee told me that this

grandfather liked to speak Mandarin but always gave up in a short time and turned back to his native language, Hokkien. Although many elders possessed both the positive Japanese image and negative image of the KMT dictatorship, some of the elders preferred the governance of the KMT while they still loved Japanese culture. My grandfather was one of them, and Teacher Lee always told me, "I didn't talk about politics with your grandfather because I knew we had different political stances, but he definitely loved Japan! Actually, no matter which party these elders support or how they identify, they don't have a negative image of Japan."

Japanese was not always the key to healing in this musical asylum. Some congregants who did not receive Japanese education only came to the class because it was their responsibility to participate in the fellowship, and the Christian Hokkien lyrics were more healing for them. An eighty-five-year-old grandfather fell asleep in every class. Even Deacon Lee, who handwrote every song in the collections, was not interested in Japanese culture because his only association with Japanese occupation was the nightmare of war. He preferred to sing the beautiful melodies with the Christian Hokkien lyrics he had found in hymn books. The 81-year-old grandfather I mentioned in the previous paragraph also shared with me that instead of Japanese lyrics, he thought Hokkien Christian lyrics impacted him more because he came here to honor the Lord, not to receive Japanese education.[57]

The bell rang, and it was time to go back to class. The Deacon Wang often extended the break time, so Teacher Lee always made fun of him and said, "Hey Wang Jin-ping,

[57] About his paradoxical opinion of Hokkien, I will address it deeply in page 71, 72, 73, and 74.

you are late again!" Deacon Wang's name was not Wang Jing-ping; in fact, Wang Jing-ping was the speaker of the Legislative Yuan[58] from the KMT party. Teacher Lee always called him Wang Jing-ping because the first two words of his name was Wang Jing. While elders and teacher Lee seldom talked about politics, yelling "Wang Jing Ping" became their favorite joke. To get the elder to laugh during class, Deacon Wang would turn to his friend, who was a silent and serious grandfather, and say, "Old Mr. Chen needs more time in restroom, right?" All the elders laughed louder. At the end of the break, elders started to walk back to their seats, but it usually took another five minutes for them to do it. The elders were more energetic now than during the first half of class. Conversations abounded throughout the room as they laughed and joked with one another, and Teacher Lee would sometimes share stories or news he had heard from attendees.

After this sharing time from the elders, Teacher Lee usually taught new songs in the second half of the class and spent more time explaining Japanese lyrics. Sometimes he would ask elders to add more information in the textbook, and many younger elders would write the information in older elders' textbooks for them. If the first half of class was a joyful karaoke time, the second half was a real music class. Teacher Lee usually spent more than thirty minutes teaching elders to sing melodies and understand the Japanese lyrics. For those elders in their nineties, this was their time to show off. A 92-year-old grandfather, who had stayed in Japan for decades as a pastor, was the Japanese

[58] Congress in Taiwan.

expert in the class. Teacher Lee often asked the pastor Japanese questions during the break time, and he sometimes would ask the pastor to explain lyrics in the class.

An explanation of lyrics also demonstrated the triangulated relationship with Mandarin, Hokkien, and Japanese. Since many elders were able to read Japanese *hiragana*[59] but unable to understand its meaning, Teacher Lee would write the *kanji*[60] of the word on the blackboard and explain it by its Mandarin pronunciation and meaning. This was practically the only moment when they used Mandarin. Although Hokkien traditionally also shared Chinese characters as written literature, many of these elders could not pronounce Chinese characters in Hokkien because of the Japanese and Chinese assimilative education. An 82-year-old grandfather told me that he did not know how to read the Hokkien lyrics written in Chinese characters in Hokkien. In fact, many elders were more familiar with reading Hokkien in Romanized words because this was the written literature used by Hokkien Bible.[61] One time, the 92-year-old pastor told me that he planned to criticize Hokkien congregants nowadays who used Chinese characters instead of Romanized words because, as he stated. “Romanized Hokkien is our tradition!”

After one more hour, the class ended with prayer. Elders slowly stood up, and church staff walked in to help the elders to taxis or their children’s cars. Certain younger elders would stay in the classroom to hang out with friends for a while, while other elders left

[59] Japanese traditional alphabet.
[60] Chinese characters. Japanese uses adapted Chinese characters.
[61] The foreign Presbyterian missionaries translated native languages by the Roman alphabet, including Hokkien (Rubinstein 2006).

the church within ten minutes of the end. A few minutes after all the elders departed, church staff closed the church building and left, and this Japanese space disappeared.

Never Say that Word Again!

In the previous section, I showed how the elders constructed a comfort zone by performing their identity and expressing their experiences through music and language. Their historical memory of Japanese occupation was constructed via navigation among the Taiwanese, Japanese, and Chinese identities, which resonates with Leo Ching's concept of the Taiwan-Japan-China triangulation. In this section, I will talk about the healing of this asylum. To begin, I want to provide another moment in this class that shows the protection and wellbeing provided by younger elders, because all of the comfort that elders gained from singing childhood music was supported by the protection and care from younger attendees. After that, I will focus on different pains and loneliness in order to address how this asylum heals specific issues.

To construct this asylum, not only Teacher Lee but also other younger congregants who were in their seventies and early eighties were very important. It was these people making this class into an elementary school classroom for elders to immerse themselves in their carefree childhood. While Teacher Lee was playing the role of teacher, these younger congregants were like nannies taking care of and protecting elders in their late eighties and nineties. They prepared lunches for attendees, took notes for older elders, and helped older elders to the restroom. Although they were also concentrating on singing, they were always ready to help other elders. They gained happiness through

helping and accompanying elders, and they treated these older elders like treasures, like kids.

One time, a heavy rain blocked some elders in the church after the class ended. A group of elders in their seventies were talking about how many instruments could they play. The 97-year-old grandmother Chen (Grandmother Chen; pseudonym) came to them and told them she also loved to learn new instruments and sing when she was young. A 70-year-old grandmother Lim (Lim; pseudonym) replied her, "I like your dance so much." Because Grandmother Chen lost most of her hearing, Lim needed to put her mouth in front of Grandmother Chen's ear and talk loudly. Grandmother Chen was happy, so she started to show how many songs and dances she knew.

Lim was so concentrated on Grandmother Chen's singing and dancing. Although Grandmother Chen only performed clips of each song, Lim followed every moment of her dance. Her eyes never left Grandmother Chen. When Grandmother Chen sang "かわいことりになって(be a cute bird)"[62] she pointed to her cheek with two forefingers to represent "cute" and opened her arms, waving them like bird wings. These movements were very childish for a seventy-year-old grandmother, but she still did those movements. Grandmother Chen sang "歌をうたえば靴が鳴る(when you sing a song, your shoes will make sound as well)," and the same trumpet movement appeared again before she pointed to her shoes. Suddenly she turned to Lim and gestured for her to follow a big

[62] Based on the lyric, I speculate that this song is a children's song "靴が鳴る". I asked the grandmother what she was singing, but she didn't give me an answer. Actually, she never answered my question because of her hearing. "靴が鳴る" was composed by 清水かつら(lyric) and 弘田龍太郎(melody) and released in 1919 (川崎洋 1998: 22–23). This song was not collected in the class's textbook volume 11 to 14, which the elders currently using.

move: she outlined a big circle to the sky with her arm to portray the next lyrics “晴れたみ空に(Under the sunny sky)” and suddenly she bent her waist to point to her shoes and take a heavy step with the lyrics “靴が鳴る(the shoes makes sound)”. Lim laughed heartily because of the big step.

Grandmother Chen sang so out of tune and rhythm that it was hard to identify the song. However, Lim did not really care about the accuracy of the song and the dance; instead, she only wanted to give Grandmother Chen more attention. She also treated Grandmother Chen like she was her child, and this was the way that these older elders felt protected and encouraged in this asylum. This reminds me of what the Teacher Lee said: “I treat them like kids because they like to be treated like kids. That makes them feel safe and carefree.” I think that Lim treated Grandmother Chen this way because Grandmother Chen reminded Lim of her mother, who had passed away. She told other younger elders nearby, “This grandmother is so cute! My mother also danced with Japanese old songs too!” Another time, I sent a video of my grandfather’s 90-year-old birthday party to Teacher Lee, and he told me, “I cried when I saw this video. This reminds me of the days your grandfather and my parents were still alive.” For older elders, they gained protection, and for younger elders, they remembered former times with their parents.

Next, I will discuss specific pain and loneliness and address how this asylum healed these elders. Because the elders were hard to interview when the questions involved politics and mentality, I will include the story of my grandfather, with whom I lived for 25 years and who always complained about his loneliness, to enrich my ethnography.

According to Tia DeNora (DeNora 2013a), asylum means a virtual or physical place providing people the space to reconstruct themselves and re-narrate the past in order to leave behind pain. I apply her theory and consider this class as an asylum for these elders. However, the elders did not deem this music class as therapy, so none of the elders mentioned trauma or pain. Rather than directly narrating the pain, they utilized particular behaviors, such as silence, and expressed complaints, such as loneliness and nostalgia, to cover the difficulties that they could not verbally articulate. These hardships included cultural discrepancies, abrupt socio-political changes, blurred identities, generational gaps, and language barriers, which all revealed the vestiges of colonization and dictatorship. From the ethnography with my grandfather and these elders, I want to discuss what constituted their pain and struggle and how they addressed this pain.

First, I want to talk about the elders' silence on politics and then talk about the avoidance of politics in this class. Some elders were careful about the politics, so they remained silent on political issues. I neither asked, nor did they share about the pain, but the silence revealed their pain. From 2014 to 2016, I kept asking my grandfather about the Japanese occupation, the KMT dictatorship, and the 228 Uprising, but he said he never thought about the event and only told me a few unimportant facts. Actually, he was terrified when I first asked these questions, and he reacted like he heard extremely rebellious words when I mentioned Taiwanese independence, because many people who advocated for Taiwanese independence were killed during the dictatorship. This calm and elegant old man suddenly stopped me and said "Never say that word again! They will send you to jail!" After that time, he became very cautious about any of my questions

related to the Japanese occupation and KMT dictatorship. He was persistent; in September 2015, he wanted me to record his personal history, and even in that condition, he reminded me again and again: “Don’t say you support Taiwanese independence!”

The elders demonstrated this same sensitivity and silence in the class. One time, I asked a 92-year-old grandmother about her song preferences and memories about music class in elementary school. She could not remember what she learned in music class; however, she told me whenever she sang Japanese songs in the class, she felt herself returning to the happy times she spent with her best friends at school. Since she seemed willing to share, I asked, “then of which times do you possess happy memories? The Japanese occupation or the time after war?” Her body suddenly distanced away from me and said, “no, I can’t tell you, I don’t talk about politics, don’t ask me.” Teacher Lee knew well about this silence and the elders’ political sensitivity, so he did not mentioned politics in class. Other elders, who did not hesitate to express their political stances, also avoided to talk about politics unless someone asked them political questions. Thus, this class not only provided the elders a place to immerse in the happiness of childhood, but also built a respectful space for these silent elders to avoid the politicized discussions of their descendants.

Speaking Hokkien and Japanese in class also healed the elders. Other than their silence, some other elders expressed their painful experiences through the refusal to engage in certain cultural practices, especially language. A 94-year-old grandmother who always sat beside me did not hesitate to share her negative opinions about China, because China equaled the KMT dictatorship for her. One time I asked her if she could speak

Mandarin, she said, “NO! I did not want to learn it because what those Chinese did was only bully us. My husband was a civil servant and he was forced to learn Mandarin, but I didn’t have to because I was a housewife.[63] Even my husband did not frequently speak Mandarin. His colleagues were all Taiwanese, so they spoke Hokkien in their office.”

While many of the elders still possessed the value and manner they learned from Japanese education, the elders could mourn the lost value from Japanese education together in this class. The elders’ nostalgia for Japanese experiences reflected the sense of loss from the political transformations. From those few elders who shared their political thoughts to me, I noticed a word they mentioned, “Japanese spirit,” which they defined as vision, order, friendliness, and punctuality. With the nostalgia of childhood memories, language, and lifestyle, these elders not only shared the same experience but also a similar persona and value that was fulfilled in the space, and this Japanese spirit was the value that they were sharing. Many of the elders missed this Japanese spirit, and they believed it was the KMT dictatorship that eliminated it.[64]

From a conversation with two elders, they felt the loss of the disappearing “Japanese spirit.” A 93-year-old grandfather said, “I remember in my childhood, we did not need to lock our door. Neighbors were all taking care of each other. People at that time were

[63] Grandmothers who were housewives could choose to learn Mandarin or not because they did not need to work with Chinese people. This grandmother and teacher Lee’s mother refused to learn Mandarin. My grandmother could not speak Mandarin either.

[64] In Japanese education, students needed to take *shushin* course, which taught manner, ethics, morality, loyalty and nationalism in order to cultivate “good person” and “good Japanese”. This course was the most important subject among other subjects. According to Chao Wan-yao’s study, *shushin* course was the most impressive course for elders (Chou 2001: 34). Tsai Chin-tang’s study also shows that *shushin* courses was elders’ favorite and many elders considered this course was useful for their lives (Tsai 2009: 16). Similar with my interview, Tsai’s interviewee told him that she thought Chinese education lacked this kind of moral education, so the society was chaotic (Tsai 2009: 22). About *shushin* courses in Japanese occupation, Chou Wan-yao (2001) and Tsai Chin-tang’s (2009) articles provide detailed studies.

more humble, elegant, and open-minded." A 94-year-old grandmother agreed: "Yes, people at that time were very innocent and polite. They were not like people today. There are a lot of immoral things happening right now that were forbidden during my childhood." I asked, "When and what happened to cause this spirit disappear?" The grandfather replied, "About 10 years after the war! People did not learn this spirit at schools anymore, so they did not pass the spirit to your (my) generation. If you had this spirit, there would not have so many people that believed the "Fa Da Cai (Make us rich in Mandarin)" campaign promoted by Han Kuo-yu (the KMT presidential candidate)!"

Teacher Lee, who was in his mid-sixties, also shared that his parents instilled the Japanese spirit in him but felt that it was lost in the younger generations because of the ROC-enforced Chinese culture. He said: "Look at these grandfathers and grandmothers! They never show up late to class, they always dress nice and formal! They will never wear a tank top in class!" I asked Teacher Lee once about his perspective of this nostalgia: "since they all miss the lost Japan a lot, what are they missing? Their childhood, the regime, or Japanese culture?" He said, "All of it. They love, so they miss. They love the past, and this love emerges from the comparison, the loss, and the bad things that happened right after Japanese left." The teacher did not indicate any particular event or objects that caused this discrepancy, but I know it was the oppression and terrors brought from the KMT dictatorship. This reminds me of a conversation with a friend whose grandparents were intellectuals during Japanese occupation. When she tried to explain why her grandfather only watched Japanese news and TV programs, and why she

loved Japanese culture so much, she told me, “Yes, the Japanese were colonizers, but the next one was even worse.”

This asylum also took care of the wound from World War II. While cherishing the Japanese spirit showed the elders’ nostalgia of Japanese occupation and their negative image of the KMT dictatorship, the elders still possessed the painful memory of Japanese occupation. The music also healed this pain. In class, we often sang a song called “雨中鳥 (Birds in Rain)”.[65] This is not a song composed by Japanese composers or famous Taiwanese composers; it was composed by Teacher Lee and a grandfather who passed away a few years ago. The grandfather, who was called “Grandfather Tu,” wrote the poem when he was enlisted into the army and sent to Hainan island, an island located on the southern side of China. During this uncertain and dangerous time, he did not know if he could ever go back to his home country, Taiwan, again, so he wrote this poem to express his hopelessness and nostalgia for home:[66]

鳥は雨降る日も　唄うよ　朗らかに

Birds keep singing cheerfully in endless raining days

歌は良いもの　君を誘うよ

Songs are good things to attract you

夢のくに　夢のくにへ

[65] This song does not have a Japanese title.
[66] For more on Taiwanese soldiers who were sent abroad during the World War II, see Chao Wan-yao’s article, “日本在臺軍事動員與臺灣人的海外參戰經驗（1937-1945）”(Chou 1995).

Go back to the land of dream (Photo 10)

Fortunately, grandfather Tu returned to Taiwan and lived a very long life until he passed away a few years ago. Before he joined the Japanese song class, he looked for someone to compose his poem into a song for a long time, but none of the composers that he asked agreed. After he found this place, he put all of his hope in Teacher Lee to ask him to compose the song for him. He was in his nineties at that time. Teacher Lee agreed and gave birth to this song in two weeks. Grandfather Tu was more than happy about the song, which relieved his painful memories from the war and fulfilled his dream. Because he thought he finally found an asylum for recalling childhood happiness in this church, he decided to convert to Christianity. The silence, the refusal behavior, the nostalgia, and the insistence of a dream were the elders' ways to address and deal the pain without talking about it.

Healing loneliness was an important purpose of this song class. Other than these experiences transparently connected with colonization and dictatorship, the loneliness that bothered elders the most was also derived from the traumatic political transformations. According to the previous examples, the memory construction was caused by the fear of the KMT dictatorship, the nostalgia for Japanese experiences, and war trauma, but these are not all. The pain was also loneliness, which was derived from language barriers, migration, and generational gaps.

To communicate with each other in native language could not only heal the pain from dictatorship, but also cure the loneliness of language barriers with family members.

With regards to language barriers, most of the elders had a hard time communicating with their grandchildren because they were not fluent in Mandarin. Teacher Lee also told me that many elders did not have family members to talk to in Hokkien. Due to the four decades-long Chinese assimilative policy that began in 1946, Hokkien and other dialects were prohibited in public spaces and were devalued as local, vulgar, and unofficial. Thus, many elders' children only spoke Hokkien to their parents but spoke Mandarin to their children. Take myself as an example: my parents seldom spoke Hokkien to me, so I did not know how to speak Hokkien at all. Even though I tried to practice Hokkien with my grandfather since high school, my Hokkien level was still insufficient to have deeper communication. None of my siblings could speak Hokkien either. I always heard my grandfather complaining that he could not understand what we were talking about and he always needed my parent's translation. Gradually, he participated in our family conversations less and less.

Loneliness from solitary living situations was another reason the church and Teacher Lee felt compelled to organize the class. This asylum, supported by the church, Teacher Lee, and younger elders, provided a protected and connected place for those solitary elders. Pingtung city was facing a severe problem of migration to other cities due to its economic crisis and lack of career opportunities. Many elders in the class were living by themselves or only with their partners because their children and grandchildren were not in town. When their friends passed away, they did not have many friends and rich social lives, which is to say that the church and this class could have been the only place for them to find company. Deacon Lee was one of the elders who lived by himself. He did

not have children and his wife was in a nursing home. Teacher Lee told me that he felt sorry for sending his wife to the nursing home, so he forced himself to focus on editing and transcribing textbooks of this class to relieve his sadness. For these elders, the church and this class were the only place for them to have conversation and community.

This loneliness also included a feeling of being abandoned by migrated family members, and this class was a place for them to forget their loneliness by showing off their accomplished descendants who lived abroad. Many elders suffered from loneliness because their children and grandchildren lived abroad, and their grandchildren could not even speak Mandarin. Every time after the class, while the elders were leaving the church, they asked me questions like, "Where do you live in the United States?" "What are you studying?" and most commonly, they all said, "One (or more) of my children (or grandchildren) also live(s) in the United States!" Some of them would also proudly shared that their child or grandchild was studying in an Ivy League or other famous university. By their understanding, Ivy Leagues were just like a high school in the next town and the United States was an adjacent country. Almost every elder had a relative or descendant living in the United States, and they were very proud of it even though many of them felt sad when they were unable to communicate with their English-speaking grandchildren. Every time I encountered these questions, I congratulated them that their descendants were very successful, and these elders would be very satisfied.

However, the pride for their grandchildren abroad was entangled with their loneliness and related to their pessimistic attitude towards their home. This class gave these elders an asylum to escape from loneliness and felt the protection from other elders

who were in a similar age with their child. A 95-year-old grandmother always came to me and told me how much her descendants who lived abroad had achieved. However, I heard that this grandmother lived with her daughter-in-law, but they did not get along with each other. The grandmother had to handle all of her living by herself. She always came to the church by bicycle alone and never talked about her current life.[67] One time when she tried to ride her bicycle in a rainy day, many younger elders asked her if she needed anyone to send her back. I ended up running back home and asking my father to drive her back because those younger elders were riding scooters. She kept using her high-pitched voice to reply loudly "ありがとう (thank you)" on the way to her home. When my father and me were trying to move her bicycle from the trunk, I saw a heavy bag of rice in the basket of her bike and I realized that she even needed to buy rice by herself.

The feelings of being left out can also be understood as a sense of being left in a hopeless country. At one point, an 81-year-old grandfather approached me and asked the same question about my school and life in the United States, and he said, "People like you never come back." Not waiting for my reply, he then said, "My brother migrated to Brazil, and life in that other country is much better than here; you can't find any hope here." The reaction of this 81-year-old grandfather included his loss of being left in

[67] Studies about memory and music in Chinese diaspora are rich. Li Sicong, and Jane E. Southcott (2012) studies elder Chinese Australians' singing activity. Yun Emily Wang (Y. E. Wang 2018) studies Chinese immigrants in Toronto, providing a close ethnography of a nursing home. She discusses the issue of filial piety. An important aspect that I didn't have chance to address in this research is the issue of filial piety between these elders and their grandchildren who live abroad. Marlon K Hom studies Cantonese immigrant in San Francisco (Hom 1987). Casey Man Kong Lum does research on karaoke of Chinese America (Lum 1996).

Taiwan and his pessimism towards the country in which he grew up, even though his language, religion, and entire life were fully connected to this local land. Since he was a civil servant before he retired, he would not face any financial burdens, so why he was still pessimistic toward the country's future? I did not have a chance to learn where his negative attitude toward the country came from, but I could only guess his pessimism was impacted by Han Kuo-yu's campaign, which claimed the country was in financial trouble under the governance of the DPP.

This 81-year-old grandfather also presented a sense of loss for another identity change, which was the transformation of the Chinese identity into a Taiwanese identity. Unlike elders in their late eighties and nineties whose Japanese memory and identity turned positive after the second memory construction happened after the late 1980s, the Chinese identity with which he identified faced a crisis. His disapproval of Hokkien being included in compulsory education and his attempts at speaking Mandarin demonstrated his Chinese identity; though his language, religion, and connection with people were also strongly connected with the Japanese and Taiwanese identity. One time, he took me to see the building beside the church and told me, "I lived here when I was working in the government (ROC). The quality of this building was so good. The government built this building with very good materials!" He possessed nostalgia, but the thing he missed most was the orderly past the strict rules in the KMT era constructed.

His paradoxical reaction reflected the contradictory nature of the triangulated identity. While he was still performing the local culture through his language and body, he identified with the Chinese culture that he learned in education and work. Different

from elders in their late-eighties and nineties, he received Chinese education after World War II, so the Chinese identity for him was not a new thing transplanted into his life. He swung between his local culture, which was embedded with Hokkien and Japanese culture, and the Chinese education and benefits he received, while the local culture was devalued by the Chinese educational system.

If this 81-year-old grandfather did not value the Japanese culture that the other elders sought, what did he gain from this musical asylum? Was this class an asylum for him to find a way to navigate his identity in the triangulation? Singing Christian hymns in Hokkien was the cure for him. As my above interview with him demonstrated, he loved the Hokkien lyrics because those lyrics helped him to feel love from God. For him, this asylum provided him a cure not through Japanese cultures, but rather through the Christianity expressed by Hokkien. In this class, Hokkien, his native language, became the most effective language for him to connect with God. The contradictory identities no longer bother him because he was in God's world.

In the asylum created for those elders, pain and loneliness were temporarily forgotten. In this space for self-development, through singing music and performing the culture with which they identified, whether it was Japanese, Taiwanese, Christianity, or even Chinese, they were crafting themselves. These elders constructed their identities, which were neither those imposed onto them by any regimes nor criticized by younger generations or other people with opposing identities. They flourished.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I demonstrated how elders' collective memory was constructed under multiple political transformations. The process of construction was not smooth but painful and tough. Although elders were finally able to re-build childhood memories without political oppression after the collective memory of Japanese occupation was reevaluated since the democratization in the 1980s, the pain they experienced still hurts. As time goes by, pain even increased when they no longer had the power to adjust to the new era. The language barrier, migration, and identity that contradicted younger generations again silenced and isolated them. Their experience became a mythical past which was promoted as victims of the KMT dictatorship, but seldom had people noticed that their healing was ongoing. I argue that, though the triangulated identities left confusion, dilemma, nostalgia, pain, and loneliness in their lives, they still worked hard to construct an asylum through song.

I want to end this essay with two stories. The first is about my grandparents, and the second is the story of Teacher Lee. My house used to be filled with Japanese old songs before I was born. Teacher Lee often visited my grandparents during Lunar New Year to sing Japanese old songs together, and the music would spread to the neighbors to recall childhood memories. My grandmother told him that every time they sang, the grandfather living across the street would sing with the melody. This beautiful scene stopped after my grandmother passed away when I was four years old. This situation is common among these elders. They spent their entire lives following rapid cultural and political transformations, but once they finally adjusted to all of the challenges, their partners and friends passed away and their descendants did not understand them. However, the music

would always exist. Music was always a trigger for them to return to the past, which included some moments of happiness.

During the crisis of COVID-19, the class stopped for two months. Teacher Lee spent more time exercising. One day, when he passed a group of lethargic elders on wheelchairs accompanied by foreign caregivers in the park,[68] he stopped and sang 夕燒小燒 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk). Those elders became alive and responded to him by singing. After that day, when those elders saw Teacher Lee appear, they started to sing Japanese songs. He said: "Almost hundred percent of elders who experienced the Japanese occupation love to sing 夕燒小燒 (*Yūyakekoyake*; the dusk)!" (Lee, Pingtung May 2020, iPhone) Even in the last moments of their lives, they still remember the music they sang in their childhood. After a long journey filled with sorrow and pain from the colonization, war, dictatorship, and loneliness, the music became their forever asylum.

[68] Instead of sending elders to nursing homes, people tend to hire foreign caregivers from southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, to take care of the elders. These foreign caregivers live with their employers 24 hours a day and six days a week, so taking elders to park became the only chance for these caregivers to leave employers' house and interact with other foreign caregivers. Those elders are usually confined to their wheelchairs and unable to walk and talk.

Appendix 1:

夕燒小燒 (1932)
Composer: 草川信
Lyricist:中村雨紅

Japanese:

夕燒小燒で　　日が暮れて
The dusk full of the sky, and the sun goes down
山のお寺の　　鐘が鳴る
Bell of the temple in the mountain rings
お手々繋いで　皆帰ろ
Hold our hands tight and all return home
烏と一緒に　　帰りましょう
Let's go back home with crows together

子供が帰った　後からは
After kids return home
円い大きな　お月様
The round and big Moon occurs
小鳥が夢を　見る頃は
When birds fall into the dream
空にはきらきら 金の星
The sky is twinkling golden stars

Hokkien: Seng-Si 344(Presbyterian Church in Taiwan 2009)
救主耶穌願你來聽 我懇求的聲
Jesus the savior please listen to my pleading pray
你大施恩 靠妳尊名 深信的確成
I rely on your great grace and your name; I believe it will achieve
我在救主面前反悔 嘆氣我污穢
I repent in front of the savior, sigh with my defilement
共我洗清除去我罪主你的確能
Wash out my sin; I believe in you Lord

救主耶穌你大功勞 我好膽依靠
Jesus, the savior, this is your achievement, I dare to rely on you
我是卑微常常失錯你准我祈禱
I am petty and low; I always miss you, so please let me pray
我心欣慕活命正路 只有主耶穌
I yearn for the only path to survive, which is you Jesus
你必替我擔當艱苦 天下無別路
You will bear the hardness, and there is no other path in this world

Appendix 2:

七つの子 (*Nanatsunoko,* Seven Little Crows) (1921)
Composer: 本居長世 Lyricist: 野口雨情

Japanese:
烏なぜ啼くの
Crow, why are you crying?
烏は山に
Because the crow has
可愛い七つの
Seven cute
子があるからよ
Kids
可愛 可愛と
They are cute, they are cute
烏は啼くの
So does the crow cries

可愛 可愛と
They are cute, they are cute
啼くんだよ
The crow cries
山の古巣へ
The old nest in the mountain
行って見て御覧
Go and take a look!
丸い眼をした
Their eyes are round
いい子だよ
They are all good kids!

Hokkien: *Seng-Si* 140 (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan 2009)

耶穌的手扶持我 安穩在祂胸前
Jesus holds me and stabilizes me in his arm
仁愛如陰影遮我 使我靈魂安寧
His love shadows me and set peace in my spirit
溫柔愛疼的聲音 能解我心憂悶
His voice with love and gentle relieves the annoyance in my heart
從榮光天堂降臨 常常安慰施恩
He often comes from glorious heaven with his consolation and grace

耶穌的手扶持我 穩當攏無煩惱
Jesus holds me stable so there is no any annoyance
世間迷惑不纏絆 罪不害我跋倒
Mundane confusions cannot trap me, the sin cannot fall me down
憂悶不做我害礙 訝疑驚惶攏息
I am not stuck by worry and depression, Flurry and suspicious are all doused
或是試煉流眼淚 攏不使我搖泏
I do not hesitate even I tear from test

主是我心所歡喜 祂死罪我罪過
Jesus is my love His death is my sing
常常堅固信靠祂 親像萬世石磐
Always trust him and rely him firmly like a ten thousand years foundation
我當吞忍站世間 等候黑暗過去
I will tolerate in this mundane and wait until the dark leaves
天光就歡喜無限 得主接納升天
I will see the heavenly glorious with endless happiness and will be accepted to heaven

耶穌的手扶持我 安穩在祂胸前
Jesus holds me and stabilizes me in his arm
仁愛如陰影遮我 使我靈魂安寧
His love shadows me and set peace in my spirit

Appendix 3:

月の沙漠 (*Tsuki no Sabaku*; Desert under the Moonlight) (1921)
Composed:佐々木すぐる Lyric: 加藤まさを

Japanese:
月の沙漠を　はるばると
Walking thousand miles in the dessert under the moonlight
旅のらくだが　行きました
Walking with the camel during the trip
金と銀との　くら置いて
Carrying the Golden saddle and Silver saddle
二つならんで　行きました
Camels walked in pairs

金のくらには　銀のかめ
The silver urn is put on the golden saddle
銀のくらには　金のかめ
The silver saddle is put on the golden urn
二つのかめは　それぞれに
Two urns for each
ひもで結んで　ありました
Bonded tightly with the saddles

先のくらには　王子さま
On the first saddle, sitting the prince
あとのくらには　お姫さま
The later saddle, sitting the princess
乗った二人は　おそろいの
The two on the saddles was wearing a pair
白い上着を　着てました
They are matching with white coat

沙丘を越えて　行きました
They walked cross over the dune
だまって越えて　行きました
They walked and didn't say a word

Hokkien: *Seng-Si* 140 (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan 2009)
耶穌的手扶持我 安穩在祂胸前
Jesus holds me and stabilizes me in his arm
仁愛如陰影遮我 使我靈魂安寧
His love shadows me and set peace in my spirit
溫柔愛疼的聲音 能解我心憂悶
His voice with love and gentle relieves the annoyance in my heart
從榮光天堂降臨 常常安慰施恩
He often comes from glorious heaven with his consolation and grace

耶穌的手扶持我 穩當攏無煩惱
Jesus holds me stable so there is no any annoyance
世間迷惑不纏絆 罪不害我跋倒
Mundane confusions cannot trap me, the sin cannot fall me down
憂悶不做我害礙 訝疑驚惶攏息
I am not stuck by worry and depression, Flurry and suspicious are all doused
或是試煉流眼淚 攏不使我搖泏
I do not hesitate even I tear from test

主是我心所歡喜 祂死罪我罪過
Jesus is my love His death is my sing
常常堅固信靠祂 親像萬世石磐
Always trust him and rely him firmly like a ten thousand years foundation
我當吞忍站世間 等候黑暗過去
I will tolerate in this mundane and wait until the dark leaves
天光就歡喜無限 得主接納升天
I will see the heavenly glorious with endless happiness and will be accepted to heaven

耶穌的手扶持我 安穩在祂胸前
Jesus holds me and stabilizes me in his arm
仁愛如陰影遮我 使我靈魂安寧
His love shadows me and set peace in my spirit

Appendix 4:

散りゆく花 (*Chiriyukuhana*, Fragmented Flower) (1934)
Composer: 鄧雨賢Deng Yu-xian
Lyricist : 周添旺Zhou Tian-wang

Japanese:

はななよ　ばんにさく
The flower blossoms at night
かなしい　くるいざき
Flower is blooming in profusion, but looks lonely
かえらぬ　夢のひよ
The dream day will never come back
誰およぶ　秋の風
The autumn's wind, who are you calling for?

寂しい　旅の空
I look at the sky and feel lonely in the journey
別れで　ひとり行く
Say goodbye and leave alone
はかない　こいのひよ
Days staying with lover are impermanence
はなもちれ　夜の風
Flower also fallen in the night wind

Hokkien:

Lyricist: Cheng Ching-yao
深夜寒冷 雨聲無停
The cold midnight, the raining sound doesn't stop
倚在窗邊 看見異象
I lean by the window and I saw imagery
基督復活 夢中引導
Jesus resurrected and led me in the dream
互阮心內 思念耶穌
Let me miss Jesus in my heart

社會黑暗 人心不安
The terrible society makes people feel disturbed
心內呼叫 我主耶穌
I call my Lord Jesus in my heart
千算萬算 不如主算
Thousands of plans cannot compare with God's plan
有主可靠 攏免煩惱
Rely on Lord then we don't need to worry

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