

## Diaries and Everyday Life in Colonial Taiwan

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## Diaries and Everyday Life in Colonial Taiwan

Hui-yu Caroline Ts'AI<sup>1</sup>

Diaries offer insights into everyday modernity. The appeal of diaries is to be explained by a growing academic interest in everyday life. Our world is part of—not external to—everyday life. Everyday life, as we know it, is of course never perfect, but to treat it with silence, as has been the practice, is to deny both its problematic as a discourse and its potentiality for generating a counter-discourse.

In Section I of what follows, I take up the issue of “diaries as everyday life” to illustrate everyday practice in colonial Taiwan. In Section II, using Utsumi Chūji as a case study, I demonstrate that the Utsumi diary reveals much of the man’s private life, family, and leisure activities, and also of his social networking in a colonial context. In Section III, I draw on the newly published diaries by two elite Taiwanese, Zhang Lijun and Lin Xiantang, and explore them in their own right in the colonial setting of Taiwan under Japanese rule (1895–1945). These diaries also reveal the limitations of the Utsumi diary. The information provided in diaries is a vital new source for reconstructing the history of colonial Taiwan. This trend of discovering diaries as Taiwan studies reflects both the optimism and the anxieties of the post-martial-law generations as they seek self-identity, just as the construction of a “national” identity in Taiwan seems to be all but impossible.

**Keywords:** Diary studies, Utsumi Chūji, Zhang Lijun, Lin Xiantang, everyday life, everyday modernity, Taiwan studies, Japan’s colonial empire, colonial Taiwan, Hakubunkan

### Introduction

Thanks to the recent discovery of the diary of Utsumi Chūji 内海忠司 (1884–1968), scholars of Japan’s colonial empire are now for the first time able to peep inside the world of a higher-

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ranking colonial bureaucrat, a man appointed to serve in Taiwan from 1928 to 1939.<sup>2</sup> In Section I of what follows, I take up the issue of “diaries as everyday life” to illustrate what I shall call everyday practice in colonial Taiwan. In Section II, using Utsumi Chūji as a case study, I demonstrate that the Utsumi diary reveals much of not only the man’s private life, family, and leisure activities, but also of his social networking in a colonial context. In Section III, I draw on the newly published diaries by two elite Taiwanese: Zhang Lijun 張麗俊 (1868–1941) and Lin Xiantang 林獻堂 (1881–1956),<sup>3</sup> both for their own value and because they both reveal the limitations of the Utsumi diary in Taiwan under Japanese rule (1895–1945).

## I. Diaries as “Everyday Life”

Archives serve not only as storehouses for personal memory or documentary heritage, but also as sites of transformation where competing discourses are generated. Diaries, as archives, are a historical source. In the past couple of decades, moreover, they have begun to take on a significant role in the postmodern study of discursive practice of the everyday. Increasingly, things regarded in earlier studies as no more than trivia in everyday life (food, clothes, shopping, tourism, for example) are being explored from new analytical perspectives, often taking the form of case studies on things “insignificant” or “fragmented.” A fragmented world is central to the problematic of “everyday life,” and diaries serve as a framework to the everyday approach.

### *A diary-led approach*

A diary-led approach to everyday life facilitates inquiry into such grey areas as intentions and actions, non-actions and compromise, resistance and the means of adjustment, as well as the exercise of rationality and a sense of subjectivity. The practice of keeping a personal diary or journal began in Europe in the late middle ages. The appearance of so-called “date-books” coincided with the development of the mechanical clock in the fourteenth century and the annual calendar which, in France, was introduced around 1650 but only became standard a century later.<sup>4</sup> It was around 1750, as time began to take on a form close to the one we now know, that the diary started to proliferate.

Recent studies have begun to look into the practice of keeping diaries in terms of material, format, contents, market strategies, and other practical concerns. Diaries—published or unpublished—are of course a primary source of autobiographical knowledge, and since the 1970s they have been taken seriously in social and cultural studies.<sup>5</sup> We should note from the outset that there exists a fundamental difference between diary and autobiography. Narrative in a diary is more often than not brief, often lacking full information about a person

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2 Utsumi 2012a. For Utsumi, his family, and his leisure, see Ts'ai 2012. An earlier version of this paper (Ts'ai 2010) was first presented at Hokkaido University, Japan, on 29 May 2010, later translated into Japanese and published by the Kyoto University Press (Ts'ai 2012). For an introduction to the Utsumi collection, see Kondō et al. 2012, i–iii; and for discussions on Utsumi’s “Era in Taiwan,” 1928–1939, see Kondō 2012a.

3 Thus far, research attention has focused primarily on a few sets of published diaries by a handful of Taiwanese intellectual elite. Of them, the diaries by Zhang Lijun (a local elite) and Lin Xiantang (a big landlord) have attracted most attention from the academia and have by far generated an impressive literature of secondary sources. See Zhang 2000–2004 and Lin 2000–.

4 Lejeune 2009, p. 59.

5 See, for example, Adler et al. 2012; Didier 2002 (1987).

or a place, and its narrative is perforce inconsecutive. By contrast, an autobiography is typically composed of organized narrative, integrated by memory.<sup>6</sup> Notebooks used to record such events as travel or battlefield experiences form a sub-category of the diary. Many steps are involved in the process of diary writing, and so the practice can profitably be examined in terms of the diary's content, the motives for its keeping and even its destruction.

"Everyday life" is a vague term, referring to the recurring practice of "everydayness," which by and large takes place in an urban realm. As a space, "everyday life" is ambiguous and evasive; and as a discourse, it conveys contrasting or paradoxical implications. The problematic of everyday life, wherever it is, generates discourses and counter-discourses. In the rational discourse of modernity, however, "everyday life" often takes on certain fixed negative connotations: boring, humdrum, repetitive. However, everyday life may also be considered sensational and expressive, full of desires, smells, touches, and emotions. Everyday life in modern society thus seems to be calculable, divisible into smaller units of space and time. It can be displayed, re-arranged, and assembled. Museums and exhibitions illustrate exactly these specific features of everyday life in modernity. It follows that, this "everyday life" is not internal to the self, but imposed by others. Accordingly, the representation of "everyday life" is exoticism (viewed by others), not "life in a day" (internal to one's daily life).<sup>7</sup>

In modern society, everyday life manifests itself more often than not as repeated behavior, and thus insignificant and trivial. Routines function to iron out individual uncertainty or doubts and afford "stability," but routinization implies "submission to authority."<sup>8</sup> When juxtaposed with desires for self-improvement, the combined effect more often than not generates frustration and anxiety, and criticism against the establishment.<sup>9</sup> A case in point is nationalist discourse, of which diary studies in Taiwan serve as an illustration.

In Taiwan under Japanese rule, feelings of frustration and anxiety in everyday life served as a critique of national discourse, and diaries in Taiwan include much concealed protest. Lin Xiantang's diary, as we shall see, is a case in point as is the diary of Huang Wangcheng 黃旺成 (1888–1978), a Taiwanese primary school teacher, who jotted down the racial inequalities he encountered in his daily life.<sup>10</sup> Here, personal issues are converted into political criticism, which becomes a prompt for action. Huang's diary offers a story of how colonial policies were carried out, and how the police intervened into the everyday Taiwanese life—in the name of modernity. His diary both attests to the limits of the attempt to assimilate Taiwanese in everyday life on the part of Japanese government, and it illustrates how his family adapted to Japanese tastes.<sup>11</sup> In its extremity, the diary as protest generates actions with the potential for challenging the establishment.<sup>12</sup> Diarists Jiang Weishui 蔣渭水, Jian Ji 簡吉, and Lai He 賴和, all Taiwanese for the nationalist movement, were of this order. The chronological "prison diary" (Ch. *yuzhong riji* 獄中日記), either written in jail or recollected in a diary form after release, needs also to be included in the genre of the diary as protest.

6 Didier 2002 (1987), p. 6.

7 Highmore 2005 (2002), p. 22.

8 Lütke 1995 (1989), p. 5.

9 Highmore 2005 (2002), pp. 9–17.

10 Huang 2008—. Huang was originally born to a Chen 陳 family; "Huang" was his adopted surname, which was also used for his household registration. See Zeng 2008.

11 Li 2010, p. 4.

12 Yang 2008, p. 311.

Not all things in everyday life during the period of Japanese rule need be framed in a colonial context, however. Diaries, if approached with good sense and sound tools, can contribute to our understanding of everyday life. Diarists are typically distracted by inconspicuous things; they search out things fragmented, and so place “events” in the background. The lack of a clearly defined realm is the appeal of the diary. Individual experiences constitute the diary’s realm and make it such a vital source. Diaries in Taiwan studies thus serve as a comparative framework for illustration to Utsumi’s colonial world.

### *Diaries for daily use*

The diary of Utsumi Chūji reflects a transitional mode of diary writing in modern Japan. His diary is relatively private in nature, impregnated with his obsession with his career. Utsumi also took notes on events unfolding around him, without much reflection or emotion. What he left out of his diary, he included in his memoirs (*kaisōroku* 回想錄) and correspondence. When there was nothing he regarded as worthy of report for a particular day, he simply jotted down *betsuji nashi* 別事なし.

Utsumi maintained his diary writing habit for fifty eight years; entries for seventeen of these years (1928–1945) concern Taiwan.<sup>13</sup> For all these years, he used a diary book known as *tōyō nikki* 當用日記, made and sold by the commercial publisher, Hakubunkan 博文館 of Tokyo. As a desk diary, it was larger than a pocket size diary (*kaichū nikki* 懷中日記).<sup>14</sup> Diary sizes differed, as did their price and the material with which they were made. By 1937, Hakubunkan had produced thirty five types of diary for the market.<sup>15</sup> Most commercially available diaries included columns for accounting purposes. Pocket size diaries served this purpose well. Hakubunkan targeted its diaries at an expanding market sensitive to prices. The company had successfully made Taiwan a key overseas base, selling its products not only to the Japanese community but also to middle class literate Taiwanese.<sup>16</sup> Book size diaries were favored by both Japanese and Taiwanese intellectuals, and made a desirable gift for the educated.

Fu Xiqi 傅錫祺 (1872–1946), whose extant diaries span nearly four and a half decades from 1902 to 1946, was an elite Taiwanese, who favored pocket size diaries. They serve as the records of his everyday life: births and deaths, marriage and other ceremonial occasions, school and work, sickness and recreation, and social networking.<sup>17</sup> Lin Xiantang, as with most Taiwanese intellectual at that time, habitually used book size diaries, with an average entry of between 300 and 600 words, unless special events demanded more detail.<sup>18</sup> The Lin family of Wufeng 霧峰, best known for its leadership in the nationalist movement during the period of Japanese rule, regularly took notes in Hakubunkan’s *tōyō nikki*.

13 After serving in Taiwan from 1928 to 1939, Utsumi assumed a post as inspector for a “national policy company” in Kaohsiung, a port city in southern Taiwan, until the end of the war.

14 The diary of “pocket size” here refers to the size of about 20cm in length and 14cm in width, but the actual size varied slightly over the years. Hakubunkan began to issue them in 1895.

15 Tsuboya 1937.

16 Lin Xiantang used a *tōyō nikki*, as did several of his family members: Yang Shuixin 楊水心 (Lin’s wife), Lin Jitang 林紀堂 (Lin’s cousin), and Lin Chixian 林癡仙 (a cousin of a branch family). The Huang family, both father (Huang Wangcheng) and son (Huang Jitu 黃繼圖), also took notes in *tōyō nikki*. See Xu et al. 2010; Li 2008, pp. 37, 42, 64.

17 Liao and Zhang 2010.

18 Gao 2008, p. 847.

Lin diarists included Lin Jitang (1874–1922), Lin Xiantang, and Lin Chixian (1875–1915). Lin Chixian first used book sized diaries; then, after June 1913 shifted to the handier pocket size version, partly because of increasing availability. Unlike Utsumi, Lin Chixian made notes of personal feelings as well as observations.<sup>19</sup> Chixian was an inconsistent diarist, who was nonetheless meticulous in recording expenditure, from taxes and debts to household and travel expenses. Growing up in a family already in decline, he was forced to lead a frugal life. The hard reality of life and his own pragmatism are everywhere evident in Lin Chixian.<sup>20</sup> We also learn from his diary that he was a voracious reader of Western science and history. For Chixian, Japan evidently served as the channel for the new learning from the West. His diary reveals that almost all of the Chinese books he purchased were translated originally from Japanese.<sup>21</sup>



Figure 1. A special exhibition on diaries by Taiwanese (31 October 2009, Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan).

## II. Utsumi Chūji's “Everyday Life”

Diaries provide a rare chance for researchers to explore the personalities and private activities of the subjects they study. Utsumi’s diary proffers a tantalizing, if often frustrating, glimpse of Utsumi in his colonial world. The man and the bureaucrat emerge, as do his family life, social networking, and everyday activities. Here, I will focus on his diary for 1935, both because it was the year when Utsumi reached the climax of his career, and because it was in other respects a “year of significance.”

### *Utsumi’s career in Taiwan*

Utsumi Chūji was born in Uji 宇治, Kyoto prefecture, in 1844. Graduating from the Law School of Imperial Kyoto University in 1911, he passed the examination for entry into the administrative division of the bureaucracy in 1913. Prior to his appointment to Taiwan in 1928, Utsumi had served in Yamagata 山形, Okinawa 沖縄, Aomori 青森, Shimane 島根, Gunma 群馬, and Saga 佐賀 prefectures. He was forced into a leave of absence from Saga after a local dispute involving party politics. Thus, for Utsumi, Taiwan provided a chance to launch the second stage of his career. He recorded his first impressions of the island in his diary.

19 Lin Chixian’s extant diaries span the decade from 1906 to 1915. His diaries are thus mostly short and fragmentary, perhaps reflecting his character as a romantic literary man.

20 Li 2009, p. 66.

21 Many of them were published by Fuzanbō.

On 4 October 1928, the Asahimaru reached the pier of Port Keelung. The Port of Keelung was small, surrounded on three sides by mountains. Many ships had cast anchor there, but the downtown as a whole looked gloomy and made one feel depressed, as if it were darkened with soot and smoke. This port town did not impress me with the promise of progress, and it appeared to lack any enterprising spirit. I was disappointed.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, Utsumi knew little about Taiwan at that time, but his passion for his mission of enlightenment was undeniable. He went to Taiwan intending to settle, perhaps permanently. Utsumi was assigned to three posts in less than four years of his arrival in Taiwan. His first appointment was as division chief of police affairs (*keimu buchō* 警務部長) in Taipei prefecture. In December 1929, he was promoted to division chief of internal affairs (*naimu buchō* 内務部長), Tainan prefecture. Then, in May 1931, he advanced further up the hierarchy to become mayor of Taipei.<sup>23</sup> In March 1932, he was appointed prefectural governor of Xinzhu 新竹. This turned out to be a turning point in Utsumi's career, and it was a post he was to retain for three and a half years.<sup>24</sup> In late August 1935, he was again promoted—this time as Kaohsiung governor. This was a strategically important promotion, as Kaohsiung was “a gate opening to the South” in Japan's colonial empire. There he served again for another three and a half years.<sup>25</sup>

On 28 January 1939, with the war between Japan and China in its third year, Utsumi decided to retire, and in April he packed up and returned to Japan. In Tokyo, he became auditor in a chemical company (Minami Nihon Kagaku Kōgyō Kabushiki Kaisha 南日本化学工業株式会社) based in Kaohsiung. He returned to Kaohsiung on business from time to time until the end of the war.

### *Utsumi's family life*

The diary of Utsumi Chūji reveals as much about Utsumi as husband and father as colonial official. He was a sociable person and a tolerant boss, who earned the respect of his subordinates.<sup>26</sup> Any discussion of Utsumi might usefully start with his life at home.

The term *katei* 家庭 (or “family”) was a neologism in modern Japan, originally deriving from the English home. Utsumi's diary attests to the value he placed on the “new family.” Utsumi had married Kimura Sachio 木村幸尾, who seems to have suffered a stroke prior to their return to Japan in 1939. They had two sons and five daughters. Tadaaki 忠昭, Utsumi's eldest son, succeeded to the family headship. Jirō 次郎 was the second son. Utsumi's five daughters were, in order of age, Takeko 武子, Momoko 桃子, Mutsuko 睦子, Yoshiko 慶子, and Toneko 刀根子, who died in infancy. Their names appear often in Utsumi's diaries and correspondence, suggesting the importance of his children to him. At home, he was a family man, as can be judged from the following two among many other entries of his diary.

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22 Utsumi 2012b, p. 955.

23 Taihoku acquired city status in 1920. For two decades, the term for the mayor of Taipei was *shiin* 市尹, until 1940, when it became *shichō* 市長.

24 See also Kitamura 2012.

25 See also Kondō 2012b.

26 Hashimoto 1999 (1930), p. 239.

1 April [1935] (Monday) Cloudy with Rain, Cold [Xinzhu]

Got up at 5:30 a.m. Yoshiko is a member of the Inspection Team of the primary schools [of Taipei prefecture] charged with the mission of observing [educational facilities in] Japan proper. She was to take a train departing at 6:10 a.m. I, along with my wife, Mutsuko, and Tadaaki, went to the station to see her off. I returned home and laid down for one more nap....<sup>27</sup>

3 July [1935] (Wednesday) Sunny [Xinzhu]

Sought to buy local products and toys for Tadaaki and Jirō. Returned home at 8 p.m....<sup>28</sup>

Utsumi's diary reveals that he helped his relatives secure jobs; his deep concern for Takeko's marriage is evident, too. He and his wife made several attempts to negotiate marriage for her. Takeko was born in May 1914, five months before Utsumi took up his first formal post in Okinawa. By 1935, she was twenty one years old, soon to pass the ideal age for marriage. Mrs. Utsumi traveled back to Japan to introduce Takeko formally to prospective marriage partners. Marriage negotiations worked out, and Takeko later married a military officer.

26 January [1935] (Saturday) Cloudy[,] Cold [Xinzhu]

... Invited my wife [to Taipei Hospital] to discuss how to reply to Colonel Iwamura with regard to Takeko's marriage arrangement, and agreed to write a letter [to him]. Simply, the negotiation with Lieutenant Harada will be discontinued....<sup>29</sup>

24 May [1935] (Friday) Sunny [Xinzhu]

... My wife sent me a letter, mentioning that Lieutenant Fukushima...had declined [the proposed marriage arrangement]. Anyway, [I] sent a telegraph, along with a letter [to my wife], urging her to accompany Takeko back to Taiwan. [I also] sent a letter to Iwamura, asking him to try his best in the future....<sup>30</sup>

Virtually all the marriage candidates Utsumi sought for Takeko were military men in active service, presumably suggesting his own favorable disposition towards the military. Utsumi's diary shows that he maintained friendly contacts with representatives of the military.<sup>31</sup>

### **Reading**

Utsumi's diary for 1935, that "year of significance," began with his hospitalization for gallstone trouble for seventy days from 11 January to 20 March. He made use of his time there to note clinical observations, which he later published as *Byōshō zatsuroku* 病床雜錄.

20 March [1935] (Wednesday) Cloudy, Rainy[,] Warm

Got up at 6:30 p.m. Left Taipei Hospital shortly after 8 a.m., saying goodbye to the

27 Utsumi 2012a, p. 595.

28 Utsumi 2012a, p. 616.

29 Utsumi 2012a, p. 577. Utsumi was presently hospitalized with gallstone trouble.

30 Utsumi 2012a, p. 610.

31 For Utsumi's years in Taiwan as Governor of Kaohsiung, see Kondō 2012b.



castle that had kept me for seventy days.... Took a rest in the afternoon. Tadaaki and Jirō had missed me so much that they stayed all the time with me. So adorable. We all enjoyed the family reunion dinner.<sup>32</sup>

Utsumi read a lot in hospital, a period he referred to as *rōjō* 籠城, “enclosure within the enemy’s castle.” He read *Chūō kōron* 中央公論, *Kaizō* 改造, *Bungei shūnjū* 文藝春秋, *Gendai* 現代, and *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun* 大阪毎日新聞. Much of his reading material he had sent directly from Japan. His diary during this time reveals a taste for books on politics and war, although frustratingly we get nothing of the impressions they left on him.

13 March [1935] (Wednesday) Sunny, Warm  
Stopped over the Niitakadō Bookstore to order *Meiji tennō to rikken seiji*. Returned home at 2:40 p.m.<sup>33</sup>

16 March [1935] (Saturday) Sunny, Warm  
Ordered [a copy of] the journal, *Gendai*, at the Niitakadō Bookstore and went home.<sup>34</sup>

Utsumi also had an unquenchable thirst for new books. He was particularly inspired by a book on Japan’s rule in Manchuria: *Manshū tōchiron* 滿州統治論 written by Ikeda Hideo 池田秀雄 in 1934. Many of Ikeda’s arguments echoed Utsumi’s “five-year industrial plan” for economic revival in Xinzhu. In addition, he sought books related to old customs of Taiwan. His favorite bookstore was Niitakadō 新高堂, the largest bookstore in Taiwan.<sup>35</sup> Niitakadō was also well known for issuing textbooks, reference tools, photograph collections, postcards, maps, and many other items. His taste for books also reflected an aspect of the marketing strategy of books, which was developed to cater to the growing needs of Japanese communities in Taiwan. An expanding readership on the island—across race and generation—was constructing “Taiwan” as a subject of Japan’s empire building.<sup>36</sup>

### ***The “year of significance”: 1935***

Today, Utsumi is remembered in Taiwan not least for his presence at a major Hakka temple festival in 1934. This “Buddhist festival for the dead” (Ch. *Zhongyuan jidian* 中元祭典) was held at the Yimin temple of Fangliao (Ch. Fangliao *Yiminmiao* 枋寮義民廟, in today’s Xinpu 新埔, Xinzhu), still the religious center of the Hakka people. Founded in 1790, the temple holds this festival annually on the twentieth of the seventh month, according to the lunar calendar.

In any case, Utsumi’s presence at the festival was a mark of his support for the Hakka temple. This was not simply a duty imposed on him by his role as governor of Xinzhu so much as a sign of his networking with the regional Hakka community. And so Utsumi entered the folk narrative of Taiwan, as his name was carved on a stele under a pair of stone

32 Utsumi 2012a, p. 592.

33 Utsumi 2012a, p. 590. *Meiji tennō to rikken seiji* 明治天皇と立憲政治 by Watanabe Ikujiro 渡邊幾治郎 (1867–1960), 1935.

34 Utsumi 2012a, p. 591.

35 Cai 2003. The Niitakadō Bookstore, at the center of old Taipei, was built in 1912 near today’s Hengyang Road 衡陽路, where the Bookstore of the East 東方書店 is located.

36 Su 2005.

horses, donated by a local alliance of villages. Today, the stone horses still stand in front of the temple's entrance gate. Perhaps reflecting on his *non*-concern about this matter, Utsumi's diary is silent about this event, although it refers to two trips Utsumi made to that region to inspect roads prior to the event.<sup>37</sup>

The 1935 great Taiwan earthquake was anything but “everyday-ness,” as Utsumi's diary reveals.<sup>38</sup> Utsumi is best remembered in history for his earthquake rescue work, which he oversaw for four months after the great earthquake hit Taiwan on 21 April. The whole region from Xinzhu to Taichung was seriously affected: many towns and villages were destroyed and over 150,000 persons either died or were injured. The colonial government of Taiwan acted immediately, and relief work began. It mobilized the military and sent Red Cross teams to the stricken districts.<sup>39</sup>



Figure 2. Utsumi Chūji and his 1935 earthquake rescue team.<sup>40</sup>

The earthquake placed Utsumi squarely in the spotlight empire-wide. Utsumi just returned to Xinzhu from Taipei the night before, after attending a local governor meeting. He documented his rescue work in his diary with relatively long entries, but gave no hint of his emotions. What the entries do offer rather is a profile of Utsumi as a local governor handling the emergency response. His diary on the day of the earthquake reads as follows.

37 Utsumi mentions the temple twice in his diary, dated 19 August 1932 and 4 February 1934, respectively. Neither trip, however, had to do with the temple's festival activities.

38 The 1935 “Taiwan Earthquake” generated numerous destructive aftershocks. In the Xinzhu region alone, earthquakes struck again on 5 May, 30 May, 7 June, and 17 June.

39 Taiwan Shinbunsha Henshūbu 1935.

40 Taiwan Shinbunsha Henshūbu 1935, p. 34.

21 August [1935] (Sunday) Sunny

At 7 a.m., it was reported that Xinzhu City was hit by an earthquake and four persons died. Later on, there was another report that in Houlong five hundred houses were destroyed by the same earthquake, and fifteen persons died. I immediately made arrangements, and paid visits to the Governor General, the Bureau Chief of the Interior, the Bureau Chief of Police Affairs, and the commander of the military. After going around to exchange greetings in the Official Residence of the Governor General, I returned to the office by car at 9:30 a.m. Upon receiving the report from Takahara the department head of police affairs and Yano the section head of Education, [I] right away sent general assistant officials and police inspectors to inspect the four earthquake stricken counties. With regard to the rescue work, [I] ordered county chiefs and city mayors to handle the emergency treatment. Automobiles were brought to a stop to the South of Zhudong, and tele-communication was suspended. A bit more information came in after nightfall, with reports of one thousand deaths and eight thousand collapsed houses, so I continued to send rescue squads. The condition was like a wartime crisis. Returned home at 3 a.m.<sup>41</sup>

Utsumi's diary reveals how he and his earthquake rescue team coped with the disaster. The diary entry for the third day reads as follows:

23 April [1935] (Tuesday) Sunny

At 6 a.m., I invited Takahara, Nishimura, Yano, and Hoshi to the Official Residence of Governor to discuss use of the disaster rescue funds. Decided to allocate 140,000 yen from the funds, inform all counties and cities of the funding distribution, and send foods and rescue goods to the stricken areas. Rescue teams were largely posted [in localities] yesterday. The disaster emergency measures for the time being came to an end today. The bodies of the dead, totaling over 1,300, have [also] been disposed of, and construction materials for [building] shelters to house victims are being shipped by trucks [to affiliated areas]. One after another visitors flooded in from the Government General of Taiwan, and the military also sent visitors. [I was] overwhelmed with the reception. [At night, I] decided on the outline for constructing shanties to accommodate severely injured persons.<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, for weeks after the earthquake, Utsumi worked from morning to night, sometimes laboring into the early hours. Aftershocks continued for four months, and Utsumi's rescue work continued to the end of his term in Xinzhu in early September.<sup>43</sup>

### *Utsumi's social networking and leisure activities*

Utsumi was a diligent public servant and an energetic colonial bureaucrat. He was an early riser, who normally woke up before 6 a.m. and regularly arrived at the office around 9 a.m. At the government hall, he convened meetings, received visitors, and spent a lot of time greeting visitors and seeing off passing guests.

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41 Utsumi 2012a, p. 601.

42 Utsumi 2012a, p. 602.

43 Refer to Utsumi's Diary (Utsumi 2012a), in particular for the entries dated between 21 April and 25 May; 2, 6, 8, 18, 25–30 June; 6–9, 13–18 July.

5 April [1935] (Friday) Cloudy, Warm [Xinzhu]

[I] got up on 7:30 a.m., and left [for the station] to greet Zheng Ziyuan [Jiang Zuobin], the Minister of the Republic of China, who passed by [Xinzhu] on a south-bound express train at 10 a.m....<sup>44</sup>

20 December [1935] (Friday) Sunny [Kaohsiung]

[I] saw Yamada, Division Director of Law School of Kyoto University, off at the station at 8:30 a.m. [I] arrived at the office at 9 a.m..<sup>45</sup>

Utsumi settled local disputes, however trivial, and he attended ceremonies, observed official events, and built social networks. The following entry highlights Utsumi in everyday action as governor of Xinzhu.

20 June [1935] (Thursday) Cloudy [Xinzhu]

[I] summoned Kawamoto Kanenori to the official residence at 7:30 a.m.; listened to his report on the dispute of the Association of Citrus Fruits [Kankitsu Kumiai 柑橘組合] and admonished him [for not handling things well]. [I] arrived at the office at 9:30 a.m. and met visitors: Yamagishi, division chief of finance; and Kano, superintendent of the Association of the Ice-making Industry (Seihyō Dōgyō Kumiai 製氷同業組合). At 1:30 a.m., [I] left for Xiangshan by horse to attend a celebration held at house of village head Chen [Chen Yunru 陳雲如] to mark the twenty fifth anniversary of the founding of the local common school [*kōgakkō* 公学校]. Returned home at 6 p.m....<sup>46</sup>

With the recent publication of Utsumi's Taiwan diaries, scholars have begun to examine his relationship with business, media, the military, and Japanese community leaders in Taiwan.<sup>47</sup> It transpires that he was a typical Japanese colonial official who skillfully wove his social networks and navigated successfully in the seas of officialdom. Utsumi's networking with business interests constituted an inner circle of officialdom. Virtually all the Japanese he associated with in business circles represented leading Japanese trading companies, banks, as well as food processing and maritime transportation companies. For Utsumi, as for his contemporaries, moreover, leisure was an integral part of these professional activities. Dinners were social occasions. Restaurants provided an open space for social exchange and served as an enclosed space for private deals.<sup>48</sup>

Virtually all Japanese resident in Taiwan joined community groups, associations, and organizations. Recreational activities included book reading, mountain climbing, and sports such as basketball, baseball, football, horse riding and golf, as well as gardening and sightseeing. They lived separately from the Taiwanese in an effort to maintain their distinct Japanese lifestyle. Transplanting the scenery from Japan—such as cherry blossoms—helped

44 Utsumi 2012a, p. 596. Jiang Zuobin 蔣作賓 was mistakenly identified by Utsumi in his diary as Zheng Ziyuan 鄭子源.

45 Utsumi 2012a, p. 654.

46 Utsumi 2012a, pp. 613–14.

47 See Kondō 2012a, Kitamura 2012, Komagome 2012, and Ts'ai 2012.

48 For details, see Ts'ai 2012. See also Komagome 2012.

this purpose.<sup>49</sup> Only a few Taiwanese, all of them major figures,<sup>50</sup> appear in the diary of Utsumi, pointing to the fact that the Taiwanese contacts he had were confined to business, legal disputes, or administrative contacts.

“Everyday modernity,” when transplanted by Japanese to Taiwan, was built on differences in daily life: class, race, gender, and power. Time was compartmentalized in everyday life, but few could afford to buy a mechanical clock or a watch, and radios were expensive. Golf courses, for example, were built primarily for—and frequented almost entirely by—leading bureaucrats and big businessmen. In colonial Taiwan, that meant the Japanese. Utsumi’s diary reveals that golf was his favorite form of recreation. Golf was an eminently social activity, and it provided a valuable means of networking since it was reserved for high-ranking officials.

Utsumi’s diary also reveals that he made inspection tours from time to time, by train or by car, sometimes also with his family, and he frequented hot springs. By 1935, sightseeing in Taiwan had become institutionalized, and the number of Western-style hotels and Japanese-style inns (*ryokan* 旅館) exceeded three hundred. The Railroad Bureau (Tetsudōbu 鐵道部) of the Government General was an effective agent in the promotion of tourism, and the newly founded Tourist Club of Taiwan cooperated with it by organizing Japanese package tours from abroad. Sightseeing itineraries covered all corners of the island, and even the aborigines were mobilized as spectacles for the tourists.<sup>51</sup> Market demand in turn improved the quality of accommodation, transportation, and exhibitions. All of which contributed to the rise of tourism.

Many Japanese traveled to Taiwan, seeking self-identification or things exotic, and they more often than not left with reinforced images of a “colonial modern.” By crossing the sea to visit this first colony of Japan, their self-identity and pride as Japanese were confirmed and reaffirmed. Travel was as much about Japan as a putatively exotic Taiwan. With the rise of tourism, demands for more ships, trains, roads, and buses as well as more leisure facilities also increased. Hotels and restaurants, as well as resorts, rapidly appeared in almost every corner of Taiwan.

Tourism was primarily targeted at the Japanese, but it also appealed to an increasing number of Taiwanese via school excursions or sightseeing trips, both within the island and to Japan. The Taiwan Daily News (*Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* 台灣日日新報) launched in August 1927 a campaign to name “eight outstanding scenes of Taiwan” (*Taiwan hakkei* 台灣八景) to promote tourism.<sup>52</sup> “Scenes” were duly “created” by the media in colonial Taiwan, and the expansion of tourism in turn helped shape identities not only for Japanese but also for Taiwanese.<sup>53</sup>

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49 Yan 2007.

50 Utsumi’s 1935 diary entries include such prominent Taiwanese figures as Zheng Hongyuan 鄭鴻源, Liu Dexin 劉德欣, Lin Xiongzheng 林熊徵, Guo Tingjun 郭廷俊, Lan Gaochuan 藍高川, Chen Qizhao 陳啟肇.

51 Zheng 2005.

52 In Taiwan, the contents of the “eight featured scenes” varied over time, evolving from the Qing (1696), to the period of Japanese rule (1927), and again to the postwar period (1953 and 2005). In 1927, the naming campaign included the nomination for both the “eight featured scenes” and the “twelve picturesque spots” (*jūnishō* 十二勝).

53 Soyama 2003, Lü 2003.

The 1930s witnessed another wave of rapid development in the market for mass consumers, and the fever for mass consumption also spread to Taiwan. On 11 December 1932, the Utsumi family paid a visit to the first modern department store in Taiwan, Kikumoto 菊元, which had just opened in Taipei two weeks before on 28 November.<sup>54</sup> Kikumoto was a seven storey building (including observatory), equipped with the latest elevators ascending to the fifth floor where the dining area was located.<sup>55</sup> Though Utsumi only visited Kikumoto when he travelled from Xinzhu to Taipei, his diary shows that the new department store had already entered his life.



Figure 3. The Kikumoto department store, Taipei, 1932.<sup>56</sup>

3 April [1933] (Monday) Cloudy, Rainy

I took my children along and left for Taipei at 9:30 a.m. Visited the Hall of the Education Association to see the painting exhibition of Ōkubo Sakuji, and went to the Kikumoto department store. Met Tanikuchi and the assistant engineer Okada and had lunch there....<sup>57</sup>

“Leisure” (*yoka* 余暇) was a neologism in interwar Japan that stressed the separation of work from spare time. In Taiwan, too, a new leisured class had begun to take up sports for leisure.

54 Hayashi 林 in Tainan was the second modern department store, which was opened only seven days later than Kikumoto.

55 Taiwan Kenchikukai 1932.

56 Taiwan Kenchikukai 1932, p. 8.

57 Utsumi 2012a, p. 487.

Some traditional Taiwanese literati shared this interest in modern leisure and pleasure, although they imagined different cultural visions of modern leisure.<sup>58</sup> Changes in recreation were both cause of, and stimulus for, cultural interaction. Leisure became the core of the colonial modern discourse, involving more than the history of golf, dining, sports, travel, theaters, or hotels and inns. In its extremity, leisure constituted a critique of the established world of labor.

### III Diaries in Taiwan Studies

Utsumi's diary is that of a coloniser; the diaries examined below are by the colonized Taiwanese. Until recently, the mainstream discourse in postwar Taiwan has treated everyday life either as a "submissive" realm dominated by an all powerful Japanese colonial government, or as a "creative" field capable of endless struggle in the Taiwanese nationalist movement. The cultural turn to the private realm via diary studies has raised empirical questions about people and the circumstances in which they lived, their social networking, and their dispositions.<sup>59</sup> Below, I focus on two diarists: Zhang Lijun and Lin Xiantang, and I limit my discussion to only two issues: transition of life and hygiene policies.

#### *Transition from "old" to "new" in the diary of Zhang Lijun*

The diary of Zhang Lijun, a member of the traditional elite class from central Taiwan, is often cited. When Japan colonized Taiwan in 1895, Zhang was twenty seven years old. The ten volumes of detailed diaries he subsequently wrote stand as testimony to his life and times. Zhang's diary was made public in the late 1990s, about a decade after the lifting of martial law in 1987. This diary is the single extant first hand source kept by a traditional Taiwanese intellectual, born in the late Qing, who served the Japanese as a local functionary. Zhang's diary spans three decades from 1906 to 1937, beginning when he was forty. It is highly valued for the descriptions of everyday life: business networking, law suits, religious activities, family life, cultural life of the literati, and public hygiene, for example.<sup>60</sup> Leisure constituted a major part of his everyday life, and he enjoyed traditional Chinese theater (Ch. *kanxi* 看戲), banquets (Ch. *yanyin* 宴飲), and geomancy (Ch. *guanqi* 觀奇, or *kanshengshui* 看風水). Zhang had been well schooled in Chinese "old learning" before Japan's take over, and thus he took up poem and verse intoning, and book reading. Moreover, he was candid about his love making (Ch. *xing* 性) and his desire for "affection" (Ch. *ai* 愛).<sup>61</sup>

A native of Huludun 葫蘆墩 (today's Fengyuan 豐原), Zhang served on local committees for more than two decades. These committees were in fact quasi government units, set up for the management of such affairs as land and forest surveys, tax collection, agricultural improvement, town assemblies, irrigation, and judicial reconciliation. His diary is the only surviving document of a *hosei* 保正 (Ch. *baozheng*), who headed a local unit of

58 Lü 2000, Li 2009. Huang Meier (2004) terms this phenomenon "mirrors of multiple modernities." See also Su 2005 for his elaboration of the view that holds print capitalism to be "a mechanism for space imagination." For visual culture and identity in colonial Taiwan, see Kikuchi 2007.

59 See, in particular, conference papers on "Diaries and Taiwan": Wang Jianchuan et al. 2005; Xu et al. 2008; Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Taiwanshi Yanjiusuo (ITH) 2012.

60 Shi 2004. The conference volume on Zhang's diary was edited by Wang Jianchuan et al. 2005.

61 Lü 2005, pp. 7–18.

the *hokō* 保甲 (Ch. *baojia*).<sup>62</sup> Of all the positions Zhang occupied, it was his role as *hosei* that has frequently been marked out for attention in diary studies. As *hosei*, Zhang frequented his town office, even on days without official assignments, since town and village offices also served as points for social networking and information exchange. For Taiwanese, another nexus of power was the local temple where religious festivals were held, traditional Chinese plays performed, and various political or social gatherings took place. Zhang frequented the local temple Cijigong 慈濟宮. He was actively involved in the temple's major festivals, and is now remembered for his devotion to temple reconstruction projects. In Taiwan, involvement in temple activities was, and still is today, a symbol of social status.

Zhang's curiosity was clearly boundless, and his roles both as community leader and as local functionary afforded him access to many interesting official events. As his diary reveals, Zhang attended at least four exhibitions. He was particularly interested in Western mechanical devices, which he came to know via Japan. Prior to 1918, Zhang faithfully recorded his daily activities in his diaries. His note taking habit conformed to the week system Japan had introduced to Taiwan, but Zhang's everyday life was not regulated by the Gregorian calendar. In fact, it was moderated by both solar and lunar calendars. He handled public affairs on weekends and he often met people at night. In brief, his diary does not reflect much difference in his life style between weekdays and weekends, or daytime and night. The week system existed only as a superficial temporal unit for Zhang, who successfully accommodated his everyday life to both calendars.<sup>63</sup>

Zhang's partiality to old-fashioned Chinese theatre (Ch. *xiqu* 戲曲) can be explained partly by traditional upbringing. While the colonial government initially honored the "old customs" of Taiwan society, it attempted to alter some. The interwar period witnessed a series of social reforms, from cutting queues and banning foot-binding in the 1910s to improvements in living conditions and social customs in the 1920s. Until the mid-1930s, when the Government General began to intervene in religion and culture, it was up to local governments to cooperate with local elites. "Old plays" were singled out for reform after war broke out in July 1937, because they offered a stage for contesting both Chinese identity and Japanese identity. Zhang Lijun's diary reveals that he accepted the new policy of theater reforms with little hesitation.<sup>64</sup>

Zhang did not oppose old plays per se, but he opposed such plays as Taiwanese opera (Ch. *gezaixi* 歌仔戲), which he considered morally corrupt and socially harmful. He identified in the reforms possibilities for edification (*kyōka* 教化). In negotiations over local disputes and legal matters, his understanding of the Japanese model for cultural reform as progress coincided with his Confucian view of "moral influence" (*fūka* 風化).<sup>65</sup> After all, the degree of "success" in social reform depended as much on Taiwanese coming to terms with the "colonial modern," as on the policies engineered by the colonial government.

Zhang's diary shows that Taiwanese conceptions of time and space, such as the week system that regulated work and leisure, had gone through fundamental changes:

62 Elsewhere I have discussed in detail the *hokō* system as a neighborhood organization and its importance as a supplementary police force in the context of Japan's colonial rule in Taiwan. See Ts'ai 1990 and 2009. Suffice it to say that, by the mid-1910s, the *hokō* system had been well integrated into the police administration, and was indispensable in enforcing almost all aspects of colonial policy.

63 Lü 2005.

64 Wang Jianchuan 2005.

65 Wang Zhihong 2005, Chen 2008.



routinization, standardization, and urbanization. This new representation of the everyday, as Utsumi's diary also testifies, meant that the tempo of life had been quickened. The "age of the masses" had already arrived.<sup>66</sup> A consumption society was quickly emerging, and it appealed to people's desires and imagination. Needless to say, the Government General of Taiwan played a crucial role.

The diary of Zhang Lijun also reveals how he was coopted by local government to implement hygiene policies, which involved mice catching and extermination, at a time when pestilence threatened to devastate his hometown. The initiative to carry out hygiene policies began in 1902, as the plague began to spread in Taiwan. Local colonial governments by and large resorted to two counter-measures. One was to offer rewards to those who caught rodents; the other was to impose compulsory quotas on each locality: every household was obliged to turn in a fixed number of rodents within a specified time span in accordance with local *bokō* rules (*bokō kiyaku* 保甲規約). In his diary, Zhang documented his involvement in carrying out such hygiene policies.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, Zhang Lijun's diary provides many details of how the policing of hygiene was conducted at a grass-roots level.

### *Hygiene policies and the diary of Lin Xiantang*

Hygiene was a recurring issue in almost all extant Taiwanese diaries.<sup>68</sup> In modern society, health is not only an individual matter; it is a government affair. In modern Japan, moreover, "public health" was a contentious ground for national survival. The Japanese concept of "hygiene" was different from that of the Chinese in that the latter gave priority to physical integrity and life continuity, and stressed the importance of prevention over treatment.<sup>69</sup> Taiwan under Japanese rule was no exception to the rule that hygienic theories helped shape colonial policies, which in turn affected the spatial structure of social life and the formation of self-identity. Japan's concern over sanitation in Taiwan, based on consideration for social order, began in the initial years of colonial rule. The colonial government was empowered to enforce public hygiene, and in the treatment of contagious diseases, it resorted to coercive methods. The diary kept by Lin Xiantang reflects how he came to terms with this hygienic technology.

Lin Xiantang was a faithful follower of "Western" medicine, and he saw doctors qualifying in it. He believed in adopting preventive measures for the sake of public health. His knowledge of the "medical modern" was shaped in the colonial years. As a prominent leader of the Taiwanese Nationalist Movement, Lin related the physical body to the colonial politics of Taiwan. Over the course of the 1920s, he articulated his view of "building the physical body for self-rule." That is, even as Lin sought to develop his physical body, he was obsessed with improving the political treatment of Taiwan within Japan's colonial empire. Both the physical body and the political body were for Lin a battlefield for self-rule of Taiwan.<sup>70</sup> Taiwanese resistance against policy implementation and their criticism of the colonial government, however, was mostly directed at the level of implementation; it did not rise to the level of theoretical discourse.

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66 Takemura 2004.

67 Fan 2008.

68 Ruth Rogaski points out that "hygienic modernity" is a key concept for approaching the understanding of the East Asian modern. See Rogaski 2004, p. 220.

69 See, for example, Liu 2001.

70 Fan 2008, pp. 742–43.

Since the opening of treaty ports in 1858, Qing Taiwan had been increasingly integrated into the world economy. Foreign merchants and missionaries arrived in Taiwan, bringing with them foodstuffs from the West such as cookies, condensed milk, champagne, and candies. These were expensive, and were usually only given as gifts on special occasions. After the turn of the twentieth century, the Japanese gradually changed their culinary culture, and they began to introduce Western foods into the everyday life of Taiwanese families. Popular food items included hams and dried beef made in Yokohama, butter, and jams.

The diary of Lin Xiantang reveals that “the West” was for its author neither an abstract concept, nor simply a signifier of things modern. Rather, Lin struggled, grasped, and selectively accepted the meanings of the West via his daily activities. For example, his family’s frequent exposures to the West led Lin to accept Western foods readily, but not in order to display his elite status, or for reasons of taste. Lin’s diary reveals that his accommodation to Western food was related to nutrition.<sup>71</sup> The scholar Chen Yuzhen has used the diaries of Lin Xiantang and Huang Wangcheng to compare their dietary habits. Lin Xiantang, who was from a wealthy and prestigious elite family, was more exposed to things in the West (medicine, golf, horse-riding, operas, plays, as well as music and movies) than Huang, an elementary school teacher.<sup>72</sup>

Diary studies suggest that assimilation in everyday life tends to develop into a hybrid form, as it is rooted in culture and based on practical daily needs. After all, colonial modernity came to be established only when the colonial people began to take the value system of the colonizers for their own use.

## Conclusion

[T]he modern is always articulated in particular contexts. Everydayness is that temporal space where modernity—the streetlight system—meets with countless individual, contingent conditions....The seemingly insignificant details and repetitive patterns of daily life serve as sites from which to unravel the cascading efforts of much larger, systemic changes.<sup>73</sup>

As with Korea, “colonial modernity” has become a catchword in Taiwan studies since 2000. Colonial modernity refers to every aspect of one’s daily life, or “everyday modernity.” As a discourse, everyday modernity concerns the reconstruction of colonial space, which displays Japan’s colonial modern. Leisure constitutes the core of this discourse, and it involves more than the history of golf, dining, sports, travel, theaters, or hotels and inns. As a space, leisure has to be examined in juxtaposition with other social realms such as office work and family life. In its extremity, the leisure world was an on-going process of alienation, but it also constituted a critique of the established world of labor or work. Everyday life served not only as a source for “refracted modernity,” but also as a space for cultural critiques.

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71 Chen 2010.

72 Chen 2010.

73 Goldstein 2006, pp. 8–9.

Taiwanese diaries offer insights into a particular case of everyday modernity. Leisure activities were aimed not so much at recreation as reinforcing social networking. Social networking was at issue here, as was gender, power, money, class, or race. The appeal of diaries thus has to be explained by a broader interest in everyday life. Our world is part of—not external to—everyday life. “Everyday life” as we know it is never perfect. To treat the realm of the everyday as silent is to deny both its problematic as a discourse and its potentiality for generating a counter-discourse.

A diary is by its inherent nature personal and private. But once made public, it immediately becomes both a means for the claim of one’s subjectivity and an object for public inspection. In Taiwan, the practice of diary taking has been complicated by the search for a national identity in the shadow of colonial legacy. The information provided in diaries has proved to be a new source for reconstructing the history of colonial Taiwan. This trend of discovering diaries as Taiwan studies, in other words, reflects both the optimism and the anxieties of the post-martial-law generations as they seek self-identity just as the attempt to construct a “national” identity in Taiwan seems to be all but impossible.

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