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Authoring the Tadaki Family Photo Album

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Authoring The Tadaki Family Photo Album

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
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By Sancia Nash

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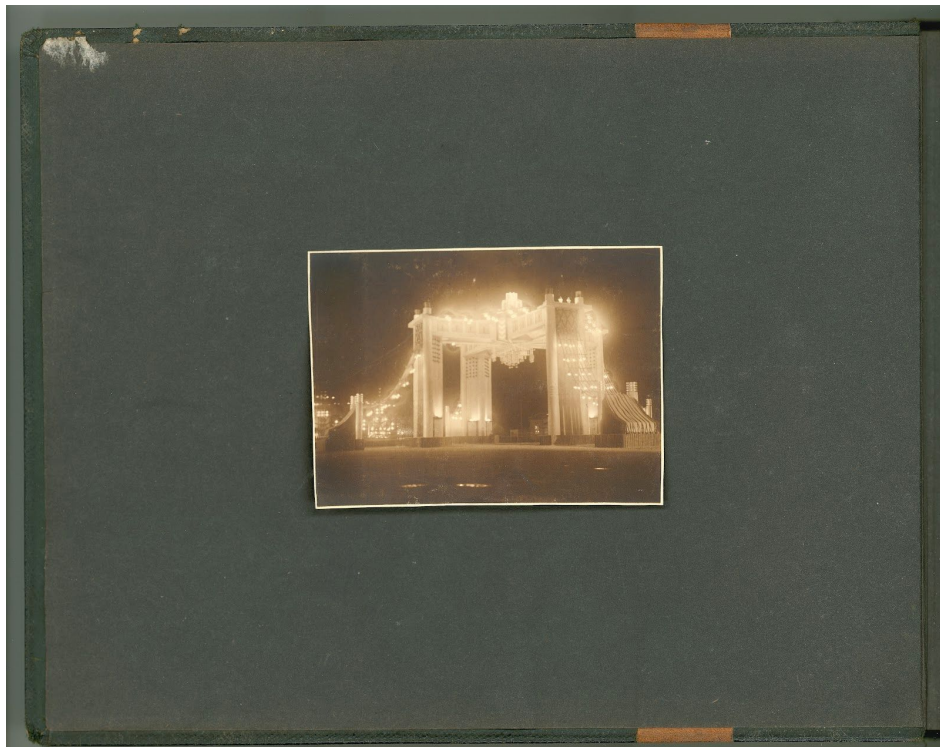
Dedicated to my mother Keiko who taught me how to take in the world. Thank you to my father Gordon; my sister Aily; my advisor Yuka; my grandparents Setsuko and Kohei; to all my friends at Bard: Mady, Shahong, Cat, Carl, Lili, Lucy, Bruno, Stephanie, Kamehana, Nat, Alethea, Peymaan, Raphael; and Maui, the island that gave me life for eighteen years.

CONTENTS

| | | |
|---------------------|--|----|
| Introduction | Opening The Domestic Archive | 1 |
| 1 | Shanghai's Bund Through the Looking Glass | |
| 11 | Futami Plays the Role of Man | |
| 2 | Memory And Youfuku: "Sites of Agency in Globally Defined Fields Of Possibility" | |
| 31 | Extending the Boundaries of Colonial Power and Nostalgia Without Memory | |
| 3 | Silences in a Web of Glances | 47 |
| | The Archive Designed to Direct My Attention Away | |

Introduction: Opening the Domestic Archive

Baba, my grandmother and I sit in the tatami prayer room looking through old family photographs. These photographs come in shoeboxes stored in the closet, seeing the light of day once a year during my visits. We spend hours looking, usually after breakfast when my grandfather Jiji goes off to work, with the pictures spread about in concentric circles around us. I ask about the relative pictured and she always has a story and some gossip. When my grandmother brought out a small brown album last summer, I remember feeling its weight—the sort of weight that loose photographs lack. I let my hand run over the soft black leather cover; Baba says her mother Kau made this. I tried to recall Kau's face—I had visited her once before she passed and had seen pictures of her. Baba flips the cover; centered on the first page is a photograph of a steel structure emanating light. It stands with four right angular arms meeting at an apex; balls of light drape across its steel body, and from its base, light beams shoot up



toward the dark sky. The thing seemed to breathe, its steel muscles pulsating and illuminating the night.

Baba kept turning the pages—a woman looks back at me with big eyes and a soft expression. This must be Kau. She is captured in kimono amidst idyllic landscapes dotted with matsu trees. Later in the album, she appears in Western dress aboard a ship, arriving in a foreign metropolis; the trees have changed: London planes. Babies are born, cradled by Kau and her domestic servants. There appears to be some chronology to the album. Baba counts the years on her hands, as if the physical movement stirs her memory. She calculates the years her family lived in Shanghai based on the birthdates of her older siblings. Harumi and Yasuko were born in

Shanghai Taisho 14 (1925), Showa 1 (1926).



In the winter of 2017 Baba shared with me a late 1920's photo album assembled by her mother Kau. It depicts her life abroad during her husband's two-year term at the Shanghai branch of the Bank of Taiwan. In these pages I found my gaze returned by deceased family members, and I grew attached to their uncanny looks. I *felt* as if I'd met them-- but I knew nothing about their lives. The next summer I began recording conversations with Baba around the photographs, hoping to uncover a family history. Baba, not yet born at the time of the photographs' capture, could not have possibly remembered those moments. However, she often spoke as if she had. She recognized the places, and the people and mapped them onto the family's oral histories. Baba

acted as the family archivist, intermediary and gatekeeper of the Tadaki family album. With her help, the still images came to life, and I could imagine their journey to Shanghai.

I started seeing dreams where I myself occupied the spaces within the frames: on the ship, in the tennis court. These subconscious encounters impelled me to find films shot of the city in the 1920's. Yuklov Bikleh, a Russian filmmaker, shot a documentary called "Shanghai Document" in 1927—the same year written on the back of a photograph of Kau on the ship, Katori Maru, en route to Shanghai. Another resource that built my visual understanding of the time and place was the online archive, "Virtual Shanghai". In situating my family photographs against a wide collection of public photographs, I managed to find the names of specific buildings, streets and parks. I often found photographs of the same space captured from different perspectives, allowing for a filmic rendering of the place in my mind. My findings occasionally contradicted Baba's accounts and allowed us more room for speculation. Remembering became a productive dialogue between Baba, the family album, the public archive and myself.

My process in writing the ethnography and making the film was an intertextual one: shifting between registers allowed for a playful speculation of the album. Concepts from the ethnography served as a structuring force for the film while the film's editing process (the development of rhythmic and visual grammar) led to unexpected ethnographic insights. This process should guide the experience of the reader of this multimodal ethnography. By multimodal, I mean an anthropological approach that draws on various mediums of knowledge production. This framework intentionally dismantles the supremacy of the written word and engages the representational possibilities (of)/in our contemporary moment (Collins 2017).

My project comes out of a broader field of anthropological scholarship on family albums. Like Annette Kuhn's approach in *Family Secrets*, I take the silences that constitute the making of domestic archives as evidence and speculate on the narrativization around images (Kuhn 2002). Kuhn analyzes photographs that depict herself as a young child, centering her analysis around interpersonal relationships. In contrast, my family album portrays the lives of my ancestors, three generations before my birth. Unable to rely on my own memories, I turn to my grandmother's oral history, historiography and public archives to animate the temporal and spatial coordinates that the photographs imply.

After New Year's dinner I brought out the family photo album and to my surprise it was the first time my aunts, uncles and cousins had seen it. My cousins Risa and Yuki huddled around me and gasped "kawaii" (cute) as I turned to the page depicting Kau dressed in kimono sitting in her family home in Higashi-Nakano. Why had Baba been so eager to share these images with me and not her other grandchildren? I am reminded of my difference: perhaps my mixed race identity is what reminds Baba of this moment in our family history, of the first days of foreign travel. This era of increasing global cultural exchange made interracial marriage thinkable for the coming generation. Baba might be tracing or situating my partial belonging in Japan to events prior to my conception— within an intergenerational story of Japanese and American imperialism in Asia. Growing up as a Japanese American settler in Hawaii I recognize my positionality as comparable to that of Futami and Kau's. My great-grandparents' living in Shanghai holds uncanny parallels to the circumstances of my upbringing. Shanghai's former International Settlement is marveled in popular culture as the "Paris of the East" much as the official narrative of Hawaii's admission to statehood celebrates multiculturalism and diversity.

These narratives of liberal multiculturalism and “East meets West” render the violent policies of imperialism invisible (Saranillio 2018).

I begin the first chapter, “Shanghai’s Bund Through the Looking Glass” within the historical frame of Japan’s informal colony in Shanghai, and my family’s own involvement in Shanghai through Japan’s colonial bank, The Bank of Taiwan. Following the British and the Americans, the Japanese acquired the same concessions as the Western nations-- including the privilege to access China’s rivers for international trade. Japan never secured political control of China as it did in Southeast Asia—instead, China operated as a site for Japanese market penetration and for Japanese recognition as a global industrial power. The bulk of the chapter situates my great-grandfather Futami as the photographer and speculates on his position of privilege. Futami captures Shanghai from the ocean and the top floor of the Taiwan Bank; Futami *looks at* the urban landscape with an all-seeing eye. To think about Futami’s detached colonial perspective, I use Donna Haraway’s concept of the “god trick”—the illusion made by modern visual technology of seeing everything while escaping representation (Haraway 2016). The Japanese ideographs used for the word photograph, *shashin*, (*sha*写 means to copy and *shin*真 truth), gives insight into the imagining of the camera’s objectivity. Arjun Appadurai writes in *Modernity at Large* that all historical actors experience the world from a partial perspective, contingent on processes of exclusion and isolation (Appadurai 2010). Using Appadurai’s visual analytic of a landscape to think about positionality, I speculate on Futami’s particular historical, economic, cultural, and political position within currents of global cultural exchange.

In Chapter 2, Memory And Youfuku: “Sites of Agency in Globally Defined Fields Of Possibility”, I interrogate the whole set of practices around the family photo album: its

production and narrativization. I do this by applying Michel-Rolph Trouillot's four stages of state archival production in his book *Silencing the Past* to the domestic archive: "the moment of fact creation, the making of archives, the moment of fact retrieval, the moment of retrospective significance" (Trouillot 2015). Trouillot suggests that every moment in the making and preservation of the archive is a gesture of exclusion and erasure— from Futami capturing the photographs, my great-grandmother Kau assembling the album, my grandmother's narration of its contents, to the writing of this ethnography. The gaps and silences within the pages represent a kind of shadow archive, what I then take to be *evidence*. I speculate on a photograph left out of the album, one that depicts the Tadaki family with Chinese domestic workers holding their new born child in Shanghai. These omissions render an idyllic family history and constitute a national imagining. While Kau's decisions dictate Baba's narrativization, she also draws on transnational histories and images to construct memories. In the second half of the chapter I write about a photograph of my great grandmother, Kau seen amongst other wives of bankers in British tennis dresses. British style uniforms were first worn by navy and army officers and historically tied to Japan's militarization and modernizing reforms. Shortly after, the Japanese elite adopted western style *yōufuku* to access colonial authority and perform their modern identity. The Japanese elite and military reterritorialized *yōufuku*—extending the boundaries of colonial power once only reserved to western powers. The Japanese subversion of western style dress and Baba's access to a collective memory operate as sites of agency within "globally defined fields of possibility" (Appadurai 2010).

As a whole, this project creates a world outwards from the photographs. An attempt at time travel that pushes the limits of what is said and unsaid in the frames. By time travel, I do not

mean an escape from the present into a time capsule of the past, but rather points of connection that emerge from a perspective in the present--looking back. Constellating a web of glances, I hope to spark new stories and break the affect of spatial and temporal alienation inherent in the archived past. My film and this ethnography operate as tools to imagine alternative possibilities to dominant and official narratives of modernization and westernization. In her book *When the Moon Waxes Red*, Trinh T. Min-ha writes: "The challenge is thus : How can one re-create without re-circulating domination" (Min-ha 1991, 15). Again and again I open the album, physically engaging with it more this past year than possibly anyone has since its inception. I refuse to let it close in on itself. New creases emerge and the glue loses its hold, reminding me that it exists as much *there* as it does *here*.

Shanghai's Bund Through the Looking Glass

My great-grandfather, Futami Tadaki, came from a working class family in Sendai, Japan. Baba tells me he worked during the day and studied at night for his classes at Hitotsubashi University (formerly the “*Shōhō Kōshujo*” (Institute for Business Training)). After earning his degree, Futami worked as a clerk for the Japan's colonial bank, the Bank of Taiwan. His proficiency in English allowed him to rise through the ranks. *Baba remembers him as an English “jisho” (dictionary)*. When Futami's superior introduced him to Shiro Nakamura, a businessman at Mitsui Bussan (one of Japan's service firms integral in establishing international trading networks (Wray 1989, 31)), more doors opened for him. Nakamura quickly grew fond of Futami and arranged for him to marry his daughter, Kau. Despite the Tadaki family's working class background, Nakamura recognized Futami's potential in international business. Following their marriage in 1925, the bank sent Futami abroad to Shanghai.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the Bank of Taiwan had branches across mainland China, including in Shanghai, a nexus for international trade and banking. *Kaisha ha*, or bank employees like Futami, lived in Shanghai's International Settlement, the extraterritorial concession, for two to three year terms with their families (Fogel 2000, 51). It was in Shanghai that Kau and Futami first encountered an industrialized modern cityscape: neoclassical buildings, electric city lights, a giant clock crafted in the image of Big Ben. One could hardly discern the difference between Shanghai and Western port cities like London, or San Francisco; hence the nickname “Paris of the Orient.” Living alongside the British, French and Americans, the Japanese adopted Western styles and ways of life (Peattie 1984, 162). Beginning in Meiji-era Japan, appropriating Western material culture made one a *modern* subject; modernity was coded

as white (Haraway 2016). For Futami, this meant carrying a camera, a visualizing technology adopted from the West historically tied to militarism, modern medicine, capitalism and colonialism. Behind the camera lens, Futami performed the role of Man. The Japanese elite (in mimicking the Western colonial image) cultivated a new modern subjectivity—integrating Western values into their own structures of meaning.

Baba reminisces, looking at her father's photographs and 16mm films of Shanghai as a child. By the time Baba was born Futami's days traveling had come to a close. The family returned to Japan as World War II began to unfold.

I imagine them at home running reels of 16 eating pai-can—cans of pineapple, gifted by the Bank of Taiwan, the only sweet treat in the dead of the war. The windows are blacked out during the air raids, an image of neon signs in a foreign land flicker on a wall, dimly lighting the faces of the children. Baba fondly remembers these projections; she inherited a colonial nostalgia in this mediatic encounter. For Baba and her siblings the images made by their father exist as a testament—a testament to the Tadakis as forerunners of Japan's modernity. The pictures depict the mundane lifestyle of an elite family whose foreign ventures reinforce the national narrative of progress and rise of empire.

In my research I trace the marks of hegemonic power on the symbolic production of the Tadaki family photo album. The practices that surround the creation and preservation of this artifact render relations of domination invisible over time. It sets the parameters of one's imagination, determining what constitutes as objective reality. Raymond Williams in *Marxism and Literature* writes that the hegemonic, as a whole set of internalized practices, permeates the fabric of a personal "lived" life—symbolically and materially; it manifests as one's identity(-ties)

and relationships (Williams 2009, 110). Futami's mundane photographs of family life abroad appear as a passive record, an objective family history. The content is so intimate for family members—those pictured are our relatives—that it is taken as fact. Emulating harmonious family relationships and stable landscapes was and is part of the ruling class rhetoric (Dower 1981, 10). It chooses to remember some things while forgetting others. Baba, in the process of caring for the family photo album and sharing it along with its oral histories, forms her conception of herself, her family, and her relations to others. Baba's identity and relationships rely on the habitual maintenance of family album keeping. Both Baba's identity and the photo album exist not as crystallized things but a set of relations that inform each other. They appear as material facts but manifest as a process of continuous creation, allowing the ruling class to maintain hegemonic power. The capitalist and colonial systems that allowed the Tadakis to live an elite family life are diffused in the symbolic production of the personal: the writing of identity and family history.

By interrogating the whole set of practices around the family photo album, I hope to fracture its assumed objectivity. I begin by situating Futami's socio-economic, political and cultural background within Shanghai's ethos of cosmopolitanism. This moment of globalization was felt unevenly by different historical actors. Increasing global connections and the exchange of cultural material is made possible by processes of exclusion and isolation (Mbembe 2008). Arjun Appadurai in his book *Modernity at Large* uses the analytic of a visual scape to think about disjunctive flows of global cultural material (Appadurai 2010). Individuals experience these globalizing currents based on their particular historical, economic, cultural and political

positions, rendering parts of the “scape” visible while concealing others—one’s perspective is always partial, never total.

Futami’s partial perspective can be read as the particular arrangement of things in his viewfinder; his position within the scape is inscribed in the photographs. Imagining Futami looking through the glass viewfinder of the camera led to my intervention on Appadurai’s analytic of the scape for thinking about global cultural flows. In an increasingly commodified world, glass surrounds the individual, in the form of shop windows, high rises, camera lenses (Bao 2015, 94). The transparency of glass blurs interiors and exteriors to the eye, while simultaneously functioning as a barrier. Glass serves as a metaphor for the illusion of uniformly available flows in a globalized world: one’s imagined world is no longer confined to the local but extends beyond national and cultural borders. When it comes to traversing these boundaries, however, one can be met with the solidity of glass— impermeable walls. The Japanese elite living in Shanghai like the Tadakis, adopted Western ways of life, style, technology and ideologies, but ultimately failed to achieve whiteness: a *New York Times* correspondent once said “Japan, too, kept gunboats on all the reaches of the Yangtze but the Japanese were never a social asset there or anywhere else” (Peattie 1984, 194). This glass wall incited their dualistic racial identity: they differentiated themselves from the oppressive white colonists, while pursuing the same imperialist agenda in Asia (Koshiro 2003, 186).

Informal Empire in Shanghai

The British first occupied Shanghai during the First Opium Wars which ended with the signing of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. A series of “unequal treaties” thereafter led to the

opening of treaty ports affording extraterritoriality and most favored nation status to Britain, leading the way for its imperial counterparts to come. Britain saw China as a prospective consumer base for the export of their nations manufactured goods. Incorporating China into their economy—importing raw material from China and exporting British goods—would expand British capital (Duus 1989, xiv). Behind the laissez-faire rhetoric of opening China's market was a relation of imperialism. Unlike a trade agreement between two consenting nations, the British coerced China with its military and naval supremacy. The presence of gunboats secured “non-interventionist” financial diplomacy.

The United States quickly followed suit as they encountered a series of depressions that were said to be a result of overproduction. The consumer market at home could no longer support the pace of industrial production. The Americans turned to foreign markets, particularly China, as the solution to the surplus of American manufactured goods: Southern cotton textiles and oil. Knowledge of China's enormous population fed the American fantasy of a land overseas with untapped consumers. In an 1899 address a cotton manufacturer called China “our new far west”: a continuation of westward expansion across the Pacific. When there was no more “waste land” on the west coast, the administration looked out on the horizon of the Pacific Ocean, and dispatched ships to continue its path of conquest: “the seas now constituted the frontier, a vast safety valve to drain the nation's surplus production” (Jacobson 2005, 23).

Yellow Man's Burden

When Japan witnessed how Britain and America's “unequal treaties” threatened China's sovereignty, they meticulously studied Western technologies of control to circumvent their own

fate. In the latter half of the 19th century Japan underwent rapid industrialization and Westernization (Koshiro, 185). Emerging out of the Meiji era, the Japanese imagined themselves as a modernized nation ready to join Western powers in ruling the world. However, Japanese leaders were soon confronted with the impossibility of achieving whiteness, despite their psychological “enlightenment”: the Meiji restoration occurred at the height of scientific racism in the West. Westernization for Japan meant learning about their *empirically* proven inferiority to the white race. This rhetoric manifested in exclusionist immigration policies and the rejection of the “*Jinshutekisabetsu teppai teian*” the “proposal to abolish racial discrimination” by the League of Nations in 1919 (Dower 1993, 204). Japan’s development as a non-Western imperial power also, however, questioned Western hegemony and white supremacy.

African American intellectuals like W.E.B Du Bois had profound influence on Japan’s conception of themselves as modern “colored” subjects. Japan recognized that African Americans, regardless of their skin color, could be Westernized and intellectual—hope for their own efforts at modernization. During their visit to the United States in the 1870’s as part of the Iwakura Missions, the Japanese elite saw themselves in the face of black struggles: despite formal education in European thought and proof of their intellectual achievement, African Americans faced discrimination (Koshiro 2003).

As Japan pursued its imperial and commercial projects, the implicit racism of Western nations fueled their rise to power. Japan harnessed white racism to pit Asia against the West. Using the rhetoric of Pan-Asianism, Japan legitimized their own colonial presence in Asia. They framed themselves as the decolonizing paternal figure, there to take Asia back and lead it into the light of civilization (Duus 1989, xxvi). In this logic we hear something of a perverse double

consciousness (Koshiro 2003). Japanese identify with and desire whiteness; they understand themselves as ‘civilized’ but cannot be recognized as such by the pigment of their skin. This mental space produced a kind of “yellow man’s burden.” “Modern Japan’s dualistic racial identity developed as a tool for its imperialism, as it seemed to legitimize Japan’s status as a colonial power in the eyes of Asians as well as Westerners” (Koshiro 2003, 186). Japan’s “dualistic racial identity” was no better performed than in their neighboring country of China.

When the Japanese won the Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895), they appropriated the British framework of the unequal treaty for their own economic interests. The signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 granted Japan the most favored nation status like other treaty powers—validating Japan’s political and economic superiority over China. China’s defeat was proof of their failure to industrialize. Japan saw it their responsibility to lift them from their backward ways; Japan’s moral duty considering that they shared a “common culture and common race” *dobun doshu*. Japan also drew on parallel historical traumas; both were victims of Western naval powers—Commodore Perry’s gunboat diplomacy in Japan and the current state of affairs in China’s treaty ports (Duus 1989, xxvi). Japan’s civilizing mission attempted to conceal their economic motives—an imperial agenda not so different from their white counterparts.

Japan acquired the same concessions as the other Western nations including the privilege to access China’s rivers, like the Yangtze—a major nexus for international trade. Establishing trade with China meant a steady supply of raw industrial materials for the manufacturing of Japanese goods that were then exported back to China’s wealth of consumers (Duus 1989, xxii). The physical proximity of the nations ensured low shipping costs and cheaper labor. Unlike Japan’s colonies in Southeast Asia, most famously in Taiwan, Japan could not assert a monopoly

of trade or secure political control. Instead China offered a site for Japanese market penetration and global recognition as an industrial power. The multilateral treaty structure set a stage for the Japanese to perform their “modernization”—their Western counterparts were both their audience and their judges.

Japanese presence in Shanghai quickly grew—by 1920 it was the largest foreign community living in the International Settlement. The Hongkew district within the International Settlement, also called “little Tokyo,” provided a home away from home, replete with Japanese goods and establishments. A Japanese banker at the time could send his child to Japanese school, have fresh fish delivered from the port of Nagasaki, visit Japanese bathhouses and speak one’s native language with shopkeepers. Most residents were lower-middle class with the exception of the small circle of elite—mostly businessmen working in banking, shipping, and trading industries. These businessmen and their families would spend their leisure time at the “Nihonjin kurabu,” or the Japanese club, resembling those of the elite whites.

Misreading the Bund

“Baba where is this?”

“This must be upon arrival in San Francisco”

According to her story, her parents had just landed on the coast of San Francisco from Yokohama port. She speculated the year 1928: the year her older sister was born in Port Chester, NY and the year the Taiwan Bank relocated her father to the United States Branch following a two year term in Shanghai.

Baba had it wrong. The photograph was not of San Francisco but of the “Bund”, a road in Shanghai’s International Settlement. The East India Company who first used it as a towpath in the 1850’s named it the “Bund” meaning “waterfront embankment” in Hindustani (French 2010, 86). The same term was used for the ports of Yokohama and Nagasaki as they were being “opened” by the West. Situated alongside the Huangpoo river the road became the locus of commercial enterprise and naval strength. Over the late 19th and early 20th centuries the treaty powers built consulates, banks, hotels and business firms on the Bund. The neoclassical style of the buildings resemble London or New York: the western elite transplanted aesthetic signifiers of their home country. Stone columns and domed interiors echo ancient Greek and Roman forms—the same Western structures imposed on India and South Africa (Lee 2001, 9). The Bund fractures the distinct lines between ‘here’ and ‘there,’ East and West. Western cultural signs appear dislocated from their natural territory, splintering the naturalized unity between culture and place.

Ackbar Abbas describes the cosmopolitanism that arose from Shanghai’s extraterritoriality as “a blurring and scrambling of signs all of which make urban signs and images difficult to read” (Abbas 2002, 772). The signs that were disjunctive in real time are also scrambled in the domestic archive. So much so that when I encounter the family album, or when my grandmother reads the photograph for meaning, the images are too difficult to read.



Aside from Baba's claim that the photograph was taken in San Francisco, the "Palace Hotel" sign on the far right building was the only textual reference to narrow my search. The bottom right photograph captures a sliver of water in the foreground, situating the photographer from the boat approaching the port. I followed the San Francisco coastline on Google Maps in an area labeled "Embarcadero"—meaning embankment in Spanish. Only later did I realize this strange coincidence. Shanghai's "Bund" also means "embankment" in Hindustani; both the Bund and Embarcadero are commercial districts within port cities. San Francisco the "Paris of the West," and Shanghai "Paris of the East": sister cities divided by the Pacific (Miller 2012, 5).

Shanghai's cosmopolitanism is not a product of utopic and equal cultural exchanges but "(Globalization) a set of processes that are refracted, splintered, and cracked—'a matter of highly selective and spatially encapsulated forms of connection combined with widespread disconnection and exclusion'"(Mbembe 2008, 5). The International Settlement and the French Settlement cut into the old Chinese city, dividing it into two sections, North and South: Zhabei and Nanshi districts. In these peripheral areas, Subei refugees lived in slums—shacks made of industrial debris (Honig 1992, 1). The glamor of the Bund depended on the poverty of these slums: "a city of forty-eight storey sky-scrapers built upon twenty-four layers of hell" (Wakemen 2011). Individual, cultural, and national borders are made of *glass*—interiors and exteriors appear fungible but maintain real physical boundaries. The effects of globalization take on the transparency of glass: it gives an illusion of total visibility but there are always a layer(s) of mediation.

Glass serves as a metaphor for thinking about the disjunctive flows of cultural symbols and goods in a metropolitan context. Arjun Appadurai in his book "Modernity at Large" uses the analytic of the landscape to consider the uneven circulation of global cultural material: actors experience these flows according to their particular histories, socioeconomic and political positions. I introduce glass walls to Appadurai's model of -scapes; the intervention emphasizes the illusion of uniformly available (transparent) flows. In attempting to traverse the landscape, one finds the body "spatially encapsulated" between glass walls. *She gazes forward at an object on the horizon; he takes a few steps towards it; a hard surface repels the body backward. What they see they can only touch with their eyes.* Walter Benjamin, among other scholars, writes about the emerging "culture of glass" and its impact on everyday life: transparency as an

architectural and perceptual medium promised democratic ideals of visibility and accessibility. Glass blurs the distinction between inside and outside spaces, introducing a unity of interiors and exteriors: “inner and outer became apparent at once, like the front and side of a cubist painting” (Burgin 2006, 146). One simultaneously sees the layer of glass and what sits behind it, deep and shallow spaces bleed into one another. The promise of totalizing vision ultimately acts as a barrier. One’s perspective looking *out* or *into* or from *within* these patchy landscapes form what Appadurai calls *imagined worlds*: groups and individuals no longer confined to a local imagined community, imagine themselves in relation to multiple global entities (Appadurai 2010, 33).

The effect of perceptual transparency can be understood in an anecdote that Lee-Ou-Fan Lee gives of Ye Lingfeng, a modernist Chinese writer. He recalls wandering the streets of the French and International Settlements looking through shop windows:

In his reminiscences Ye Lingfeng recounts how his mind was fired up when, as he peered through the display window of one such bookstore, he spotted Joyce’s *Ulysses* published by the Shakespeare and Co. bookstore in Paris; he immediately bought the book, which cost U.S 10, at the unbelievable price of 70 cents (Lee 2001, 35).

From the outside street Lingfeng’s eyes move inside—inside a world beyond the boundaries of the local. Introduced to Shanghai during the treaty port era, glass radically transformed the perceptual experience of the urban environment. The Chinese nicknamed the extraterritorial spaces “glass worlds” for the overwhelming abundance of glass in department stores, movie theatres, and dance halls (Bao 2015, 220). In a commodified world, glass served as the medium for the display of commodities; the display window made the commodity desirable and maintained a social divide (Bao 2015, 200). These commodities, as we can see in the case of Yingfeng, are not only wrapped up in economic forces but the cultural and political.

In his book “In/Different Spaces,” Victor Burgin writes, “In the mediatic encounter, there is permeability between ‘layers’ such that interior and exterior, here and there are simultaneously affirmed and confused” (Burgin 2006, 154). Lingfeng’s “mediatic encounter” of Western literature renders the space between his subjectivity and another’s porous. An unfolding of the psychic boundaries occurs; Lingfeng integrates the embodied identity of others for his own (Burgin 2006, 152). Lingfeng’s reading of Ulysses ties him to a world literature (Lee 2001, 35). Modernist Chinese writers like Lingfeng incorporated Western material culture into their own structures of meaning, producing distinctly modern Chinese work. In the mediatic encounter, Lingfeng and others participate in the consumption of Western thought, recognizing themselves as part of a global public—while being radically excluded in Shanghai’s white spaces.

Embedded in these Western cultural products were the twin ideals of progress and rationality, which fueled expansionist logics and produced what we know as the modern nation state. Lee suggests that the Chinese imagined their new modern nation through “dissemi-Nation”; she draws a connection between the circulation of both foreign and modern Chinese texts to China’s renewed nationalism. It was through the writing of authors like Yinfeng that the public absorbed Western values and desires, principles like “new culture” (xin wenhua) and “new epoch” (xin shidai)—the second derived from the Japanese word *jidai* (Lee 2001, 44).

The Bund through the Looking Glass

From the steamship, you look at the Bund through your camera’s viewfinder. The glass window gives you ultimate vision; the god trick of all the wandering eyes that have come before you. The shutter clicks and you burn the buildings onto two dimensions.

Between Futami and the Bund is glass, dividing and mediating. The glass window deceives the eye, making it believe it sees for itself. To collect a better knowledge of the material world of Shanghai in the 1920's I began collecting images through an online archive called Virtual Shanghai. The Center for Chinese Studies of the University of California, Berkeley and the Institut d'Asie Orientale (CNRS-University of Lyon) collaborated to build a virtual library of "Shanghai in Images". On the first page of images, ten pictured a stretch of buildings identical to my great grandfather's. Labeled under "Bund," these photographs captured a particular segment of the street; they listed the names of the buildings: Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, the Customs House and the Palace Hotel.



In fine black ink, my great-grandmother contextualizes the buildings: 「左の高い建物が銀行です」: “the tall building on the left is the Bank. The photograph on the right says ‘Looking from the top of the bank building.’” The bank was not the Bank of Taiwan, like I had assumed, but Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. This British colonial bank helped

the Japanese government take up the gold standard, and make the yen the predominant currency in Asia (Horesch 2009, 74).

A variety of angles depicted this strip of the Bund: from the Huangpoo river, along the road looking south, within the wharves, from the building. Despite differences in camera angles, all the photographs were taken from relatively the same height and distance: from a boat or building. This optimal zone comfortably hovers between a birds eye and street view—simultaneously removed and within the the scene. The subject's physical mobility produces a gap between the subject and the object— making it (the object) observable. An observer at such a remove captures a sweeping gaze over the urban landscape. Futami taking his snapshot from a boat in the Huangpoo river, sailed amongst the steamships of foreign navies. His nautical perspective allows us to imagine the view from imperial gunboats—vessels hovering the coast like sharks protecting their nation's share of the China market.

Futami's amateur photographs of the Bund exist as part of a repertoire of archived photographs of the Bund. Putting the photographs beside one another forms a glimpse of a particular historically situated imagination—one in which snapshot photography offered a new form of communication: a visual language of the everyday. This imagined world is possible by what Abbas calls the configuration of global flows of technology: the techno-scape. Futami's photographs exist within a global web of "Kodak moments," and a web within a web of histories of colonial photography. Their colonial context entangle them in a history of surveillance by imperial state institutions. The Japanese adopted the photographic medium from the West among other technologies of control for their own imperial projects (Allen 2014, 1011).

The God Trick

In the history of anthropological discourse the anthropologist's ability to move between places is recognized as quintessentially metropolitan and Western (Appadurai 37, Tsing)—enabled by their affluence and technological “prowess”. The white male anthropologist assumed a position at the center of the panopticon, observing culture with an objective eye: “colonial panopticism” (Tsing 1993, 32). The adventurous modern subject existed in contradistinction to the mentally and spatially confined “native”. Their assumed difference legitimized the implicit hierarchy in the production of knowledge and representation of others. In addition to maritime navigation, visual technologies that emerged out of modern science replaced the eye of God with that of Man. Man claimed the position from above, the center and nowhere, “to represent while escaping representation” (Harraway 2016, 581). This perfected vision presented itself as an unmediated gaze without a body; totalizing, panoramic views appeared to record reality untouched. *The unmarked hides behind the glass lens, the camera turned away from his own body and towards the bodies of others: “the god trick of seeing everything from nowhere”* (Harraway 2016, 581). In the latter half of the nineteenth century Europe and America implemented this ideology of an all-seeing eye into state institutions for the discipline and surveillance of bodies, as well as the production of knowledge. Visualizing technologies became embedded in anthropological, military, and modern medicine practices.

The Japanese word for “photo” is *shashin* 写真; 写 means to copy or reproduce and 真, signifies truth or reality. The two ideographs give insight into Japan's first conceptions of photography when it was introduced by the Dutch in Nagasaki and later Perry's expedition (Dower 1981, 3). The word *shashin* invokes the medium as a harbinger of truth and

transparency. Hyper-visibility and exposure come to represent *reality*. The introduction of the camera occurred in tandem with Japan's shift from a feudal to capitalist state; it is inextricably tied to its efforts to modernize, militarize, and colonize (Allen 2014, 1011). Meiji era Japan institutionalized visualizing technologies for the production of knowledge and as a mechanism of surveillance. Like Western empires, Japan used photography in their imperial projects—the earliest portraits were of aboriginal groups in Japan and in Taiwan by anthropologists (Allen



2014, 1013).

Futami's use of the photographic medium in 1920's Shanghai, ties him to a history and tradition of colonial photography. Although Futami's photographs were not produced for the state, how might the ideology of an unmediated eye be embedded in his aesthetics? How might he construct his own body as unmarked, and the bodies of others as marked? What do the formal similarities between the production of images surrounding the Bund by Western photographers

and that of Futami suggest? Who has access to visualizing technologies, the privilege to produce images? Futami's photographs is a mimicry of the Western style snapshot. Behind the camera lens Futami was able to transcend his skin color. Futami Tadaki plays the role of Man; taking the West's colonial and panoptic perspective as his own.

Difference in Spatial Terms

Victor Burgin in his essay "Geometry and Abjection" suggests that Western conceptions of space prior to the 1970's inform dichotomous representations of political relationships. They reinforce the simplistic idea that systems of domination operate one directionally: one group subjugates the other. Burgin denaturalizes the subject object positions implicated in hegemonic conceptions of space by tracing their formation in history. Renaissance perspective which undergirds the modern worldview takes Euclid's system of geometry and vision as its foundation: "space extends infinitely outward along three dimensions," and the eye is as an apex, of a cone in which objects exist outside of oneself (Burgin 2006, 39). This monocular perspective replaces the all-seeing position of God with Man—his power rationalized as scientific and objective. It produces only two possible positions: subject or object. Either you are the knowledge producing subject, or the object of study to be perceived and represented. In this model of vision the seer encounters the visible as predetermined objects, as sovereign, naked fact existing separate from the seer.

Another Place: Desire

Burgin problematizes this “cone of vision” model of perspective, one that forms a dichotomy between subject and object, inside and outside. He introduces the importance of “psychical space” for understanding perspective. Psychical space does not share the same spatial properties as geometric space—it blurs the lines between subject and object (Burgin 2006, 47). It considers vision as an entwinement of interior and exterior gazes. Not only does the voyeur look but he feels himself watched by the object:

I feel myself looked at by the things, my activity is equally passive—which is the second and more profound sense of the narcissism: not to see in the outside, as the others see it, the contour of a body one inhabits, but especially to be seen by the outside, to exist within it, to emigrate into it, to be seduced, captivated, alienated by the phantom so that seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen (Merleau-Ponty 139).

The phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty, who writes extensively on vision, suggests that in the moment that one looks, one simultaneously imagines one’s own body as one of the visible and tangible objects; “to exist within it”, it being the world. The seer comprehends the depth of the object, in reference to his own flesh. Flesh and the body serve as the language, the common element in which the seer looks. Merleau-Ponty’s conception of vision is based on the sense of touch. When one touches an object, its texture is available in the dual relation that the hand is also a thing amongst tangible. Similarly vision can be approached in much the same way. To see implies that one’s own body can be seen: this is what Merleau-Ponty calls a “profound sense of narcissism”.

Futami feels himself looked at by the Bund. Through his viewfinder he emigrates into, exists within, the scene of global capital flows. He is one of the elements caught in the world of foreign investments, and the colonial banking institution. Like in a mirror he encounters himself

in an external thing. Futami's own visible body forms the basis of his visual perspective. If we follow Burgin's logic, the arrangement of objects that fascinate the photographer reflect his own ego. The gap between subject and object closes, Futami exists as part of the Bund, constituting it and constituted by it. The image remains as a projection of Futami Tadaki's imagination; the modern buildings reflect Tadaki's desire to participate in its experience.

Partial Perspectives

The break with the theoretical dichotomy of subject and object positions in postmodern writing on perspective coincide with postcolonial approaches in ethnography. Colonial power is recognized as partial, susceptible to subversion and misreadings (Tsing 1989, Bhabha 1984). These scholars complicate the objectivity of the conventional white male ethnographer, and disperse agency on the part of the other. The ethnographer recognizes the self as inextricably linked to the subject of knowledge, and the ethnography as a product formed in their relation. Writing ethnography requires a kind of border crossing (Tsing 1989, 22). Implied in this overlap, or interaction is the unique positionality of both subjects: "The knowledge of an author, like that of the people about whom he or she writes, is always partial, situated and perspectivistic" (Tsing 1989, 15). In the metaphor of the scape with glass walls, every subject is always situated in a specific set of historical political and cultural relations, experiencing global flows accordingly. One's position in the scape determines the arrangement of things in the landscape: some shapes are emphasized while others go unseen; some surfaces appear in detail, others in abstraction.

Implicit in "perspective" is a dialectical relation between the gaze and that which it abjects. What is radically excluded in one's view of the scape allows for the production of

meaning. The symbolic meaning that arises from one's field of vision is contingent on the site of abjection: the vanishing point.

Lines demarcating the street narrow, meeting the sky at a single point on the horizon. The vanishing point imposes a structure on the rest of the objects. It is simultaneously a void, embodying all the lost information (the lost meaning) beyond the horizon that forms the abstraction of buildings. The grain structure of the photograph are vanishing points themselves, subsuming detail for the sake of emphasizing the contours of the Bund. If the image can be read as a text for understanding Futami's conception of himself—the buildings as his objects of desire—what is abjected so that Futami can imagine himself as modern?

“A passenger on the starboard side of a steamer sailing up the Whangpoo (Huang-poo) River in Shanghai in the mid-1930's could scarcely have failed to notice the serrated roofs, towering smokestacks, and loading docks of the great cotton mills along the opposite riverbank” Japanese owned cotton mills replaced formerly British. Machine spun/woven cloth and cotton (Duus 1989, 65).

Memory And Youfuku: “Sites of Agency in Globally Defined Fields Of Possibility”

I begin this chapter by speculating on the practices around the production and preservation of a domestic archive. Baba, born after the events captured in the album, relies on her imagination to narrativize the photographs. Using the approach shared by Annette Kuhn in her book *Family Secrets* and Michel Rolph Trouillot in *Silencing the Past* I attempt to recover the erasures in the Tadaki family photo album. In the second half of the chapter I explore the Japanese elite's adoption of western style dress, *yofuku* as a subversive act— a remaking of a

western cultural signifier to serve Japan's efforts to militarize and join other "modernized" western nations. The remaking of *yōfuku*, what Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson in their essay "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference" would call an instance of reterritorialization, allowed the ruling class to extend the boundaries of colonial power (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Both the Japanese subversion of western style dress and Baba's access to memory are made possible through global cultural exchange. However, as Appadurai suggests the field of possibility remains limited based on one's specific racial, cultural, socio-economic position.

Nostalgia without Memory

Trouillot suggests that material presences make and remake History: "Concrete reminders that the uneven power of historical production is expressed also through the power to touch, to see, and to feel, they span a material continuum" (Trouillot 2015, 45). Tangible historical artifacts assert an objectivity; what is accessible to the senses is taken as *real*. This material presence conceals its social relations: the practices that prolong its corporeal existence. The rituals surrounding the maintenance of historical artifacts elicit a continual "remembrance" of dominant narratives and histories. Archives produce *immortal* signs, fixed facts, that continuously inform historical production. Their undying presence obfuscates any memory in opposition to the dominant one.

Although Trouillot writes exclusively about state archives, the power of material traces in historical production applies to the domestic archive as well. Existing three generations after its

inception, the Tadaki family album continues to dictate how my family remembers and tells stories. It acquires authority over family history precisely because it is tangible.

Similar to the process behind the making of state archives, the family photo album undergoes rounds of production. Trouillot calls the first round “the moment of fact creation”: when Tadaki captured the event. The second moment, “the making of archives”—when Tadaki’s wife, Kau, printed, selected, then made arrangements and inscriptions on the images.



When the album was passed down to my grandmother, Baba, carefully stored it as a “concrete reminder” of her family’s historical past. The third and fourth moments— “the moment of fact retrieval” and “the moment of retrospective significance” can be understood as the instances in which my grandmother narrativizes and retells the family history in the presence of the domestic archive (Trouillot 2015, 26). In this stage the photographs function as a “trace or clue” for the activity of remembering (Kuhn 2002). Rather than existing as an impetus for some

ready made memory from the past, images spark a dialogue between past and present:

“Memories evoked by a photo do not simply spring out of the image itself, but are generated in a network, an intertext, of discourses that shift between past and present, spectator and image, and between all these and cultural contexts, historical moments” (Kuhns 2002, 128). Photographs do not in themselves elicit memory; they operate as a catalyst, unlocking access to individual and collective memories. The activity of remembering is contingent on a state of inbetween-ness. Memory then is text, the friction between material and immaterial, now and then made legible.

Appadurai suggests that in our contemporary world as a “global village”, nostalgia can be felt for a national and cultural past that is not one’s own. The circulation of images through old and new media allows for what Appadurai calls “nostalgia without memory”: the possibility of feeling a sense of longing for a past not lived. One’s desire for past things or places, is no longer contingent on one’s individual experience or bound to a national identity and history. The activity of remembering—wrapped up with desire and longing— does not require one’s direct participation in the past, but only the imagination. Memory engages the “imagination as a social practice...a form of negotiation between sites of agency and globally defined fields of possibility” (Appadurai 1996, 31). Baba relies on present images rather than a tangible past to narrativize her family history. Her work of articulating nostalgia and remembering without experience, constitutes a site of continual dialogue between album images, transnational history, and herself.

“これはママが十九か二十の時に。。。東中野のままの実家のお嫁に行く中丸の内で撮った写真だと思う。” (*I believe this photograph was taken when my mother was 19 or*

20 before her arranged marriage in the Nakamura household in her hometown Higashi-nakano).
 Baba puts her finger down on the edge of the photograph to trace the tatami floor.

She says “ここがずっと廊下になってて。” (This here was the hallway).

She goes on to explain the photographs on the right page: “これはもう洋服着てるから多分
 シャンハイかなんかに行った時じゃないかと思うのね。 (She's already wearing western
 clothing so it's probably from when she went to Shanghai”.

How does Baba generate memories from photographs captured before her time? She
 relies on clues like the hallway—the contours of the tatami floor, glass shoji—a familiar place in
 her own lifetime to reconstruct the memory. This moment of recognition places Baba into the
 scene, resurrecting the individual and collective memory of the house. Though Baba could not
 have actually witnessed her mother being photographed by her father, the familiarity of her
 mother's gaze coupled by the immediate presence of the interior of the Higashi-Nakano house



allows her to imagine the moment. Baba engages in a sort of investigative work comparable to a
 detective or archival filmmaker—she uses photographic evidence to speculate and weave

together a historical account. *In the activity of remembering she breathes life into bygone light.*

Baba's ability to simulate memories suggests that "to remember" is not contingent on one's presence: "Besides in its nature referring to events which cannot be retrieved or fully relived, then remembering appears to demand no necessary witness, makes no insistence on the presence of the rememberer at the original scene of the recollected event" (Kuhn 2002, 128).

If memory or the act of remembering does not require one's presence in the past but rather the present, what is a memory? Kuhn proposes that memory should not be recognized as an archive in the mind, but a position in the present looking back. Memory when understood as a perspective allows for a fluid relationship with the past—beyond the boundaries of one's own lifetime. Accessing the past then becomes less of an individual process and more of a collective one.

Mother, Motherland

If photographs in the album allow us to access memories beyond their frames, what is lost with the excised photograph or the event not captured? The existence of an archive is contingent on the cumulative and cyclical negation of certain people and places. Trouillot calls the four stages of archival production, a cycle of silences. Kuhn and Trouillot suggest that the gaps in the archive tell us as much about history as the tangible record: "What happens, then, if we take absences, silences, as evidence?" (Kuhn 2002, 14) Adopting this approach I attempt giving equal weight to that which is present and that which escapes the album. The *absent presences* help reveal the album's construction and preservation. I begin by looking at the images left outside of Kau's final arrangement of the album.

Baba after showing me the family photo album brings out a stack of photographs from the same time period. It appears that they were shot on the same roll of film but left out of the album's final layout. Among these, a photograph of the family with their domestic servants posed in the entrance of their home in Shanghai catches my eye. Kau is dressed in kimono and holds her newborn, her husband stands to her left in a suit and spats. To their right stands an older woman in kimono, who Baba points out is the same domestic servant frequently pictured in the album. Next to her, a man in a *changshan* robe carries Baba's brother and to his right a smiling young woman, also in traditional Chinese clothing. Baba looking at the young Chinese woman says "her hair is tied back—looks like it's braided behind her in a long queue.

Why did Kau choose not to represent her Chinese domestic workers but her Japanese worker in the album? Trouillot reminds us that "absence itself is constitutive of the process of historical production" (Trouillot 2015, 49). Without the absences, there could be no contained form (the album); silences allow for the production of meaning. How might the inclusion of a Chinese domestic servant threaten Kau's perception of herself as mother and her relation to others in the album? Kuhn claims that family archives are made to assemble a utopic set of personal relationships: "The history constructed is also an expression of a lack, and of a desire to put things right. What is being made, made up for, by the work of the album is the 'real' family that the child's parents could not make" (Kuhn 2002, 20). The family photo album serves to construct an idyllic history, one that compensates for its failure in real life. The decision to exclude the Chinese domestic worker and include the Japanese domestic worker, upholds the core image of a 'real Japanese family' and constitutes a national imagining through the family

album. The image of the Chinese domestic workers remain a trace of what Kau could not achieve: a racial purity within the household that reflected that of the nation.

Still looking at the image Baba says: 「昔話満州と言うところがあったのてしている？日本わるかったんじゃない。」 (Did you know there used to be a place called Manchuko? The Japanese must have treated the Chinese very badly at the time). Although Kau's decisions in the making of the album dictate Baba's narrative, she often takes notice of the unsaid. Informed by transnational histories and images, Baba works against the design of the album. Here she presents a critical view of Japan's colonial agenda and breaks Kau's silence.

Kuhn suggests that a psychical longing for fusion and oneness fuels the imagining of family and national histories: “historical imagination of nationhood has something about it of the acts of remembering shared by families and other communities, and also of the desire for union, for wholeness, that powers the psychical dimensions of remembering.” (Kuhn 2002, 169) Kuhn draws a symmetry between the family and the nation using the mother as a metaphor for the nation. Kau articulates the home as a microcosm of the homeland. Her construction of the Tadaki's cosmopolitan character in Shanghai through the album reflects Japan's desire for international recognition as a colonial power. The domestic archive bears the marks of Mother's psyche, a desire for the integrated seamless national story—a motherland.

***Youfuku*: Performing a Modern Japanese Identity**



“昔長い洋服をきてテニスしてたのよね。シャングハイじゃないの？台湾銀行の奥さんたちじゃない？”

“They used to play tennis wearing long western clothing. This is most likely in Shanghai...and they must be the ladies of the Taiwan bank” *Baba* says. We sit with a family photo album between us, open to a small black and white photograph, its edges bleached by time. Eight women are arranged in two rows within a garden. They wear matching Victorian clothing: white floor-length dresses, some of them tied at the waist, and white bonnets adorned

with flowers. The five women in the first row sit in a relaxed *seiza*—in their laps either infants or tennis rackets. Three others stand behind them, their arms at their sides. The two rows, five and three, form a symmetrical triangular composition; even the placement of their hands seem calculated. Wedged between them kneel two women dressed in kimono. While the women in *youfuku* are visible waist up, the two women in kimono are strategically out of view; they appear as extensions of the women in front.

The eight women with their hair cropped to their cheeks and dressed in *youfuku* are the wives of bankers at the the Bank of Taiwan. My grandmother first adopted western dress in the cosmopolitan context of Shanghai. The adoption of western dress by Japanese elite suggests a desire for the privileges afforded to the western identity; a way to access colonial authority (Sueyoshi 2005, 89). The first Japanese emperor to be photographed, Emperor Mutsuhito, wore Napoleonic dress for the occasion in 1872 (Cambridge 2011, 173). The West's political and economic power at the time dictated the aesthetics of modernity. Using the symbolic power of western colonial aesthetics, the Japanese performed a “First World” identity. To mimic the western style was to to encode their superiority and present a modernized image to the world.



In the 1850's army and navy officers began wearing *youfuku*—wool uniforms designed after British marines in Yokohama (Nakagawa 1963, 61). The Meiji government implemented western style military uniforms during a period of modernizing reforms expressed by the slogan *bunmei kaika* (enlightenment and civilization) (Cambridge 2011, 173). Thus the adoption of *youfuku* is historically tied to Japan's militarization in an effort to join other “civilized” (western) nations.

Shortly after, upper class women appeared in European dress at western social events. Up until the 1930's one rarely saw a Japanese woman in *youfuku*, unless she was elite and in the public eye. Even those women in the labor force still worked in kimono. The majority of the Japanese, regardless of class, strictly wore Japanese clothing at home; it was thought to be more comfortable and suitable for a Japanese lifestyle— one that required sitting on *tatami* in *seiza* (Cambridge). If we consider the possible years of the Bank Wives photograph (1927-1929), the *youfuku* and kimono signify a class difference. Those in kimono were most likely the domestic servants of the “bank wives” in *youfuku*. The domestic servants may have allowed upper class

Japanese women to take part in public life— and begin dressing in *youfuku* like their male counterparts.

Protection Through Mimicry

Gupta and Ferguson in “Beyond Culture” discuss how transnational flows complicate predetermined conceptions of cultural identity; cultural difference is no longer bounded to physical place. The blurring of fixed cultural signs creates a “problem”, an “uncanny familiarity” when *we present as others and others as ourselves*: “The problem of cultural difference is ourselves—as others, others as ourselves, that borderline” (Bhabha in Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 19). The Japanese women in *youfuku* depict a borderline in flux— hybridized subjects. The tennis *youfuku* is a mimicry of the British colonial image (Allen 2014, 1029).

Both as immigrants and in the context of the International Settlement in Shanghai, the Japanese failed to pass as white in western eyes (Sueyoshi 2005). What Homi Bhabha calls the “slippage” inherent in colonial mimicry, is revealed not only by their skin color but in their form of sitting. Sitting in *seiza*—sitting with legs folded directly underneath one’s buttocks— in western attire resists signification. It was precisely this failure— “almost the same but not quite, almost the same but not white”—by retaining racial and cultural ambivalence that differentiated them from the oppressive white “other” (Bhabha 1984, 130).

Junichiro Tanizaki in his book *In Praise of Shadows* writes “For the Japanese complexion, no matter how white, is tinged by a slight cloudiness” (Tanizaki 1977). Tanizaki recalls observing mixed crowds of western and Japanese women in *youfuku*, and how easily he could identify the Japanese even from afar. Beneath the layers of white powder, Tanizaki says

“they could not efface the darkness that lay below their skin. It was as plainly visible as dirt at the bottom of a pool of pure water”. The darkness cast from within the body seeps through white makeup, marking her as other. What Tanizaki claims are inherent shadows on Japanese skin reinforce difference in western eyes *and* in their own eyes.

Despite this failure, the Japanese adoption of western hegemonic forms (like *yōfuku*) also made them culturally close to the white ruling class and distanced them from the colonized Asian “other”. Gupta and Ferguson claim that displaced signifiers like *yōfuku* must not be recognized as the deterritorialization of space but *reterritorialization* (Gupta 1992, 20). The elite Japanese *reterritorialized* western dress for their own colonial and capitalist agenda. By reterritorialized, I mean that the Japanese extended the boundaries of colonial power—once only reserved to American and European powers: “ It was, however, the wearing of foreign styles in toto—a strategy characterized by Japanologist Basil Hall Chamberlain as 'protection through mimicry'—which vouchsafed sartorial parity for the ruling elite in their encounters with the outside world” (Cambridge 2011, 173).

“Physical location and physical territory, for so long the only grid on which cultural difference could be mapped, need to be replaced by multiple grids that enable us to see that connection and contiguity—more generally the representation of territory—vary considerably by factors such as class, gender, race, and sexuality, and are differentially available to those in different locations in the field of power.” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 20). Historically, social scientists have measured cultural difference based on physical location (Appadurai 2010). Postmodern theories writing in an era of mass media extended the meaning of “culture” to apply to practices shared by multiple peoples. In a globalized world, locating the construction of

cultural difference, requires “multiple grids” beyond physical boundaries: political, economic, gender and sexuality, race (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 20). Access to *youfuku* should not just be recognized as just the crossing of a racial boundary but also class. In their access to capital—by taking on a western worldview—the Japanese closed the economic gap between themselves and their western colonial counterparts. What becomes “uncanny” for the western ruling class is the proximity of the Japanese as a capitalist, colonial power.

Nakagawa writes that an economic boom during World War I marked the increased westernization of the country: “the slogan *bunka seikatsu*—literally “cultured or civilized life” actually meaning a Western style of life—began to be heard. “These people craved *bunka-jutaku* (cultured houses), *bunka shoku* (cultured food) and *bunka-fuku* (cultured clothes), and all this meant the same thing: Western ways were preferred.” (Nakagawa 1963, 65).

As I have outlined in the last two paragraphs, *youfuku* operates as a signifier that serves the hegemonic systems of capitalism and colonialism: “Western dress was a symbol of social dignity and progressiveness.” (Nakagawa 1963, 63). Western aesthetics coded economic and moral superiority. The garden scenery of presumably a tennis club, present a space of leisure and entertainment, separate from the political. As Williams suggest, the discreet signifiers not explicitly tied to systems of domination most violently produce and reproduce the hegemonic. The very materiality of the clothing masks its profound power over people’s perception of themselves, and others in the world. It is in material and cultural practices like these that the hegemonic confines our imagination. The adoption of the western dress allowed Kau and Futami to masquerade as archetypal colonial figures.



Baba points to a photograph of two young boys in woolen uniforms squatting on a lawn.

She says: 「みんなね学校がねぎょうせいってねフランスから来たカトリクの学校だったのよ。みんなフランス語が上手だったみたいよ、習って。」

私も、ほら小さい時しらいりと言うの、やっぱりフランスから来た学校なの。それで幼稚園の頃からあのフランス人のシスターたちがいっぱいいて朝あの幼稚園いくとボンジュール「ma sœur」と言わなきゃだめだったの。

(They all went to this Catholic school from France called Goosei. I assume they were good at French since they were learning it. I also attended a school from France called Shirayuri. Since preschool I was around many French sisters, and in the mornings we would have to greet them by saying “bonjour ma sœur”)

I have heard this story about Baba and her uncle's educations at French schools countless times. Why does Baba choose to reiterate Tadaki family ties to French missionary schools? Kuhn suggests that family photographs serve as a tool to situate the present self: “These traces of our former lives are pressed into service in a never-ending process of making, re-making, making

sense of, our selves-now” (Kuhn 2002, 19). It allows us, to return to a collective identity in order to position the self. If the activity of remembering stems from the psyche’s desire for union as Kuhn suggests, Baba’s retellings like her mother’s assembling of the album, are attempts at constructing a common past, a shared home and homeland. Baba creates an affinity between herself and her uncles; by tracing their educational background she implies their shared class and cultural background. Both Shirayuri and Gyosei were private single-sex schools and founded in the 1880’s by a French Catholic order, and popular among elite socio-economic families. Access to French language, culture and education was available to those of a particular field of power. Rather than a wholesale adoption of French culture, the ruling elite *reterritorialized* it as a symbol of wealth. This reterritorialization is comparable to the way in which Kau and elite Japanese women abroad wore *youfuku* to perform their nation’s colonial and capitalist power in Shanghai. The ruling class remade western cultural practices like a French education and *youfuku* to function as a signifier of socio-economic class. By establishing the French Catholic education as a family value, Baba can speak about her family’s privilege without directly addressing it.

Western Tinted Eyeglasses



Masaki Tsuneo, in *Shokuminchi gensō* (*Colonial Fantasy*) uses the image of “western tinted eyeglasses” to speak about Japanese colonial mimicry: “Before their nation began to invade Asia, the Japanese learned to look at Asia anew through Western-tinted eyeglasses. Almost four hundred years after the Europeans, Japan attempted to create a new “world” in Asia. It was called the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.” (Tsuneo cited in Tierney 2010, 140)

In Tierney’s analysis of Tsuneo’s metaphor of “western tinted eyeglasses” he points to the importance of a *visual mediation*. Beyond Japan’s adoption of western economic and political systems, the Japanese perceived the world through the optical lens of the western empire—a vestige of the first European explorer. The West rationalized colonization on the basis of a natural caste system, one that reduced the humanity of others—enslaved Africans—and elevated the white man (Trouillot 2015). This western gaze situates the knowing subject in opposition to the outside world, making it available as a resource and object of knowledge. The Japanese wearing western tinted eyeglasses, put themselves at the top of the ethnic hierarchy, above all of Asia. Using the hierarchical model of white supremacy, the Japanese structured an ethnic order for their own needs.

Like Tsuneo, Williams speaks of the hegemonic in visual terms. Williams emphasizes how hegemonic forms manifest *materially* in the very act of looking: “People seeing themselves and each other in directly personal relationships; people seeing the natural world and themselves in it; people using their physical and material resources for what one kind of society specializes to ‘leisure’ and ‘entertainment’ and ‘art’”(Williams 2009, 111).

The optical lens of the western empire manifest in the wearing of youfuku and Gyosei uniforms. These physical signs work to legitimize uneven colonial relationships. Tinted glasses

are real, controlling the ways that people see themselves and others around them. The production of Tadaki's images or "facts" remain a testament of this: frozen frames; reflections in tinted sunglasses. Tinted sunglasses are also worn during the construction and narrativization of the domestic archive. Baba wears tinted glasses as she looks at the image of her uncles wearing a Gyosei uniform. The glasses determine the contours of her imagination as she chooses to recognize and revere their shared Frenchness, symbolic of the Japanese upper-middle class. The woolen uniform immediately brings her back to those morning greetings at Shirayuri "*bonjour ma sœur*."

Silences in a Web of Glances

The writing of this ethnography is as much a part of the production and preservation of the domestic archive as Futami's photography, Kau's assemblage, and Baba's narrativization. It chooses to represent some photographs and histories while neglecting others. By speculating on specific signifiers around the album, I assign to them "retrospective significance"—what Trouillot calls the fourth moment in the cycle of silences. I make textual the processes behind the making of the album only through my own mediated eye. By virtue of documenting, I participate in the practice of fact production. The writing is an encounter between Futami's photographs, Kau's absent hand, Baba's stories and myself. I meet the gaze of my mother's mother and my mother's mother's mother through layers of glass. Glass, a metaphor for our specific historical, political, and cultural limitations, is the medium of our dialogue.

Li-hua carefully flips through the pages of the album. She stops at a series of photographs depicting a group of men ascending a mountain. They appear in what looks like

jinbei, traditional Japanese shirt and pants carrying flowers. Li-hua speculates that they may be collecting data and specimens on the new frontier: China. On the right side two rows of kanji write: “赤城山”. Li-hua stops to read the characters to herself, and suggests that the writing is Chinese not Japanese—pointing to the lack of hiragana and katana. At her computer she types in the characters to find a name for the chinese mountain. The results show the mountain Akagi in Japan.

China’s landscape appears countlessly in the album bereft of any Chinese people. These pastoral images naturalize the presence of the settler within the landscape under the same sort of logic with which the Hudson River School operated. The efficacy of these images to silence outlive their original moment of capture. I myself replicated some of the erasures inherent in the images—though I read from Chinese writers, I failed to speak to those with Chinese ancestry close to me. After a year of research, I speak with Li-hua Ying, a professor of Chinese language and literature at Bard College, my friend Shahong Lee and her mother Shawna Lee: those whose histories are implicated within the landscapes of my family photo album. To conclude I hope to break the loop of storytelling that exists between Baba, Kau and I by opening up the photographs to them. This collaborative speculation harbors new readings of the photographs beyond the Tadaki family context.

To undo the closures and parentheses that traditional historiography and ethnographic writing often make, I offer descriptions of photographs left out of my analysis in hope of rendering them at least partially visible for readers. By presenting some unfinished notes and impressions alongside the images I hope to provide a glimpse into a few more of the album’s secrets.



“You write west, garden, time”

Baba draws the characters on her palm

“Saionji look him up”

a leftist politician in the 20’s and 30’s

targeted by the military coup in 1936

his son is pictured beside Futami

Hands stiff in his trenchcoat.



She leans on the right arm of a white bench

As if centering herself between the pines

Kau sits smiling at me

(though unaware she was at the time)



Shawna and my grandfather tell me the same story

210 BC

Xu Fu and 500 boys and girls set sail
for the secret of immortality on Mount Penglai (Mt.Fuji)

“They appear on a hill wearing silks”

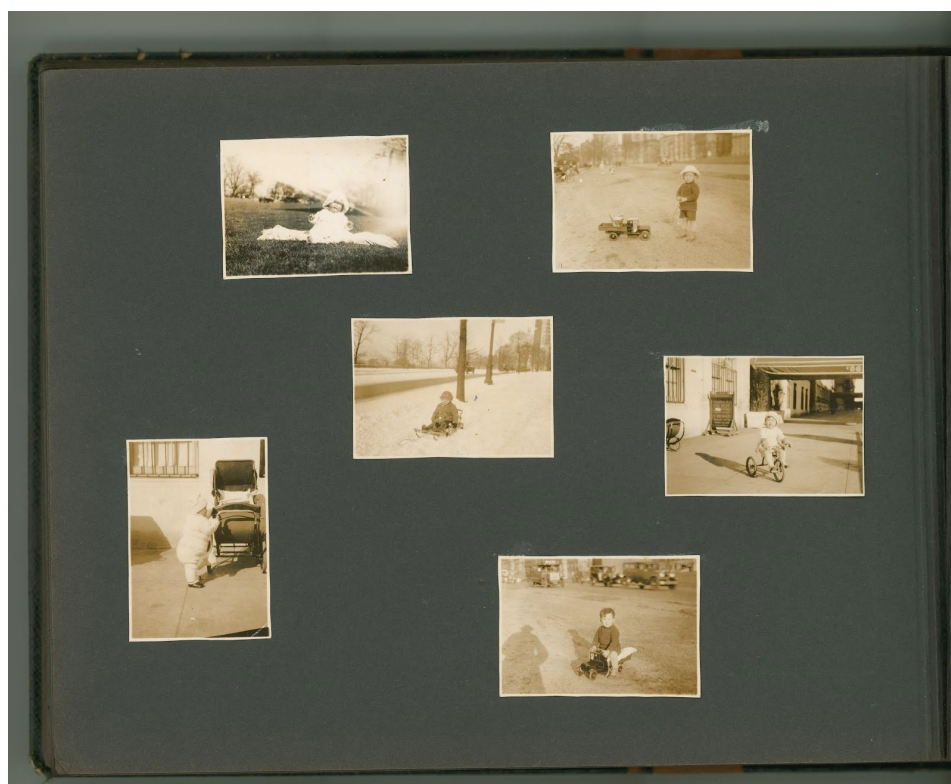
never to return.

On Kamakura beach,

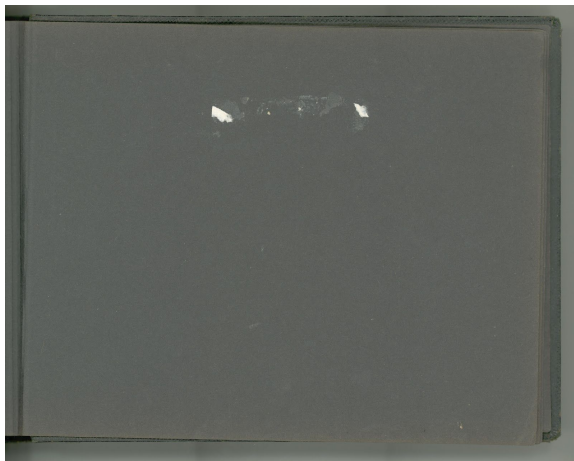
Kau dresses the children as sailors

they play naval games

keep watch for *gunkan* (warships).



He positions the boy,
steps back
amidst traffic
holds the shutter
(though unaware of his own shadow).



A black page with an uneven strip of white paper,

held by 90 year old glue

made during the war by rubbing rice.

A suggestion of a vertical photograph excised

by hand,

by one of two mothers,

the gatekeepers,

who on second thought deemed it unfit for

the eyes of their children and children's children



Hei-ichiro, a graduate of Beijing University

“he was very knowledgeable in Chinese history” Baba says.



they hold fish in their throats

for their master

Li-hua Ying tells me

Baby basket

cormorant fishing

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