

“Objects, memory and cultural identity in (re)construction”

「文物、記憶與文化認同的建構」國際學術研討會

Taiwan Historica, Nantou & Feng-chia University, Taichung, Taiwan

27-28-29 June, 2008

**The complexities of cross-cultural encounters embodied in Yuan-Li
grass-weaving craft and a local museum**

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Abstract

This paper examines and analyses a phenomenon, the combination of a local craft and a museum and its association with colonialism, decolonisation, and post colonialism, in contemporary Taiwan. The research is conducted by the method of social anthropology, and the field site is situated in Yuan-Li Township, Miao-Li County. Ethnographically, I explore the museum and the objects collected by the museum, that is, a ‘museum of local culture’ named ‘Triangle Rush Exhibition Hall’ (hereafter TREH) and a locally made craft, grass-weaving, whose history of production is over a century. In the relationship between the museum and its objects, I find, the museum collection plays a central role and connects the two. By looking into the life histories of the collected objects, it is found that they contain colonial encounters while also connecting to the decolonisation in contemporary Taiwan.

Theoretically, I put together and discuss Jeanne Cannizzo’s work on the history of European colonisation in Africa, Susan Pearce’s analysis on museums, objects, and collections in the Western tradition, and Nicholas Thomas’s work on the European colonialism in Oceania. The dialogue between theories and the ethnography leads to the understanding of following issues: the exploration of the relationship of the museum, objects and collections, and the complexities of cross-cultural encounters; the nature of the collection and the nature of colonial encounters; and interactions and perceptions of each other in the cross-cultural encounters. This paper aims to illustrate what museum collections really mean and what they represent, through which I believe a better understanding of the association of museums, objects, cross-cultural encounters, colonisation decolonisation, and post-colonialism can be achieved.

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苑裡藺草編織工藝與「藺草文化館」所展現的文化交會

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中文摘要

本文嘗試分析一個當代台灣地方工藝與博物館結合且與殖民、去殖民、後殖民相關的文化現象。以社會人類學的方法進行研究，實際的研究地點座落在苗栗縣苑裡鎮。從民族誌的脈絡而言，本研究欲講述與分析博物館與博物館中的物—即，苑裡一座名為「藺草文化館」的地方文化館以及當地深具歷史性的藺草編織工藝；探究兩者之間的關係之後發現博物館的收藏行為與收藏品是連結兩者的關鍵。進一步探究博物館收藏中物件的生命史之後發現其中蘊含著（多重）殖民交會的議題；然而，進入到館內之後的物件仍然與它們所來自的脈絡維持著連帶關係，亦即，物件與當代台灣的去殖民、主體性建構的議題相關連，事實上物件與博物館同樣在這個脈絡下發展著。

從理論的脈絡而言，以 Jeanne Cannizzo 對於非洲被歐洲殖民的歷史的討論、Susan Pearce 對於西方歷史傳統中的博物館與物件與收藏的討論、以及 Nicholas Thomas 對於大洋洲被歐洲殖民的討論為核心，進而將理論與民族誌資料對話，透過博物館、物、收藏三者之間的關係，瞭解收藏的真正意涵以及跨文化交會的複雜性；透過對於收藏性質的探究，理解殖民交會的本質；透過對於文化交會的探討，理解交會過程中彼此之間的互動關係與相互的看法。最終，本文乃欲闡明博物館收藏的真正意涵與它所代表的意義。以此，筆者認為乃得以對於博物館、博物館中的物件、其所蘊含的文化交會、及其與殖民、後殖民、去殖民等議題的連結，獲得更適切的理解。