

## Poetry and Mining in Colonial Taiwan

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Abstract: This paper discusses the relationship between classical Sinitic literary associations and colonial development projects in early twentieth-century Taiwan through a study of the Hoklo Taiwanese mining magnate Yan Yunnian (1874-1923) and his poetry. Early twentieth-century Taiwan witnessed a proliferation of civil society associations and publications devoted to the study and practice of classical Sinitic literature, both poetry and prose. Previous scholarship has debated the relationship of this movement to the colonial government in Taiwan and the Empire of Japan, sometimes emphasizing its Chinese nationalist and anti-colonial character, other times presenting it as an attempt among leftover Qing dynasty elites to accommodate their preexisting high culture to new imperialist aims, intending thereby to retain their ruling class status even as colonial subjects. This paper's analysis of Yan Yunnian's 500+ published poems and his participation in poetry societies supports the latter view, arguing that the social capital generated by Yan's poetry parties was in fact crucial to his organization of Taiwanese-Japanese mining companies. This paper also highlights the role of mountains in northeast Taiwan as objects of both mineral extraction and poetic composition, as well as the construction of simulated mountain landscapes—such as the Yan family garden in Keelung—as sites for both poetry parties and business meetings.

Keywords: Taiwan, poetry, environment, colonialism, development

Let us begin with a poetic contrast between, on the one hand, a palatial garden where men gather to sample appetizers and compose verse, and, on the other, a mine:

Whether or not it is the equal of Wang Wei's Wheel River estate,  
Cloud covered mountains protect this remote dwelling on all sides.  
Mining the coal, wherever there is a cave, the men become rats,  
“Playing with their swords” but not singing, the guests eat fish.  
摩詰輞川如不如，  
雲山四面護幽居。  
採煤有穴人成鼠，  
彈鋏無歌客食魚。<sup>1</sup>

What does poetry have to do with mining? In Taiwan during the period of Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945), quite a bit. The host of the party and author of the poem quoted above was named Yan Yunnian 顏雲年 (1874-1923).<sup>2</sup> Yan was a classically educated son of a

<sup>1</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Lou yuan si zhang you yin” 陋園 四章有引, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Read as Gân Hûn-liân in Yan's native Southern Min. This paper will use Mandarin pronunciations.

relatively new gentry family in northern Taiwan. In 1921, the year the above poem was published in the colonial government newspaper *Taiwan Daily News* (*Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo* 臺灣日日新報), Yan was also the majority shareholder of the Taiyang Mining Company (*Taiyō Kōgyō Kabushiki Gaisha* 臺陽礦業株式會社) and the proud owner of a newly renovated garden estate nestled in the eastern foothills of the harbor city of Keelung. At the time, Yan was one of the most famous men in colonial Taiwan, the “Yan family of Keelung” (*Jilong Yan jia* 基隆顏家) was one of the wealthiest and most powerful families of colonial Taiwan,<sup>3</sup> and their garden estate was one of the most splendid in colonial Taiwan.

Yan was a literatus (*wenren* 文人) and a capitalist, an admirer of landscape gardens and a developer of mines. These identities reflect the vicissitudes of colonial Taiwan. During the invasion and pacification of Taiwan by Japanese troops, some “merchants and gentry holdovers” like Yan’s family “cooperated with the Japanese mainly to protect their neighborhoods and villages from armed conflict.”<sup>4</sup> Over time, these families were granted significant economic, social, and cultural privileges, as well as limited political power, in exchange for assisting their colonial ruler in the governance and development of Taiwan.<sup>5</sup> In the language of the period, they buttressed and improved their preexisting social status by assuming the role of “matchmakers” (*meijie* 媒介) between colonizer and colonized.

Families such as Yan’s remain controversial in Taiwanese public discourse. This controversy is unsurprising, given that some of these families held onto their wealth and even accrued new political privileges under post-1945 Kuomintang 國民黨 (KMT) rule.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, in the immediate aftermath of retrocession, these families were denounced as traitors to the Han Chinese (*Han jian* 漢奸), guilty of joining with their colonial overlords and assimilating to Japanese culture in exchange for personal enrichment. More recently, descendants and sympathetic scholars of these families have published accounts emphasizing their positive role in developing Taiwan’s modern economy and infrastructure, peacefully advocating for greater political autonomy and representation in the Japanese Diet, and using their riches for philanthropy and for the promotion of traditional Chinese culture.<sup>7</sup> At stake in these debates is the central question of who has a right to extract surpluses from Taiwan’s population and

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<sup>3</sup> For information on Yunnian’s activities as a philanthropist and local leader in Keelung, see Evan N. Dawley, *Becoming Taiwanese: Ethnogenesis in a Colonial City, 1880s–1950s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2019). For an overview of the “great families” of colonial Taiwan, see Sima Xiaoqing 司馬嘯青, *Taiwan wu da jiazu* 台灣五大家族 (Taipei: Yushan she chuban, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Harry J. Lamley, “Taiwan Under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945: The Vicissitudes of Colonialism,” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2007), p. 215.

<sup>5</sup> For general studies, see Harry J. Lamley, “The Taiwan Literati and Early Japanese Rule, 1895–1915: A Study of Their Reactions to the Japanese Occupation and Subsequent Responses to Colonial Rule and Modernization” (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1964); Wu Wenxing 吳文星, *Riju shiqi Taiwan shehui lingdao jieceng zhi yanjiu* 日據時期臺灣社會領導階層之研究 (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> The most famous case of transgenerational wealth transfer was initiated by Koo Hsien-jung 辜顯榮 (1866–1937), the wealthy Twatutia 大稻埕 merchant who in 1895 led a delegation of businessmen to the Japanese army in Keelung where they welcomed the army into Taipei. This decision laid the foundation for a business powerhouse that still exists today in the form of the Koos Group 和信集團. See Tsai-Man C. Ho and Wenbin Sun, “A Spell Breaker: The Dynamism of the Koo Family,” in *Chinese Capitalisms: Historical Emergence and Political Implications*, ed. Yin-wah Chu (Springer, 2010), pp. 176–198.

<sup>7</sup> Koo Hsien-jung, for instance, used his wealth to support cultural projects such as the 1925–1928 reconstruction of the Taipei Confucius temple. See Gu Xianrong weng zhuanji bianzuan hui 辜顯榮翁傳記編纂會, *Gu Xianrong zhuan* 辜顯榮傳, trans. Yang Yongliang 楊永良 (Taipei: Wu Sanlian Taiwan shiliao jijinhui, 2007), pp. 110–111.

environment, as well as justifications for extractive regimes based on purportedly shared cultures.

This essay is about the relationship between cultural production, resource extraction, and colonial development in colonial Taiwan, focusing on the poet-capitalist Yan Yunnian as a significant figure in the movement to promote *hanwen* 漢文 and *hanxue* 漢學 (Sinitic literature and Sinitic learning) through private organizations such as academies, night schools, conferences, prose and poetry societies, and publishing projects. This movement, apparent already in the rapid proliferation of poetry societies only a few years after colonization, grew in intensity as classical Sinitic language instruction was expunged, bit by bit, from the government school curriculum.<sup>8</sup>

Given the controversial political status of the movement's wealthy backers, it is striking that most post-1945 scholarship describes the Chinese literature revival movement as anti-colonial or even nationalist in character.<sup>9</sup> In a recently-published sourcebook, for example, we read: "The fact that colonial Taiwan boasted the highest number per capita of *shishe* (poetry societies) compared with regions in mainland china is often cited to demonstrate how various civilian organizations functioned as an outlet for indigenous cultural sentiment as well as passive resistance to colonial rule."<sup>10</sup> The problem with this narrative is that writings from the time in support of the Chinese literature movement tended to emphasize the value of Chinese literature for the Japanese empire—an unsurprising fact, again, given that the movement was financially supported by people who owed their wealth to Japanese imperialism. As periodical literature of the period repeatedly demonstrates, proponents of classical Sinitic literature tended to promote the movement by emphasizing its value to imperial projects such as the Southern Expansion Doctrine (Nanshin-ron 南進論), or even the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere (Dai Tōa Kyōeiken 大東亞共榮圈), emphasizing that education in both classical Sinitic and Japanese would make Taiwanese students ideal peace brokers between Japan and China, agents for the "economic development of Southeast Asia," and vanguards of either world peace through global economic integration or a united East Asian racial front against white western imperialists.<sup>11</sup>

Yunnian himself supported such a view, both financially and rhetorically, in the journal *Tâi oân chheng liân* 臺灣青年. This journal was founded by Taiwanese students attending school in Tokyo in 1920 with the stated aim of "introducing native and foreign civilizations, to comment on matters relating to the reformation of Taiwan, and to promote good relations between Japan and China" 介紹內外之文明併評論我臺應改善之事項兼謀日華之親善.<sup>12</sup> The inaugural issue featured a calligraphic inscription by the governor-general of Taiwan Den Kenjirō 田健治郎 (1855-1930), the first civilian governor-general and an advocate of "assimilation" (*dōka* 同化) policy, which claimed that Taiwanese would be granted greater

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<sup>8</sup> Wu Wenxing 吳文星, *Rizhi shiqi Taiwan de shehui lingdao jieceng* 日治時期臺灣的社會領導階層 (Taipei: Wunan tushu chuban gongsi, 2008), p. 281.

<sup>9</sup> Wu Wenxing 吳文星, *Rizhi shiqi Taiwan de shehui lingdao jieceng* 日治時期臺灣的社會領導階層 (Taipei: Wunan tushu chuban gongsi, 2008), p. 281.

<sup>10</sup> Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang, Michelle Yeh, and Ming-Ju Fan, eds., *The Columbia Sourcebook of Literary Taiwan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ann Heylen, *Japanese Models, Chinese Culture and the Dilemma of Taiwanese Language Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), pp. 112-113.

<sup>12</sup> *Tâi oân chheng liân* 臺灣青年 vol. 1, ed. Cai Peihuo 蔡培火 (Tokyo: Taiwan qingnian zazhi she, 1920), front matter. In the mid-1920s the anarchist group Taiwan Black Youth Union 台灣黑色青年聯盟 was formed by the writer Wang Shilang 王詩琅 (1908-1984) and several other Japanese and Taiwanese youth.

political and economic rights once they had proven themselves worthy by assimilating to modern Japanese culture. Governor-general Den's inscription reads *jin sheng yu zhen* 金聲玉振, "the bell rings, the stone chimes," an allusion to a Mencius passage comparing several ancient sages' attitudes toward serving new rulers, and describing how Confucius left his parents' homeland when the time was proper—the historical parallel is obvious.

In a donor list appended to the fourth issue, we find that Yan donated 1000 yen to help get the journal started, tying with Lin Hsien-tang 林獻堂 (1881-1956) of the prominent Wufeng Lin family and Lin Hsiung-cheng 林熊徵 (1888-1946) of the Banqiao Lin family for the third largest donation.<sup>13</sup> The inaugural issue's articles, some of them written by these wealthy donors, tend to emphasize meritocracy and civil rights within the accepted framework of empire, and always with the expectation that Taiwanese would diligently work to raise their "cultural level" 文化程度 until they were on par with Japan. For example, Lin Hsiung-cheng wrote that if Japan could combine its "human talent" 人才 with China's "physical resources" 物力, with Taiwanese students serving as "matchmakers" 媒介, East Asia could overtake the west in economic power.<sup>14</sup> Yan himself contributed a short essay, in which he thanked Emperor Taishō for his policy of *isshi dōjin* 一視同仁, congratulated students on having an opportunity to bring "new learning" (*xin xue* 新學) from the metropole to the colony, and warned the students to avoid "dangerous thoughts" (*weixian sixiang* 危險思想) and "dangerous trends" (*xian'e zhi fengchao* 險惡之風潮) then spreading from the west to Japan—a probable reference to Japanese anarchist and communist movements.<sup>15</sup>

The ubiquity of such statements supports E. Patricia Tsurumi's general characterization of the anti-colonial movement as "more interested in acquiring bigger shares of existing economic, political, and social rewards than in fundamentally disturbing the status quo,"<sup>16</sup> as well as recent reappraisals of the Chinese literature movement such as Leo T.S. Ching's argument that it is "wrong to associate culturalism with political resistance,"<sup>17</sup> and Ann Heylen's argument that Taiwanese promoters of *hanwen* were "toying with a twofold colonial logic" which both "justified [Japanese] cultural interference in China" and legitimated the "Japanese imperial presence" in Taiwan.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the promotion of classical Sinitic literature and learning was generally carried out within an accepted ideological framework of regional Japanese imperial hegemony, albeit a sanitized liberal form which carefully paid lip service to Sino-Japanese friendship and ethnic equality.

How should we interpret such claims? The sincere words of true believers in liberal imperialism? Weapons of the weak, preserving national heritage while avoiding outright proclamations of nationalism? Or as the opportunism of unemployed scholars, desperately trying to make their obsolete vocation relevant to a new realpolitik? How should we understand the

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<sup>13</sup> Koo Hsien-jung made the largest donation of 3000 yen. See *Tâi oân chheng liân* 4, back matter.

<sup>14</sup> Lin Hsiung-cheng 林熊徵, "Wu suo wang yu liuxuesheng Ri Hua qinshan zhi meijie" 吾所望於留學生 日華親善之媒介, ed. Cai Peihuo 蔡培火, *Tâi Oân Chheng Liân* 臺灣青年 1 (1920), Chinese section pp. 3–4.

<sup>15</sup> Yan Yunnian 顏雲年, "Taiwan qingnian zazhi kanxing zhuci" 臺灣青年雜誌刊行祝辭, in *Tâi Oân Chheng Liân* 臺灣青年 1 (1920), Chinese section p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> E. Patricia Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895-1945* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 219.

<sup>17</sup> Leo T.S. Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 63.

<sup>18</sup> Ann Heylen, *Japanese Models, Chinese Culture and the Dilemma of Taiwanese Language Reform* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), p. 113.

cultural politics of that generation of Taiwanese men who, in their youth, received a traditional education based on classical poetry and the eight-legged examination essay, but as adults became managers and even sometimes owners of sugar factories, banks, and mines? What role did elite poetry societies and garden parties play in the development of Taiwan's physical environment under colonial rule?

This paper addresses these questions through a study of the literatus-capitalist Yan Yunnian. It is about the relationship between poetry and mining, the intersecting social spheres of poetry societies and joint-stock mining companies, and the terraforming of mountains into both landscape gardens, where Yunnian exchanged poems and cultivated professional relationships, and mines, where Yunnian supervised the development of the extractive industries. The first section discusses Yunnian's<sup>19</sup> background prior to 1909, when he helped found the Ying Society 瀛社 and began regularly publishing poetry in *Taiwan Daily News*. It sketches the geological characteristics of northeast Taiwan, the historical mining practices of Han settlers, and Yunnian's mediation between these older practices and the interests of the Japanese imperial state. The second section discusses poetry dating roughly from the formation of the Ying Society in 1909 to the 1917 dedication of a commemorative stele in the gold mining town of Jiufen 九份. It focuses on poems describing the mountains Yunnian managed, poems addressed to Japanese mining officials, and an anthology of poems commemorating the construction of the Round Mirror Tower (*Huan jing lou* 環鏡樓) in Keelung in 1912, a modern colonial mansion at which Yunnian hosted gatherings of multiple northern Taiwan poetry societies. The third section considers the role of landscape gardens and garden parties, both in Japan, where Yunnian successfully fought for extraction rights to the northeastern Taiwan coal mines, and in Keelung, where Yunnian subsequently purchased a massive garden estate from the co-owner of his push car railway company.

Through examining the interplay between collective literary composition at poetry gatherings and the formation of colonial mining enterprises, as well as the transformation of some mountains into mines and others into landscape gardens, I propose two arguments. First, the collective poetic production practiced in poetry societies also served as a basis for the formation of Taiwanese-Japanese joint-stock companies, the engines of colonial development. Second, this literary-developmental process entailed a transformation of the landscape in which mountains were first tamed and made into sites of industrial mineral extraction. Their natural capital was used in turn to build multi-story mansions, landscape gardens, and other sites for the collective production of poetry and social capital.

### *Geology and Genealogy*

The physical landmass that we call "Taiwan" is part of an orogenic belt, a bending of the earth's crust and upper mantle, extending southward to the Philippines and northward to Japan, and onward around the Pacific in a "ring of fire." According to Taiwan's Central Geological Survey: "The main island of Taiwan comprises in part a metamorphic basement covered by Cenozoic deposits to a thickness of more than 10,000 meters."<sup>20</sup> In the mountain ridges of northeastern Taiwan, volcanic activity "deposited valuable gold... at Chinkuashih [Jinguashi],

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<sup>19</sup> To avoid confusion with other family members, this article will refer to Yan Yunnian by his given name Yunnian.

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol\\_western\\_23.jsp](https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol_western_23.jsp)

Chiufen [Jiufen], and Wutankeng,” and the erosion of these formations left behind alluvial gold deposits along the Keelung River.<sup>21</sup> In the same foothills, exposed stratigraphic columns reveal three depositional cycles of Miocene rocks, “each represented by one coal-bearing formation and one marine unit.”<sup>22</sup>

Rumors of indigenous gold mines animated both Spanish and Dutch colonial activity in Taiwan, driving significant territorial expansion in the Dutch case, as the gold mines always seemed to be just one village away.<sup>23</sup> In northern Taiwan, a Spanish captive informed his Dutch captors that the primary site of gold production was a village in the area of Keelung called both Tackilis and Taraboan, where it turned out that villagers “did not actually mine the metal but obtained it from sediment at the river mouth.”<sup>24</sup> We also read that the Dutch East India Company “was actively involved in the production of coal in Quelang [Keelung],” using as miners both Cagayan slaves and indigenous Basayan.<sup>25</sup>

Under Qing rule, coal remained a focus of social conflict between local gentry, self-strengthening officials, and western imperial powers. In the *Danshui ting zhi* 淡水廳志 (Tamsui Subprefectural Gazetteer), published in 1871, we read that locals had long been mining coal from Jilong Mountain 鷄籠山 for sale to mainland markets as fertilizer. Initially, beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing up to 1847, local officials repeatedly attempted to prohibit coal mining due to local gentry claims that unregulated mining was harming the mountain’s “dragon veins” 龍脈, through which *qi* flowed. Following the denial of a British request to work the mines in 1850, however, as foreign interest in the Keelung coal fields grew, official opinions began to shift, and in 1864 officials from the commercial tax offices of both Fuzhou and Tamsui argued for opening the fields to foreign merchants. Continued opposition from local gentry led to an official survey of already active mines in the area, which identified twelve coal fields unlikely to disturb the mountains’ dragon veins, as well as local people’s dwellings, fields, and cemeteries. In these coal fields, extending from Shen’ao keng 深澳坑 to Nuannuan 暖暖 and Sijiaoting 四腳亭, there were enumerated a total of 92 mine caves. Of these 92 caves, 23 were returned to the mountain owners after it was found their coal was already exhausted, and 21 were temporarily closed after they were found to contain coal of such poor quality as to be currently unsaleable.<sup>26</sup> For the remaining active caves, the American consular agent James Wheeler Davidson summarized, “[t]he commission recommended the abandonment of the government prohibition, but suggested the adoption of certain measures to prevent foreigners obtaining an interest in the industry.”<sup>27</sup>

In 1874, Shen Baozhen 沈葆楨 (1820-1879) successfully petitioned for the construction of a “modern mining plant” near Keelung, and soon after consulting the British mining expert David Tyzack and importing the necessary machinery from England, the plant was opened in

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<sup>21</sup> [https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol\\_western\\_27.jsp](https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol_western_27.jsp)

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol\\_western\\_23.jsp](https://www.moeacgs.gov.tw/english2/twgeol/twgeol_western_23.jsp).

<sup>23</sup> Hsin-hui Chiu, *The Colonial “Civilizing Process” in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 72-73, pp. 87-108.

<sup>24</sup> Hsin-hui Chiu, *The Colonial “Civilizing Process” in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), p. 97.

<sup>25</sup> Hsin-hui Chiu, *The Colonial “Civilizing Process” in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), p. 155.

<sup>26</sup> Chen Peigui 陳培桂, ed., *Danshui ting zhi* 淡水廳志, (Taipei: Xingzheng yuan wenhua jianshe weiyuanhui, 2006), pp. 193-195.

<sup>27</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 480.

Badu 八堵.<sup>28</sup> Yet things did not go smoothly: Liu Mingchuan 劉銘傳 (1836-1896), governor of Taiwan and supporter of Shen Baozhen's developmental aims, was forced to destroy the plant during the Sino-French War. Even after the mines reopened under government control, they were still "losing some 3,000 to 4,000 taels per month because of difficulties in shipping and marketing the coal, as well as managerial problems compounded by the exhaustion of accessible coal seams."<sup>29</sup> As we will see below, the Japanese mine owners encountered the same problems.

Another one of Liu Mingchuan's development projects, closely related to the coal industry, unexpectedly led to the northeast Taiwan gold rush that, in part, made the Yan family fortune. In 1887, following a petition by Liu, the construction of the Taiwan Railway 臺灣鐵道 began at Twatutia 大稻埕.<sup>30</sup> Three years later, Davidson recorded, "some workmen, erecting a railway bridge across a branch of the upper Kelung river, near Hatto (Boe Tau) [Badu], observed some glittering flakes of metal in the gravel which they were handling. Some of the more intelligent of the men commenced panning, with encouraging results. Finally the news reached the China mainland. Chinese who had returned from California or Australia, and who were familiar with gold washing, flocked across the channel in thousands. They introduced gold washing cradles and 'long toms,' and carried on the work with great energy."<sup>31</sup> Initially, the government established a system whereby workers and prospectors applied for daily licenses in the form of "a wooden tag bearing the government seal."<sup>32</sup> Rights to work these areas were then rented out to wealthy individuals.

The mining industry that developed in this area was highly destructive of both workers and the physical environment. With regard to the environment, mining tailings polluted waterways and gold washing along the banks of the Keelung River destroyed "natural levees," leading to increased flooding of the surrounding farmlands.<sup>33</sup> With regard to working conditions, Davidson described "tunnels...so small that it seemed impossible for a human being to work in them" and "drifts...so small that the workmen negotiated them on all fours, and were obliged to excavate in a reclining position."<sup>34</sup> Unsurprisingly, given the dimensions of these tunnels, children were sometimes used as workers.<sup>35</sup> A more vivid description is given of coal tunnels:

The entrance is so small that the miner enters on his hands and knees; the height of the tunnel very little exceeds the thickness of the seam, being thus so small, that, in excavating, the miner must work on his knees, or in a half reclining position, resting partly in mud and water; and the writer has seen tunnels so low that the miner was obliged to lie at full length, and in this position handle his pick. In the absence of ventilation, the atmosphere in a few hours becomes so foul that the lamp flame is reduced to a sickly flicker, and the miner, with strength exhausted is obliged to stop work and seek fresh air. ... It

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<sup>28</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), pp. 480-481.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Gardella, "From Treaty Ports to Provincial Status, 1860-1894," in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (Armonk, N.Y: M. E. Sharpe, 2007), p. 192.

<sup>30</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 248.

<sup>31</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 464.

<sup>32</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 464.

<sup>33</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 468.

<sup>34</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 465.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, a photo captioned "Chinese Children Employed in Coal Mine" in James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 472.

also frequently occurs that the inclination is such that water accumulates to an extent interfering with work; and, if there is too great a quantity to be carried out in buckets, the seam is given up. Furthermore, owing to the absence of artificial supports, a land slide sometimes occurs, not only obstructing work, but occasionally resulting in loss of life.<sup>36</sup>

The prevalence of these working conditions were a boon to owners like Yunnian, who exploited them to turn a profit with very little capital outlay. But ordinary people remember the mines differently: when I asked one man in Pingxi why the coal industry had declined, he answered that it was normal in the old days for parents to have seven or eight children, so it was less of an issue for them than for parents nowadays if two or three of their children died in the mines.

According to the Yan family historian Tang Yu, Yunnian's great-great grandfather Yan Haotuo 顏浩妥 (dates unknown) was the first of Yunnian's ancestors to come to Taiwan, where worked there for ten years before a famine drove him back to Fujian.<sup>37</sup> After Haotuo's death, sometime during the Jiaqing 嘉慶 reign (1789-1796), Haotuo's sons Yulan 玉蘭 and Yuci 玉賜 returned to Taiwan with their families. They settled in northeast Taiwan in Nuannuan 暖暖, where the banks of the Keelung River were being converted into farmland by other Hoklo settlers. According to genealogical records, around the year 1825 Yulan's son Doumeng 斗猛 was engaged in coal mining in the hills of Gengziliao 煥子寮 and Diesihou 跌死猴, just east of Keelung.<sup>38</sup> Around the same time, the family accumulated enough capital to purchase some riverside land in Badu, bring it under cultivation, and build a dwelling on it. In 1848 they purchased more land further upriver in Jieyukeng 傑魚坑 and Xizhou 溪洲. As Tang Yu notes, buying up land at different points along the river served as an insurance policy during a time of social strife—Yan family properties in both Dingnei 碇內 and Badu had already been destroyed during periodic feuds between settlers from Quanzhou and Zhangzhou.<sup>39</sup> More land also allowed the Yan family to diversify their income: besides coal, they also made profits from tenant farmers, firewood, and tea.<sup>40</sup>

Given the proximity of coal mines, gold mines, the Taipei-Keelung railway, and Keelung Harbor, it is clear that, on the eve of the Sino-Japanese War and colonization, northeast Taiwan represented a potential focal point of industrial development. But Yunnian's family did not seem to have any sense that his future might lay in this direction. Instead, Yunnian was given a classical Chinese education in preparation for a career in the Qing civil service. At the age of eight, Yunnian received an elementary education from his uncle Zhengchun at the family school in Jieyukeng, named "Nurturing Virtue Pavilion" (*Peide xuan* 培德軒). At eleven he studied the classics with a local village tutor named Lin Wanxuan 林萬選. At fourteen, Zhenchun engaged

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<sup>36</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), pp. 486-487.

<sup>37</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), pp. 72-80.

<sup>38</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 94.

<sup>39</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 94.

<sup>40</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 108.

another tutor named Wang Anjia 王安甲 to teach literary composition to Yunnian at the family school, with a focus on the “eight-legged” examination essay (*bagu wen* 八股文). At twenty, Yan traveled to Taipei to take the local circuit examinations (*daoshi* 道試), where he stayed at the household of Hong Tengyun 洪騰雲 (1819-1899), a rice and salt merchant well-known for financing the construction of the Taipei examination grounds.<sup>41</sup> Although Yunnian failed the examinations, he established what would later prove a crucial friendship with Tengyun’s son Hong Yinan 洪以南 (1871-1927), one of the future founders of the Ying Poetry Society 瀛社, the largest such organization in northern Taiwan.

Yunnian never had a second chance at the examinations. In less than a year, Taiwan was ceded to the Empire of Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki. On May 29th, 1895, Japanese troops landed near Sandiao point 三貂角. They took the city of Keelung on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, and by June 7th Taipei had surrendered.

Even after the fall of Keelung and Taipei, the thickly wooded mountains around the Keelung River remained a hotbed of rebellion due to changes in mining law and land ownership. In September 1896, the Japanese colonial government placed all the major mining districts under the control of a few large Japanese business groups (*zaibatsu* 財閥). The colonial government also announced a new set of “Formosa Mining Regulations,” the second article of which specified: “The occupation of mining shall be permitted to Japanese subjects only; and none but Japanese subjects can become members or shareholders of any mining corporation or association.”<sup>42</sup> According to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, Taiwanese would not become subjects of Japan until after two year grace period following the signing of the treaty, during which time they had the option of emigrating to China.<sup>43</sup> Although a supplementary clause corrected this apparent contradiction, allowing Taiwanese miners to continue their work as usual and then become Japanese subjects, the fact remained that the former owners of mining districts were now no longer the legal owners, and as a result, an article from the period reported, both they and their former employees turned to banditry to make ends meet.<sup>44</sup> As we will see below, this social dynamic presented an obstacle to the profitable development of claims by Japanese companies, an obstacle which Yunnian proved especially well-suited to remove.

In Yunnian’s earliest extant set of poems, he described the uneasy atmosphere of the time:

Terror at midnight, soldiers in the woods,  
The atmosphere of banditry everywhere, boiling like thick soup.  
Local residents hope for comfort, hoping for a miracle,  
They vie to present themselves before the Japanese army, swearing  
allegiance.  
中夜皇皇草木兵，  
匪氛到處沸如羹。  
居民願慰雲霓望，

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<sup>41</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 125.

<sup>42</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 473.

<sup>43</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 475.

<sup>44</sup> Wu Wenxing 吳文星, *Rizhi shiqi Taiwan de shehui lingdao jiecheng* 日治時期臺灣的社會領導階層 (Taipei: Wunan tushu chuban gongsi, 2008), p. 21.

爭向軍前道至誠。<sup>45</sup>

In describing these “local residents,” Yunnian was probably referring to his own family. In 1896, as the mining disturbances were taking place, Yunnian’s uncle Zhengchun was ordered to report to Ruifang for questioning. In a biography later published by the colonial government, Yunnian is said to have volunteered out of a profound sense of filial piety to attend this interrogation in his uncle’s stead, where he explained the situation to the Japanese officer. The officer, we read, was so impressed with Yunnian that he offered him a position as interpreter, hoping that Yunnian could serve as intermediary between the Japanese military and the local population.<sup>46</sup> Following this meeting, Yunnian was employed by the Ruifang garrison as an interpreter and later as an “assistant patrolman” 巡查補。<sup>47</sup> Around the same time, Yunnian was awarded his first gold mining contract.

Yunnian explained the relationship between his duties as assistant patrolman and his first mining contract in two articles on gold and coal mining in Ruifang. In the first article, we read that, after issuing new mining laws, the colonial government carried out a geological survey of the three primary gold districts of northeast Taiwan: Ruifang 瑞芳, Jinguashi 金瓜石, and Mudankeng 牡丹坑, referred to colloquially as the “three gold mountains” 三金山. The Ruifang zone was awarded to the Fujita group 藤田組, headed by Fujita Denzaburo 藤田傳三郎 (1841-1912) of Osaka, and was further subdivided into the zones of Jiufen 九份, Daganlin 大竿林, Dacukeng 大粗坑, and Xiaocukeng 小粗坑. However, as Yunnian noted, impoverished locals did not recognize these official boundaries:

At the time, in this area the weeds were teeming with hidden outlaws, and bandits covered the land. The fighting had just settled down, but the “warning smoke” was not yet extinguished. Although the owners of this mine already had clear title, the local poor people continued to freely dig it. They did not yet know what “exclusive rights to the mining district” meant. They treated the gold like dirt, and lost a considerable amount.

當時該地伏莽跳梁。盜賊滿地。干戈初定。狼煙未息。此礦山主人翁。名義雖已定。而土著貧民。自由採掘。未知礦區所有權為何物。冀土黃金。所失不少。<sup>48</sup>

Because of these issues, in 1898 Fujita decided to contract out management of the Xiaocukeng sub-zone to Yunnian. In the same article, Yunnian framed this decision as a benefit that he negotiated on behalf of impoverished locals, whom he initially charged only a daily placer mining license fee. Indeed, Yunnian took a loss in the first year, and his panicked request

<sup>45</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Yiwei (1895) ganshi shi” 乙未 (1895) 感事詩, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Yūseikai 友聲會, ed., *Gan Unnen-Ō Shōden* 顏雲年翁小伝 (Taihoku: Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo, 1924), pp. 15-17; Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), 128-130.

<sup>47</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), 134-139. Lamley explains: “Because of the shortage of trained Japanese policemen, a sizable number of Taiwanese were added to the force after the junior grade of assistant patrolman was instituted in 1899.” See Harry J. Lamley, “Taiwan Under Japanese Rule, 1895-1945: The Vicissitudes of Colonialism,” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (Armonk, N.Y: M. E. Sharpe, 2007), p. 212.

<sup>48</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Ruifang kuangshan jingying guanjian” 瑞芳礦山經營管見, *Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo*, October 19, 1914, p. 4. For a printed facsimile, see *Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shinpo*, vol. 54 (Taipei: Wunan, 1994-1995), p. 138.

to cancel the contract was refused by a Fujita agent, who took the opportunity to question Yunnian's manhood.<sup>49</sup> The following year, Yunnian took a more direct hand in developing the holding. Initial attempts to dig new tunnels in the mountainside were stymied by the steepness of the mountain, the thinness of the gold veins, the inexperience of the workers, and the thickness of the vegetation. Yunnian described his role during this period as that of a general leading his troops in a campaign against the enemy:

I summoned the poor people and directed them how to dig. We experienced many difficulties and tolerated unimaginable suffering, clearing the waste and opening up the grass and weeds, making war on poisonous snakes, vermin, and scorpions, making war on the cold wind and rain, in order to obtain minerals that we didn't even know were there amongst the cliffs and ridges.

招徠貧民。指揮採掘。歷諸險艱。耐盡勞苦。闢榛莽。開草莽。與毒蛇蟲蝎戰。與寒風冷雨戰。以採取有無不可知之礦物於 X 崖峭壁之間者。<sup>50</sup>

As we will see below, the hostile mountains in this essay make a stark contrast with later images of tamed mountains and landscape gardens in Yunnian's poetry.

Another technique Yunnian used to render the Taiwanese landscape more profitable was implementing differing proportions of more or less modern labor organization and technology based on the accessibility and size of gold veins and coal seams. For example, in an article about coal mining, Yunnian described how, with coal mines accessible by railroad and therefore amenable to mechanical improvements, he found it best to employ an ethnic division of labor between Japanese and Taiwanese, with Japanese handling the machinery and Taiwanese doing the digging. With mines inaccessible by railroad, he simply relied on the "old method," in which, Yunnian wrote,

[Miners] follow the thickness or thinness of the coal seams, angling their body sideways to dig, like rabbits making a burrow or foxes slipping through a cave. They just see how much coal can be obtained, and when the coal is gone then they stop. There's no need to widen the tunnels and use a lot of wooden supports before you see a return. Thus, I don't think that, between the new style and the old style, there is one better or worse.

隨炭層之厚薄，側身採掘，如兔營窟，如狸穿穴，但期得炭，炭盡則止，不必坑道廣闊，多用坑木，而後收功。故新式與舊式，非思於二者之間，有所優劣。<sup>51</sup>

In other words, the persistence of more dangerous and environmentally destructive old-fashioned labor practices was a condition of, not an obstacle to, the growth of the extractive industries in colonial Taiwan.

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<sup>49</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 141.

<sup>50</sup> Yan Yunnian, "Ruifang kuangshan jingying guanjian" 瑞芳礦山經營管見, *Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo*, October 19, 1914, p. 4. For a printed facsimile, see *Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shinpo*, vol. 54 (Taipei: Wunan, 1994-1995), p. 138.

<sup>51</sup> Yan Yunnian, "Tankeng jingying lun" 炭坑經營論, *Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo*, January 22, 1915, p. 3. For a printed facsimile, see *Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shinpo*, vol. 55 (Taipei: Wunan, 1994-1995), p. 195.

Another example of this process may be seen in the development of the gold mine boomtown of Jiufen 九份. Jiufen was one of the sub-zones of the district owned by Fujita, but by 1908 Fujita contracted out most operations to Yunnian.<sup>52</sup> The town of Jiufen grew up right alongside the tunnel entrances and mill. Davidson deemed it “as odd looking a settlement as one could find. ... [N]ever before has the writer seen so many houses in such a small place. Some appear to be partially telescoped in adjoining buildings, others standing above as though unable to force their way to the ground, and each structure seems to be making a silent appeal to its neighbor to move over.” Gold washing was frequently done at home, with washers paying daily licensing fees to Fujita: “Water is supplied from the Fujita mill, and runs in many small streams, directed so as to provide each building with a little rivulet, passing sometimes by the doorway or even over the floor of the building.”<sup>53</sup> Under the management of the Yan family, there developed a practice of sub-contracting individual tunnels to groups of local investors, who would in turn sub-contract sections to other smaller groups of investors, who paid the actual miners’ wages.<sup>54</sup> This system produced profits large and reliable enough for Yunnian to continue expanding his holdings, while also becoming a prominent sponsor of the literary scene. Within a year of consolidating his control over Jiufen, Yunnian joined the newly-formed Ying Poetry Society.

### *Poetry Excursions and Mine Surveys*

In China, poetry was traditionally a social art, and the history of Chinese literature is studded with famous poetry parties and clubs, from the Orchid Pavilion Gathering 蘭亭集 in 353 CE to the Crab-Flower Club 海棠詩社 in the eighteenth-century novel *Hong lou meng* 紅樓夢 (Dream of the Red Chamber). The founding of the Ying Poetry Society in 1909 at a party in Bangka 艋舺 was a milestone in Yunnian’s life. Prior to 1909, Yunnian had only published one poem in *Taiwan Daily News*, an ode to the tea girls of Twatutia.<sup>55</sup> With the founding of the Ying Society, Yunnian began regularly publishing his poems in the paper, often in a special Ying Society column. Yunnian’s second published poem was a commemorative account of the society’s inaugural meeting:

Heaven dispatched its literary stars to assemble in the Northern  
City;  
Flashing their fashionable clothing, they drew up the new pledge.  
With deep feeling and mutual understanding, host and guest  
mixed,  
Mingling to the point of forgetting themselves, they became even  
closer than brothers.  
Raising their cups to dispel their melancholy, their songs were  
fervent;  
Assigning topics and vying in composition, their brushes went  
wild.

<sup>52</sup> Yan Yifang 顏義芳, “Jilong Yan jia yu Taiwan kuangye fazhan 基隆顏家與臺灣礦業開發,” *Taiwan Wenxian* 62, no. 4 (2011), pp. 114, 120.

<sup>53</sup> James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1903), p. 469.

<sup>54</sup> I am grateful to the curator of the Jiufen Gold Museum 九份金礦博物館 for explaining this system.

<sup>55</sup> A description of the attractive tea girls in Twatutia. See Yan Yunnian, “Dadaocheng jie jian cha zhuzhici” 大稻埕街揀茶竹枝詞, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 3.

In an era of great peace, intoning poetry is the task of all Confucian scholars,

Do not allow the Orchid Pavilion to monopolize that fame.

天使文星聚北城，  
翩翩裙屐訂新盟。  
情深知己渾賓主，  
交到忘形勝弟兄。  
把酒消愁歌慷慨，  
分題競賦筆縱橫。  
太平吟詠儒生事，  
不讓蘭亭獨占名。<sup>56</sup>

Who were these “literary stars”? Let us consider the three founding members of the Ying Society. As was already mentioned, Hong Yinan was the son of a wealthy merchant and financier of the Bangka examination building. After fleeing to Quanzhou in 1895, Hong returned to Taiwan where he served the colonial government on various transitional administrative bodies, for example as assistant captain of the Bangka *hoko* 保甲 mutual surveillance unit. Later he would also become known as a prominent bibliophile. Xie Ruquan 謝汝銓 (1871-1953) was a licentiate under the old examination system who after colonization graduated from a Japanese language school, taught Taiwanese language, and worked as a Chinese language reporter for both *Taiwan Daily News* and the Philippines Chinese language paper *Gongli bao* 公理報. Lin Xinlan 林馨蘭 (1870-1923) also fled Taiwan for Fujian during 1895, but returned soon after to teach classical Chinese and then to write for the Chinese section of *Taiwan Daily News*. Besides these newspaper writers, most of the early members of the Ying Society were businessmen and professionals operating in the Banka 艋舺 and Twatutia 大稻埕 commercial area: Lin Xiongyang 林熊祥 (1896-1973) of the Banqiao Lin family, the doctor and Twatutia district head Ng Giok-kai 黃玉階 (1850-1918), and the merchant family heir and Twatutia pharmacy accountant Zhang Chunfu 張純甫, who would later work for Yunnian.

Very soon after the founding of the Ying Society, Yunnian began to invite his fellow poets on excursions to his gold mines in Ruifang, where they would take turns composing verse in response to the mountain scenery. These poems were subsequently published in the *Taiwan Daily News* in a special Ying Society column. In the March 17, 1910 issue, for example, we find the following poem by Yunnian, recording a hike he took with Hong Yinan and several courtesans:

Having invited some gentlewomen on a spring outing,  
We were delighted when the rain suddenly stopped this morning.  
Climbing to the summit of this renowned mountain, our eyes were  
opened to new horizons,  
On this trip, your poems took first prize.  
招邀士女作春遊，  
最喜今朝雨乍收。  
歷盡名山開眼界，

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<sup>56</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Ying she yaji ji shi” 瀛社雅集即事, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 3.

此行君應占鼇頭。

In the layers and layers of mountain ridges, caves of gold are  
opened up,  
Profit-seeking people vie to clear away the weeds.  
If you have a mind to go into the mountains and develop their  
precious treasures,  
Why not ascend to the peak, tramping upon the green moss?  
層巒疊嶂穴金開，  
逐利人爭闢草萊。  
有意入山興寶藏，  
何妨陟嶺踏青苔。<sup>57</sup>

As in many of Yunnian's poems, these two stanzas combine the classical trope of composing poetry in response to beautiful mountain scenery with colonial development discourse. The first stanza follows the classical trope: Yunnian invites his poetry club friend Hong Yinan and several courtesans on a springtime excursion to a scenic mountain. In the second stanza, however, this party runs into a different sort of mountain excursion: land clearance in preparation for a mining survey. In this stanza, the very language of landscape poetry takes on a developmental tone. For example, the word *kai* 開 ("to open up") occurs in both stanzas, but with different shades of meaning: in the first stanza, the poets' horizons are "broadened" (*kai* 開) by the mountain scenery, whereas in the second stanza it is the mountain's innards are physically "opened up" (*kai* 開) for mining. The parallel construction of each stanza's third line is also striking: the poets summit the mountain to take in the view, while the miners enter into the mountains to "develop" (*xing* 興) its "precious treasures." As with *kai*, the word *xing* can be used in the more poetic sense of "excite" or "arouse" to describe the effect of viewing mountain scenery on the imagination, but Yunnian uses it in the second stanza to describe improvements in mineral extraction. Thus, the mountains serve as a source of both poetic inspiration and mineral wealth.

In the same year, we also find Yunnian publishing poems dedicated to Japanese mining officials. These poems were usually printed in both the Chinese and Japanese editions of the paper. In the January 27, 1910 Chinese edition and the February 1, 1910 Japanese edition, for example, we find a farewell poem to Fujita's outgoing supervisor for the Ruifang gold district:

You have spent several years here, developing the precious  
treasures,  
And now, at this sudden parting, my tears are about to flow.  
With parting feelings wound through a thousand miles of rivers  
and mountain passes,  
And the sky filled with wind and rain, I see you off in your return  
boat.  
Who now will supervise that producer of riches, Jiufen?  
Who will be in charge of planning those crowns of profit, the three  
mountains?  
From this parting, I hope your future will be just as you wish,

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<sup>57</sup> Yan Yunnian, "Bu Hong Yinan shexiong Jiufen jijing shiyun" 步洪以南社兄九份即景詩韻, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 11.

As we part paths I wish you the best in your future business success.

為興寶藏幾經秋，  
忽爾分襟淚欲流。  
千里關河縈別緒，  
一天風雨送歸舟。  
財生九份將誰護，  
利冠三山賴孰籌。  
此去前途應得意，  
臨歧豫祝振鴻猷。<sup>58</sup>

Below it, we also find a welcome poem addressed to his incoming replacement:

In the heavens, Venus joyously illuminates your approach;  
In the fields, the fresh dew makes the cherry-apple's shade flourish.  
In auspicious signs, we repeatedly hear the jade of a rich harvest,  
In fragrant folds, long has there lain ubiquitous gold.  
The mining business begins to flourish, like a goose unfolding its wings;  
The mountain's spirits become fully productive, deep as a horse's hoof.  
Hoping that your engineering will be great and transform  
[Taiwanese mining]  
As our elder [you] step down from your car we all alike do obeisance.  
上界長庚喜照臨，  
田間新沐芾棠陰。  
瑞徵屢聽豐年玉，  
芳澤長留遍地金。  
礦務肇興鴻翅展，  
山靈盡產馬蹄深。  
所期工學大而化，  
長者下車共式欽。<sup>59</sup>

These poems are highly conventional, filled with clichés that Yunnian recycled in subsequent poems to mining officials. The second poem also spells out the name and title of the incoming commissioner in the first character of each line, a technique one finds occasionally in poems addressed by Yunnian to Japanese benefactors. In both poems, the focus is on gold extraction: Jiufen as the “producer of riches,” the appearance of Venus the gold star, “ubiquitous gold” in the mountains' folds. The incoming mining commissioner is described in classical idiom as a worth official (“cherry-apple's shade” is a euphemism for living under an upright official; likewise “jade of a rich harvest” refers to talented official). In contrast, the outgoing official is

<sup>58</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Jing song Abu Ruifang kuangshan suozhang gui Ban” 敬送阿部瑞芳礦山所長歸阪, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 10.

<sup>59</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Gong ya Shantian Ruifang kuangshan suozhang xinren” 恭迓上田瑞芳礦山所長新任, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 10.

presented, again in classical idiom, as Yunnian's intimate friend (tears at parting, "parting feelings wound through a thousand miles of rivers and mountain passes," seeing of the "returning boat"). Note also the reuse of the word *xing* 興, first in the sense of "developing" the mines, then in the sense of the "flourishing" of "mining affairs."

The connection between mining and poetry deepened following the construction of Yunnian's new residence in Keelung, named Encircled Mirror Tower (*Huanjing lou* 環鏡樓), which served as a meeting space for both poetry societies and business associations. Yunnian announced the completion of the building in the September 16, 1912 issue of *Taiwan Daily News* in a poem.<sup>60</sup> The completion ceremony itself was an occasion for poetry composition. Yunnian wrote: "On the day of its completion, I again humbly received the heroes of the world of poetry from throughout the island, who came in a continuous stream to favor me with their presence. I 'beat the bowl' among them, admired their literary achievements, and obtained over 270 fine works."<sup>61</sup> While a few of these poems were published shortly afterward in *Taiwan Daily News*, a more complete collection was published in 1920 in the anthology *Collection of Harmonized Verses from the Encircled Mirror Tower* (*Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集).

The contents of *Collection of Harmonized Verses from the Encircled Mirror Tower* give us a sense of how Yunnian's poetry gatherings and excursions worked, how they related to his mining interests, and how he wished these activities be perceived by the public. First of all, it should be noted that the paper used to print the book contains small particles that glimmer under light, evoking the mineral sources of Yunnian's wealth. The book's front matter includes a front-facing photo of Yunnian in a western-style suit and jacket, with short hair and a thin mustache, titled "Master of the Encircled Mirror Tower" 環鏡樓主人. A host of calligraphic inscriptions and prose dedications showcased Yunnian's eminent social circle: two calligraphic inscriptions by the Chief of Civil Government Shimomura Hiroshi 下村宏 (1875-1957) and Vice Director of the Bank of Taiwan Nakagawa Kojūrō 中川小十郎 (1866-1944), and prefaces authored by the heads of the Ying Society, the Oak Society 櫟社, and the Bamboo Society 竹社. The book's front matter also includes a photo of the Encircled Mirror Tower itself as seen from the street. Although the structure itself does not survive today, we can see from the photo that it was an imposing two floor building in the new red brick and granite "Tatsuno style" 辰野式 prevalent among official buildings in Japan's colonies. Shiqiu Ridge 獅球嶺 is distantly visible behind the building, which would have made an excellent view for poetry composition.

The first set of poems included in the anthology were written to commemorate the building's completion. Their arrangement gives a sense of how Yunnian's poetry parties worked. The poetic form for the first set was seven character regulated verse, a form with a stringent set of rules regarding line length, rhyme, tone, and use of parallelism. Parenthetical notes further specify that this session consisted of "harmonized jade verses" 和瑤韻, meaning that the first poem, written by Yunnian himself, set the characters and thus the rhyme that each participant would have to reproduce in his own poem. That is to say, in this round every participant had to use the same character in the same line-end spot. For example, the first line of Yunnian's poem ends with the character 周, pronounced *tsiu* in Southern Min, or *zhou* in Modern Standard Mandarin:

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<sup>60</sup> Yan Yunnian, "Xin ju gao cheng liao yi ziwei ji cheng yi lü" 新居告成聊以自慰即成一律, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 35.

<sup>61</sup> Yan Guonian 顏國年, *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), preface.

In selecting the land and constructing the building, two years have elapsed.

擇地營居歲兩周<sup>62</sup>

The first lines of the next ten poems, constituting the first round of the game, all end with the same character. The first four are given below, to give a sense of how they read:

In “carving you into a scepter of jade,” heaven’s will has been thorough.

玉汝於成天意周

Two years of construction, your wisdom and care have been thorough.

兩載經營智慮周

In constructing the wide mansion, two years have elapsed.

廣廈經營歲再周

In constructing the great mansion, you continue the culture of the Zhou dynasty.

大廈經營繼有周<sup>63</sup>

The pleasure of this poetry game derived from reusing the same word to express different meanings. In the five poems cited above, two use the word *zhou* in the sense of “elapsed,” two use it in the sense of “thorough,” and one uses it as part of a classical allusion, *you Zhou* 有周, referring to the ancient Zhou dynasty. The first section of *Collection of Harmonized Verses from the Encircled Mirror Tower* contains several such sets of poems, some in linked verse and some not, composed at various parties hosted by Yunnian.

The second section of the anthology is preceded by a set of photographs from a 1917 dedication ceremony for a stele lauding Yunnian’s mining achievements. The stele was erected in Songde Park 頌德公園 on the outskirts of Jiufen, where it still stands to this day. Compared to the poems in the first section, which mostly deal with Yunnian’s new residence Keelung, the spatial focus of the second section is more the mining district of Ruifang. One of the most interesting works in this section is set of four poems by Huang Chunqing 黃純青 (1875-1956). Huang was a member of the Ying Society and, like Yunnian, a literatus-capitalist. As an adolescent he learned to write classical poetry and eight-legged essays in preparation for the civil service examinations, and after colonization he became a prominent businessman, opening a winery in Shulin 樹林. In this set of four poems, Huang recorded a journey from Keelung City to Jiufen by means of the push car railway recently financed by Yunnan and the Japanese owner of the Mudan 牡丹 gold district:<sup>64</sup>

### *Once More Ascending Encircled Mirror Tower*

<sup>62</sup> Yan Guonian 顏國年, *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), p. 17a.

<sup>63</sup> For these poems, see Yan Guonian 顏國年, *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), pp. 17b-18a

<sup>64</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 348. One study of push car railways in Taiwan notes that the railway company founded by Yunnian “carried almost half a million passengers as well as 150,000 metric tons of freight during 1934 on its 45 kilometers of light track.” See Ronald G. Knapp, “Push Car Railways and Taiwan’s Development,” in *China’s Island Frontier: Studies in the Historical Geography of Taiwan*, ed. Ronald G. Knapp (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980), p. 211.

“Trimming the wick” and “dividing the paper” in remembrance of  
past years,  
This evening we ascend the tower once more, discussing the basis  
of poetry.  
I am happy that, since our last parting, the scenery has not suffered  
any loss.  
As of old, the tower’s balcony illuminates the painted boats.

重登環鏡樓  
刻燭分箋憶昔年，  
今宵重上話詩緣。  
別來景物欣無恙，  
依舊樓臺映畫船。<sup>65</sup>

*On the Road to Ruifang*

Rolling, rolling, the light push car heads for Ruifang,  
Green shade fills the tracks, the sun just becoming strong.  
Everywhere the locals vie to open up the mines,  
The grass long, the mountains luxuriant, the wild growth  
uncleared.

瑞芳途上即景  
轆轤輕車上瑞芳，  
綠陰滿路日初長。  
居民到處爭開礦，  
草長山肥不墾荒。<sup>66</sup>

*Cable Cars*<sup>67</sup>

Having arranged metal cables in the mountain’s hollow,  
The minerals, suspended from on high, pass back and forth by  
themselves.  
Why even mention the technology of the wheelbarrow?  
Just look at how many turns back and forth this system makes in  
the sky!

流輪  
安排鐵索傍山隈，  
礦物高懸自去來。

<sup>65</sup> Huang Chunqing 黃純青, “Chong deng Huanjing lou” 重登環鏡樓, in *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集, ed. Yan Guonian 顏國年 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), p. 30a.

<sup>66</sup> Huang Chunqing 黃純青, “Ruifang tu shang ji jing” 瑞芳途上即景, in *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集, ed. Yan Guonian 顏國年 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), p. 78b.

<sup>67</sup> Liulun 流輪 should be read as the Southern Min word liû-lông 流籠, also written as 琉榔, meaning “cable car.” I am grateful to Wang Hung-tai for pointing this out to me.

漫道木牛流馬巧，  
盤旋空際幾輪回。<sup>68</sup>

*The Gold Washing Area*

Having split open the mountain's innards, there are built layers  
upon layers of buildings,  
And the implements for grinding and washing are everywhere  
supplied.  
With admiration we discuss Ruifang, the world of gold,  
With alchemical skill, it has been planned well.

洗金場

切開山腹築層樓，  
磨洗機關設備周。  
豔說瑞芳金世界，  
點金有術善籌謀。<sup>69</sup>

The focus of the first stanza, set in Yunnian's mansion, is the maintenance of old relationships and traditions through the social art of poetry: reminiscing about past years, ascending the tower "once more," and happily finding the scenery below unchanged. The next three stanzas, however, travel into a new world. Seated on a small car pushed along a set of narrow rails by workers, Huang admires other workers opening up mines below a rising sun. Huang is even more amazed by the technological innovation on display at Jilong Mountain 鷄籠山, where Yunnian has situated the push car railway next to cable car tracks by which gold-bearing rock is lowered down for transport to the washing site. The final stanza describes the washing site—i.e., the town of Jiufen itself—where residents break down the rocks and use rockers to extract the gold. The contrast between the spaces depicted in the first and last stanzas is striking: in the first, Yunnian's mansion serves as a site for preserving the old world through recreation; in the last, workers' residences in Jiufen serve as sites of hard work and mineral extraction. As with Yunnian's juxtaposition of poets eating fish and miners "becoming rats," one senses in Huang's poem a fascination with the relationship between these spaces, and the process by which the profits torn from "the mountain's innards" finance mansions from which poets admire and memorialize supposedly unchanging scenery. Indeed, the profits of extraction financed not only vantage points from which to view scenery; they also financed the construction of the scenery itself, in the form of landscape gardens.

*Gardens*

One of the most lavish landscape gardens of colonial-era Taiwan was the Yan family garden in Keelung City. Although the only remnant of the garden now is the diminutive Yan family cemetery off of Yiliu Rd., old maps and photos show that the garden extended far back into the hills north of modern-day Xin'er Rd., to the east of Keelung Hospital. After purchasing

<sup>68</sup> Huang Chunqing 黃純青, "Liulun" 流輪, in *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集, ed. Yan Guonian 顏國年 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), p. 78b.

<sup>69</sup> Huang Chunqing 黃純青, "Xi jin chang" 洗金場, in *Huanjing lou changhe ji* 環鏡樓唱和集, ed. Yan Guonian 顏國年 (Taipei: Yan Guonian, 1920), p. 79a.

the property in 1920, Yunnian named it *Lou yuan* 陋園, “Rustic Garden,” an allusion to an Analects passage describing the humble background of Confucius’s favorite student Yan Hui 顏回. The following year, Yunnian’s new property served as the site for a joint gathering of the three major northern Taiwan poetry societies: the Ying Poetry Society, the Taoyuan Poetry Society 桃園吟社 (based in Taoyuan), and the Bamboo Society 竹社 (based in Hsinchu). In the September 2, 1921 issue of Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo, Yunnian reported on this grand housewarming party in a preface to a series of four poems:

The garden is to the east of Keelung Harbor, where an area of over 60,000 ping of land was cleared. A ring of mountains surround it, and on its west it is close to the sea. It has painted halls and carved roof beams, rare flowers and grasses. It has two ponds, one large and one small, where swimming fishes nibble. On one pond is a pavilion, and several steps from the pavilion a small waterfall—the scenery is extremely beautiful. I got it last year, expanded the buildings, trimmed the overgrown parts and filled in the gaps. For fruits I grew sugarcane, for flowers I cultivated plum and apricot, and for trees I planted pine and banyan. Even before work was completed, I invited my wandering poetry friends over to view the scenery and compose verses, and to diffuse their literary brilliance. I wanted to collect their works in one volume, so I wrote these four stanzas and asked everyone to harmonize with them.

園在基津之東，拓地約六萬餘坪。四面環山，其西近海。畫閣雕樑，奇花異草。大小兩池，游魚唼喋。池上有亭，距亭數武，有小瀑布，風景殊勝。余去年得之，添建崇樓，更理其荒而補其缺。果種甘蔗，花栽梅杏，樹植松榕。功尚未竟，交游騷壇諸子即景題詞，紛披藻采。余思編次成集，因識四章，即請大家賜和。<sup>70</sup>

As with the Encircled Mirror Tower, the results of this and other parties held at the Rustic Garden were later collected and published on sparkling paper in an anthology titled *Collected Verses from the Rustic Garden* (*Louyuan yinji* 陋園吟集).

The front matter for this anthology features a photograph taken from the hillside looking south, down onto the estate. On the hillside where the photographer was standing we can see sparsely planted pine trees, a stark contrast to the thick vegetation covering the mountains along the Keelung River. At the base of the hill is a pond with a few pavilions along its sides, as well as a pagoda and a stone lantern (*tōrō* 燈籠) in the Japanese style. On the near side of the pond, on the other hand, we see a ring of flower beds arranged in complex and neatly defined geometric patterns, a more Western touch. And on the far side of the pond we see several mansions build in a more traditional Japanese style. Another copy of the same photograph from the Institute of Taiwan History archives at Academia Sinica clarifies that the structure on the right side was the family residence.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Lou yuan si zhang you yin” 陋園 四章有引, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 109.

<sup>71</sup> Yan Yunnian 顏雲年, “Yan Yunnian Jiazu Zhaopian 顏雲年家族照片 T0745\_04\_02\_001,” 1964 1922, Photo no. 3, Zhongyang yanjiu yuan Taiwan shi yanjiusuo Taiwan shi dangan ziyuan xitong 中央研究院臺灣史研究所臺灣

A set of poems included in the anthology give a sense of what it was like to walk through the garden. In a preface, Yunnian recorded that, when he first came into possession of the Rustic Garden, its “many sights had not yet been named” 所有園中諸勝，均未命名，<sup>72</sup> so Yunnian took it upon himself to name them, and compose a poem describing each sight, thereby taking his readers on a poetic tour through the “springtime-seeping pond” 沁春池，“autumn-intoning brook” 吟秋澗，“frost-splitting forest” 擘霜林，“moon-hoeing wall” 鋤月塢，“shadow-stilling hut” 息影廬，“light-gathering balcony” 涵光臺，“business-forgetting pavilion” 忘機亭，“robe-ruffling ridge” 振衣岡，“dragon marsh waterfall” 龍湫瀑，and “crab ripple well” 蟹波井。Eminent guests also wrote poems describing these sights. What is most interesting about these poems, however, is how totally absent mining is in them. In contrast to the earlier Encircled Mirror Tower anthology, which included numerous poems describing or set in the actual mountain landscapes being mined by Yunnian, the poems in this later anthology describe a landscape built purely as a setting and object for group poetry writing.

At the same time—much like the modern day golf course—it was precisely the leisurely, non-business character of this landscape that made it such an ideal site for cultivating business relationships. Yunnian’s initial acquisition of the property derived from his mining connections. The garden was originally owned by Kimura Kutaro 木村久太郎, head of the Kimura business group, owner of the Mudan 牡丹 gold mines just south of Yunnian’s claim, and co-owner (with Yunnian) of the Keelung Push Car Rail Company 基隆輕鐵株式會社.<sup>73</sup> In the October 2, 1921 issue of *Taiwan Daily News*, we read that Yunnian celebrated the construction of his younger brother’s new house on the estate with a three day garden party. The first day of this party was for “employees and close associates of Mr. Yan’s various businesses,” the second day for friends, and the third day for officials.<sup>74</sup> It is often difficult to say whether Yunnian’s interest in a certain guest was primarily literary or commercial. In the September 19, 1922 issue of *Taiwan Daily News*, for example, Zhang Yushu 張玉書 published a poem describing the beautiful scenery during a stay at his “verse brother” 詞兄 Yunnian’s garden in Keelung.<sup>75</sup> Originally a merchant and self-taught poet, Zhang had opened a camphor business in Caotun 草屯 with the help of the Lin family of Wufeng, with whom he had a literary relationship.<sup>76</sup> In 1920 Zhang founded the Oak Poetry Society (*Li she* 櫟社) as well as the Central Taiwan Development Company 中部拓殖株式會社 which provided credit and brokerage for land development and

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史檔案資源系統,

[http://tais.ith.sinica.edu.tw/sinicafrsFront/search/search\\_detail.jsp?xmlId=0000344188&checked=&unchecked=0000344188,0000344189,0000344194](http://tais.ith.sinica.edu.tw/sinicafrsFront/search/search_detail.jsp?xmlId=0000344188&checked=&unchecked=0000344188,0000344189,0000344194).

<sup>72</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Louyuan shi yong” 陋園十詠, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 118.

<sup>73</sup> Tang Yu 唐羽, *Jilong Yan jia fazhan shi* 基隆顏家發展史 (Nantou: Guoshi guan Taiwan wenxian guan, 2003), p. 194; Yan Yifang 顏義芳, “Jilong Yan jia yu Taiwan kuangye fazhan 基隆顏家與臺灣礦業開發,” *Taiwan Wenxian* 62, no. 4 (2011), p. 114.

<sup>74</sup> “Louyuan yan ke” 陋園宴客, *Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpo*, October 2, 1921, p. 6. For a printed facsimile, see *Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shinpo*, vol. 82 (Taipei: Wunan, 1994-1995), p. 16. Ironically, an adjacent article reported on a mining accident that occurred the same day as Yunnian’s party, in which a cable car full of coal fell back into a steep tunnel after the cable snapped, causing severe injuries to the miners.

<sup>75</sup> Zhang Yushu 張玉書, “Jiang you dalu tu zhi Jijin su Yunnian cixiong louyuan” 將遊大陸途至基隆宿雲年詞兄陋, in *Lou yuan yin ji* 陋園吟集, ed. Yan Yunnian (Taihoku-shū: Kubota Akira, 1924), p. 12.

<sup>76</sup> <http://xdcn.nmtl.gov.tw/tpw/b/b02.htm>

construction.<sup>77</sup> Following his brief stay at the Rustic Garden in 1922, Zhang embarked on a tour of mainland China—a prime example of the Taiwanese poet-capitalist acting as a “matchmaker” between Japan and China.

While the Rustic Garden was a particularly lavish example, acquiring a villa or landscape garden to use for important parties and meetings was a typical move for a member of Yunnian’s class, a transnational class of *zaibatsu* business group professionals, managers, and subcontractors. For example, just a few years prior, three high-level representatives from the Mitsui business group had helped settle a dispute between Yunnian and a rival Japanese claimant to the Sijiaoting coal fields. The dispute was settled with Yunnian being named as a director of the newly formed Taiwan Coal Company 臺灣炭礦株式會社, after which Yunnian again pooled his capital with Mitsui to form the Keelung Coal Company 基隆炭礦株式會社. Subsequently, in the October 16, 1918 issue of *Taiwan Daily News*, Yunnian published three poems composed to express his gratitude at a party hosted by the Mitsui engineer Makita Tamaki 牧田環 at his garden villa in Hakone. Yunnian’s poem to Makita reads:

In the garden, everywhere feels like clear autumn,  
As we record our pleasant trip to the green wilds and mountain  
villages.  
You are as hospitable to your guests as Lord Pingyuan,  
And I, though no Wang Can, nevertheless climb your tower.  
In embroidered bags are drafts of poems, which capture the  
essence of things,  
As the scenery of the Island of Mount Penglai is absorbed into our  
eyes.  
To raise your cup and sing out loud is truly a happy occasion!  
You don’t know how lucky we are to have this leisurely and  
comfortable life.  
庭園到處盡清秋，  
綠野山莊記勝遊。  
君是平原能好客，  
我非王粲亦登樓。  
錦囊詩料園中得，  
蓬島風光眼底收。  
把酒高歌真樂事，  
不知清福幾生修。<sup>78</sup>

Just as with Yunnian’s Encircled Mirror Tower and Rustic Garden in Keelung, Makita’s villa and landscape garden in Hakone served as a site for the collective landscape appreciation and poetry composition. These shared emotional experiences reinforced nascent business partnerships and facilitated the pooling of greater concentrations of capital and more intensive development of Taiwan’s colonial industries—in this case, the extractive industries.

Even when it came to business associates without gardens, Yunnian’s poetic vision could still transform mines into landscape paintings. In a poem published in the September 28, 1922

<sup>77</sup> [http://memory.ncl.edu.tw/tm CGI/hypage.cgi?HYPAGE=toolbox\\_figure\\_detail.hpg&xml\\_id=0000294428](http://memory.ncl.edu.tw/tm CGI/hypage.cgi?HYPAGE=toolbox_figure_detail.hpg&xml_id=0000294428)

<sup>78</sup> Yan Yunnian, “Wuwu bayue sanshi ri gongxue boshi Mutian xiansheng zhaoyin yu Xianggen biedi” 戊午八月三十日工學博士牧田先生招飲於箱根別邸, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 79.

issue of Taiwan Daily News, Yunnian described a party hosted by the Pingxi coal magnate Pan Bingzhu 潘炳燭:

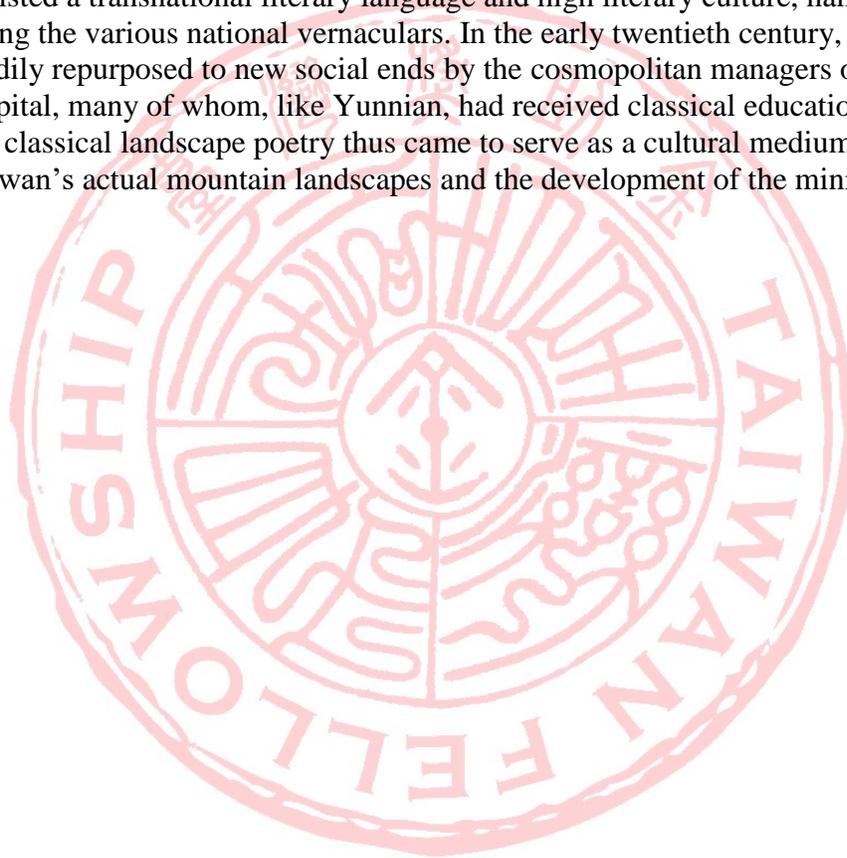
With the scenic river and famous mountains entwining before our eyes,  
This place is just perfect for unrolling a mat and intoning poetry.  
Mist and clouds everywhere obscure the coal shafts,  
Gold and jade sounding together, they are tossed as stones upon paper.  
The waterfall rumbles, a dragon bursting from the wall,  
The autumn wind rustles, geese appearing in the sky.  
This poetry gathering in Pingxi is worthy of being transmitted to posterity,  
We don't merely concern ourselves with formal requirements.  
勝水名山繞目前，  
此間正好啟吟筵。  
煙雲到處迷煤井，  
金玉同聲擲石箋。  
瀑布淙淙龍破壁，  
秋風肅肅雁來天。  
平溪韻事堪千古，  
不在尋章摘句先。<sup>79</sup>

In the case of the Rustic Garden, the mining and denuding of a mountain landscape generated enough profit to alter another section of that landscape so that it conformed to a stereotyped image of a poetic landscape. In the case of the Pingxi coal mines, the poet-capitalist simply projected this clichéd poetic vision onto the actual, denuded mountain landscape through the act of writing. In both cases, one witnesses two interrelated modes of mountain terraforming: one seeking to create sites for industrialized resource extraction, the other seeking to create pseudo-classical kitsch drawn from the transnational literary Sinitic tradition for consumption by a new professional-managerial middle class.

When we consider Yunnian's activities as a poet-capitalist, it becomes clear that the *hanwen* renewal movement in early twentieth-century Taiwan possessed a significance deeper and more complex than the nationalistic motives usually attributed to it. *Hanwen* was both the national essence of China and a transnational East Asian tradition. Because *hanwen* was a transnational tradition, poetry clubs and parties served a useful social role for people like Yunnian and his associates, as embryos for a transnational professional-managerial class whose livelihood and lifestyle depended on the free movement of capital, objects, and people throughout the empire. A key question for the Japanese administrators of empire, then, was whether to allow the development of a cosmopolitan, culturally pluralistic professional-managerial class which would necessarily include men like Yunnian, or whether the maintenance of empire required a more kind of direct cultural domination. As the latter approach gained became more prevalent in the 1920s, and the upward social mobility of mobile colonial elites came into conflict with metropolitan cultural chauvinism, the *hanwen* movement began to take

<sup>79</sup> Yan Yunnian, "Pingxi yinhui xi shang" 平溪吟會席上, in *Quan Tai shi* 全臺詩, vol. 28, ed. Shi Yilin 施懿琳 (Tainan shi: Guojia Taiwan wenxueguan, 2013), p. 125.

on increasingly radical nationalistic, anti-colonial, and even communist and anarchist overtones. Yunnian was wary of these radical tendencies, and continued until his death in 1923 to support something closer to what his friend Li Hanru 李漢如 described as equal treatment and equal opportunity in “planning a shared life on the global economic stage” 與世界經濟場中謀共同生活。<sup>80</sup> If we zoom out further, we might compare this vision of empire and the global economy with similar trends in the west, for example Quinn Slobodian’s recent study of early western neoliberals and their admiration for the British and Hapsburg empires, where we read: “For neoliberals, the empire’s cosmopolitanism modeled and prefigured a future world. Among the most compelling aspects of the Hapsburg Empire in retrospect was its separation of economics and politics. The multinational principle had made the empire a single economic space without a homogeneous language or culture.”<sup>81</sup> The situation in East Asia was slightly different, in that there already existed a transnational literary language and high literary culture, namely literary Sinitic, overlaying the various national vernaculars. In the early twentieth century, this literary culture was handily repurposed to new social ends by the cosmopolitan managers of transnational capital, many of whom, like Yunnian, had received classical educations. In a historical irony, classical landscape poetry thus came to serve as a cultural medium for the denuding of Taiwan’s actual mountain landscapes and the development of the mining industry.



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<sup>80</sup> Li Hanru 李漢如, “Fakan zhi ci” 發刊之辭, in *Tâi Ôân Chheng Liân* 臺灣青年 1 (1920), Chinese section p. 8.

<sup>81</sup> Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2018), pp. 105-106.