

The Representation of Taiwanese Childhood
As Reflected in Taiwanese Theatre for Young Audience of
The Taipei Children's Arts Festival 2000-2011

by
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ABSTRACT

The construction of the contemporary Taiwanese child and childhood has been under-researched. It is often understood solely in contrast to a Western context as a mysterious or even exotic existence. However, this understanding differs from what I discovered in my literary reviews, which reveal many similarities – not differences – with respect to the philosophical views of the child and childhood between the so-called “East” and “West.” To gain a better understanding of the Taiwanese child and childhood, I chose the annual Taipei Children’s Arts Festival (TCAF) as my main research subject and adopted grounded theory and dramatic analysis as my research methods to explore the following question: *What are the representations of the Taiwanese child and childhood as reflected by the cultural artifacts of TCAF between 2000 and 2011?*

TCAF is the largest children’s arts festival in Taiwan and theatre for young audiences (TYA) has been its main component. I therefore selected four award winning TCAF plays and their production videos as my main data. Additional data consists of forewords from the programs, which were written by mayors of Taipei City, commissioners of Taipei’s Department of Cultural Affairs, and festival organizers. To provide context, I give a brief history of Taiwanese children’s theatre before beginning the main analysis.

My findings indicate a complex construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. The central category states that Taiwanese children are constructed as adults’ futures. This explains adults’ desires to preserve children’s positive qualities, and reflects adults’ emphasis on learning and teaching, children’s

agency, and their happiness. Determining one central category/hypothesis proved to be difficult, due to the variety and complexity of my data. Missing categories include concepts of the unconscious child and children's relationships to religion, family, friendships, and gender issues. The distinctions between children and adults are both distinct and ambiguous.

Although differences of the East/West binary exist, social constructions of the child and childhood become increasingly similar as the world becomes more fluid. My research highlights a variety of such elements. Future research is still needed, however, in order to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Taiwanese child and childhood.

To my grandma, Hung-hsiang Liu Yang (劉鴻香),
and my parents, Yen-shung Tsai (蔡炎盛) and Chia-li Yang Tsai (楊嘉麗).

For letting me be myself and giving me a wonderful childhood

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“To be accurate in our studies of children, and fair in our treatment of them, we must abandon our stereotype of them, and try to recognize them for what they are – persons in their own right”
(Lee, *Childhood* 43).

Through this project, I intend to contribute to the overall understanding of the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood by examining theatre for young audiences (TYA) in the Taipei Children’s Arts Festival. What is the Taiwanese child and childhood? I never contemplated this question on a philosophical level before I began my scholarly journey at Arizona State University in 2008, despite the fact that I have worked in the field of TYA for over ten years. I am passionate about my career, working for and with young people on a daily basis. I am deeply interested in gaining a better understanding of young people in various capacities, particularly in the arts. I considered myself knowledgeable in methods of working with and for young people. The reason I never considered this question before is because I thought I already knew. Growing up in Taiwan, I thought I knew what the terms “Taiwanese child” and “Taiwanese childhood” meant.

I grew up in a middle class dual-income family with one older brother in a small town called Yang-Mei. Both of my parents taught at a university, twenty-five minutes from our home. My father, Yen-Hsian, was a math professor and my mother, Chia-li, was a senior English lecturer. (Both of them are now retired.)

When we first moved from the university's faculty housing to our home in Yang-Mei in 1981, our neighborhood was surrounded by rice fields and bamboo trees, and far from any convenience stores. Today, there are plenty of convenience stores, but few rice fields, and no bamboo trees remain. I lived in a tiny gated community with four other homes, and my childhood was well-protected, full of love and caring from my parents, extended family, and neighbors.

I played a lot with my neighbors and brother while growing up. When the weather was nice, we went outdoors to play in the mud with flowers, climb trees, ride bicycles, and swim in our tiny community pool. (Community pools are very rare in Taiwan.) Later, we enjoyed playing video games on our Apple®/PC computers and Nintendo®, reading comic books, and watching cartoons. Barbies®, Hello Kitty®, LEGO® and Cabbage Patch Kids® were among the toys with which I played. After entering middle school, our lives were focused on school, tests, and getting into a good high school and university. My brother and I were both accepted to decent high schools in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, and each lived with our grandparents separately for three years during that time. My brother and I had fairly privileged childhoods and academic opportunities because of our upbringing and the amount of education we received. (My brother is currently an assistant professor in Taiwan.) However, I always imagined that we had a typical Taiwanese childhood.

During my studies at ASU, I encountered Steven Mintz's book, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood*. I was intrigued by the historical development of the concept of the child and childhood, which has shifted

throughout different regions and periods of time in the US. I realized how my perception of Taiwanese childhood was limited to my own experiences as a child and working with children. I began to see that, although my family was never rich, my childhood was unique because of our gated community, our special American toys brought back by my uncles, and our access to better educational resources because of my parents. Because my personal experience is one example of Taiwanese childhood, I began to wonder about other constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood and how these constructions affect my practice of teaching in the field of Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA).

Because of my education and work experience, I have lived in the US for over ten years. In addition to obtaining my Master of Fine Arts at the University of Texas at Austin and pursuing my Ph.D education at Arizona State University, I worked at a professional children's theatre company as the Academy/Education Associate Director for two and a half years. I gained most of my experience by working with young people in the US. In order to have better contact with Taiwanese TYA practitioners, drama teachers, and children, I have taken as many opportunities as possible to work in Taiwan during breaks and trips home. Thinking back to those teaching experiences, I now realize that my teaching style is different than most teachers with whom I worked in Taiwan. For example, when I worked at a summer theatre camp in Taipei county, students were often called out to do chores for their teachers. These students were typically the best students, academically, in a class. It was acceptable for them to miss part of class because they were believed to be able to catch up quickly. Once, the music

teacher wanted another drama teacher and me to incorporate a choir competition song into our drama lesson. Disregarding our protest, she asked a few students to search for the file and download it to a CD. This is different from my own practice as a teacher. I would never ask one of my students to do something similar. At the end of the camp, one teacher commented on my teaching style, saying that I offered students a lot of control and options. I never figured out if this was meant as a compliment or as a critique. She seemed to appreciate my effort, but also thought it was too time-consuming. In my opinion, it is never a waste of time to provide opportunities and a degree of authority to the students with whom I am working. These teachers helped me realize that they might have a different concept of “the child” than me.

My practice and research has been informed by my Taiwanese culture, heritage, and education as well as my American education and practice. Having a bi-cultural background, I was often struck by the common dichotomy between “East” and “West,” two loosely defined words. Recently, a book called *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* by Amy Chua stirred a parenting controversy. Regardless of the author’s intention, the book was framed by the media as placing greater value on a strict and rigid “Chinese” (Eastern) approach to parenting, compared to more relaxed American (Western) parenting methods. An article by Chua, published in *The Wall Street Journal*, is titled “Why Chinese Mothers are Superior: Can a regimen of no playdates, no TV, no computer games and hours of music practice create happy kids? And what happens when they fight back?” In the article, Chua indicates that she uses the term “Chinese” and “Western” mother

loosely and recognizes that some Asian and non-Asian mothers alike fit her idea of the “Chinese mother,” and that there are a variety of Western mothers as well. Nonetheless, this short-lived media frenzy and the popularity of the book demonstrates the fascination of this “East vs. West” dichotomy. Ironically, this book was based on an American (second generation Asian-American) mother’s reconstruction of “Chinese” mothers' parenting methods.

In general, Theatre for Young Audiences in the US includes only limited representations of Asians and Asian-Americans. The majority of Asian-related plays are about ancient stories, folktales, imaginary Asian worlds, adaptations, or immigration. These include *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep, *Kimchi Kid* by Joanna Halpert Kraus, *Monkey Magic: Chinese Story Theatre* by Aurand Harris, and *The Honorable Urashima Taro* by Coleman A. Jennings. As for Asian performances from Asia, Chinese acrobats remain one of the better known shows for family audiences in the US. In a market-driven world, it seems that the concept of the East as “exotic,” an East very different from the West (US), is more appealing to the public. Besides theatrical performances, movies such as Disney’s *Mulan* and Dream Works’ *Kung Fu Panda* are also examples of films that help perpetuate the “mysterious Asian” concept. These Asian/Asian-American stories and performances from Asia are not necessarily an accurate reflection of the contemporary Asian world. While many TYA practitioners might agree with my assessment, it is hard for any of us to pinpoint what parts of the construction of the Asian child and childhood are exactly the same and what are different from the Western counterpart.

Cultural differences exist between the East and the West, but these differences are no longer as distinct or “exotic” as they are portrayed. Our world is much more fluid today. Modern technology and transportation make cultural exchanges easier than ever before. Even before the Internet and social networks became prevalent, cultural exchanges happened regularly and, sometimes, seamlessly. Consider my family as an example: while growing up in Taiwan, my brother and I watched *He-Man*, *ET*, and *Back to the Future*; we played with Thunder Cats, Snoopy, Cabbage Patch Kids, and Super Mario Brother's toys; and we listened to Michael Jackson. Of course, we also watched movies and TV shows from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan and played with non-Western toys. Viewing the same entertainment and playing with similar toys does not make our Taiwanese childhood experiences the same as children in the US or other parts of the world. There are, however, certain ideologies and memories that we share.

I have decided to interpret the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood as a way of contributing to the overall understanding of the contemporary Taiwanese perspective using my own field of study as the subject of exploration. To make this project more feasible within my timeframe of study, I chose to study the theatre for young audiences of the Taipei Children’s Arts Festival (TCAF) from 2000 to 2011 as my main subject. TCAF, founded in 2000, is the largest government-funded international children’s arts festival in Taiwan. (The arts activities involved in the 2010 festival numbered more than three hundred.) Although the festival includes visual arts, dance, music, and theatre performances and workshops, TYA performances constitute the majority of the

activities. The performances, selected by the local government, are not limited to those from Taipei city, but also include companies from around the nation and the world. The TCAF performances offer a well-rounded representation of Taiwanese TYA. This month-long festival contains both contemporary and traditional theatre performances for young people at various performing locations around Taipei city. (The traditional theatres mentioned here include Taiwanese and Beijing opera, shadow puppets, and glove puppets.) The formation and location of all TCAF productions represent an assortment of materials to showcase current developments in Taiwanese TYA and therefore provide a solid foundation from which to reflect on Taiwanese childhood. TCAF also includes a TYA playwriting competition each year. Juried by theatre professors and government officials, the winning scripts are reliable indicators of the developmental trends of Taiwanese TYA over the past decade. Because of this, TCAF anthologies of winning plays are invaluable and easily accessed materials.

Taiwanese TYA is a relatively young field: the first non-profit professional children's theatre was founded in 1987. Nevertheless, this non-traditional, contemporary TYA tradition can be traced back to China, through the period of Japanese colonization (1895-1945), and up to the end of World War II (WWII). For the past thirty years, Taiwanese TYA has grown tremendously in the number, size, and quality of its productions to become one of the main sources of live performance for young people in Taiwan. In order to contextually frame the construction of the child and childhood within TYA and TCAF, I will give an in-depth introduction to Taiwanese TYA in the following chapter.

Ian Neary, a scholar of oriental politics and international relations, pointed out in his 2002 publication, *Human Rights in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan*, that “[t]he idea that the notion of ‘childhood’ was problematic is scarcely recognized in Taiwan” (247). There is minimal research related to childhood studies in Taiwan before 2000. The historian Ping-chen Hsiung (熊秉真) is the only person, as far as I know, who has written publications related to the Chinese child and childhood during imperial China in Taiwan. After 2000, however, there have been considerably more conferences, publications, and research regarding both Western and Taiwanese childhood studies, which were led by an early childhood professor, Yin-Kun Chang (張盈堃). Although the field of childhood studies in Taiwan is steadily growing, the need for studies that examine and problematize the notion of childhood in Taiwan remains great, especially in the field of the arts. Researching the Taiwanese child and childhood through grounded theory in the TYA of TCAF can potentially open a new path for childhood studies in Taiwan.

In this study, I adapt grounded theory and dramatic analysis as my research method to analyze TCAF’s artifacts, which consist of plays, videos, and festival programs/reports as viewed through the lens of childhood studies. Thus, the main question of this project is: *What are the representations of the Taiwanese child and childhood as reflected by the cultural artifacts (plays and other materials) of TCAF between 2000 and 2011?* Sub-questions are:

- What representations of childhood are reflected in the characters (their genders, families, and relationships), and stories (their themes and educational messages)?
- Which messages for and ideologies about children are reinforced in these plays and the overall festival?
- What kind of agency do young people have, if any, within the plays and structure of TCAF?

I detail my research methods, and describe my process of study in the following chapter. In the third chapter, I provide the theatrical and historical context for this research by including a broad overview of Taiwanese TYA along with a brief history of Taiwan. The fourth chapter introduces the background of the Taipei Children's Arts Festival (TCAF). Chapter Five consists of literary reviews of both Western and Taiwanese childhood studies. Chapters Six and seven include the analytical codes and analyses of TCAF plays and production video recordings as well as excerpts from festival programs and reports. In the concluding chapter, I offer my hypothesis concerning the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood and point out challenges in conducting this research.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design Overview:

For this research, I draw from the constructionist grounded theory research method to analyze representations of the Taiwanese child and childhood based on data from the Taipei Children's Arts Festival (TCAF). The data includes printed materials and media from the beginning of the festival in 2000 to the most current festival in 2011. Selected winning TYA plays from TCAF's Playwriting Competition are the main data for this research. Festival reports, programs, video tapes, and other available materials serve as secondary data to support the findings. I use Kathy Charmaz's guidelines for conducting grounded theory, Johnny Saldaña's coding manual for qualitative research, and elements of dramatic analysis as my research foundation, while modifying the process and selecting different analytical tools to better fit this project.

I begin the research with a main question: *What are the representations of the Taiwanese child and childhood as reflected by the cultural artifacts (plays and other materials) of TCAF between 2000 and 2011?* Then, I analyze my data based on the process of grounded theory as suggested by Charmaz, including initial coding, focus coding, memo writing, and refining conceptual categories. I conclude the research with my findings, provide an in-depth analysis of codes/categories, and suggest a central category for the construction of Taiwanese child and childhood.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory, as advocated by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in the early 1960s, is a methodology which uses systematic strategies to conduct qualitative research to build theory from data rather than verifying/testing hypotheses from existing theories (Charmaz 4; Corbin and Strauss 1; Glaser and Strauss 1-2; Strauss and Corbin 12-13). Glaser and Strauss' systematic research procedure helped legitimize qualitative research as a valid research method that could generate theory. This was opposing the positivist scientific research method and negative perceptions about qualitative research at the time (Charmaz 4-6). Since then, grounded theory has thrived as one of the major qualitative methodologies in the field of sociology, nursing, psychology, and many others.

Kathy Charmaz, a sociologist and methodologist, concludes that the key components of Glaser and Strauss' grounded theory practices in *Constructing Grounded Theory* are as follows:

- Simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis
- Constructing analytic codes and categories from data, not from a preconceived logically deduced hypothesis
- Using the constant comparative method, which involves making comparisons during each stage of the analysis
- Advancing theory development during each step of data collection and analysis

- Memo-writing to elaborate categories, specify their properties, define relationships between categories, and identify gaps
- Sampling aimed toward theory construction, not for population representativeness
- Conducting the literature review *after* developing an independent analysis (5-6)

To clarify, among Glaser and Strauss' practices, "codes" are not unique to grounded theory, but are commonly used in qualitative research methods. "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, *Coding* 3). Qualitative researchers "codify" data by grouping, arranging and linking data and ideas in an order to generate patterns or categories for the purpose of consolidating meanings (Saldaña, *Coding* 8). Different researchers may analyze and interpret the same data using completely different codes because of their own paradigms (ontology, epistemology, methodology, positivism, postpositivism, critical theory et al., constructivism, etc.) (Guba & Lincoln; Saldaña, *Coding* 7). Grounded theorists use emerging codes as an important part of their research procedure in data collection, memo-writing, comparing, and sampling from their data as the foundation of their theories. As Strauss and Juliet Corbin say, the analysis of grounded theory is "the interplay between researchers and data" (Corbin and Strauss 13).

I believe grounded theory best fits my research because of its ability to allow the data to “speak” for itself. It forces me to abandon my preconceived notions of the Taiwanese and Western child and childhood, and instead to use a “clean slate” perspective to interpret the constructions and representations grounded in the Taipei Children’ Arts Festival data. Admittedly, it is virtually impossible to conduct research without any preconceived notions whatsoever, but this is not what grounded theory proposes. This concept's importance is tied to the researcher analyzing data from multiple perspectives and not being influenced by previous theories or losing sight of the data. Through data collection, coding, memo writing, and interpretation (not in a linear form), I am able to interpret different categories of the Taiwanese child and childhood.

I would like to make it clear that my use of grounded theory is different from the classic version of grounded theory, established by Glaser, Strauss, and even Corbin, but is closer to Charmaz’ idea of constructing grounded theory. The classic grounded theory, as first introduced in Glaser and Strauss’ *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, is based on positivistic assumptions that the theory was “discovered” and is “emergent” from the data. The data and the researcher or scientific observer are isolated from each other (Charmaz 10). Although he was under the influence of recent methodologists, Corbin began to recognize the constructivists’ criticism (Corbin & Strauss 12), and her and Strauss’ approach still emphasizes the verification of, rather than discovery from, the data (Charmaz 8). However, the constructivist’s idea of grounded theory, as Charmaz suggested, assumes that we cannot separate the researchers from the data they collect and

that we cannot “discover” theory from the data. Since we are bound to our past experiences, research, relationships, and interaction with people and the world, Charmaz’s approach suggests that “any theoretical rendering offers an *interpretive* portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture” (10). Grounded theory methods construct reality from data that could be changed if new data is introduced during the analytic process. My research is limited to the available data of TCAF, and, therefore, is open to further examination.

Although my intention is to follow the research process laid out by Charmaz in her book, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, I am fully aware that my research has some fundamental differences from Charmaz’s, and even classic, grounded theory. This is not because of the procedure or structure of my research, but because of my data. Most data used in previous grounded theory research consists of interviews. My research, however, primarily deals with play scripts, festival documents, and DVDs. I am applying the theory by using the steps and processes of grounded theory from Charmaz and other grounded theorists as guidelines, and adapting them to better fit my research (Charmaz 9).

Since my goal is to understand the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood in TCAF, I interpreted TCAF’s materials as one unified cultural entity. Following Charmaz’s grounded theory process (Charmaz 11) helps me explain my vision and way of modifying data for grounded theory.

Analytic Framework

My analytic framework drew from both grounded theory and dramatic analysis. My aim was to turn mundane, familiar material into something fresh

and unfamiliar, as Kathy Charmaz suggested for the initial coding process in *Constructing Grounded Theory* (55). Using different qualitative coding methods helped me view play scripts in new ways when compared to using only dramatic analysis methods. However, play scripts are different from interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other typical qualitative research documents. The plays required different analytic units to better organize the data. As a result, I still needed to adopt elements of dramatic analysis while using qualitative research methods to better interpret my data.

Dramatic analysis is typically used by both artists and scholars. The primary goal for artists is to analyze a script and create a production. The primary goal for scholars is to gain a better understanding of a piece of dramatic literature in its social, political, and historical contexts. Qualitative research methods are developed to study “natural social life,” primarily through tactile and visual materials such as documents, interviews, fieldnotes, artifacts, video recordings, and photographs (Saldaña, *Fundamentals* 3). The goals for qualitative research vary based on individual projects. “Outcomes are most often composed of essential representations and presentations of salient findings from the analytic synthesis of data . . .” (Saldaña, *Fundamentals* 4). In my opinion, dramatic literature and qualitative research tools are complementary and help me delve deeper into my data.

My original analytical plan was as follows: I selected one of the three top-ranking TCAF winning plays from each year as data for my initial collection. My primary coding methods included In Vivo Coding, Value Coding, and Themeing

the Data. Next, instead of using line-by-line coding as suggested by Charmaz, I separated scripts into French scenes and used them as units for my following coding process. I treated the rest of my TCAF materials, like festival reports, programs, news articles, DVDs, festival images, and festival websites, as my resource for additional information. Writing memos, adapting categories, and sorting memos happened between data collections and codings. I intended to include more data based on my codes and the emerging questions in my memo. Finally, I wrote my draft and explored additional information as needed.

I narrowed my initial primary data to eight different award-winning plays, and intended to include more data based on my codes and the emerging questions in my memo. After my pilot coding and memo writing concerning the play *Ghost Lady* (鬼姑娘) by Hsing-Chih Yang (楊杏枝), I quickly discovered that the differences between a play and its production, which are crucial in the representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood, were missing. Even though these eight plays were the materials approved by the judges and the festival, the majority of the audiences would watch the performance rather than read its script. From my experiences working in the field of theatre, play productions are mostly different from scripts, in minor ways to significant ways. The transformation of a play from words on paper to a three dimensional live performance typically has a strong impact on the outcome of a play. In order to better represent each side of the spectrum, both what the judges approved and what audiences actually saw, I decided to change my data to include four plays and four production videos

instead of eight different plays. I believe this represents TCAF more accurately than only interpreting eight scripts as my main data.

My initial plan also included using three different coding methods: In Vivo coding, Value coding, and Themeing the Data. These three methods are based on Johnny Saldaña's *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. In Vivo coding, also known as literal coding and verbatim coding, is using "a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record" (Saldaña, *Coding* 74) "to preserve participants' meanings of their views and actions in the coding itself" (Charmaz 55). This helps a researcher pay close attention to language while coding. The goal of Value coding is to determine participants' worldviews by examining their values, attitudes, and beliefs. The term "Value coding" subsumes all three different components (Saldaña, *Coding* 89). Themeing the Data is to code "a phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (Saldaña, *Coding* 139). For Saldaña, Themeing the Data is different from a theme, which is not a code but "an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection" (Saldaña, *Coding* 13).

Play scripts are different from interviews; they almost always contain multiple characters and use dialogue. Play scripts therefore require different analytic units to better organize the data. I began my pilot coding cycle by separating *Ghost Lady* into beats and French Scenes, respectively. For clarification, a beat will be defined as a single and complete topic that helps advance the plot (Thomas 130). A French Scene is divided whenever there is a new arrangement of characters (Thomas 136).

Through trial and error, I narrowed my initial choice of coding process to the Themeing the Data coding method, with dramatic beats as my coding units. Initially, I started to code using In Vivo coding based on French Scenes. I immediately found the French Scene to be too large of a unit to be effective and began to use beats instead. In Vivo Coding also presented a difficulty in interpreting the data. Although the division of beats is driven by progression of the entire story, the In Vivo codes tend to capture the essences of the narrative, which are not the center of my inquiry. Value codes, on the other hand, were extremely helpful in pinpointing different aspects of constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood. However, the coding results proved extremely similar to the Themeing the Data results, yet were not as poignant. Therefore, my coding for scripts was based on Themeing the Data coding and dramatic beats.

When using Themeing the Data coding, I began each coding with: “Childhood is or means . . .” and “Children are or mean” The phrases “Childhood is” and “children are” were generally tied to children characters’ actions on stage or in the script. “Childhood means” and “children mean” were codes tied to actions or discussions about childhood or children. I am aware that this coding method is unorthodox to grounded theory. Because grounded theory emphasizes open coding, it allows the data to speak for itself without preconceived notions or theories. However, plays are not traditional qualitative research data. They are not organic like interviews. On the contrary, plays are crafted works of art that contain specific language and messages. Because I am only interested in how the child and childhood are represented in these plays, I

needed to use Themeing the Data coding to extract essences of child and childhood from these plays. During the coding process, I therefore coded openly and allowed my data to speak for itself within these parameters.

To interpret video recordings in qualitative research, I decided to transcribe the recording into fieldnotes before coding. I obtained full length production recordings from both IF and Shiny, and found a six minute YouTube clip of *Ghost Lady* from Seden. Since these productions were based on the scripts, it was not as crucial to transcribe the entire play production to fieldnotes. It was more important to capture production elements such as acting, costumes, and scenic designs, as well as noticeable differences between the production and the original script. Therefore, although the six minute YouTube clip is short, it still contained a significant amount of information about the production. (I previously saw *Ghost Lady's* full length DVD at the Electronic Theater Intermix office at the National Central University in Taoyuan, Taiwan.) My fieldnotes from the other three plays were also based on transcribing twenty to thirty minute videos rather than the entire production.

I began to use qualitative coding methods after finishing my fieldnotes. These fieldnotes were based on my own words and interpretation of the production. Beats did not apply to this portion of my coding. It was also not efficient to code line-by-line because the data contained many descriptive sentences. I therefore used theatrical elements as my units, and I separated the fieldnotes according to which of these elements were discussed. These included costume, lighting design, music, acting, and characters. One portion of my

fieldnotes was dedicated to capturing differences between the production and the original script. These differences were only noted when they made an impact on the portrayal of young people or how they addressed the young audiences.

From my memo writings after the data analysis, I discovered that the plays and production videos raised many other questions regarding the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood. For example, what distinguishes adults from children? Children are often represented as people who possess contradictory qualities, like capable vs. incapable and agency vs. no agency. Which adult perspectives contribute to these contradictory constructions? To answer these questions, I extended my data to include the forewords from mayors of Taipei City, commissioners of the City Department of Cultural Affairs and leaders from festival hosting organizations who were serving during the times of the festivals. Because these forewords are closer to interviews, I used line-by-line and open coding to interpret the data. This additional data broadens the scope of my research and provides a clear view of the Taiwanese child and childhood through adults' perspectives. After this expansion, I was able to combine my codes and categories into one central category/hypothesis.

For clarification, my actual analytical data includes four TCAF award-winning scripts and their production videos, and thirty-six forewords/afterwords from festival programs or reports. Depending on the type of data, my initial coding included Themeing the Code with beats, open coding with different dramatic elements, and open coding with line-by-line codings. I used Focus

coding to refine categories. After coding with memo writing and diagramming concepts in a non-linear fashion, I came to a conclusion for my research.

Data and Data Collection

As mentioned before, my data contains TCAF materials, which are limited to those I could obtain within the duration of this research. My initial data collection began in December 2010, during a trip to Taiwan. Before visiting TCAF's central archive, in the Department of Cultural Affairs office at Taipei City Hall, I was able to receive a basic TCAF statistics Excel file from a helpful staff member. While visiting, I found three festival publications: festival reports (2000 & 2002-2007), TCAF award-winning play anthologies (2002-2009), and the festival programs (2000-2010). Other materials include the current festival website and in-house festival reports from 2008 to 2010, published by the hosting organization, Taipei Cultural Foundation (台北市文化基金會). These reports include some newspaper clippings, individual play programs, and remaining program tickets. There are no published or in-house festival reports for 2001, nor are past festival websites available due to confusion/complaints from past participating citizens. Unfortunately, none of these unpublished materials may be copied or borrowed outside of the office. Even though most festival reports and play anthologies are out of print, I was able to find them in either public or university libraries. (No conference programs were available in these locations.) The materials, although limited, became both my initial and primary data.

Because I am currently based in Tempe, Arizona (USA) and the data is in Taipei (Taiwan), I had to seek and collect as many available materials as possible

during this trip, even before finishing my first coding process. I decided to utilize past festival hosting organizations, participating organizations, and newspapers/magazines to gather as many additional festival materials as possible for my potential secondary data. My first approach was to visit the past contracting/hosting organizations. The hosting organizations from the first two years, Peaceland Workshop (明境藝術工作室) and Taiwan Aesthetic Company (台灣美學公司), no longer exist. I was, however, able to obtain materials from the Taipei Children's Theatre Association (台北兒童戲劇協會), the Taipei Cultural Foundation (台北市文化基金會) and If Kids Children's Theater (如果兒童劇團). Additional information regarding the hosting organizations is available in the TCAF History and Background section of this dissertation.

Taipei Children's Theatre Association (TCTA) provided me electronic versions of the festival reports from 2003 to 2007 as well as a PowerPoint presentation of their organization that includes some past TCAF information from their hosting years. Taipei Cultural Foundation (TCF) has the most complete archive of the festival by far, even in comparison to the Department of Cultural Affairs. They have most of the conference publications, including reports, anthologies, and programs. I was able to copy all of the festival programs in their archive, which included the programs from the years of 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010. In addition to festival materials, TCF also has a great collection from festivals between 2008 and 2011. It contains newspaper/magazine clips, individual play programs, performance tickets, festival souvenirs, conference handbooks, etc. TCF's staff were very generous in letting

me copy their materials and in giving me play programs if they had more than three original copies. They also provided a copy of the 2011 TCAF Playwriting Competition rules. If Kids Children's Theater (If Kids) does not maintain past festival documents, but through their artistic director, Shong Chao (趙自強), they provided me with DVDs of their past festival winning play performances.

If Kids inspired me to expand my data collection through seeking past festival materials from individual TYA companies, especially extending my data collection to include companies that produced TCAF award winning plays. I contacted multiple theatre companies from the winning list of TCAF's Playwriting Competition in the past ten years. Unfortunately, I ended up with several DVDs from only one TYA company, Shiny Shoes Children's Theater. The only other production taping that I could find was *Lady Ghost* (鬼姑娘的傳說) by Hsing-Chih Yang (楊杏枝) in the Electronic Theater Intermix (ETI) at National Central University in Taoyuan, Taiwan. I was able to watch the DVD in the ETI office at the university. During my second data collection trip in October, 2011, I managed to receive more festival DVDs from Song Song Song Children's & Puppet Theater (Song) (九歌兒童劇團). This was done with the help of the Manager/Director of the Activity Department, Tswei Hwa Huang (黃翠華) and the Arts Administration Executive, Mei Lee (李美宜). These materials might seem restrictive, but these three companies together arguably represent the main part of the festival. Because of the tight market, Taiwanese theater companies do not share scripts. Therefore, a play also represents its theatre company, in a way. If Kids and Shiny Shoes are the top two TYA companies and produce the most

award-winning plays at TCAF, while Song is a festival veteran and one of the oldest children's theatre companies in Taiwan. Together, these companies are a good example of the festival performances.

The final part of my data collection comes from newspapers, magazines, and the festival website. I found articles from several major newspapers and one children's newspaper, including *United Daily* (聯合報), *Chinatimes* (中國時報), *Min-Sheng Daily* (民生報) (part of United Daily News Group), and *Mandarin Daily News* (國語日報), as well as articles from several magazines, including *Taipei Pictorial* (台北畫刊) and *Taipei Art +* (台北好藝術). Most of the newspaper articles are informational. Magazine articles had more comprehensive reports of the festival. The festival website also provides detailed information; however, most of the information is included in the festival program and only the most current year's website is available.

To clarify the above information, here is a more concise list of my data:

- 1) TCAF Reports: 7 printed reports (2000 and 2002-2007)
5 electronic reports (2003-2007)
- 2) TCAF Award Winning Plays Anthologies: 8 total anthologies and 59 total play scripts (2002-2009). (2010 and 2011's anthologies have not been published.)
- 3) TCAF Festival Programs: 8 total (2000-2001, 2003-2004, 2006, 2008-2010)
- 4) TCAF Playwriting Competition Rules: 1 total (2010)

- 5) TCAF Community Arts Performances Recruiting Rules: 1 total
(2010)
- 6) TCAF Festival other printed materials:
 - 2008: individual play programs/flyers (22 total); performance ticket (1); Asian Children's Theatre Alliance Forum brochure (1); and festival pamphlet (1)
 - 2009: individual play programs/flyers (30 total) ; performance ticket (1); blank audience survey (1)
 - 2010: individual play programs/flyers (23 total)
- 7) DVDs (TCAF play productions): (9 total)
 - If Kids Children's Theater: *The Light Princess* (輕輕公主) by Shong Chao and Ching-Ping Weng (翁菁莘), 2003; *Age of Speed* (速度專賣店) by Che-Wei Wu (吳哲瑋), 2004; *Three Pieces of Cat Cookies* (三顆貓餅乾) by Che-Wei Wu, 2005; *Six Locks* (六道鎖) by Shong Chao, 2006
 - Kiss Me Theatre Company (親一下劇團): *Next Page* (故事書裡面的故事) by Shong Chao, 2008
 - Shiny Shoes Children's Theater: *Long Long Time Ago, the Sky was Low* (從前從前天很矮) by Ming-Hua Lee (李明華) and Ann Chen (陳筠安), 2007; *Pinocchio's Three Teardrops* (木偶的三滴眼淚) by Ming-Hua Lee, 2008; *A Good Time at the Antique Shop – Le-Le's Music Box* (骨董店的幸福時光~樂樂的音樂盒) by Ming-

Hua Lee, 2009; *Ten Lessons of Angels* (天使米奇的十堂課) by

Wei-Yu Chen (陳威宇), 2010

8) Newspapers/ Magazines articles: (349 total)

- *Chinatimes*: 31 total (2003-2010)
- *Min-Sheng Daily*: 83 total (2000-2006)
- *United Daily*: 173 total (2000-2010)
- *Mandarin Daily News*: 58 total (2000-2009)
- *Taipei Pictorial*: 4 total (2007-2011)
- *Taipei Art +* : 4 total (2008-2010)

My initial data are the four number one ranking play scripts and their production tapes from each year. These plays include *The Light Princess* by Shong Chao (2002), *Lady Ghost* by Xing-Zhi Yang (2003), *A Good Time at the Antique Shop – Le-Le’s Music Box* by Ming-Hua Lee (2008), and *Ten Lessons of Angels* by Wei-Yu Chen (2009). Even though I obtained these videos directly from their theatre companies, most of them do not include the production information such as performance date, director, actor, designers, etc. My secondary data, the forewords and afterwords, are from both TCAF reports and programs. The forewords and afterwords are exactly the same in both of the reports and programs. Therefore, I draw on whichever is available from each year.

It is important to note that not all of these materials are included in my final analysis. As grounded theory suggests, my secondary analysis is based on my first round of coding. Therefore, many of the above materials are omitted.

For example, I was not able to fit any of Song Song Song's materials into my final data. Newspaper and magazine articles turn out to be informational and not sufficient as the other data. Although it is possible to interview some of the festival organizers, organizations, and involved companies, the project would become unmanageable in the given time frame that I have. These are necessary sacrifices for the current stage of research. If opportunity allows, my further research will extend to all of the collected materials and might include interviews to enhance the dimensions and depth of my research.

Translating Issues

Translation is not the main focus of this research, but it is an unavoidable challenge. The majority of my data is in Mandarin Chinese. Only very little of the data, such as festival reports or programs, have an English translation alongside the Chinese texts. People and organizations' names and book titles are among the most difficult things to translate. Therefore, translation is an issue that I must constantly manage throughout my research process. One of my goals concerning translation is to make my research approachable for English readers who lack any knowledge of Chinese language, and more readable for bi-lingual (English-Chinese) readers.

In addition to the complicated nature of translation, Chinese-English translation also involves complex Romanized phonetic spelling systems. There are several kinds of common spelling systems, such as Hanyu Pinyin (漢語拼音), Tongyong Pinyin (通用拼音), Yale, and Wade-Giles. After 2009, Hanyu Pinyin has become the official Chinese Romanization system in Taiwan (Shih, "Hanyu").

Even though Tongyong Pinyin was once announced as the official Romanization system in 2002, the usage was not mandatory (Shih, “Hanyu”). Before 2002, the Taiwanese government used a mixture of Tongyoung, Yale, and Wade-Giles for official business, which can be confusing.

The current standardizations are applied to but not reinforced with all official usage, especially names and locations. For example, my official last name in English is Tsai (蔡). This is romanized according to the Wade-Giles and Yale system. According to Tongyong or Hanyu Pinyin, my last name should be “Cai.” This is similar to the spelling of Taipei city. The current spelling is based on Wade-Giles, but if it were based on any other systems, it should be “Taibei” city. Since many locations’ and peoples’ names are established, it is difficult for the Taiwanese government to force name changes.

As a result, it is almost impossible to determine official phonetic spelling of people’s English names solely from original Chinese characters. (Some people may even adopt an English first name into their official name.) It becomes more complicated when trying to translate someone’s name from phonetic spelling back to Chinese. My first name, for instance, is Yi-Ren, which written in Chinese characters as “依仁”. There are a large number of Chinese character combinations that would also match the Romanized Yi-Ren, including “伊人,” “怡仁,” “依人,” “怡芒,” “毅忍,” “一韌,” etc. Admittedly, the possible list can be shortened by fluent speakers, as some of these characters are used more commonly as names than others, but the possibilities are still there. As a result, I will use Wade-Giles if individuals' official English names are not available, and will always provide

the original Chinese characters at the end to remove all ambiguity. The reason why I chose Wade-Giles is because this is the oldest spelling system and most Taiwanese people's names, especially last names, are based on this system. The extra phonetic emphasis marks are taken out for clarity. For instance, my last name is written "Tsai" instead of "Ts'ai." (Because if a family would like to have the same last name, they keep the old spelling of the last name rather than adopt a new spelling.)

For easy reading, all names, book titles, or organizations have their English names/translations before their Chinese names/titles. I noted the translations of book titles or organization names in the list of works cited. All books with Chinese as their original language have Chinese titles before their English translations. For example:

2003 臺北兒童藝術節成果專輯[*2003 Taipei Children's Arts Festival Report*]. Taipei: Dept. of Cultural Affairs, 2003. Print.

This indicates that the original material is in Chinese. In the works cited page, I alphabetized all materials according to their first English letter for clarity.

As for special terminologies, I will provide their Hanyu Pinyin first, then their English translation. Since some of the philosophical concepts do not have exact equivalent words in English, this will potentially make these ideas more accurate in the content. If a long Chinese passage is quoted, I will provide only the English translation in the main text and include the original Chinese text in the footnotes.

For the convenience and accuracy of my coding process, Chinese materials are coded in Chinese and English materials are coded in English. During memo and draft writing, the emerging themes or categories were then translated into English. This was done to eliminate complications involved in translating ideas back and forth, during which intricate meanings may be lost. Among all the materials, three different translations must be noted: *Ghost Lady*, *Ten Lessons of Angels* by Wei-Yu Chen, and the TCAF forewords and afterwords. *Ghost Lady* was written for a Taiwanese traditional glove puppet theatre troupe; therefore, the dialogue is mostly in Taiwanese, not Mandarin Chinese. Chinese readers should bear in mind that the Chinese characters provided are Taiwanese, not Mandarin. The written characters may be the same, but the words bear different meanings across different languages. *Ten Lessons of Angels* was an adaptation from an English book: *And God Cried, Too* by Marc Gellman. Therefore, I use original English from the book rather than my translations. The original language from the Chinese scripts will be provided in the footnotes. All of the TCAF forewords by the mayors and commissioners are provided with their English translations along with the original Chinese text. However, in order to avoid translation confusions, I provide the original Chinese text as needed.

Challenges of the Research

Initially, I was hoping to interpret my data based on the “performance of children characters” in these plays and production types to understand the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. However, after scrutinizing my data, I found that constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood are

mostly represented through interactions between adult and child characters as well as messages about children delivered by adults. Therefore, instead of discussing the performances of children on stage, my findings gave me more insight on how adults view children in contemporary Taiwanese society.

I am also very aware that my data is not based on human subjects. My focus is to understand and interpret the embedded construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. Therefore, it is inherently different from an orthodox approach of grounded theory. More accurately stated, my research is based on qualitative research methods, which borrow elements and processes mostly from grounded theory. Second, I am limited by the type and quantity of my data due to the accessibility of archive materials from TCAF. I was also unable to conduct interviews as part of my theoretical sampling due to the people's availability and time frame of my research. To supplement the interview materials, I included official messages from the Taipei City mayors, the commissioners from Taipei's Department of Cultural Affairs, and the festival host organization leaders, to delineate and clarify my categories.

Lastly, based on my data, it proved difficult to have one central category/hypothesis to encompass the complexity of the representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood. Although my central category provides a strong interpretation of the contemporary constructions of the child and childhood rooted in TCAF, it falls short in capturing several other important aspects of such social constructions. More details of my findings are provided in the conclusion chapter, Chapter Eight, of my dissertation.

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF TAIWANESE CHILDREN'S THEATRE

To understand the construction and representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood in the Taipei Children's Arts Festival, especially in Taiwanese theatre for young audience (TYA), it is necessary to introduce the context, history, and overall development of Taiwanese TYA. Taiwanese TYA is a relatively young field. The current model of non-profit, professional, and modern theatre for young people was founded in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, past documents show that this type of modern, non-traditional Asian theatre for young audiences is traceable to late nineteenth century China, and through the periods of Japanese colonization (1895-1945), WWII, and political transformation until today. Over the past thirty years, the field has grown tremendously in the number, size, and quality of productions, echoing changes in Taiwanese society.

Before 20th Century--Traditional Taiwanese Theatre

The form of modern theatre mentioned above and used in this dissertation refers to western style theatrical performance, which differs from Taiwanese "traditional" theatre. When modern theatre was first introduced to China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was called *xin* (new) (新劇), *wen ming* (culture) (文明戲), or *ai mei* (愛美劇) drama. In 1927, *hua* (dialogue) Drama (話劇) became its unified name. During Japanese colonization, the modern drama in Taiwan was called new drama (新劇) or *wen hua* (culture) drama (文化戲) (Jian 5).

Taiwanese traditional theatre, which inherited and evolved from the “traditional” theatre of China, has always been incorporated in Taiwanese TYA. Taiwanese traditional theatre commonly refers to local theatre productions with Chinese traditions, such as glove and shadow puppet theatre, or Beijing and Taiwanese Opera. Almost all performances of these traditional theatres are performed in an operatic/musical style and, until the twentieth century, toured in outdoor spaces. They are now also found performing in indoor theatres. Throughout the performances, characters, human beings, and puppets alike all sing and speak dialogue. As in Beijing Opera, these theatres often use local languages such as Taiwanese or Hakka, instead of the national language, Mandarin Chinese. The songs and music are accompanied by a combination of Chinese instruments such as the *suona* (嗩呐), *huqin* (胡琴), *bangzi* (梆子), *luo* (鑼) or others, depending on the theatre's origins.

Traditional theatre has always been part of the entertainment for young people in the past (Cheung 230; Ma, “Words” 2002). There are two major types of these traditional plays, the “historical hero” and romance stories (Cheung 237). None of these plays are written specifically for children. Most of the time, their inclusion of classical Chinese makes them difficult for younger children to comprehend. Even so, children and the illiterate could still enjoy traditional theatre because of the popular music, singing, and actions combined with well-known stories. Traditional theatres typically carry a set of repertoires with which audiences became familiar enough to sing along during performances. Many mothers would use historical stories in the plays to teach ethics to their children

(Cheung 239). Even though traditional theatre is not nearly as popular now as it was before, (as it has been replaced by many other types of entertainment), it is still part of TCAF. Besides classic pieces, contemporary traditional theatres also produce new plays with modern stories and elaborate costumes to compete with modern TYA performances. Chinese culture is the mainstream culture of Taiwan; therefore, the early development of traditional Taiwanese theatre was heavily influenced by Chinese theatre and culture. Although not an exact comparison, the cultural differences between Taiwan and China bear resemblance to the differences between the United States and the United Kingdom. For example, each country shares the same (but slightly different) spoken language, as well as some historical, religious, and cultural customs. Taiwan was arguably under Chinese reign for the majority of the 17th - 19th centuries.¹ It is unclear when Chinese people began to migrate to Taiwan, which is located roughly one hundred miles off the shore of China. However, the *Eastern Barbarian Journal* (東番記) recorded the emergence and growth of small Chinese communities in southwest Taiwan in 1602, under the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) (Chiu 1). From then on, by sheer population, Chinese people and culture have dominated the aboriginal people of Taiwan. Thus, mainstream Taiwanese culture can be considered a continuum or branch of Chinese culture.

Chinese traditional theatre migrated with Chinese immigrants, as it was an important part of their religious offerings/ceremonies/rituals during festivals and

¹ Taiwan also has a strong set of aboriginal cultures originating long before the 17th century. Past anthropological documents show that Austronesian people were the first residents of Taiwan an estimated eight thousand years ago. Today, fourteen official aboriginal tribes comprise two percent of Taiwan's total population.

holidays (Chiu 2). Theatre also served as the main form of entertainment on the island for hundreds of years. Notably, some of the aforementioned traditional Chinese operas, through years of localization, slowly merged and developed into a new format in the late 19th century: Taiwanese Opera (歌仔戲). Taiwanese Opera is the only traditional theatre that originated within Taiwan. Taiwanese audiences gravitated so strongly toward this new opera that it became commercialized in the 1920s (Chiu 2). Through many periods of peace and tribulation, it remains one of the most popular traditional theatre forms today.

Young people participated in the traditional theatre in several different ways, such as family businesses, apprenticeships, and as audience members. Many Taiwanese traditional theatre troupes are run as family businesses. Children from these families often traveled and performed with their families. Sometimes, poor families would send their children as apprentices to the theatres. When traditional theatre performances were held during religious ceremonies, holidays, or other events, young people were often part of the audience. Even though adults or “gods,” rather than young people, were the target audience, the performances were generally entertaining for all ages.

One unique form of traditional theatre performed by children called “*xiao li yuan* (小梨園)” was also popular in Taiwan. *Xiao li yuan* was composed of seven 12 to 13 year old children, mostly from low income families. Under the guidance of the troupe leader, these young performers learned the theatre craft and performed mostly in private settings. *Xiao li yuan* troupes performed the same plays as other traditional theatre companies, which meant that most of the

children were acting in adult roles (Hsieh, “Summary”). Again, as in all other traditional theatres, the audiences for *xiao li yuan* were mainly adults, but young people were not excluded.

Besides traditional theatre performances, children sometimes participated in another kind of folk art called *yi ge* (藝閣). *Yi ge* is like a float built atop a vehicle to carry performers along with other parts of the parade. Children ages five to twelve posed as famous characters in this performance for religious or holiday parades. Its characters are based on poems, legends, or Taiwanese mythologies. It is believed that *yi ge* will bring both the child actors and the community safety and luck. Though it is not a theatre performance, this folk tradition shows an interesting perspective of child performances (Hsieh, “Summary”). Although *xiao li yuan* no longer exists, *yi ge* is still part of holiday and religious parades in Taiwan's small towns.

The popularity of traditional theatre declined partially due to heavy governmental promotion of the official language, Mandarin Chinese, before the 1980s and as well as the growth of modern entertainment, movies, television, and western theatre. People can still enjoy a variety of traditional theatre performances in front of temples, on television and at performing centers. However, there are no organized professional all-children’s troupes like *xiao li yuan* in Taiwan anymore. Children only occasionally perform with adults on stage. It is worth noting that some traditional companies now produce traditional pieces or new plays with modern twists specifically for young people.

Early 20th Century to 1945

Aside from Taiwanese traditional theatre, the development of Taiwanese modern theatre is also strongly tied to Taiwan's complex historical and political development. Taiwan has been through two significant political transitions since the late nineteenth century.² The first was in 1895, when the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) ceded Taiwan to Japan under the Treaty of Shimonoseki after losing the First Sino-Japanese War. The second transition occurred in 1945 after Japan was defeated in WWII. After WWII, Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China (ROC), which would soon lose control of the mainland to the People's Republic of China. ROC still maintained rule over Taiwan and became the governmental authority there. Modern Taiwanese TYA was mostly developed after WWII. TYA activities both during Japanese colonization, and before 1945 in China, influenced the development of Taiwanese TYA immediately following WWII. However, the level and degree of their influence requires further examination.

Theatre Activities under Japanese Colonization³ (1895-1945)

During the period of Japanese colonization, Taiwanese traditional theatre suffered a variety of oppressions but remained active until 1937. This was mainly attributed to the close relationship between traditional theatre and Taiwanese religious practices and holiday celebrations. Contrasted with traditional theatres,

² During the Age of Exploration, around the early seventeen century, Dutch and Spaniards both occupied part of Taiwan as bases to trade with mainland China (Wu, *The Dutch*). In 1662, one of Ming Dynasty's remaining generals, Chenggong Zheng, defeated the westerners and ruled Taiwan (Wu, *The Koxinga*). Not until 1683 did Qing Dynasty take full control over Taiwan.

³ There are two different terms to describe this period of time: “日治 [Japanese rule]” and “日據 [Japanese occupied]”, due to complicated Taiwanese country identity. For clearness, I will use Japanese rule in this research.

a new form of western/modern theatre appeared in Taiwan around 1910. “*xin ju* (New drama) (新劇)” emerged through the influence of both Chinese and Japanese modern theatre and the ethnic nationalism movement. “New drama” was so named to distinguish itself from the “old/traditional” Taiwanese theatres. “New drama” used modern costumes, colloquial dialogue, and a naturalistic acting style. Students who studied abroad in both China and Japan brought the concept of “new drama” back to Taiwan and organized theatre troupes to perform around the country. National movement (民族運動) activists often used new drama as a tool to fight against the Japanese government (Jian 10). In 1925, Japanese people in Taiwan also created their own theatre company and performed translated versions of famous western plays. There are also records indicating the intermingling between Japanese and Taiwanese theatre practitioners and audiences. Thus, early Taiwanese modern theatre development had a stronger link to Japan than China (Ma, *Twice* 149-152).

From the 1920s to the 1930s, new drama was performed in Taiwanese or Japanese. Japanese was the official language in Taiwan at the time, but Hakka and Hokkien (southeast Chinese languages), and several aboriginal languages were and still are the primary language of many people in Taiwan.⁴ When tensions between Japan and China escalated after the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the then-flourishing new drama and traditional theatres were restricted by Japanese Kominka policy. The Kominka movement’s

⁴ Hokkien, used by the Hoklo community, is also commonly known as Taiwanese. Many communities, such as Hakka, Hoklo and the fourteen aboriginal Taiwanese tribes, are still differentiated by their original regions, foods and customs, in addition to language.

goal was to completely transform Taiwanese citizens into “the imperial people of Japan” in all aspects of life: food, clothing, language, religion, and so forth. From that point, theatres were only supposed to perform and promote Japanese cultural and imperial/militarism ideologies. Kominka theatres were also founded specifically to accelerate this process (Ma, *Twice* 153; Chiu 28).

A theatre scene illustrated in the famous Taiwanese movie, *March of Happiness* (天馬茶房), depicts the atmosphere in Taiwan during Japanese colonization. Even when the Japanese government tightened its control over the use of language and implemented a more stringent Japanese culture policy, many Taiwanese theatres, both traditional and modern, were still able to work around the system and continued to perform. This was accomplished by switching the costumes and language from Taiwanese to Japanese when police officers came by. However, after the beginning of the Second Sino War in 1937, the Japanese government in Taiwan began to ban all traditional performances, including music. Some artists, such as Tien-Fu Hsu (許添扶), were forced to travel to China to make a living (Lin, “Hsu”).

During Japanese colonization, most TYA-related theatrical performances could be categorized into three formats: Japanese touring performances, children’s school performances, and youth group performances. Documents regarding Japanese touring performances are scarce. In *Taiwanese Children’s Literature Chronology, 1985-2004* (臺灣兒童文學年表, 1985-2004), Chiou, a children’s literature historian, recorded the occasion of two special Japanese touring performances in schools in 1930 and 1932 (15). The content and type of

the performances is unclear. The practice of holding children's school performances was imported directly from Japan around the 1910s. Japan began to hold children's modern theatre performances around the beginning of the twentieth century (Jian 10). The wide variety of school performances included miming, plays with songs, singing, radio drama, modern theatre with fairy tales (童話劇), traditional theatre, mask drama (假面劇), and others.⁵ Schoolchildren performed a variety of plays for school festivals, holidays and celebrations (Jian 12-13). Aside from their celebratory purposes, school plays also functioned as tools for moral lessons, Japanese imperial assimilation, and propaganda.

Youth theatre performances were part of government-organized youth groups (青年團) and female youth groups (女青年團) after the 1930s. These groups depicted children between the ages of twelve and twenty-five as a unified force promoting Japanese ideologies. These groups continued performances similar to school performances, but served their communities instead of school students. Their activities were not limited to theatrical performances, but also included other art exhibits, newspaper publications, concerts, and movie showings (Jian 21). These groups later became major forces for the Japanese Kominka movement to further assimilate Taiwanese people to Japanese culture.

Chiou also documented the founding of the Taipei Children's Modern Theatre Research Association (臺北童話劇研究會) in 1932 (Chiou, *Taiwanese*

⁵ For other school performances and play titles, see Lu, *History* 182; Chiou, *Taiwanese* 9-23.

15). However, the document does not specify the purpose or function of this organization.

Modern Theatre Activities in China (Before 1945)

After Japan was defeated in WWII in 1945, Taiwan was under the government of the Republic of China (ROC). The ROC was formally founded by the Kuomintang (KMT) or Chinese Nationalist Party, in January of 1912. Its establishment also marked the end of the Chinese dynasties. In 1949, the KMT lost the civil war to the Communist Party of China (CPC) and moved the ROC's government to Taiwan. At the same time, the CPC named their government the People's Republic of China, also commonly known as China. China and Taiwan have been under two different governments ever since. When the ROC retreated to Taiwan, they brought many sudden changes to the Taiwanese way of life, including a new language (Mandarin Chinese, which replaced Japanese as the official language), political transition, new forms of censorship, and a post-war economy. "New drama," created by local and Japanese artists, diminished quickly after these transitions and was replaced by modern theatres and artists who emigrated from China (Chiu 30-31). Therefore, an abrupt change occurred in the Taiwanese theatre scene. All theatres relating to Japanese culture or that used Japanese language were discarded. As a result, Taiwanese modern theater around the 1950s and 1960s merged with theatrical styles migrating from China.

Records show that modern theatre arose in China in the late nineteenth century. Many scholars attributed the school plays from St. John's Academy (聖約翰書院) in Shanghai as the beginning of modern western theatre in China

(1899). Students at St. John's performed Christmas plays in English every year, and occasionally put on new plays in Chinese (Li, *History* 3-4). Kainan School (開南學校), a private Chinese middle school located in Tianjin (天津), was another school that started to host yearly modern theatre productions in 1909 (Ma, *Twice* 94). A Taiwanese theatre historian, Sen Ma (馬森), believes that Kainan was not the only school that produced school plays, but it was the most documented and representative of its time (*Twice* 94).

After the establishment of the democratic government and, especially after the May Fourth Movement in 1919, Chinese scholars actively engaged in a westernization movement, learning from western culture and civilization, reflecting on and criticizing the “old” Chinese society/culture, and promoting a “new” way of thinking, writing and living. Modern theatre was spreading. School plays were still the main force and had become more common (Ma, *Twice* 95). Amateur theatres appeared and joined this modernization movement. The People’s Theatre Club (民眾戲劇社), established in 1921, was the first amateur theatre company in Shanghai (Ma, *Twice* 96). When political disputes between the Nationalist party (right) and the Communist party (left) heightened in the late 1920s, scholars and social intellectuals were forced to take sides. Theatre activities were used as tools to promote different political ideologies, particularly by the communist party (Ma, *Twice* 103). Besides propaganda and translations of western dramatic literature, playwrights also began to create original plays about romance, comedy, and historical and social issues (Ma, *Twice* 109-117).

Dawn (黎明), written in November 1919 by a poet and playwright named Mo-Jo Kuo (郭沫若), was one of the earliest TYA plays to be influenced by the modern theatre movement (Li, *History* 6). According to theatre historian Han Li (李涵), the play was poetic but fell short in its dramatic action and structure. Soon after, another artist, Chin-Hui Li (黎錦暉), created the most common TYA format of the time, which combined theatre with songs, poems, and dance at the National Language (Mandarin) Specialized School (國語專修學校). As one of the most productive and popular TYA playwrights of the 1920s, Li included realism and fairy tales in his plays while focusing on promoting the standard Mandarin language, especially for elementary school students (Li, *History* 6-9).

In the following decades, the Communist Party of China (CPC), also known as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), founded in 1921, placed more emphasis on theatre activities when compared to its rival party, the KMT. They utilized theatre to rebel against the nationalist party and to promote communist beliefs. Red Theatre (紅色戲劇) was what they called this type of revolutionary theatre. According to Han Li, theatre by young people was a strong component of this movement (*History* 24-27). Communist troops around the country organized all children's theatre groups as part of the military units. These youth groups performed for soldiers and civilians alike, but few of their performances were targeted toward young audiences. The recruited child performers were orphans, war refugees, child soldiers, children of military personnel, or from low income families. Depending on the troupe, young performers' ages ranged from eight to eighteen (Li, *History* 28).

Theatre activities had been part of the CPC since its foundation. However, the TYA was not elevated to a higher quality until the establishment of the Blue Shirts Theatre (藍衫劇團) (1932) and its theatre school, later called the Gorky Theatre School (高爾基戲劇學校) (Li, *History* 27-28). Close to one thousand students were trained under this school system, and they formed more than sixty theatre troupes (Li, *History* 28). These theatre troupes toured the country and cultivated local theatre groups. Their repertoires, including plays and songs, were mainly written or adapted by the performers, so that the content would better reflect current events (Li, *History* 33-34). Until the end of the war around 1949, more than one hundred and sixty children's theatre troupes were created. Xin An Traveling Troupe (新安旅行團) (1935) and Child Theatre (孩子劇團) (1936) stood out for different reasons, Xin An for its outstanding training system, and Child for its unique focus on serving child audiences (Li, *History* 42-53). Territories under the KMT's control also had similar theatre activities but on a much smaller scale.

Despite internal political turmoil and civil war, the first professional adult theatre company, Chinese Traveling Troupe (中國旅行劇團) was founded by Huai Qiu Tang (唐槐秋) in 1933 (Ma, *Twice* 96-103). When the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, Chinese theatre artists, regardless of their political party affiliation, put their differences aside and worked together to create many anti-Japanese plays. This type of play was the emphasis of the field until the end of WWII. Military and educational troupes were formed to educate the general population about anti-Japanese issues and to reinforce patriotism. Modern theatre

in China, which primarily produced political messages, was a vibrant and prolific field at the end of WWII (Ma, *Twice* 109).

1945 to 1960-Taiwanese Modern Theatre after WWII

When the ROC government accepted the surrender of the Japanese government and took control of Taiwan in 1945, the Taiwanese people were liberated; arguably, however, they had simultaneously fallen under another form of oppression. Friction between the Taiwanese people and Chinese military immigrants increased with the implementation of the new governmental system, laws, and language. Taiwanese people quickly became disappointed with the new government due to governmental corruption, grain shortages, discrimination against Taiwanese people, serious inflation, and a cholera epidemic (Wu, *Realm* 31-44). The so-called “228 Incident” (short for February 28th, or “two-two-eight”) was the result of many of these shortcomings, and physical clashes between Taiwanese and Chinese immigrants broke out in 1947. Without accurate statistics, the estimated death toll was between 18,000 and 28,000 (Wu, *Realm* 79), during the new government's violent suppression of the incident. Taiwan had stepped into the period of White Terror (白色恐怖). Many Taiwanese intellectuals and social elites were arrested, imprisoned, or executed during this time. Other than the aforementioned political turmoil, the ROC government's immediate promotion of anti-communist plays contributed to the fall of “new drama.” From 1945 to the 228 Incident in 1947, most performances had had anti-communist themes (Chiu 31). Theatre activities were still growing, but the “new drama” that had developed under Japanese colonization died out completely under the new

ensorship and the change of official language. Many Taiwanese people continued to perform both traditional and modern theatre; however, the modern theatre was heavily influenced by the theatre movement from China. Famous Chinese modern theatre groups were invited by the new government to perform and train theatre practitioners in Taiwan (Chiu 30). New Chinese Theatre (新中國劇社), which performed many times around Taiwan, was one of these examples (Lu, *History* 347-350). Unfortunately, the 228 Incident prevented the theatre training program from happening and possibly led to the eradication of many previously established local theatre practitioners.

Between 1947 and 1949, modern theatre activities continued with a few Taiwanese practitioners and audiences. The government invited Chinese theatre troupes to perform in Taiwan. Audience Theatre (觀眾戲劇) from Shanghai provided the majority of these performances. Su-Shang Lu (呂訴上), a Taiwanese theatre historian, practitioner, and scholar, had organized lectures and performances in hopes of recruiting new Taiwanese theatre practitioners. For example, he funded the Taiwanese Theatre (臺語劇團), which was comprised of all-Taiwanese performers and scripts, and successfully gained support from the government to tour its anti-communist play called Give Me Freedom (還我自由), in 1950 (Lu, *History* 400-403). Even though his work was well-received and viewed by over 220,000 people, it was still only a one-time occurrence.

Other military, amateur, school, and traditional theaters remained active during this time, and even the traditional Taiwanese theatre began to be revitalized. In May 1948, the Taiwanese Department of Education (currently the

Ministry of Education) produced the only youth theatre performances, which were performed by, and mostly for, young people (Li, *Man-Kui* 120). A play anthology called *Children's Play Anthology* was subsequently published. Because of the sponsorship, these plays were performed in Mandarin Chinese and mostly with anti-communist subjects that could no longer hold Taiwanese audiences' interests. Performances by and for young people, and even other modern theatre performances, were sporadic between 1949 and 1960 (Wang, *Development* 7). When the ROC government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, it declared that the country was under martial law, to eliminate any opposition against the government or the KMT party.

1960 to 1980

In the early 1960s, the modern theatre was rejuvenated under the leadership of Man-Kui Li (李曼瑰), a playwright, artist, educator, and legislator (Li, *Man-Kui* 12). Li's influence was significant, ranging from amateur to professional, from Taiwan to overseas, and from general theatre to religious, feminist, educational and children/youth theatre movements alike. The exuberance of Taiwanese theatre today can partially be partially to Li's passion and dedication in all facets of theatre movements (Chui, 32-34). In 1967, Li founded the Center of Chinese Theatre Arts (中國戲劇藝術中心) (CCTA) to promote modern theatre arts, organizations, training, networking, and publications (Li, *Man-Kui* 119). Although Li was not the first person to bring young people into the Taiwanese theatre scene, she was credited by many scholars as the first

person to elevate Taiwanese modern theatre and TYA to a higher level (Li, *Man-Kui* 121; Chiu, 32; Wang, *Development* 8-9).

During Li's period, amateur theatre by and for elementary and middle school students was known as children's theatre (兒童劇). In order to distinguish these activities from the professional children's theatre after the 1980s, I will use "youth theatre" to describe TYA activities during this time, although their Chinese name is the same.

Li's efforts to advance Taiwanese youth theatre were multi-modal. A variety of theatre troupes and committees, theatre festivals, productions, playwriting workshops (mostly for teachers), youth theatre training courses, and script publications all fell directly or indirectly under Li's guidance. Some of the youth specific organizations included CCTA's Youth Theater Promotion Committee (兒童戲劇推行委員會) (1969), Youth Educational Troupe (兒童教育劇團) (1969), and Youth Theatre Play Selection Committee (兒童劇徵選委員會) (1972) (Li, *Man-Kui* 120). She also planted seeds for theatre education in schools and the Youth Theatre Festival (兒童劇展) (1977-1987). All of these youth theatre movement activities and organizations can be roughly grouped into two categories based on their emphasis: young people or elementary/middle school teachers.

For young people, Li produced "demonstrative" youth theatre performances and provided drama courses. The "demonstrative" performances were performed by and for elementary or middle school students for a single stand-alone production. The performers were recruited for only one event, and

possibly selected by the school authorities. The first production of this kind, *The Emperor* (皇帝), was performed by students from the Taipei Mandarin Experimental Elementary School (台北國語實驗小學) in 1967 (Li, *Man-Kui* 121). Since then, this type of performance has occasionally been produced by CCTA's Youth Educational Troupe, or through the support of CCTA. Besides productions, drama courses were also offered to young people by the Youth Educational Troupe. From 1969 to 1973, a total of five annual training courses attracted nearly one thousand participants. At the end of each course, outstanding students were selected to participate in a demonstrative public performance. Some of these young people would continue on to act in movies or television programs (Li, *Man-Kui* 122).

For elementary and middle school teachers, Li's primary agenda was to foster new playwrights and to encourage advocacy for theatre arts for young people among the teachers. While producing demonstrative plays, Li realized that the lack of good TYA plays was the largest obstacle to promoting youth theatre. In her opinion, school teachers were the best candidates for playwriting because they were familiar with students' lives and had the potential to bring theatre arts onto the campus (Li, *Man-Kui* 123). Therefore, between 1968 and 1973, Li hosted four playwriting workshops, co-hosted by CCTA and the government's education departments, and trained roughly two hundred teachers. A school's nomination was required in order to participate, but it was not clear whether this process was mandatory or voluntary. In 1968, some of the trainees organized a Hua Xia Teacher's Theatre Arts Club (華夏教師劇藝社), which produced and

toured some of their productions to several cities in northern Taiwan (Tu). The composition of ages among the performers was not clearly documented. Only the Taiwan Council for Cultural Affairs' *Encyclopedia of Taiwan* reported adult performers' involvement in some of their performances. In 1972, the Youth Theatre Play Selection Committee issued an open call for a youth theatre playwriting competition; the selection committee advertised through governmental education departments and councils, targeting elementary and middle school teachers. The CCTA was commissioned to conduct a children's playwriting class along with the competition. After an intensive selection process, which Li was heavily involved in, a four-volume play anthology that included twenty-six plays was published (Li, *Man-Kui* 123-124). The anthology became the main resource for schools and other practitioners into the late 1970s.

Although Li's initial concept for theatre education in schools was inspired by Winifred Ward's creative drama, the actual implementation was driven by performances: product rather than process. In 1974, the Ministry of Education enacted "The Principles for Executing Elementary and Middle School Youth Play Festival (國中國小兒童戲劇展實施要點)" and required all cities' and counties' education departments to host one theatre festival for school children per year (Wang, *Development* 8). The installment of this groundbreaking policy was undoubtedly influenced by Li's previous attempt to bring theatre arts into schools. Unfortunately, Li passed away in 1975 before the first festival in Taipei in 1977 (Li, *Man-Kui* 126).

Until the last festival in 1987, eighty-three elementary schools and forty-eight middle schools around the country participated (Li, *Man-Kui* 127). Because of the competitive nature of the festival, many schools spent a considerable amount of money to hire professional scene/costume designers and incorporate special effects into their productions. As noted in *A Collection of Articles and Critics on Children's Theatre Festival of Taipei City* (北市兒童劇展歷屆評論集), edited by I-li Chia (賈亦棣), critics applauded schools' efforts to advance theatre arts in education. However, the lack of quality scripts beyond the CCTA play anthology, students' academic constraints, financial burdens, and competitive pressure slowly constricted the development of the quality and educational aspects of the festival (Wang, "Eleven" 116-120). Simply said, the festival did not end on a high note.

Taiwanese TYA did not grow from only Man-Kui Li's theatre movement. Many practitioners established their own paths to conducting drama with children around the same time. Most of them, however, crossed paths or overlapped later in their practices. Happy Children's Center (快樂兒童中心) began as a summer camp which grew into a children's social service center under a Catholic organization, CICM Taiwan, Taipei. The goal of the center was to serve lower income children and their families. Under Pei-Yu Deng's (鄧佩瑜) leadership, the center has held a variety of events and activities to serve their constituents beyond the summer camps. To engage children in the center's events early on, Deng developed games, activities, and skits, some of which were arguably similar to creative drama activities. These included storytelling and reading services, zoo

tour guide services, community engagement activities, and a volunteer training program (Chen, “Ms.” 36-40).

In the late 1970s, several elementary schools began to have traditional theatre troupes comprised of school children. For example, a teacher named Chu-Hsien Fang (方朱憲) at Pu-Qian Elementary School (埔墘國小) organized a shadow puppet group called Pu-Qian Elementary School Puppet Troupe (埔墘國小皮影劇團) in 1978 (Fang 52-53). One of the most famous Taiwanese traditional glove puppet theatres, I-Wan-Jan (亦宛然) Puppet Theatre, founded by Tien-Lu Lee (李天祿) in 1931, also began to bring traditional theatre training onto campus. Their first school troupe, Wei-Wan-Jan (微宛然) at Taipei Country Ju-Guang Elementary School (莒光國小), was created in 1984. The other troupe, Chiao Wan Jan Puppet Troupe (巧宛然), was founded at Taipei Municipal Pingdeng Elementary School (台北市平等國小) in 1988 (Lai). Other traditional theatres followed and brought different kinds of traditional theatre into schools. This trend continued throughout different phases of government funding. However, only some of these clubs/troupes remain active today.

Early 1980s

In the 1980s, the growth of the economy, political liberation, and localization of literary movements were all directly reflected in the vibrant Taiwanese theatre scene (Wu, *Mini* 241-242; Chiu, 35). The economic, social, and political changes of the early 1980s directly caused significant events that would happen later in the decade. These included the lifting of the martial laws

(1987), allowing Taiwanese residents to visit relatives in China (1987), releasing the restrictions on newspaper licensing (1988), and the succession of the first native Taiwanese president, Teng-hui Lee (李登輝) (1988). Overall, the professional theatre scene of this period was dominated by small, experimental theatres, including children's theatre.

One noticeable development of professional theatre is the creation of an experimental theatre festival by Yi-Wei Yao (姚一葦), a theatre professor and practitioner, in 1980 (Ma, *Twice* 202-207). The festival lasted for five years, fostering many theatre professionals and inspiring the creation other theatre companies in the 1980s and into the early 1990s. A number of the famous theatre, film, and television practitioners and scholars began their careers participating in this festival. Lan Ling Theatre Workshop (蘭陵劇坊) (1980-1990) was one of the most successful theatres, becoming the leading theatre company at the time and fostering later prominent theatre practitioners (Chiu 37-38). Later, some of these practitioners funded their own successful commercial theatre companies. Most important was the involvement of others in creating various professional children's theatres.

The decade between 1980 and 1990 is considered the beginning of Taiwanese modern TYA (Chiu 49-50). The production scale, style, and techniques grew throughout the following decades. Nevertheless, its basic principle was formed during this period. Since the 1980s, Taiwanese children's theatre performances have been by professional or amateur adult actors/actresses for young people under the age of twelve. (Plays for young people from twelve to

eighteen are scarce in comparison.) Several amateur theatre companies emerged in the early 1980s and were soon followed by the founding of the first professional children's theatre by former Lan Ling Theatre Workshop members. Some of these professional children's theatres continue to be the leading companies in Taiwanese TYA.

The first amateur theatre, Happy Children's Theatre (快樂兒童劇團), was founded by volunteers from the Happy Children's Center in 1982 (Wang, *Development* 9). The center's leader, Pei-Yu Deng, learned about creative drama via participation in a study abroad program to the US, as well as a trip to Europe in 1982. Afterward, she began to call her own activities "drama activities" (Chen 26). Volunteers of the center were trained to facilitate or perform in these activities. Several volunteers from the center were later engaged in work with other professional children's theatres. The founder of the Happy Children's Theatre, Cheng-Ming Lo (羅正明), was one of them (Chen, "Ms." 95-100). Most of the company members were volunteers who only received drama training from the center. They held free performances at many outdoor locations and community spaces for children or family audiences. The group was only active for a short number of years.

Square and Circle Theatre (方圓劇場), founded by Ling-Ling Chen (陳玲玲) in 1983, was the first professional theatre for adults to produce plays for children. Scholars see it as the trendsetter for having "adults performing for children" (Chiu 49; Wang, *Development* 9), even though the Happy Children's Theatre also had adults performing for children. This confusion might exist

because the Square and Circle was more professional, influential, and well-known within the theatre community. The company was created in response to the Experimental Theatre Festival mentioned above. Lasting for only a few years, Square and Circle's only three TYA performances were all produced in 1983 (Chiu 49).

Other professional companies and organizations also produced plays for children around the same time or soon after Square and Circle's productions. These included Spoon Theater Company (湯匙劇團), Cloud Gate Experimental Theatre (雲門實驗劇場), and students from the National Taiwan University of Arts, led by Chi-Mei Wang (汪其楫) (Wang, *Development* 10). However, these organizations only produced one or a limited number of productions for children. In 1983, early childhood educator Feng-Li Tung (董鳳麗) funded the first black light theatre, Cup Theater (杯子劇團) (Cup). Cup is the oldest TYA company in Taiwan still in existence. In 1985, Fang-Lan Chen (陳芳蘭) established Shui Qin Chai Children's Theater (水芹菜兒童劇團), which was the only theatre company to use young people as their primary actors during the 1980s (Fang-Lan Chen, 36).

Late 1985 to 2011

After 1985, Taiwanese TYA grew exponentially through the foundation and development of various professional and amateur TYA companies. In general, a handful of prominent professional puppet or children's theatres were the driving force behind this growth, but other amateur, professional, and

traditional theatres also contributed to the overall growth of the field. The following are introductions to several of these theatre companies:

Mokit Children's Theater (摩奇兒童劇團) (1986-1992/1994)

Mokit Children's Theatre was established by Jui-Lan Hsieh (謝瑞蘭), a previous volunteer of Happy Children's Center, and Chih-Hao Teng (鄧志浩), an ex-member of Lan Ling Theatre Workshop. Mokit was permitted to be named after an Austrian children's theatre, MOKI Theatre for Kids. Mokit was the first professional TYA company founded by a non-profit foundation, Yi Hua Culture Foundation (益華文教基金會). It is often considered to be the first professional Taiwanese children's theatre (Hsieh, "Promotion" 41). This reputation is probably based on criteria which exclude puppet companies and theatres by children. Mokit, despite concluding their final productions in either 1992 (Yang) or 1994 (Wang, *Development* 10), is still the most influential children's theatre company of its time. Mokit's considerable impact in the field is a result of the high quality of its productions and successor companies. Two other important children's theatres with longevity were founded by its members, Song Song Song Children's & Puppet Theater (九歌兒童劇團) (1987) and the Paper Windmill Theater (紙風車劇團) (1992). These two theatre companies became the major forces of Taiwanese children's theatre from the 1990s on.

Song Song Song Children's & Puppet Theater (九歌兒童劇團) (1987-current)

Teng left Mokit to create Song Song Song and to import European concepts of children's theatre to Taiwan. In Song's early years, it brought many new concepts and standards to TYA from several Eastern European theatres, such

as MOKI Theatre for Kids (Austria) and National Puppet Theatre of Kiev (Ukraine). The use of western puppetry, a minimalistic set, ensemble staff members and playfulness are some of the innovative ideas in the Taiwanese TYA of the late 1980s. Today, Song's productions have moved away from the minimalistic and ensemble concepts, but it still leads the field because of its international reputation. As one of the most senior TYA companies, some elements and practices brought in by Song remain influential. These practices include incorporating puppets and audience participation in the theatre, using only adult performers, providing entertainment, and introducing serious themes for children without hesitation (Teng 151-154, 181). The current managing director, Shu-Ming Ju (朱曙明), one of the founding members, assumed the leadership position of the company in 1996. Currently, Song remains one of the most international children's theatres in Taiwan. The company stages their own productions abroad and brings international TYA performances to Taiwan; they are also active in international TYA conferences. So far, the company has performed in many countries across Europe, North America, and Asia. In 2009, according to their website, the company had more than twenty full time employees, sixty-six productions in their repertoire and had served close to two million audience members.

Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (鞋子兒童實驗劇團) (1986-current)

Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (Shoes), literally translated to Shiny Shoes "Experimental" Children's Theater, was founded by teachers from Healthy Growth Center for Early Childhood Education (成長兒童學園) (Healthy Growth)

in 1986. As one of the trendsetting and leading companies, Shoes is significantly smaller than other prominent TYA companies, with a budget slightly under seven-hundred thousand US dollars. Growing out of a childcare/kindergarten setting and a television program, Shoes has a unique history. Founded in 1983, Healthy Growth was established by Shu-Min Cheng (鄭淑敏) and other early childhood educators and artists to experiment and explore different methods of conducting early childhood education (Ni 239). Ming-Hsiang Ni (倪鳴香), an early childhood professor and was the department chair at Healthy Growth, decided to host a weekly series of children's theatre performances for the students. These performances, or as Ni called them, a "teaching-learning theatre," were written, directed, and performed by teachers with no previous experience in theatre (Ni & Chen 28-29). The program was an instant success after it was launched. Healthy Growth established a tradition of holding theatre performances by teachers for their students. Post-show discussions, open-ended performances, introduction to theatre, and exceptional audience etiquette were some unique aspects of Healthy Growth's teaching-learning theatre (Ni & Chen 31). The program grew and opened to the public in 1984 (Shiny). Beginning in 1985, Healthy Growth teamed up with a production company, Kuangchi Program Service (光啟社), to produce, for five years, the first children's program of the Taiwanese Public Television Service (公視): Popcorn (爆米花). In 1986, Shoes was formally registered as a professional TYA company. Since then, the company has continued to grow in production scale and to expand the themes and content of TYA productions. As an experimental theatre, Shiny Shoes' plays are mostly based on award-winning

children's literature. However, their subjects cover a wide variety of cultures (African, Indonesian, British, American, etc.) and themes (death, giving, poetry, children's philosophy, etc.). Because of the difficult economy, the company is now slowly cutting back on their production numbers and is undergoing a transition period. Shiny Shoes also offers many storytelling sessions in libraries, community centers, bookstores, and department stores, and also plans to open a storytelling/playhouse for seniors.

Eyuan Puppet Theatre (一元布偶劇團) (1987-current)

Eyuan Puppet Theatre, founded by Cheng-Wei Kuo (郭承威), was also established in 1987. Eyuan, which literally translates as "one Taiwanese dollar," expresses Kuo's ideal of creating affordable performances for children. After inviting the Japanese puppet theatre Nyudougumo Musical Puppet Play (劇団入道雲) to perform in Taiwan in 1985, Kuo decided to collaborate with Nyudougmo and created Eyuan. They claim to be the first professional modern Taiwanese children's puppet theatre (Eyuan). The company performs internationally, and remains active today.

Paper Windmill Theater (紙風車劇團) (1992-current)

The Paper Windmill Theater (Paper Windmill) was founded in 1992 by Yung-Feng Li (李永豐) and several other movie and theatre artists. Paper Windmill, one of the largest children's theatres with a budget of approximately three million US dollars, stands out for its unique organizational structure and wide variety of theatrical activities. It is the only children's theatre established parallel to two other arts organizations. The first organization is a professional

theatre company, Green Ray Theater (綠光劇團), and the second is a professional dance company, Wind Flyers Dance Laboratory (風動舞蹈劇團) (inactive), operated under a non-profit foundation, Paper Windmill Culture Foundation (紙風車文教基金會). Li serves as both the Artistic Director for Paper Windmill and the Producer for Green Ray. Paper Windmill's popular repertoire includes a "witch/wizard" series and annual Chinese Zodiac themed plays. Paper Windmill's Creativity Workshop provides theatre classes for children and training workshops for teachers. From 2000 to 2006, the Taiwanese Council for Cultural Affairs contracted with the company to conduct the Teenager Theatre Promotion Project (青少年戲劇推廣計畫). The project consisted of teacher training, theatre festivals, on-campus theatre club guidance, touring performances, and short play competitions (*The Paper*, *Teenager*). This project has been the only governmental effort to promote theatre for teenagers since the 1970s and was cut because of the lack of funding. Besides the theatre productions and studio classes, the company also hosts outdoor events for political campaigns and government celebrations, which is atypical in the field of children's theatre.

If Kids Children's Theater (如果兒童劇團) (2000-current)

If Kids Children's Theater is one of the fastest growing and newest TYA companies in Taiwan. It was founded by Shong Chao (趙自強), a famous actor, children's TV program and radio host, with help from Yung-Feng Li (李永豐) and Stan Lai (賴聲川) in 2000. In 2009, If Kids had grown from three to seventy full-

time employees, with a single production budget as high as 288,000 USD (NT8,500,000) (“Losing”). It is currently the largest children’s theatre in Taiwan.

Other amateur or community-based children’s theatres established in the late 1980s and early 1990s outside of Taipei city include Mommy Children’s Theatre (媽咪兒童劇團) (1989), Kaohsiung City; Children’s Theatre of Taichung Culture Center (台中市立文化中心兒童劇團) (1990), Taichung City; Hualien County Children’s Theatre (花蓮縣立兒童劇團) (1993), Hualien County; Taitung County Children’s Theatre (台東縣兒童劇團) and Children’s Theatre of Taitung Theatre (台東公教劇團附屬兒童劇團), Taitung County; Children’s Theatre Branch of Hua-Den Theatre (華燈兒童劇團), Tainan City (Wang *Development* 10). When professional theatres grew stronger in both numbers and quality and began to tour the country, most of these theatres were overshadowed and became inactive or closed entirely. Regardless, there has been a continuous string of other theatres, professional and amateur, being founded over the years. Many of them, unfortunately, are short lived.

After the 1990s, the number of professional children’s theatres grew tremendously. It would be overwhelming to introduce these TYA companies individually. Therefore, a comprehensive list of professional and amateur TYA theatres from most of the major cities, Taipei, Tainan, Kaohsiung, Taichung, and Yilan, is included in an appendix. The majority of these children’s theatre companies are located in Taipei city. Regardless of primary physical location, however, most professional companies tour around the county.

My overall observations regarding the current Taiwanese TYA field are as follows:

- Neither the TYA companies, nor the other professional theatres, have their own performance space. Theatre companies apply and compete for the same performance locations (mostly government owned) nationwide.
- There are three scales of touring productions in Taiwanese TYA: First, large scale productions, performed in theatres for over 800 audience members; second, medium scale productions, performed in smaller venues for 300 to 800 audience members; and third, small scale productions for communities or schools. Major companies often produce all three scales of performances, dominating the market.
- In Taiwanese TYA, there is no distinction to separate puppet from non-puppet companies as exists in the US. Many puppet companies identify themselves as TYA companies and are recognized as such.
- A considerable number of professional theatres, including modern theatres, traditional theatres, dance companies, and symphonies, occasionally produce performances for young people.
- A high percentage of TYA plays are adaptations of famous or award-winning stories, from both Taiwanese and international literature.
- Throughout history, the lives and works of TYA practitioners often overlap with each other. For example, the artistic director at If Kids, Shong Chao, once served as the host of Shiny Shoes' TV program

Popcorn, and the artistic director of the Paper Windmill, Yong-Feng Li, is also the founder of If Kids Children's Theater.

- Almost all of the theatres, especially the professional TYA companies, provide certain kinds of theatre training for young people and school teachers.
- With few exceptions, most TYA productions are for young people between four and twelve years of age. Baby theatre is new to Taiwan and is found to cater only to children in the early development stage. Theatre activities for teenagers are mostly in schools, especially for high school students. (Teenager Performing Arts League has hosted an annual “Whatsyoung (花樣年華)” Teenager Theatre Festival since 2001 for high school students (*Teenager*).

Besides the growth of the TYA companies, other aspects of theatre education in Taiwan have also contributed to the development of Taiwanese TYA. In 1999, performing arts were formally adopted into the Taiwanese national curriculum of compulsory education, which includes first to ninth grade (Chuang 94). Theatre courses, both modern and traditional, were offered in colleges and universities starting in the 1950s. In 2003, the first and only TYA/educational theatre graduate school was founded under the Department of Drama Creation and Application at National University of Tainan (NUTN) in Tainan city. The school started to offer undergraduate degree programs in 2006. (There are no doctoral TYA programs or theatre programs that offer a TYA concentration at this point.)

CHAPTER 4

TAIPEI CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL 2000-2011

The Taipei Children's Arts Festival (TCAF) is one of the largest international children's arts festivals in Taiwan. TCAF is hosted by the capital city of Taipei and has been held annually since 2000. It typically lasts twenty to forty days and is held during the months of July and August to align with the summer vacation period for schools in Taiwan. The goal of TCAF, according to the festival's website and annual reports, is to bring together different art forms, to provide an entertaining summer event for youth, and "to cultivate our junior citizens' compassion and values through the enjoyment of arts and culture" (Taipei 2009). The youth referred to are of elementary school and kindergarten age (roughly three to twelve years old), but the festival is not limited to these age groups.

TCAF provides a wide range of both indoor and outdoor arts activities which change every year, but typically include outdoor art installations, indoor art exhibits, crafting/painting workshops, drama workshops, city tours, children's movie screenings, concerts, and dance and theatre performances. In addition to events for children and their parents, the festival also includes workshops or conferences for artists, scholars, and teachers. Among all the activities offered, theatre for young audiences (TYA) performances have been the most prominent since 2001. In 2002, the then Commissioner of the Taipei Cultural Affairs, Ying-tai Lung (龍應台), decided to make TYA performances the main event of TCAF for the following ten years (Shiu 66). Another important event at TCAF is the

TYA Playwriting Competition, which began in 2002.⁶ This annual competition has two separate categories for individual playwrights (individual) and playwrights with production teams (group). The top three winning plays selected from the group division are produced during the next festival, and are sponsored and subsidized by TCAF. The top three plays selected from the individual division also receive a significant cash reward.

The primary marketing materials and publications for TCAF include the festival website as well as programs, reports, and play anthologies. TCAF's website offers comprehensive information about the festival and the website's design changes annually according to the festival's theme. In the past, the website has included blogs for children (2004 and 2005) and scholars (2007). A festival program called Child's Heart Passport (童心護照) is distributed to public elementary schools and to private and public kindergartens in Taipei (Chang, "Words" 2005). The programs are also available at most public libraries, travel centers, museums, and ticket booths citywide. Children can use coupons from their "passports" as discounts to museums and activities, and may also collect stamps from participating museums. Following the festival, TCAF published a conference report in 2000 and from 2002 to 2007, as well as a TCAF winning play anthology from 2002 to 2009.

Through advocacy from TYA artists and the Taipei Children's Theatre Association (TCTA) (台北兒童戲劇協會), founded in 1995, the festival was established by Taipei's Department of Cultural Affairs in 2000. Before TCAF,

⁶ Please see Appendix 2 for original Chinese and English translations of the 2011 TCAF Playwriting Competition Rules.

there was no city-organized multi-arts festival for children. Occasionally, private children's arts festivals and state sponsored TYA festivals were held. For example, both Fan-Mei (汎美藝術) and the Management of New Arts (牛耳藝術), two private arts management companies, organized international children's arts festivals in 1993 (Hsieh, "2004" 24). These festivals, whose primary focus was on musical arts, were designed to promote private companies' own artists and programming for children; therefore, their tickets were not as affordable as TCAF and their programming was not nearly as diverse. Taiwan's Council of Cultural Affairs also organized a series of yearly national TYA performances to promote children's theatre in 1992 (Wang, Yu-Hui 38). These performances are produced by local TYA companies and tour community centers and elementary schools nationwide. TCAF replaces private companies' international children's arts festivals, while the Council of Cultural Affairs' annual TYA theatre promotional activities continue to flourish. I suspect that private children's arts festivals died out because they could not compete with TCAF, which is the first international festival hosted by a city government. Many other Taiwanese cities began their own children's arts festival after 2000, but none of them are as large as TCAF.

TCAF is hosted and sponsored by the Taipei city government, but it is organized by contracted organizations. The first festivals were hosted by Peaceland Workshop (明境藝術工作室), an arts managing/marketing company, and subsequently by Taiwan Mei-Xui International Culture Company (台灣美學國際文化事業(股)公司), neither of which still exist, according to my research. Instead, host organizations have changed to If Kids Children's Theater (如果兒童

劇團) in 2002, Taipei Children's Theatre Association (TCTA)(台北兒童戲劇協會) from 2003 to 2007, and the Taipei Cultural Foundation (台北市文化基金會) from 2008 to 2011. Changes between the festivals' activities were more pronounced during the transition periods of the first three years. For example, in 2000, the festival covered equal amounts of music, dance, theatre, and visual arts performances and activities. Then, in 2001, the festival was focused on Taiwanese and international puppetry; every activity, workshop, and performance involved puppetry. In 2002, If Kids Children's Theater founded the TCAF Playwriting Competition and offered drama workshops for adults to promote TYA and educational theatre. After the first three years, the festival activities were only altered slightly from year to year. Overall, the festival has maintained a unified curriculum with an emphasis on TYA performances.

Most years, TCAF has a theme, such as the Hans Christian Andersen (安徒生童話) theme of 2005, and The World is by Your Side (世界就在你身邊) theme of 2006. Some themes play with puns and common Chinese terms that contain a word which sounds like "child (童)," pronounced "*tong*." This gives the festival fun and easily remembered themes. For example, "*tong le hua yuan* (童樂花園)" was the theme in 2010. It means "children's happy garden," but also sounds like "*tong le hua yuan* (happy together garden) (同樂花園)." Although many themes are clever and fun, most are general and bear little resemblance to the actual festival.

As previously mentioned, the selection of activities changes slightly each year, but many activities remain similar. Variations include a costume/makeup competition that was held in 2000, 2005, and 2006. In 2006, participants paraded on a red carpet near Taipei City Hall, and some performed/showcased their costumes on a temporary stage at the end (Department 2006 Report, 48-51). In 2011, the festival invited a Taiwanese artist, Akibo Lee (李明道), to create six giant movable fish sculptures with the help of six hundred pairs of grandparents and their grandchildren (*Taipei*). The participants signed up for painting workshops to help decorate the six sculptures.

After 2004, the festival collaborated with public and private museums citywide to offer festival attendees coupons for their tickets (Department 2004 Program, 32). The number of participating organizations grew from five to twenty-nine between 2004 and 2010. Children's movies were part of the 2002 festival, but were shown on the Taiwanese Disney Channel (Department 2002 Report, 72-73), which is viewable only through subscription cable TV. Since 2005, a small children's film festival has been held alongside TCAF. Museums, elementary schools, and libraries all host free screenings.

Arts workshops are another unique feature of the festival. Some workshops are for children while others are geared toward adults. Joint workshops are less common. Some examples of children's workshops include drama, backstage production, puppet making, fabric playing, little reporter, and storytelling. Although multiple sessions of workshops were held, most were only offered once during the festival. Local theatre companies and artists presented the

majority of these workshops; among the presenters were The Puppet and Its Double Theater, Eyuan Puppet Theatre, Shiny Shoes Children's Theater, and many others. Only rarely would international artists lead workshops for children, such as the Broadway production of *The Lion King*, which provided "Simba's Creative Workshop" for children in 2008 (Department 2008 Program, 37).

Participating international theatre companies have included Tall Stories Theatre Company (UK), Teatro de las Maravillas (Spain), and MOKI Children's Theater (Austria), each leading one workshop for children ages nine to twelve in 2006 (Department 2006 Program, 17).

On the other hand, drama workshops for adults have always been part of the festival since 2001. Regardless of the types of workshops, or whether they are from local or international companies, their common goal is to promote children's arts, especially theatre for youth. There are workshops for school teachers, undergraduate students, scholars, and professional and amateur theatre practitioners. Participants from each category often work together in the workshops. In 2002, Patricia Zimmer from Eastern Michigan University, USA, and Larry O'Farrell from Queen's University, Canada, conducted workshops in story theatre and drama in education for both teachers and practitioners. From 2002 to 2004, there were theatre/drama workshops designed for school teachers led by local TYA companies or artists. In 2010, Giacomo Ravicchio, the artistic director of Meridiano theatre in Denmark, led a Mythology in Modern Theatre workshop for theatre professionals. In 2003 and 2004, the festival provided workshops specifically for adult volunteers of the festival. During the same years,

TCAF also trained sixty participants, with and without previous experience, in a story theatre workshop. These participants then performed their stories at community centers and schools during the festival. TCAF also hosted or co-hosted several conferences and international forums during the festival, including the Asian Children and Youth Arts Festival Conference (2004), Taiwan Educational Drama/Theatre International Congress (2005), and Asian Children's Theatre Alliance Forum (2006 & 2008).

Regardless of the artistic medium, performances have remained an important part of the festival. These performances are produced by modern and traditional dance groups, symphonies, solo musicians, traditional theatres, as well as local and international TYA companies. TCAF has traditionally included indoor/outdoor performances, with both free and charged admissions. These performances are mostly by professional artists with only a few child performers. The locations vary from small venues like community centers, libraries, and children's hospitals to larger venues such as the city of Taipei's performing arts centers. All of these elements make the festival more accessible to children citywide.

Performances have also transitioned from all outdoor locations to mostly indoor locations. During the first festival in 2000, all performances were held in a city parking lot, the "A9 Parking Lot" near Taipei City Hall, or on the main stage of DaAn Park, also known as Da-an Forest Park. The second festival was similar but added Xin Sheng Elementary School (新生國小), to its list of hosting locations. Beginning in 2003, almost half of performances were paid

performances and nearly all were TYA performances. Since then, TCAF has always offered four types of performances. First, free outdoor large performances are offered on the stages of DaAn Park and at Tienmu Sport Park. According to the festival reports, the number of audience members at one performance can exceed nine thousand. These performances are from professional and amateur groups alike. Second, free small community performances are offered, primarily at informal performance spaces like community centers, libraries, museums, children's hospitals, and the Taipei City Zoo. In recent years, some community performances have been held at small performance venues. They are still free of charge, but sometimes require tickets to attend; the festival distributes free tickets at various locations. These performers are also from professional and amateur groups alike. Third, paid performances (mostly TYA performances) are offered by local companies. The plays which are winners of the TCAF Playwriting Competition are part of this category. Lastly, paid performances (again, mostly TYA performances) from international companies are offered. Rarely, the festival will offer free international shows.

Among all the performances, those in the free category are the most diverse in their style and in their performers. Represented in this category are Professional TYA theatres, traditional theatres (Taiwanese shadow/glove puppets, Taiwanese opera, Beijing opera, etc.), symphonies, small musical ensembles (solo, quartet, or sextet), and dance companies. Some examples of performances in this category include the Bigfish Children's Theatre's (黃大魚兒童劇團) *Mission: Impossible IV* (2010), Taiwanese folk drum groups, and a Taiwanese

aboriginal music group. The performers ranged from youth to adult, although some groups, such as the Bigfish Children's theatre, used mostly child performers.

As for international performances, companies from many countries such as Mexico, Canada, Japan, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Austria and the USA perform or collaborate with local artists. In 2005, for example, the Big Telly Theatre Company from Northern Ireland performed *The Little Mermaid* in a swimming pool (Department, 2005 Report 21). When international TYA plays are translated into Chinese (Mandarin) productions, the international company uses local artists to narrate or act in the play. The productions of *Petit Pierre* by Le Carrousel, a Canadian Theatre company in 2009, and *Buchettino* by Societas Raffaello Sanzio, an Italian company in 2010, represent these kinds of collaborations.

The Taipei city government subsidizes all performances, regardless of genre. Performances which require tickets generally cost 150 to 200 NT (roughly 5 to 7 USD), which is cheaper than other children's performances of the same caliber. Based on two major ticketing websites, ERA Ticket (年代售票) and Arts Ticket (兩廳院售票), a performance of similar size or by the same children's company may cost 300 to 1500 NT (roughly 10 to 30 USD). Performances which are smaller or performed by community theatres typically cost 150 to 200 NT, but are provided by TCAF for free. The only exception, criticized by the media, was the Broadway production of *The Lion King*, which cost 800 to 2800 NT (26 to 94 USD), even after TCAF's subsidy (Liu). Although the festival aims to provide

affordable art performances for youth, low ticket prices can strain other performance companies, especially during the summer.

Throughout the years, the festival has grown in the size of its locations, in the number of performances, and in the number of attending audience numbers. According to an unpublished statistic from Taipei's Department of Cultural Affairs, the number of performances increased from 92 to 432 between 2000 and 2009 (although the number dropped to under 400 in 2010), and the number of audience members reached roughly 270,000 in 2009.

CHAPTER 5

LITERARY REVIEW OF WESTERN AND TAIWANESE CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE CHILD AND CHILDHOOD

All of us, so called “adults,” were once children. It is very easy to assume that we understand what the child and childhood are because we have been there and done that. However, individual personal experiences and memories, although they can serve as legitimate research data especially from an auto-ethnography standpoint, have their limitations in explaining the scope of a culture’s construction of the child and childhood. With a complex political and colonial background, Taiwanese culture is strongly influenced by a mixture of Chinese, Japanese, and contemporary Western cultures. The intricacy of the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood is exponentially beyond any individual’s personal experience. This research, based on data collected from the Taipei Children’s Arts Festival (TCAF), is to explore the representation of Taiwanese child and childhood in arts activities for children.

The advancement in human technologies gradually helps blur the dividing lines among different cultures, such as Taiwan. Pop music, cartoons, internet, social media, academia and many other inventions make cultural exchanges easier than ever. Like many countries, Taiwan is also immersed in such culture exchanges and has developed its own complex cultural identity. The uniqueness of Taiwanese culture lies in its mixture between the “East” and the “West.” Because of its past immigration and colonial history, Taiwanese culture is a lineage of Chinese culture (after the 17th century), and heavily influenced by

Japanese colonization (1895-1945). After WWII, the United States of America (US) began to give the Taiwanese government both financial and military aid. The peak of US support occurred after the Korean War (1951) and into the mid 1960s, and included establishing US Air Force bases in Taiwan. The influence of US culture in Taiwan did not stop after both countries broke off diplomatic relations in 1978. Taiwan remains extremely susceptible to US culture today. Over the past few decades, Europe, North and Southeast Asia, also began to have more influence in Taiwan because of media, internet, and new immigrants. Therefore, it is inadequate to decipher Taiwanese cultural codes and the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood as a contrast to Western cultures or a binary between Western and Eastern. This part of my dissertation introduces the background of Taiwan's intricate blend of cultures, and related childhood studies theories from both Taiwanese and Western perspectives.

One example showcasing this mixture of culture in children's daily lives is in Taiwanese children's TV programming. According to the National Children and Youth Conference's (NCYC's) report about "Children and Media," close to 90% of the TV shows for children are imported cartoons from the US and Japan (Cho 8). The Cartoon Network, Disney Channel, and two Taiwanese local children's TV channels (YOYOTV and MOMOTV) provide around-the-clock entertainment for young people. Slots for children and youth programming are also available from the regular TV channels. Taiwanese young viewers, like their counterparts in the US, watch Disney movies, *Dora*, *Handy Manny*, *Chowder*, *Sponge Bob Square Pants*, *Pokemon*, *Naruto* and many more. Locally produced

programs occupy only 11% of the total programs for young people, and the majority of them target pre-school and kindergarten age groups (Cho 8).

Children's local TV producers' impact on generating the cultural constructions of the childhood are arguably diminished by the canceling of locally produced TV programs. They give power to other adult creators of these now-Taiwanese shows to shape ideologies for Taiwanese children. However, they remain the gatekeepers for the programming they select. This example demonstrates that, as the world and cultures grow more and more fluid, many constructions of childhood are exchanged and gradually become less distinct among cultures.

Literary Review of Childhood Studies

Just as in Taiwanese culture, Taiwanese academia embodies this mixture of East and West in its research. In the newly developed field of Taiwanese childhood studies initiated by historian Ping-chen Hsiung (熊秉真) in the mid 1990s, most of the research was influenced if not based directly on US and British theories, primarily because the field of contemporary childhood studies was generated in the West. Therefore, in my literary review for this project, both western and Taiwanese theorists are referenced and discussed.

The dichotomy between adult and child “became ‘almost’ unquestionable in the mid-twentieth century,” and this distinction has dominated many studies of children and childhood before the 1990s (Lee, *Childhood* 37). Allison James and Alan Prout refer to this position as a “dominant framework,” which generally considers children lesser than adults in both mental content and mental processes

(Lee, *Childhood* 38). The theories based on this “dominant framework” tend to work from the assumption that children are in some sense incomplete, that they are not *fully* human” (Lee, *Childhood* 38). Adults are equal to “human beings,” and children are “human becomings.” Developmental theories of child study in education and psychology, which are rooted in Darwinian evolutionism and focus on children’s cognitive and biological progress, embrace and even help construct this adult/child dichotomy. G. Stanley Hall, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget, although having different approaches, were some of the major contributors. Other theorists in sociology, such as John B. Watson and Talcott Parsons, based their theories on John Locke’s belief, and see children as blank slates and passive recipients of adult culture. While these theories advance the understanding of child growth, they also emphasize the idea that “children are not worthy of study in their own right because they are not fully formed individuals, and their lack of maturity and rationality makes them unreliable as informants” (Freeman 5).

Under this dominant framework, theorists Allison James, Chris Jenks, and Alan Prout, in *Theorizing Childhood* identify several models of child that “they begin from a view of childhood outside of or uninformed by the social context within which the child resides” (10). The following “presociological” models taken from Western and Eastern histories, philosophies, common sense, psychology, and psychoanalysis are these: the evil child, the innocent child, the immanent child, the naturally developing child and the unconscious child. James *et al* considered these models “unimpressed by any concept of social structure”

(10). The following are models described by James and others in conjunction with some classic Chinese philosophies:

- The evil child

This premise is based on the belief that children are inherently, but not necessarily intentionally, evil. From Adam's original sin in Christianity, to Michel Foucault's theory, to contemporary literature, children are portrayed as potential dark forces or susceptible to evil. They could potentially be harmful for the adult world if not carefully controlled and guided. Therefore, punishments and discipline are deemed as rightful ways to mold children into docile adult bodies, who are good and pliant citizens. This image of children often leads to oppressive and often physical methods of childrearing, which sometimes can be harsh and brutal, as seen in the Puritans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (James, *Theorizing* 10-13). This concept of an evil child is similar to the classic philosopher's idea, Xunzi (荀子) (fl. 298-238 BCE). He basically believed "the doctrine that human nature is essentially evil" (Kinney, *Chinese* 22).

- The innocent child

Opposite to the concept of the evil child, this model views children as naturally good, pure, and in need of protection. We can learn from the natural qualities of the innocent child. These qualities are subject to being lost or forgotten and deserve to be safeguarded. Rousseau contributes to this train of thought by bringing attention to the needs of children and their particularities. Children are no longer signified as "bundles of negative attributes" or incomplete adults. "[T]hey are who they are. As parents and educators we are contracted to

bring up our children in such a manner that their state of pristine innocence remains un-spoilt by the violence and ugliness that surrounds them” (James, *Theorizing* 14). Rousseau and his concept of child heavily influenced modern child-centered education (James, *Theorizing* 13-15).

The innocent child is also a common concept in Chinese culture. Mencius (孟子) (ca. 371-289 BCE), a Confucian philosopher, had a view of human nature opposite Xunzi’s and “regarded human nature as essentially good” (Kinney, *Chinese* 22). This trend of thought dominated Chinese culture over thousands of years and was reflected in a Neo-Confucian thinker Yang-ming Wang’s (王陽明) (1472-1529) emphasis in the innately good nature of children (Hsiung, *Tender* 225). In the late sixteenth century, Zi Li (李贄) proposed a radical view with “a child’s heart (*t’ung-hsin*) as the only true heart (*chên-hsin*) a person could probably have” (Hsiung, *Tender* 225). “To Li’s mind a child was endowed with a good heart, upon which external teaching and acculturation could only produce a superfluous and harmful effect” (Hsiung, *Tender* 225-226). This seems to indicate that with learning and experiences, “a child’s heart” will only deteriorate and be lost. As Ping-chen Hsiung (熊秉真), pointed out in *A Tender Voyage*, under Zi Li’s concept, children are viewed as having “a superior purity and precious innocence” when compared to adults.

Confucius (孔子), one of the most influential philosophers in Chinese history, taught that children could be born with inherently good or evil natures. However, the evil natures could be transformed through different forms of instruction (Kinney, *Chinese* 23-24).

- The immanent child

The idea of immanent child is based on John Locke's epistemological concept that children's minds are born without any character or ideas, blank as white paper. Children are "innately charged with reason, reason which will develop given the appropriate environment" (James, *Theorizing* 16). Adults, who have more experience and knowledge, "are in a position to exercise responsible control over them [children]" (James, *Theorizing* 16). Based on this concept of the immanent child, Locke and Rousseau shared a similar ideology that children are not inadequate or incomplete adults. Again, they are who they are. Locke is another major influence in the development of modern child-centered education.

Although not completely the same, classic Chinese philosophers also brought a similar idea of "ran" (dyeing [染]). Mozi (墨子) (late fifth to early fourth century BCE), Zunzi and Wang Chong (王充) (around first century CE) all adopted this idea of dyeing silk (Kinney 30-31). They said that children were like white silk. Once dyed, they would forever change their color. This view does not necessarily indicate that children are blank white paper, but emphasizes more the effects of education.

- The naturally developing child

Based on developmental psychology, the model has two basic premises: "first, that children are natural rather than social phenomena; and secondly, that part of this naturalness extends to the inevitable process of their maturation" (James, *Theorizing* 17). Jean Piaget's genetic epistemology has significant influence in the construction of this model. It maps the development of humans

into defined hierarchical stages. Infants in this model appear on the bottom with their lower intelligence and bodily skills, and adults on the top. These stages provide justification for viewing adults as superior beings to children, and, at the same time, indicate the distinct dichotomy between adult and child. The fundamental criticism for this model resides on the view of this “universal, standardized and inevitable programme of developmental stages” (James, *Theorizing* 18).

Even though Piaget’s and the developmental psychology model are prominent in Taiwanese education and psychology, children are physically viewed quite differently in late imperial China, according to Hsiung’s research in *A Tender Voyage*. According to instructive literature throughout Chinese history, children “were not necessarily understood in any mechanical or biophysical sense as relating to age” (Hsiung 221). Different from Piaget’s hierarchical stages, the characteristics of a child “came from inferences anchored in cultural and ritualistic schemes that emphasized ethical order and social performance over biological reproduction” (Hsiung 222).

- The unconscious child

Based on a Freudian idea, the model considers childhood as an adult’s past. Within the three elements of Freudian development, id, ego and super-ego, childhood is viewed as id, an instinctive and unconscious existence. Freudian psychoanalysis blames childhood as the source of causality for adult deviant behaviors. “Within this model, childhood is once again dispossessed of intentionality and agency” (James, *Theorizing* 21). This concept broadens the

understanding of adulthood and the relationship between adult and child.

However, this model does little to contribute to an understanding of children (James, *Theorizing* 20).

James *et al* describe these models as universal. At the meta level, I agree that modern Taiwan is heavily influenced by all of the Western philosophers and their thoughts in modernity, especially in educational and psychological theories. This is where I believe the US and Taiwanese child and childhood have many similarities in our contemporary societies. However, ideologies covered by these models are, as demonstrated, not unique to the Western world. Besides the aforementioned Chinese philosophies, many similar concepts were also developed and became embedded within the thousands of years of Chinese history.

Hsiung, regarding distinctions between classical Chinese views of children when compared to some of these “presociological” models, also provided different interpretations between children and adults in contrast to the dominant framework about “human beings,” and children are “human becomings.” In Hsiung’s book *Childhood in the Past: A History of Chinese Children* (童年憶往—中國孩子的歷史), he notes that Mencius, the second most important scholar in developing Confucian philosophy, discussed children in terms of human nature, stating that when children are born, they already possess “complete” human beings inside them. The purpose of child rearing, according to Hsiung, was to cultivate and bring out the “adult” within (37). Under this school of thinking, Hsiung suggests that the child/childhood vs. adult is not a dichotomy divided by age or developmental process. The terms child and childhood refer to certain

qualities or characteristics commonly owned by children. Therefore, children are considered complete human beings; moreover, adults can preserve certain child-like qualities. This concept of children and adults represents a continuing process rather than an absolute segregated dichotomy (38-39).

This being said, scholars in contemporary Taiwanese history, education, and sociology seem to gravitate toward the dominant framework of the child and childhood rather than this classical Chinese philosophy. Although Mencius' philosophy is commonly known as a philosophical, literary, and educational concept, the ways in which his and other classic Chinese perspectives intersect with Western theories is unclear in Hsiung's writing. Hsiung discusses the various qualities and characteristics that children have, and also questions how human beings maintain or lose these qualities, but does not provide an hypothesis to answer the question. Other evidence provided in Hsiung's book about the child-parent relationship, family/ancestral concept, and education system shows that Mencius' philosophy is not always obvious, and sometimes is not relatable to Western perspectives. Whether Mencius' ideas of human nature are completely opposite to the Western dominant framework of the child and childhood is debatable without further comparison in literature.

Examining these issues at the global level, the concept of child and childhood as a social construct emerged, in opposition to the dominant framework, as early as the 1960s in European and American literature. In this perspective, the ideas of child and childhood are not defined or confined by a universalized age range, social conditions, personalities, class, economic value,

sentimental value, or developmental process. Instead, it is an ever-changing concept which depends mostly upon adult/child relationships in different cultures throughout human history. Philippe Ariés' book, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, published in 1962, famously claimed that the modern concept of childhood did not exist before the 17th century. This extreme assumption has been rebuked by other scholars. However, Ariés' perspective that "[t]he idea of childhood . . . corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult" (128), was not only thought-provoking at the time, but also bears similarities to Mencius' philosophy. For Ariés, it is false to assume a universalized concept of the child or childhood. Other historians, such as Paula S. Fass, Mary Ann Mason, and Steven Mintz, support Ariés' idea, and they argue that the construction of the child and childhood changes throughout history due to industrialization, decrease in the infant mortality rate, alteration in family structure, varying religious practices, slavery, and other changes in the society.

It is now common among scholars of history, sociology, and sometimes psychology to view the idea of the child and childhood as a social construction. In *After the Death of Childhood: Growing Up in the Age of Electronic Media*, David Buckingham describes this idea of the social construction of childhood:

The central premise here is that 'the child' is not a natural or universal category, which is simply determined by biology. Nor it is something which has a fixed meaning, in whose name appeals can unproblematically be made. On the contrary, childhood is

historically, culturally, and socially variable. . . . The meaning of ‘childhood’ is subject to a constant process of struggle and negotiation, both in public discourse and in interpersonal relationships, among peers and in the family. (6)

Based on this ideology, sociologist Nick Lee proposes a radical view of the child and childhood: “that there are no ‘human beings’ but that there are instead potentially unlimited numbers of ways of ‘becoming human’” (Lee 2). All people, adults and children alike, are “human becomings” rather than “human beings,” which could potentially eliminate the prejudice against children which views them as a lower or lesser class.

The aforementioned socially constructed ideas of the child and childhood do not negate the obvious physical differences between children and adults. The biological attributes are factors that distinguish children from adults, and include such characteristics as body size, language ability, motor skills, etc. Therefore, within a culture or society, we have a collective sense of what defines children and how to describe them biologically. At the same time, Buckingham suggests that “these collective definitions are the outcome of social and discursive processes” (6). This is similar to Judith Butler’s view of sex and gender as a sedimentation “that over time has produced a set of corporeal styles which, in reified form, appear as the natural configuration of bodies into sexes which exist in a binary relation to one another” (904). The apparent physical “binary” between child and adult is also a construction and sedimentation throughout time and in different cultures.

Research based on these social construction theories is relatively new to Taiwan's academia. Previous child-related research is mostly found in educational and psychological studies in which the "dominant framework" is prevalent. Just as Ariés began his childhood studies' journey through the historical aspects of children, Taiwanese contemporary childhood studies were also initiated from a similar direction. Ping-chen Hsiung focuses his studies on children's history, primarily in the medical field, in imperial China. Before delving into Hsiung's publications, allow me to explain the context of childhood studies based on the social construction perspective in Taiwan.

As mentioned before, Taiwan's identity has an intricate tie to Chinese culture. After the current government took over Taiwan after Japanese colonization in 1945, it focused on erasing past Japanese memories, reinstalling Chinese ideologies and trying to regain the reign of China. These efforts were clearly illustrated in the development of Taiwanese history in the school curricula. Before the 1990s, most of the Taiwanese history content was part of the "Chinese" history curriculum. Taiwanese history was typically designed as the last part of the Chinese history curriculum, focusing only on Taiwanese history in the Qing Dynasty (清朝) and after WWII, skipping Japanese colonization (Liu). The meta-narrative of Taiwanese history as being completely intertwined with Chinese history has been taught for more than forty years in elementary to high school education. Only since 2005 has "Taiwan history" been included as its own category in the high school curriculum. The subject of Taiwanese history is extremely politically laden. Depending on an individual's political inclinations,

either pro unification with China or pro independence, he/she may espouse very different opinions regarding the appropriate level of inclusion or exclusion of Chinese or Taiwanese history. Regardless, studies of Chinese culture are commonly accepted as Taiwan's and China's combined history prior to Taiwan's postsecondary education.

As a result, Taiwanese scholars in childhood studies generally view Hsiung's research of classical Chinese society as a crucial part of understanding the past constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood.

Hsiung's early publications, *To Nurse the Young: Infant Care in Traditional China* (幼幼:傳統中國的襁褓之道), and *Ill or Well: Diseases and Health of Young Children in Late Imperial China* (安恙:中國近世兒童的疾病與健康), published in 1995 and 1999 respectively, are the first two books which attempt to unveil the constructions of the Chinese child and childhood from historical perspectives. Emphasizing two different "age" groups, infants and children, both books use medical classics from the past thousand years and autobiographies after the eighteenth century as data to analyze children's health. Hsiung's goals were to systematically document children's history within the medical field by providing rich information about methods of infant-caring, common diseases, and diagnoses for children in imperial China. Therefore, the elaborate data tends to be more factual than analysis about how these diseases or medical care systems affected the relationships between adults and children and the overall construction of Chinese childhood. They are thus more beneficial as medical history than childhood studies. However, Hsiung signified the

importance of children in the family and in Chinese society by pointing out the significant points of this early development and specialization of the pediatric field, both in the government and in the private sector at the end of Tang Dynasty (618-907AD).

In 1997, a Cantonese author, Sin Yee Cheung (張倩儀), published a book about Chinese childhood, titled *Goodbye to Another Childhood* (另一種童年的告別). The content contains information about Chinese childhood based on over one hundred autobiographies and memoirs written between 1828 and 1938. Many of them are from well known scholars, authors, and even politicians, including Mao Zedong (毛澤東). The title is too vague in Chinese to be translated precisely; for instance, Cheung used “goodbye” to signify the “passing” of these Chinese childhoods. In this case, childhood is definitely seen and displayed primarily as adults’ pasts. In the preface, the author stresses that the book's purpose is not academic. The included short essays are informative, and they are also helpful as a resource for understanding Chinese childhood on personal levels. At the same time, the bibliographies and quotes from other literature help situate these narratives into the larger social context. Subjects of the books include education, family, environment, play vs. work, value, religion, and gender. Because the book is based on autobiographies and memoirs, it provides rich details and culture references about Chinese childhood in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. These stories, however, are sometimes not specifically about children, and the analyses are sometimes not comprehensive enough.

Hsiung published subsequent books: *Childhood in the Past: A History of Chinese Children* (童年憶往—中國孩子的歷史) and *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* (published in English), in 2000 and 2005.

These books are different from his previous works, and Hsiung widened his data beyond the Chinese medical field. Using classic paintings, literature, autobiographies, poems, and photographs, he explored family relationships, educational systems, teaching materials, childcare systems, girlhood, and the emotional states of Chinese children. Again, these primarily emphasized imperial China rather than contemporary Taiwan, but they are still useful in understanding some root-ideologies of the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood. Hsiung employed his materials to demonstrate the different schools of classic Chinese theologies and philosophies, but how these different schools of thought are applied in reality is not specified. For example, some curricula were written in the early Qing Dynasty promoted ways of motivating learning without being overly harsh or using corporal punishment (such as Piao Tang's (唐彪) *Guiding with Patience for Father and Teacher* (父師善誘法) (Hsiung, *Childhood* 137)). Although Hsiung's example showcases the changes in teaching methods and philosophies, his and others' evidence does not, in reality, support the idea that elimination of corporal punishment actually took place.

Sin Yee Cheung and Hsiung's later books are similar in their subjects and how they categorized the contents, but different in their methods of data analysis. Hsiung focuses mostly on materials written before the late nineteenth century, while Cheung researched newer materials. These two books complement each

other by providing a solid cultural reference, and became popular reference books in studies about Chinese children. However, Hsiung remains the only Taiwanese author to publish books about imperial Chinese children and childhood.

Besides Hsiung, Yin-Kun Chang (張盈堃), an early childhood education professor, represents the other major force to advance childhood studies in Taiwanese academia. He organized childhood studies study groups, translated childhood studies books into Chinese, edited and published two Taiwanese childhood studies anthologies, and carried out national research projects in the field. By translating Robyn M. Holmes' *Fieldwork with Children* (1998), co-translating Michael Wyness' *Childhood and Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Childhood* (2006), and editing/co-translating Allison James, Chris Jenks, and Alan Prout's *Theorizing Childhood* (1998), (all of which were published in 2008 and 2009), Chang helped make Western childhood studies more accessible to Taiwanese scholars. The last translated work is the result of his previous study groups in 2008.

Chang's other anthologies, *Research Children/Children Research: From Theories to Practical Fieldwork* (研究兒童/兒童研究：從理論到實務的田野工作) and *Theories and Practices of Child/Childhood Research* (兒童/童年研究的理論與實務), include articles from Taiwanese scholars' work in childhood studies. Some of these articles are introductions to Western theories of childhood studies, some are discussions about research or fieldwork methods with child participants, and some are studies about Taiwanese children. The subjects for Taiwanese childhood studies include toys, childhood environments, corporal punishment,

and media. Most of the articles reveal ideas about the Taiwanese child and childhood from adults' perspectives and view childhood primarily in a nostalgic sense, as adults' pasts. Nevertheless, Chang's anthologies begin to emphasize the sociological perspective that views the concept of a child and childhood as a construction rather than natural development in other parts of Taiwanese academia. This research, regardless of subject, became invaluable in understanding the lives of Taiwanese children, especially in education related subjects.

Other related Taiwanese publications are translations of US and UK works. Some examples are include *The Disappearance of Childhood* (1984) by Neil Postman (Chinese translation in 2007), and *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times* (2001) by Colin Heywood (Chinese translation in 2004). While Postman's work is still prevalent and quoted in many child-related master theses, Heywood's book and several others, which offer a more updated historical perspective in studying the construction of childhood, are already out of print.

Studies about Taiwanese children are rare in English publications. Most related materials are about Chinese children in imperial or contemporary China, such as books or anthologies about Chinese childhood edited or written by Anne Behnke Kinney, Jon L. Saari, or Hsiung. Kinney's book, *Representation of Childhood and Youth in Early China*, and her editorial of *Chinese Views of Childhood* focus primarily on the construction of the child and childhood in early imperial China, especially during the Han dynasty (206 BCE –220 CE). These

books introduce many classic concepts and philosophies regarding children and childhood in early China. Saari's book, *Legacies of Childhood*, is based on personal documents from 1890 to 1920 and interviews with scholars from both Hong Kong and Taiwan (all of whom were born in China) in 1969. Saari's research introduced specific perspectives of childhood, from male elites' memories and upbringings in the pivotal transitional time after the end of Qing dynasty.

The only book I found relating to Taiwanese childhood is Charles Stafford's *The Roads of Chinese Childhood: Learning and Identification in Angang*, written from an anthropological viewpoint. This research is based on a rural fishing community, Angang, located in Southeastern Taiwan, between 1987 and 1989. The author analyzes Angang's performance of childhood through food, money, families, spiritual mediums and rituals, etc., but primarily focus on the educational aspects of childhood analysis. While I do not always agree with Stafford's observations of Taiwanese social interactions, he successfully brought attention to seemingly mundane interactions between adults and children, the likes of which local researchers might overlook. Even though this case study is only one representation of Taiwan, it provides a useful interpretation of the contemporary rural and small-town Taiwanese childhood from a non-Taiwanese perspective. The Taiwanese childhood, in Stafford's view, is full of religion, superstition, love, protection, punishment, and education (both in and outside of schools).

Hsiung, Kinney, and Saari's research is beneficial providing an overview of the traditional and past constructions of the Chinese childhood. Comparing their data with the current Taiwanese situation helps me, as a researcher, understand the contemporary Taiwanese child and childhood on a deeper level. As for the recent Taiwanese childhood research in Yin-Kun Chang's books, scholars often adapt Western theories and concepts of the child and childhood by referencing Philippe Ariés, Shulamith Shahar, Linda A. Pollock, Neil Postman, Colin Haywood, and other scholars' works. These adaptations are beneficial in putting the current Taiwanese situation into Western perspectives. Unfortunately, some of the research seems more focused on introducing Western theories, rather than presenting the actual representation and construction of the Taiwanese child. These efforts are a helpful step toward understanding the Taiwanese child and childhood on a global level. However, there is an important need to perform further specific research about children in Taiwan.

Recent Government Efforts

As in the recent growth of childhood studies in Taiwan, the Taiwanese government has also demonstrated its efforts in putting children at the center of inquiry over the past decades, in ways such as the establishment of the Taipei Children's Arts Festival in 2000. The most recent example is the creation of the first National Children and Youth Conference (NCYC) in 2011. Hosted by the Ministry of the Interior's Child Welfare Bureau, organized by the Child Welfare League Foundation, and led by government officials and scholars, the goals of the conference were to gather public opinion, provide a public forum for child related

issues, discuss future child and youth related policies, and elevate the awareness of children's rights and other social welfare issues (Child). The conference included a separate webpage to allow young people to participate in the discussions. Unfortunately, the website seems to have a very low participation rate, according to their discussion board (Child). Even though the conference appears to be attempting to actively engage young people, the result is, unfortunately, questionable. However, government officials' reports about Taiwanese children and youth in family and welfare, the legal system, healthcare, media, education, and employment provide a valuable overview of Taiwanese child related policies in recent years. These reports help reveal certain contemporary constructions of Taiwanese young people from the government's perspective.

Arts related research is rarely presented in the aforementioned materials. Even when arts become part of the inquiry, they are typically limited to classic Chinese paintings and photographs. Therefore, research of the Taiwanese child and childhood through Taipei Children's Arts Festival (TCAF), especially in the Theatre for Young Audience (TYA) portion of the festival, could potentially open up a new path for childhood studies in Taiwan. Both the dominant framework and the idea of the construction of the child and childhood are fundamental to my research when exploring the construction and representation of Taiwanese childhood within TCAF. It is my goal to investigate what TCAF's materials reveal about the Taiwanese representation and construction of the child and

childhood from TCAF's scripts, from the performances of the child and childhood on stage, and from the messages embedded in all of the festival related materials.

TCAF is essentially a discourse produced by adults for children, which is different from the discourse about childhood by adults for adults. These two discourses are not mutually exclusive in this research, because adults, including parents, teachers and other child guardians, also compose a significant part of TCAF's audiences. Since all the materials are produced and performed by adults, not directly by children, these representations of the Taiwanese child and childhood are several layers removed from "real children." These representations may even be contradictory, because they may say more about "adults' and children's fantasy investments in the idea of childhood" and "nostalgia for a past Golden Age of freedom and play" (Buckingham 9).

However, these representations cannot be dismissed as merely illusory. Their power depends on the fact that they also convey a certain truth: they must speak in intelligible ways, both to children's lived experiences and to adult memories, which may be painful as well as pleasurable. (Buckingham 9-10)

The goal of this research is to gain a better understanding of the representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood through TCAF. Arts for children, especially performing arts, are an under-researched area of childhood studies in Taiwan. The popularity of TCAF is great. In 2008 alone, the festival attracted over 100,000 theatre goers (Taipei Art+), out of a total population of

680,000 in the Taipei metropolitan area, and yet the festival has not been a part of Taiwanese childhood studies.

Other Aspects of the Taiwanese Child and Childhood from Literary Reviews

Before analyzing my research data, I must address the categories of language, ages, laws, and other child related information to provide a cultural background for this research. I'm fully aware that these arbitrary categories seem to contradict my belief in the social constructions of childhood. Nevertheless, they are necessary information for readers who are not familiar with Taiwanese culture.

Language

One aspect of the socially constructed child which may be pointed out is in the use of language itself. Mandarin Chinese, which is Taiwan's official language, has many different ways to refer to children. Historian Ping-chen Hsiung (熊秉真) groups the use of these words into three different categories: biological, social status, and child-like quality (*Childhood* 24-25). Biological refers to age, including the cognitive and physical growth of a person. Social status indicates the child's lower status compared to his/her parents and other adults. In traditional Chinese society, parents always assume a higher position, requiring respect and obedience. Unmarried people or married people without a child were often treated as children or deserving of less respect. Child-like quality is most commonly used to describe adults who possess certain personality traits or a spirit like a young person.

As in English, many words or terms are used to describe “not adult,” such as “young people,” “youth,” “young adult,” “teenager,” and “tween.” However, Taiwanese terms tend to be more distinct from each other, and are better defined under the influence of educational, medical, and legal systems. Some of the official terms are: *er tong* (兒童), *shao nian* (少年), *you er* (幼兒), *qing shao nian* (青少年), *wei cheng nian* (未成年), *hai zi* (孩子), *xiao hai* (小孩), *xiao hai zi* (小孩子) and *xiao er* (小兒). The following is a list of these terms' meanings:

- *Er tong*: under the age of twelve or before middle school.
- *Shao nian*: between twelve to eighteen years old. These two terms, *er tong* and *shao nian*, are defined and translate legally as “children” and “youth” in the Children and Youth Welfare Act (Legislative).
- *You er*: pre-kindergarteners and pre-school children.
- *Qing shao nian*: between fifteen/sixteen to twenty/twenty-one, referring to high school and college students. Some scholars also consider *Qing shao nian* as including middle and high school students (Wang 8).
- *Wei cheng nian*: literally means “not yet grown up,” not mature in age and non-adult. This term seems to directly speak to the child/adult dichotomy.
- *Xiao hai* and *hai zi*: These two terms are usually used by parents to refer to their children, and they are different from daughter (*nu er*, 女兒) or son (*er zi*, 兒子). They imply a certain degree of ownership, and, therefore, an adult of any age could still be their parents' *hai zi* or *xiao hai*. However,

those terms, along with *xiao hai zi*, many also be used interchangeably with *er tong* or *you er*.

- *Xiao er*: A more classical way of referring to a combination of the meanings above. It is the official name of the pediatric department, *xiao er ke* (小兒科). All people under the age of eighteen are under the care of *xiao er ke* (Wang 8).

If you ask several different Taiwanese people about the definitions of the above terms, each of them might offer slightly different answers, just as English speaking people might have slightly different ways of using the English terms “children” and “youth.” The quantity of these terms potentially indicates a more complicated relationship between adults and children in Taiwan when compared to the constructions of the child and childhood in English speaking countries.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment in school was a common practice in Taiwan before the 1990s. This was also the case during the Japanese colonization (Yu 265-267). As a young girl, I had many experiences of being hit in front of the class by my teachers, who used tough branches. This was not because I was misbehaving, however. On the contrary, most people would categorize me as an “obedient” and “good” student. I was punished because I did not get a good grade on a test. Considering how many tests we could have each day in middle school, the chances of being “punished” were actually quite high. Even though my parents were unhappy with the situation, they would only urge me to get a better grade, rather than complain to the school. This was because it is the way they also grew

up. Corporal punishment used to be publicly acknowledged for its “value” and “effect.” Although not overtly, teachers, police, and prison officers were granted rights to carry out such violent acts (Chen, “Hit” 252) until recently.

It is a traditional Chinese value to consider this kind of punishment a way of expressing caring and love. These punishments represented teachers’ dedicated attitudes and their responsibilities to their students. “*Bu da bu cheng qi* (不打不成器),” a Chinese idiom with a western equivalent meaning, “spare the rod and spoil the child,” is commonly accepted in Taiwanese Society (Chen, “Hit” 252). However after the 1990s, support for the idea of corporal punishment in school received a rapid and complete reversal, from fully supportive of corporal punishment to fully against it. Researcher Ming-jen Chen (陳明仁) suspects the changes occurred partially due to the liberation of the media from the legal ban, which brought the general public knowledge of some horrible injuries and tragic events (268). But the definitive cause of this drastic change remains uncertain. In 2006, the Legislative Yuan passed a law to make corporal punishments in school illegal, an event which marks a significant landmark in the life of this traditional value (Chen, “Hit” 251). This does not point to the disappearance of physical punishment at home. Many parents, although against teachers physically punishing their children, do not mind doing so at home (Chen, “Hit” 270).

Family Structure

In past Chinese society, a household consisted of all members, both those in the immediate family and the extended family alike. For both rich and poor, it was common to live as a joint family of several generations. Grandparents,

especially grandmothers, were important, if not the most important, figures in their grandchildren's lives. Sons continued to live in the family after they got married, as did widowed daughters. With servants, polygamous, and near-relation marriages, it was not unusual to have hundreds of people living together under one roof (Chang, *Childhood* 143-144). However, as society changed, polygamy has long been illegal and families became smaller and smaller.

For the past twenty years, even though birth and marriage rates have changed, the stem family (which includes three generations of the core family) remains one of the main family structures for more than forty percent of the population, slightly less than the percentage of nuclear families (including only parents and children) (Yang 148). As a result, grandparents continue to be a significant part of children's lives, even though fewer and fewer extended family members live together.

Birth of a Child

When discussing the "value" of a child to a family, Ping-chen Hsiung makes a strong point that even though children might have the least labor contributions to a family, their birth alone was big contribution to the family, especially for rich families. Because newborns mean the continuation of a family name, they become the most precious treasure in the family (Hsiung, *Childhood* 60). In the past, this mostly referred only to the boys rather than the girls. Girls were often considered outsiders even in their own families, because they were considered part of their future husbands' families. However,

they were almost always regarded as outsiders in their husbands' families as well (Cheung 276).

The Taiwanese fertility rate has been dropping for the past two to three decades. It dropped from 1.03 percent to 0.9 percent in 2010, becoming the lowest in the world (Sui). This means that, on average, a Taiwanese couple has only 0.9 children, instead of a more sustainable 2.1. Even though news reports suggest future growth, the Taiwanese fertility rate is still one of the lowest worldwide. Unfortunately, there are still prejudices against girls in more traditional families. At the same time, girls are slowly gaining more equal footing in society

Filial Piety

Filial piety, *Xiao* (孝), the practice of respecting one's parents and ancestors, is one of the most valued Chinese traditional philosophies and ideologies when considering child/parent relationships based on Confucian teaching. In Chinese literature, many classic books were written to teach young people about the importance of filial piety. *Classic of Filial Piety* (孝經) is considered the first teaching of this concept. It was based on the dialogues between Confucius and one of his pupils, Tsenzi (曾子) (Shih, *Classic* 1). The eighteen chapters in the text cover topics ranging from the principles of *xiao*, to the general public's practices contrasted with the emperor's practices, from respecting parents to respecting the country/emperor, and from taking care of the parents to take care of the people. Even though many of Confucius' teachings were for the emperor, other royals and civil servants are still highly regarded, and

xiao refers mostly to interactions between parents and children when mentioned in contemporary Taiwan.

Children should not only respect and obey their parents by taking care of their own bodies, but should also treat parents with respect and pleasant attitudes, care for parents' well-beings and mourn for parents with grief (Shih, *Classic* 50-54). Because parents bear the child, raise the child, and educate the child, children should try to repay their parents out of gratitude. For thousands of years, the concept and practices of *xiao* has prevailed in Chinese societies.

Based on my literary reviews, most of the “Chinese mothers” are more loving than strict. A term for strict father and loving mother, “*yan fu xi mu* (嚴父慈母),” is frequently used to describe family dynamics in Chinese and Taiwanese society. For example, Charles Stafford pointed out this exact concept in his observations of a Taiwanese school textbook that “to be loving is to be motherly, and to be stern is to be fatherly” (74-75). The idea of the “tiger mother” is essentially part of the US construction of parenthood based on one author's interpretations of the “Chinese mother.” There are also many strict mothers and loving fathers in families. But overall, loving mothers are a lot more common in Chinese society than “tiger” mothers.

Chapter Conclusion

In David Buckingham's article, he refers to Patricia Holland's arguments that “these [cultural] representations of childhood are part of a continuous effort on the part of adults to gain control over childhood and its implications – not only over actual children, but also over our own childhoods, which we are constantly

mourning and constantly reinventing” (69-70). Language, physical punishments, filial piety, and many other elements in Taiwanese culture represent different elements of the constructs of the Taiwanese child and childhood. Many of them are different from Western constructions. However, I suspect there are more similarities than differences in today’s Taiwanese society. By using TCAF as my research subject, it offers more contemporary data for understanding the Taiwanese child and childhood, particularly in the yet unexplored field of arts and TYA.

CHAPTER 6

PLAYS AND PRODUCTION VIDEO RECORDINGS ANALYSIS

I chose four play scripts and their production videos as my basic data through which to examine the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. These plays were selected from the number one ranked plays between 2002 and 2009, and were produced by three different theatre companies: If Kids Children's Theater (如果兒童劇團), Seden Taiwanese Puppet Troupe (西田社布袋戲基金會), and Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (鞋子兒童實驗劇團). If Kids Children's Theater (IF) won first place in 2002, 2004, and 2005; Seden Taiwanese Puppet Troupe (Seden) won in 2003; and Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (Shiny) won from 2006 to 2009. These plays therefore represent the "best" of the TCAF Playwriting Competition. With regards to Shiny's domination of the competition, from 2006 to 2009, I consciously chose to use two plays by different playwrights. In Taiwan, it is common for an actual production and its script to be slightly or even very different from each other. Therefore, it is crucial to include production tapings as part of my data. The availability and taping quality (i.e. close up vs. long shots of the stage, image clarity, and sound) of these production videos became one factor in determining my play selection. Based on the above reasons, therefore, these are the four selected plays:

Year	Play Title	Playwright(s)	Theatre Company
2002	<i>The Light Princess</i> (輕輕公主)	Shong Chao (趙自強) and Ching-Ping Weng (翁菁莘)	If Kids Children's Theater
2003	<i>Lady Ghost</i> (鬼姑娘)	Hsing-Chih Yang (楊杏枝)	Seden Taiwanese Puppet Troupe

2008	<i>A Good Time at the Antique Shop – Le-Le’s Music Box</i> (骨董店的幸福時光~樂樂的音樂盒)	Ming-Hua Lee (李明華)	Shiny Shoes Children’s Theater
2009	<i>Ten Lessons of Angels</i> (天使米奇的十堂課)	Wei-Yu Chen (陳威宇)	Shiny Shoes Children’s Theater

In the following section, I will introduce the plays with a brief plot summary as well as theme analysis and production notes. The production notes are focused on providing a sense of how the play was performed on stage. These notes mostly emphasize *mise-en-scène*, such as set, costume designs, lighting designs, and casting. I will then present my qualitative research findings from both the original scripts and the production recordings. Supporting examples from all of the materials are provided. The purpose of this form of introduction is to reduce redundancy, because I found many similar analytic points from these plays.

Play Summaries and Production Notes

A Good Time at the Antique Shop – Le-Le’s Music Box (Music Box) by Ming-Hua Lee

This play’s structure is that of a play within a play. It begins in an antique shop, where a child (Child) enters, wanting to buy a story from the shop owner (Owner). Owner can’t resist Child’s plea, and decides to tell a story about a sea turtle, Le-Le (樂樂). Le-Le is a special kind of sea turtle called *Chelonia Mydas*, also known as the “Green Turtle,” which is a unique species of turtle under conservation status in Taiwan. Le-Le’s story is an adaptation from a picture book

called *The Music Box under the Ocean* (樂樂的音樂盒), written by Pei-Tzi Chen (陳沛慈) and illustrated by Wei-Chi Wang (王蔚萁). Interestingly, both the play and the book have the same titles in Chinese, but differ from one another in English translations.

Le-Le grew up without knowing her mother, and so she is always wondering what it feels like to have a mother. One day, she hears that there is a master owl (Master) who can use music to help people understand feelings. Le-Le decides to look for Master in the forest. Master and his music boxes are extremely popular in the animal kingdom. The exhibition of Master's music boxes only happens once every five years, and always draws animals from around the world.

When Le-Le arrives, the forest is already filled with many kinds of animals. This year, Master announces a special rule. He is not selling his music box, but will instead give it to someone who can accurately guess the subject which the music expresses. Of course, Le-Le is the only animal to interpret the music correctly. However, instead of accepting the music box as a gift, she asks Master to make a custom music box which will play a song about her mother's love for her. After three tests and hearing Le-Le's explanation, Master realizes that Le-Le is his kindred spirit and that no one has ever been able to understand his music as well as she. Master and Le-Le become close friends, and Master agrees to make Le-Le a music box of her mother's love for five years.

When the time comes, Le-Le is disappointed because Master's music box expresses a mother's love for birds, rather than for sea turtles. Master realizes his

mistake of not making a music box that would universally express a mother's love. He promises Le-Le to make a new one in another five years. However, Le-Le has since grown over the past five years, becoming a mother herself. She asks Master to make the new music box for her children, who she must leave behind. Master agrees. Le-Le and Master spend a whole afternoon rekindling their friendship before Le-Le has to leave again. Before Le-Le leaves, Master promises that the music box will be called "happiness." Time passes, and one day Le-Le meets a group of happy young sea turtles. In fact, Le-Le is surprised at how happy they are. The young turtles tell Le-Le that it is because they know their mother loves them. They are from a sandy beach near Master's forest and have had a music box playing for them every day. Without revealing herself as their mother, Le-Le understands that their happiness is because of Master's music box, and travels back to the forest right away. However, Le-Le does not find Master, because he has already passed away from old age. To repay Master, Le-Le decides to tie the music box to the most beautiful and soft seaweed in the ocean, so that more animals can enjoy the music. She also brings a piece of Master's feather with her while traveling in the sea.

This play expresses two layers of themes. The first layer is found in Owner's quest in seeking childhood. Although the play only briefly, indirectly, addresses Owner's intention, the play within the play is told entirely by Child and Owner's collaborative effort. They use different objects in the shop as different characters to help finish the story. Owner mentions several times how Child is like him when he was little. The question of where Child came from is never

addressed in the show. Child's character can be interpreted as Owner's childhood personified. Telling a story from his childhood seems to help Owner rediscover his childhood. The other layer of the theme lies within Le-Le's story about a mother's love. Her quest is not only to find a mother's love, but she also discovers a desire to give love to her children when she becomes a mother. She discovers that, for her and her little turtles, a mother's love is the source of happiness.

The production of *Music Box at the Antique Shop – Le-Le's Music Box* (*Music Box*) by Shiny Shoes Children's Theater was about seventy minutes long and taped on August 2, 2009. It has two main characters, each played by an adult actor and actress. The child character, although without a specific gender in the script, was portrayed as a boy by the actress. (Based on my Taiwanese TYA experience, I find it common for petite actresses to play boy roles.) Several extras were added, including adult actors/actresses and an eight or nine-year-old boy. These extras performed during an added short scene at the beginning of the play and at the end when Le-Le travels back to the ocean with Master's feather. Most of these extras did not have lines. The rest of the characters were turtle puppets (big and small), owl puppets, and object puppets (maps, washbowl, fan, lamp, hot water bottle, etc.). The two main actors are therefore also the narrators and puppeteers of Le-Le's story.

There is only one set for this production. It is a bamboo boat which also serves as the antique shop. In the beginning, the boat was docked at a small wooden platform. When traveling, the wooden platform was removed and the

boat faced the audience in different directions. Besides the beginning, the boat served as the main performance space. The shop looked self-built and had bamboo walls and a metal roof. Many different household objects and music boxes occupied the shop. There was a small row of potted plants on the roof. The boat was also equipped with a string of lights from the front, over the roof, and to the back of the boat. One side of the boat was later used as a projector screen for images and shadows. The rest of the scenery relied on the lighting design and music to set time and mood.

Ghost Lady by Hsing-Chih Yang

Ghost Lady is an adaptation of a short Taiwanese folktale, “Yan Hsin Fruit (燕心果),” written by Ching-Wen Cheng (鄭清文) in 1985 (Huang 118). The story starts in Ping-Ting (平頂), a small village. Because of recent turbulence, such as ghosts and missing livestock, the villagers are determined to find a solution. A town elder, Granduncle (舅公), suspects that the incidents are happening because of the Ghost Lady. A long time ago, a ghost king kidnapped a human lady from the village. The Ghost Lady was their daughter; she lives a half-human, half-ghost existence, and rarely interacts with the villagers. During the day, she is a kind-hearted person called “White Lady,” but during the night, she turns into a scary and evil “Black Lady.” Granduncle believes that all of the disturbances are caused by the imbalance between these two personalities. While villagers decide to kill Black Lady to solve the problem, A-Cheng (阿城), a timid but kind-hearted boy, decides to help the situation by curing White Lady’s sickness. Moved by A-Cheng’s sincerity, White Lady discloses that she has a

terminal illness and teaches A-Cheng how to get rid of Black Lady. Following White Lady's instructions, A-Cheng successfully eliminates Ghost Lady and saves the village.

The main themes of the play are bravery and kindness. Throughout the play, A-Cheng grows, from a timid and almost wimpy child into a brave and courageous child. His transformation is driven by his kindness and sympathy toward White Lady. Motivated by his desire to help White Lady and his village, A-Cheng somehow (this portion is not very clear in the play) gains courage and stops being scared of his friends' small pranks (like when they threw a toad at him). A-Cheng becomes the bravest person in the village by entering the mysterious forest to find White Lady, and by killing Black Lady at the end.

The recording date of this production is not clear. Compared to other production photos in the festival report, this production by the Seden Taiwanese Puppet Troupe seemed to be the same production as in TCAF, 2004. It was forty-five to fifty minutes long. Although this was a Taiwanese glove puppet theatre piece using traditional puppets, it did use an innovative stage. Traditionally, Taiwanese glove puppet theatre uses hand-sized puppets, and is performed in a simple red and gold stackable wooden raised stage, about seven or eight feet tall. A primary performer with one or two assistants performs behind the stage, barely visible to the audience. The performance is typically accompanied by a small band with Chinese instruments.

In this production, all of the puppets, manipulations, and music are traditional, but the stage was innovative. This was the first time I have ever seen

such a unique stage for a Taiwanese glove puppet performance. The stage was a modified claw machine, like those found in the entrances of grocery stores or at carnivals. The glass panes on the sides were removed, and two horizontal strips of small light bulbs were added to the front of the frame. The claw machine was located in the center, with two fold-out sections built on either side. Instead of the traditional red and gold, the entire stage was a splash of many colors. The main part of the machine had a bright yellow frame and two colorful monsters on the bottom. (It was not clear whether these monsters were originally from the machine, as they did not fit in well with the rest of the production.) The backdrop featured contemporary geometric shapes in shades of pink, gray, white, and black. The side sections were like a modern watercolor or oil painting (not very clear from the tape), and included an interesting mix of characters, mountains, clouds, and ghosts.

Ten Lessons of Angels by Wei-Yu Chen

Ten Lessons of Angels is another adaptation. The original story was called *And God Cried, Too* by Marc Gellman. In the play, the main boy character, Mikey (米奇), has recently died and is recruited into angel school to become a guardian angel. However, Mikey is doubtful about his ability to be a good guardian angel, because he can neither understand God nor can he understand many things happening in the world. He decides to quit, but Gabe (加比), the head angel, persuades Mikey to give it a second chance. Gabe promises that if Mikey decides to quit afterward, Gabe will support Mikey. Mikey agrees to the plan. Throughout the rest of the play, Gabe gives Mikey a series of lessons.

In the first lesson, Gabe takes Mikey skiing. By skiing, Mikey learns that it is impossible to go through life without getting hurt. Therefore, it is important to be both brave and careful, yet not afraid. This attitude is also how you find the beautiful things in life. In the second lesson, Mikey and Gabe encounter a tragedy on Earth. Gabe reminds Mikey that when bad things happen, God is there to bring people to heaven. The third lesson is about “pretend dancing.” While Mikey is feeling sad about the previous tragedy, Gabe forces Mikey to dance and pretend to have fun. Mikey learns that pretend dancing actually makes him feel better. In lesson four, Mikey learns that when people are sad, (because they lost their family, for example), they need a group of friends to help them through the pain, because “sticks in a bundle are unbreakable” (Gellman 35). The fifth lesson Mikey learns is about a girl, Jennifer, who has lost her dog, Spot. Jennifer was mad at God for letting her dog die. Through a dream message, Mikey helps Jennifer realize that things happen for a reason. If dogs lived forever, the world would be full of old dogs, with no room for new dogs. Mikey learns in his sixth lesson that although some acts of kindness seem small, they do matter and can make a difference to the person or creature on whom they have been performed. For example, a leftover cake from a bakery can mean a lot to a girl who never had a birthday before. The next lesson happens when one of the people Gabe watches over dies. Mikey realizes that just being there and saying nothing can be comforting to someone. Mikey’s final lesson consists of going through a test by conquering his biggest fear, thunder. He learns that as long as he trusts God, he will not be afraid anymore.

At the end, Mikey successfully becomes a guardian angel. When Gabe asks him who he wants to protect first, Mikey says, his parents. He flies back to promise his parents that he will protect them and his little brother, and he finally gets to say goodbye to them. The play ends with a choir singing hymns.

Ten Lessons of Angels is definitely a religious play. Even so, I believe the main theme of the play is about death and how to handle it. Death is a strong theme throughout the play, from Mikey's own death to other tragedies like Spot's death, people whose family members die, and the passing of the person to whom Gabe is a guardian angel. Mikey learns about many of these difficult situations in life and also learns how to handle them. The second theme is to believe in and trust God. It might be surprising to some practitioners in the US TYA that a religious play can be selected as the top winning play in a government sponsored competition at a public, ticket-selling performance. However, Taiwanese people are very open to and have respect for different religious traditions, because Taiwan has been influenced by Buddhism and Taoism as well as Christianity and Islam. As long as the play delivers a strong and positive message to children, it doesn't seem to matter which religions are emphasized in a play; we might easily see Buddhist and Taoist plays performed for the same reason. In the preface of the play anthology, this play was not even specifically presented as a religious play, but was simply meant to be about Mikey and his understanding of life.

The production of *Ten Lessons of Angels* was written and directed by Wei-Yu Chen and produced by Shiny Shoes Children's Theater. It was close to ninety minutes long, with a fifteen minute intermission, and was taped on July 16th,

2010. The most noticeable difference between the script and the production was the change in character composition. In the script, there are several apprentice guardian angels other than Mikey, presumably all child characters. However, Mikey was the only child character in the production, portrayed by a puppet and manipulated by an actress. Four adult characters portraying teachers at the angel school were added, two females and two males. A group of adult and child extras were used. The children only showed up at the beginning and end of the performance to sing. The adult extras played many non-speaking roles throughout the play.

The stage has two major acting areas, downstage and upstage. The upstage area has three sections of a giant platform, which covers the entire length of the stage. The three sections were separated in height, but all were taller than seven feet. The platforms were painted with multicolored squares, and two geometric set pieces, painted like the platforms, hung above them. The separation between the upstage and downstage areas seemed to symbolize the separation of earth and heaven. The platforms were moved around the stage and later transformed into different settings, such as snowy hills, campgrounds, behind a store, a child's bedroom, etc. In some scenes, additional small set pieces or props were used. These pieces were also used as shadow screen and projector screen during different scenes. The production used a lot of projected images, such as an electrocardiogram, fire, the backdrop of a city, and a dark sky with lightning.

Mikey, the boy puppet, was dressed like a typical Taiwanese elementary school student, in a bright orange hat, light yellow short-sleeve shirt, blue shorts

and a red backpack. His feet were attached to the puppeteer's feet. The puppeteer dressed completely in black and spoke for Mikey from behind. There were also rods attached to the back of Mikey's head and hands for manipulation. The other main characters had colorful and quirky costumes, although their costumes' designs did not seem to fit in any specific era. Even though they were angels, the other characters did not have wings, with the exception of two costumes, which each had feathery shoulder pads. One of the characters wore a puffy red skirt with puffy blue sleeves, and a pair of yellow/purple striped tights with red shoes. She had brown curly hair braided into two loose queues. One of the other actors wore a light blue suit with dark blue pockets and a brown vest (on the outside). The suit had short sleeves, so we could see his yellow long-sleeved shirt. He also wore a bow tie and glasses. His pants were black in the front and back with white on the sides. Overall, the costume designs for the angels were retro and quirky. Other minor characters wore regular street clothes.

The Light Princess by Shong Chao & Ching-Ping Weng

Loosely based on a Western fairytale of the same name by George McDonald (1824-1905) (Lung, *Taipei 7*), *The Light Princess* is a play with songs. It opens with two teachers, named Most Awesome (最厲害) and Super Great (超級ㄅㄛ), who serve as narrators, introducing the sweet kingdom into which Light Princess is born. On Light Princess' first birthday, her joyful party turns one hundred and eighty degrees when a vengeful witch, Babayoujia (芭芭尤加), shows up. Unhappy with being forgotten, Babayoujia casts a curse on Light Princess to make her weightless like a balloon. From then on, it becomes a

challenging, but fun, job to keep Light Princess “grounded.” Unfortunately, the King and Queen’s problems do not stop there. Babayoujia’s curse also makes the Light Princess emotionless, instead of happy and playful. Even Most Awesome and Super Great cannot help the King solve the problem.

One day, Light Princess accidentally floats to the sky while sleeping. Luckily, flower spirits use the weight of petals to bring her down into a lake. To everyone’s pleasant surprise, Light Princess can swim happily in the lake without worrying about floating away. The lake becomes Light Princess’ primary playground and is also where she meets Prince. When they first met, Prince thought Light Princess was drowning and tried to save her. Despite the fact that Light Princess is oblivious to Prince's feelings, Prince falls in love and decides to take a shoeshine job at the palace in order to get closer to Light Princess. When Babayoujia learns that Light Princess is happily swimming in the lake all day without suffering, she conjures up a big snake to poke holes and drink all the water in the lake, which is also the kingdom’s only water source. Learning about the crisis, Prince volunteers to sacrifice himself to block the hole, and he requests only that Light Princess be by his side the entire time. Eventually moved by Prince’s action, Light Princess begins to feel emotion and starts crying. Her tears help fill the lake and save the kingdom. Light Princess can finally love and feel loved, and she gets married to Prince and has children. Babayoujia ends up suffering because she must now deal with her overdrinking snake.

The theme of the play is love. Even though Light Princess is different, she is always cared for and loved by her parents. Prince’s love for Light Princess

helps her to discover love and have feelings again. Light Princess' love for Prince ends up saving the kingdom. We also learn later in the play that King and Babayoujia met when they were young. Babayoujia got lost and was saved by King. Babayoujia's curse is her revenge, since King has completely forgotten about her and their promises to one another, which also demonstrates a love-hate relationship.

Light Princess' production by If Kids Children's Theater was about ninety-five minutes with a fifteen minute intermission. The duration of the performance was actually about seventeen minutes longer to include a pre-show, as well as after-intermission and post-show talks. It is common in Taiwanese children's theatre to have a host chat briefly with young audiences, either over the microphone or in person, about theatre etiquette. However, the unique aspect of If Kids' production lies in their host's character, called Fruit Grandma. Fruit Grandma is a popular TV character from an early childhood program called Fruit Ice Cream (1999~). She is portrayed by a famous actor, Shong Chao, who is also the founder and artistic director of If Kids. Fruit Grandma is often used as a mascot for the company. *Light Princess* is one of the company's earlier productions; therefore, the character of Fruit Grandma was more involved in the performances. The performances that I saw in recent years had significantly fewer Fruit Grandma appearances.

Based on the main actress, Hsin-Ling Chung (鍾欣凌), who played Light Princess, this video recording is probably from one of the performances in 2003. The performance began with Fruit Grandma singing Fruit Ice Cream's theme

song and having a conversation with the audience. Fruit Grandma asked about the audience's previous theatre experience and theatre etiquette. She then introduced the two narrators, Most Awesome and Super Great, to the stage. They begin to have a discussion about which story the two narrators should tell today. Finally, after Fruit Grandma's story chat, the play started. These interactions took about eleven minutes. After intermission and at the end of the play, Fruit Grandma also reintroduced and wrapped up the performance.

The entire set was built like a set of building blocks. These blocks were moved around to represent different parts of the castle. These blocks appeared to be fairly light. Actors and actresses moved the blocks quickly and easily when transitioning between different places. The lake looked like a giant circular shower curtain with strips of fabric covering the top. When Light Princess was swimming in the lake, the lake traveled on the stage with the princess. Overall, the entire set was simple, portable, and creative.

All the characters in this production were played by adults. When Light Princess was a young child, different balloons were used by Light Princess' character to float around the stage. When Light Princess grew up, Chung stepped in to become the character. In the script, the "grown-up" princess should be around sixteen years old. However, Light Princess seemed to be portrayed as significantly younger, perhaps ten or eleven years old. This was because of the conversation between Prince and Light Princess during the drowning scene at the end. Many of the added lines were geared toward younger children. For example, they started some sentences with "My mother says . . . (我媽媽說)."

This phrase is more common for younger children, and is used in statements such as, “my mother says that people should say thank you,” or “my mother says should wipe their mouths after drinking water.” Another notable point is that Babayoujia was double-cast as the Queen. When Babayoujia first showed up, there was a lot of back and forth between these two characters, which created an interesting dynamic on stage.

From Plays to Productions

Productions that differ from their original scripts are fairly common in the world of theatre, especially when producing new works such as these TCAF plays. After interpretation and collaboration among designers and directors, changes are natural and often welcome. The colorful and playful designs in sets, music, props, and costumes enhance the entertaining aspects of the performance. As for acting, humorous movements, dance sequences, and exaggerated acting styles are incorporated. *Music Box* and *Ten Lessons of Angels* also had child actors/actresses in the production; however, they were only in the beginning and/or end of the performance as extras.

When working with new plays, some changes are beyond the production teams’ creative visions. Oftentimes, a script will be altered to better bridge plot gaps, tell a clearer story, and/or define a character/action. In addition to some necessary changes, such as insertion of aphorisms, rhymes, phrases (some of them are simple English phrases like “good morning”), or terms that are familiar to young audiences were also common in these productions.

Music Box is by far the closest to its original script among all of the productions. The minor alterations enhanced its sense of completeness. The production of *The Lessons of Angels* also stayed close to the original script; however, it has the biggest change in characters. Four adult teacher characters replaced four young characters. Although the lines remain close to the original script, Gabe's lines were sometimes shared by all five adult characters. *The Light Princess* had the most modifications between script and stage. This was not necessarily because it had the most added scenes. Most of the lines during the play were different, if only slightly. Admittedly, small differences made up the majority of changes and the production still shared much of the same meaning as the original script. This might be because If Kids Children's Theater has a reputation for employing ensemble and improvisation in their rehearsal process, which could likely create an overwhelming amount of changes.

The Lessons of Angels, *The Light Princess*, and *Ghost Lady* all have added scenes. While most of them remain true to the essences of the story, some did change the construction of children's images in the play. I will discuss some of these changes in following sections.

Plays and Production Video Recordings Analysis

After analyzing the data and focus coding my initial coding, several prevalent images and concepts of the child and childhood emerge from my interpretation of the data:

- Childhood is Learning and Growing.
- Childhood is Having Fun. Children are Playful.

- Childhood is About Love and Children Need Love
- Children are Vulnerable and Childhood Means Protection
- Childhood is Adults' Reminiscences
- Children's Agency
- Children have Power vs. Children are Powerless
- Children are Capable vs. Children are Incapable
- Gender

Childhood is Learning and Growing

Besides telling a story, children's dramatic literature and children's theatre performances are often written or produced to deliver a lesson or message to young audiences. Therefore, it is not surprising that "children are learners" and "childhood is/means learning and growing" are the most frequent codes in my data. Some of these learning experiences are more obvious than others. For example, the child characters are often positioned in a learning environment, such as a school, to learn specific lessons. Some are less apparent, as teaching/learning occurs through dialogue or interactions among adult characters. These learning and teaching moments include a wide range of subjects, such as life, moral values, and behavioral lessons. In all of my data, playwrights and production teams consider child characters or audiences to be capable learners who are able to gain understanding and grow from these learning experiences.

The most apparent example of children as learners in these plays and productions is from *Ten Lessons of Angels*. Even in the play's title, it is clear that the play concerns ten different lessons to be learned by the angels, yet these

lessons are also for the audience. The child character, Mikey, attends the angel school with hopes to become a guardian angel. These classes do not happen in traditional classrooms; instead, Mikey and his teacher, Gabe, travel around the world to learn the lessons. Locales include a snowy mountain, a camping site, a beach, a soup kitchen, and a girl's bedroom. However, the set up of the school is still a typical Taiwanese school, featuring a roll call, testing, and a graduation ceremony. Even though the script does not describe Mikey's costume specifically, Mikey the boy puppet wore typical Taiwanese elementary school student attire. At the end of each lesson, Mikey concludes by saying what he learned. For example, in the lesson about "pretend dancing," Mikey is upset by the tragedies happening in the world. Gabe brings Mikey to a "dancing cloud" and asks Mikey to pretend dance. As Mikey dances, he changes from a sad, reluctant dancer into a happy dancer. In the end, Mikey says to Gabe:

I thought there was only one kind of dancing. Teaching me about pretend dancing was one of the best things you've taught me. The only way to go from not dancing at all to real dancing is to pretend dance for a little while. I wanted to hide out in my cloud, but I needed to get going again.⁷ (Gellman 26)

In another lesson, Mikey helps Jennifer (珍妮弗) understand death as a natural part of life. Jennifer is mad at God because her beloved dog, Spot, has

⁷ 我本來以為跳舞只有一種方式。假裝跳舞是你教我的事情中最棒的事，從不想跳舞到真的跳舞，只有假裝跳一跳才能辦到。我原本很想躲在雲裡，不過我想，我真的需要跳跳舞。(Chen 230)

passed away. Mikey uses a dream message to help Jennifer see death as an important part of life. Jennifer concludes her learning by saying:

It's okay that Spot died. I am still sad and I miss him very much, but I am not angry at God anymore. I understand now that if no old dogs die, there would be no room for new dogs to be born. Death is sad, but death is a part of life. I am okay now.⁸ (Gellman 49)

These two examples also show how children can learn from different methods and even become teachers. In the first example, Mikey is forced into the “pretend dancing” lesson. However, this forced situation ends up helping Mikey to get out of his bad mood and learn instead. Mikey, the child, is depending on Gabe, the adult, to learn in this scenario. In the second example, Jennifer and Mikey are both learners. Mikey learns about “dream messages” from Gabe, and Jennifer learns about death. At the same time, Mikey’s status is elevated to Jennifer’s guardian angel and her “teacher.” This represents children’s ability to learn from and also to teach other children.

According to the play, children are capable of learning to handle difficult issues such as death, sadness, and tragedy. At the same time, they also require explicit explanations of what is being learned. *The Light Princess* mentions schooling as part of the play and has a similar conclusion at the end of the play. When young King and Babayoujia first meet, Babayoujia is crying because she

⁸ 爸爸媽媽，小點點死了，不過沒關係！我雖然還是很難過、很想牠，但是我再也不會生上帝的氣了。我現在知道，如果老狗不死，新出生的小狗就沒有生存空間。死亡讓人很傷心，但那是生命的一部份。我沒事了。(Chen 235)

was late for school. At the end of the play, Most Awesome (最厲害) and Super Great (超級ㄉ一ㄤ) address the audience with a message about the power of love. They emphasize how love solves the problems for Light Princess, Prince, and the kingdom, but they also caution the audience that too much love might drown you like a lake. In the production tape of *The Light Princess*, Fruit Grandma also came on stage to tell the young audience that Light Princess is able to feel love at the end, and asked them if they can feel their parents' love for them, just like in the story.

Besides these obvious teaching moments, other learning moments happen in less direct ways, and are generally not for the characters in the play. The playwrights and/or productions delivered these messages by having characters do something good or bad on stage. They hope that the young audiences will learn from viewing these positive or negative experiences. Some of these moments happen briefly and are not the focus of the play. For example, in *Ghost Lady*, there is a short exchange between A-Cheng (阿城) and his mother. A-Cheng's mother asks him to wake up and wash his face. A-Cheng responds to his mother's request right away without hesitation. This hints to the child audience that they should be like A-Cheng, listening to their parents and acting without hesitation, reinforcing the idea of filial obedience.

In *The Light Princess*, Most Awesome (Awesome) and Super Great (Great) argue all the time. I believe this is mostly written for comedic effect. However, their arguments also include some educational messages. Awesome and Great deliver messages through their bickering, and these messages teach

children what not to do. One such example occurs when Awesome and Great discuss why Babayouja cursed Light Princess. Great bluffs about many reasons he thought Babayouja cursed Light Princess. When Awesome interrupts Great and calls him out, Great admits that he actually has no idea. Awesome scolds Great and says, “If you don’t know, say you don’t know. How could you bluff as a teacher!”⁹ Even though Awesome scolds Great based on his position as a teacher, this example also teaches children that bluffing is bad regardless of station.

Besides utilizing different ways of delivering educational messages, these plays cover a wide range of teaching/learning moments. Life lessons are by far the most ubiquitous, and include lessons about death, nature, good vs. evil, injustice, sacrifice, tragedies, and problem solving. Surprisingly, although the target audiences are three to twelve-year-olds, according to the TCAF Playing Writing Competition rules, the plays often contain difficult life lessons. For example, part of *The Light Princess* deals with sacrifice. Prince decides to sacrifice his life to save Light Princess and the kingdom. He requests that Light Princess remain by his side until he is completely underwater. Of course, the play ends on a positive note, when Light Princess is so moved by Prince’s love that her tears eventually solve the crisis and save Prince. Conversely, the witch also curses Light Princess and love becomes hatred toward the King. *Ghost Lady* has a similar event. White Lady must be sacrificed in order to kill Black Lady and save the village, because they are essentially two opposite personalities trapped in

⁹ My translation. The original quote is: 不知道就說不知道，身為老師怎麼能亂說話！ (Chao, *Light* 16)

the same body. White Lady is terminally ill, and her death in the near future is unavoidable, so A-Cheng carries out White Lady's plan to kill both her and Black Lady at the end.

Another difficult life lesson concerns Mikey's death and his departure from his parents at a young age in *Ten Lessons of Angels*. Mikey dies at a young age. (Based on the puppet's height, he might only be eight or nine years old.) In the production, we actually see him dying on his hospital bed. This was done by projecting Mikey's electrocardiogram onto a giant screen. (I once saw the production in person, and this was a dramatic way to visually represent death.) An emotionally charged scene occurs at the end when Mikey flies to his parents and says goodbye.

In *Music Box*, most of Le-Le's Journey as a green turtle is about Le-Le mourning her missing mother's love and then feeling guilty about not being able to take care of her own children. Although Le-Le's character is generous and optimistic, she remains sad for her loss until the very end of the play. Master, the music box maker owl, also passes away before Le-Le can visit him for a final time. He leaves one of his feathers behind, to hold open his last music box (which plays a song about love) for Le-Le's children to enjoy.

These dark or sentimental elements indicate how these playwrights believe in difficult life lessons and in children's ability to deal with such challenging issues. At the same time, almost all the children were accompanied by adults who attended the performance with them. Trusting in the power of a parent's presence

might also have influenced the inclusion of these topics; however, the fact remains that these plays still contain a significant amount of serious events.

Lessons about values such as kindness, love, bravery, belief, filial piety, sympathy, and empathy are also emphasized or punctuated in these plays. Bravery is emphasized in *Ghost Lady*, love in both *Music Box* and *The Light Princess*, belief in *Ten Lessons of Angels*, and sympathy and/or empathy in all these plays. To my surprise, the concept of filial piety is not as explicit in these plays as I thought it might be. The only line mentioning filial piety is in *Ten Lessons of Angels*. During one of the lessons, Mikey and Gabe visit a girl's birthday at a soup kitchen. An old gentleman, after giving the girl a gift, reminds her to do her filial duty to her mother (Chen, "Ten" 238). All four of these plays have minimal parent/child interactions. Because of this, therefore, the aspects of filial piety are indirectly modeled through children's respectful attitude toward their teachers or other adults, rather than taught directly. This contrasts the overall emphasis of filial piety in Taiwanese society. I suspect that the idea of filial piety is so common that including too much in a play might seem cliché.

All of these prevalent and subtle messages make "learning" one of the most noticeable constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood. Children are considered capable learners, both as child characters and as observers in the audience. However, this finding is not too surprising because, as mentioned before, the purposes of plays and performances for young people are often educational.

Childhood is Having Fun and Children are Playful

The construction of children as playful and of childhood as a time of having fun is evident in my data. It is understandable that some of the comedic moments in the plays are designed to lighten up the heavier issues. However, the silly jokes, witty lines, and elaborate movements are undeniably major elements in these children's plays and performances. Some of these entertaining instances are based on clown characters, wordplay, acting style, and exaggerated movements. Others are based on observation of others making mistakes, bickering, making fun of others, or making negative comments. When transitioning from the script to the stage, all of the performances had additional movements and lines to enhance the level of humor and stimulate laughter. Besides the scripts and acting, the lighting, sets, and costume designs also incorporate this joyful concept by using vibrant colors and playful constructions. The following are some examples of these playful moments.

A-Lai Aunt (阿來嬭) is one of the clown characters in *Ghost Lady*. She is deathly afraid of the word “*kûi* (ghost) (鬼).” Whenever anyone says the word “*kûi*,” such as when mentioning “Ghost” Lady, she faints dramatically. This happened many times throughout the play and often brought laughter from the audience. In addition to her fear of ghosts, A-Lai Aunt's characteristics also highlight or ease intense moments during the village chaos. One such humorous scene involving wordplay and misunderstanding happened between A-Lai Aunt and Granduncle. When A-Lai Aunt first delivers the bad news to Granduncle, she tries to tell Granduncle that her cow was missing. In Taiwanese, “*giû-bo-khi* (cow

missing) (牛無去),” phonetically sounds like “goo-mo-key.” Granduncle kept thinking that A-Lai Aunt was saying “good morning” in English. After A-Lai Aunt’s multiple futile efforts to convey her point in Taiwanese, she tries to say “cow” in English but still adds “*bo-khi* (missing)” in Taiwanese to Granduncle. Unfortunately, “cow” in Taiwanese sounds like a curse word. Granduncle now becomes even more confused with “what” is missing, for he is expecting only Taiwanese now. Finally, A-Lai Aunt mimes out the incident to end this humorous exchange.

In addition to some fun and age-appropriate jokes, *Music Box*’s production was entertaining to watch. This was partially because of the actors’ and actresses’ use of various voices to portray different puppet characters. Many times, the two performers had to switch quickly between different object-characters and voices, like a fan/peacock, mop/horse, washbowl/pig, paper airplane/seagull, lamp/bear, etc. Young audiences became especially excited when the shop owner played three little green turtles at the same time. One of the voices was hoarse and nothing like what one would expect the voice of a little turtle to be. In the video recording, I could hear the audience roar with laughter. During more serious scenes, the production added some lines specifically to make it more entertaining for the young audience. For example, during Le-Le’s interpretation of Master’s music boxes, one of the boxes was about love. In the script, Le-Le simply answers that the music box expresses “love,” after listening to its music. In the production, the music box was accompanied by some romantic photos projected onto one side of the boat. With each photo, Le-Le made different comments such

as “They’re in love! (談戀愛),” “Holding hands. Eww... (牽牽手，咻咻臉),” “Kissy-Kissy (親親),” and “How lovely! (好幸福唷!).” Other than the very last line, all of the other descriptions were delivered in a teasing way, which in this case was thoroughly enjoyed by the young audience.

The humor in *Light Princess* came from a different angle. Super Great (Great) and Most Awesome (Awesome) were the two narrators and storytellers of the play, and they also functioned as a comedic duo. Their characters almost seemed to be modeled after a traditional Chinese comedy duo called *Xiang-Sheng* (相聲). In *Xiang-Sheng*, a duo often speaks in rhyme with certain rhythms and beats. They take turns being ignorant about certain topics. The exchanges between the knowledgeable and ignorant become the source of jokes. Even though Great and Awesome did not use rhymes or speak in beats, they bickered in a humorous way like *Xiang-Sheng*. For example, during the opening scene, Awesome was using a prop doll to introduce Light Princess. He kept using the wrong things to decorate the doll, resulting in an entertaining effect. For example, he mistakenly put on a green cheek instead of red, black straight hair instead of gold curly hair, and flashlight eyes instead of starry eyes. Later on, when trying to figure out the best way to keep Light Princess grounded, Great offers many crazy ideas, like feeding Light Princess until she is as big as an elephant, gluing her to the ground, etc. Of course, his ideas were mocked and challenged by Awesome.

A couple of jokes are, unfortunately, based on stereotypes. For example, when Babayoujia first showed up, King tried to address her by calling her “witch

grandma (女巫婆婆).” After being given a stern look by Babayoujia, he quickly changed to “old witch sister (女巫姊姊)” and then to “young witch sister (女巫妹妹).” This joke plays with the idea that Babayoujia, as a female, would prefer to be called a name that makes her sound younger than she looks. Later, when King tries to remember the first time he met Babayoujia, he says:

Yeah, it was very funny. She [young Babayoujia] had a broken broom, carrying a book bag and wearing an all black uniform. And then, her mom showed up. She was also carrying a broom, black cloth and book bag. It was so hilarious.¹⁰

Here, King laughs at young Babayoujia only because of her different appearance and even makes fun of her mother as well. In this case, children are definitely viewed as people who laugh at the reinforcement of stereotypes. Interestingly, both of these portions were changed during the production. Babayoujia was never addressed as a “grandma” or “older sister” in the production. Even though King still describes Babayoujia and her mother as wearing all black attire, he did not emphasize that their appearance was funny. The actor emphasized the situation as funny instead.

Instead of teasing Babayoujia’s appearance and her age, the production added other playful actions to make the production more entertaining. For instance, when Babayoujia first showed up in the kingdom, King, Queen, Great, Awesome, and courtiers were scared and running around the palace. The entire

¹⁰ My translation. The original script is: 國王：... 對對對，很好笑，她拿了一枝斷掉的掃把，背著書包，穿著黑黑的制服，後來她媽媽出現把她帶去了，她的媽媽也是拿技掃把、穿黑衣、拿包包，好好笑喔！（Chao 35）

sequence was done like a game of hide and seek with toy building blocks. The characters all carried different “blocks” from the set of the castle and moved them around to hide from Babayoujia. The actions added intensity to the entire scene and were visually appealing. I could vaguely hear young people calling out directions from the audience to help characters on stage.

Most of the humorous aspects of *Ten Lessons of Angels* rely on actors/actresses’ movements. Gabe entered the stage with robotic gestures and noises. Energetic dance sequences were added to the songs in the production, especially for Mikey’s pretend dancing scene. The four additional teacher characters, Teacher John Brother and Sister (約翰兄妹老師), Teacher Good Job (Good Job 老師), and Teacher Notebook (連絡簿老師), had many entertaining physical movements. John Brother and Sister danced stylishly during Mikey’s lesson on the beach. Teacher Good Job was in love with his fancy shoes, so Mikey purposefully knocked one of Good Job’s fancy shoes to the floor when Good Job was polishing the shoes. Of course, this made Good Job gasp dramatically as he dived to save his shoe, all to the laughter of the audience.

The above entertaining elements were not only limited to these specific plays. I separated these elements because they were used most often in that specific play. Two things I noted across the board were that all of the performances included extra lines or movements to make the play more fun to watch. An exaggerated acting style, including using big gestures and fake laughs, was also commonly used. Besides the actress who played Light Princess, all other characters were acted exaggeratedly for either part of or for the entire play.

Personally, I think this style often makes the play less sincere and runs the risk of seeming condescending to children. Therefore, this is not the style that I enjoy watching for a children's play. However, from the constant laughter of the young audiences in the production recordings, I cannot deny that there was a certain appeal of this acting style for young people.

Colorful and playful sets also enhanced the "fun" aspects of these plays. *Ghost Lady's* claw machine brought some unexpected action to the story. In one part of the production, a character was caught by the claw machine and sent down the hole where players normally pick up their prizes. A child from the audience was asked to pick up the character and return him to the puppeteers, which created a wonderful surprise in the play. *The Light Princess's* set basically looked like colorful building blocks. During the play, actors/actresses could easily move these blocks around like a toy. The blocks made the entire play feel like a giant playground. *Music Box's* set was designed to be a space for storytelling. Every ordinary household object/prop transformed into a different character. Child and Shop Owner were not only telling a story together, they were also playing together on the movable house boat for the entire performance. Lighting design for this show extended to both sides of the wall in the auditorium, and generated genuine vocal reactions among the audience. *Ten Lessons for Angels's* set was elaborately designed to cover all of the teaching locations. The most interesting element was the mix between human vs. puppet, and realistic vs. stylized props. In the camping scene, Gabe brought out a cartoonish cardboard-radio, which turned into a fancy barbecue rack in two quick folds.

Overall, these creative aesthetic structures reinforce a representation of the child and childhood as fun and playful. The playwrights and production teams put significant effort into integrating these humorous scenes, jokes and movements with the performances. From the reactions of the audience, these playful elements were successful in bringing laughter to the theatre. On a broader level, these elements support TCAF's mission of providing a fun and enjoyable summer for children.

Childhood is about Love and Children Need Love

Love is another important aspect within these plays. In these plays, love between children and their parents is clear, even if the stories did not deal with it directly, or even mention the word “*ai* (love) (愛)” at all. In Taiwanese culture, expressions of love are implicit, and shown mostly through actions rather than words. In my family, I have never heard my parents say “I love you” to me. I would probably feel pretty awkward if they actually said it. However, I have no doubt that they do love me and feel perfectly content without ever hearing them say it. This is typical in Taiwanese society. That being said, my parents belong to Taiwan's own baby boomer generation, born after WWII, and they are more old-fashioned. It stands to reason that most older generations harbor this feeling about expressing this emotion. However, because of Western influence, I have heard younger parents express their love directly to their children. Because of this cultural tradition, my codes between parents and children are mostly derived from other actions in the play, rather than purely what was explicitly expressed verbally. Other types of love, such as love between lovers or the love of God, are

also included. Without a doubt, love, whether implied or spoken aloud, is part of these child characters' lives.

For the green turtle Le-Le, her entire journey is a quest for this feeling of a mother's love. Even though she does not know exactly what a mother's love is, she feels sad without it, and is determined to find out. Le-Le eventually discovers, through the help of Master Owl's music box, that a mother's love is a feeling of happiness. In *The Light Princess*, parents' love was shown in their care of their children. King worried about Light Princess and the curse that kept her afloat and unable to feel emotion. Without a perfect solution, King realizes that he prefers Light Princess to be cursed and happy, rather than cured and unhappy, and yet he never gives up searching. King's deep care shows his love for Light Princess. The story of *The Light Princess* also ends with love between Prince and Light Princess. Right before Prince takes his last breath and drowns, Light Princess feels a strange feeling and begins to cry. She refuses to hurt Prince for her own happiness. She never expresses love directly to Prince in either the script or the production. Instead, Awesome and Great conclude the play saying that it is love that was felt, and love that solved the problem.

Since *Ten Lessons of Angels* is a close adaptation of an English book, it differs from the other plays. For instance, when Jennifer receives a new puppy to replace Spot, she thanks her parents and says, "Dad and Mom, I love you so much! (爸媽，我好愛你們)" (Chen, *Then* 235). Mikey also directly expresses love to his parents when he says goodbye to them at the end of the play. Jennifer's line was a direct translation from the original book *And God Cried, Too*

by Marc Gellman. Mikey's death was never part of Gellman's story. Nevertheless, Mikey's character adopted the same language used in the original story. This is an example of Western influences in Taiwan. Mikey's love for God and God's love for Mikey are one of the most important parts of the play. Mikey had a difficult time understanding God's will in putting people through tragedies. In the production, Mikey's character had an additional line stating, "I dislike God the most! (我最討厭上帝了!)." He says this when upset about the helpless situation of seeing many people die. This line enhances Mikey's later transformation by way of contrast. Mikey's quest continued until he had finished all his lessons and found God's love once again.

Besides one quick exchange between A-Cheng and his mother, *Ghost Lady* does not have any other interactions between a parent and a child. However, Granduncle constantly provides A-Cheng with care and advice. This is similar to Gage's relationship with Mikey. It's notable that Granduncle's relationship with A-Cheng was not very clear. Granduncle is not necessarily A-Cheng's blood relative. It is common and respectful to call an elderly person from your grandparents' generation granduncle. Regardless of their actual relation, they have a positive loving and caring relationship.

Although every play displays aspects of love differently, it is evident that children are constructed as people who need love and caring relationships with adults. They learn about familial love, as well as love between adults and love between humans and God. Love unquestionably plays a crucial part in this narrative about child and childhood.

Children are Vulnerable and Childhood Means Protection

In these plays, children are vulnerable and portrayed as fragile human beings. Mikey dies at a young age, Light Princess is cursed as a baby, Le-Le is an easy target for other creatures as a small sea turtle, and A-Cheng was easily scared by his friends' pranks and by small animals. In addition to being physically vulnerable, children are also portrayed as emotionally vulnerable. Le-Le is sad because of her missing relationship with her mother and her insecurity, Mikey is in a constant state of distress about the difficult events happening around him, and A-Cheng is sad about being teased and bullied by his friends. When Le-Le attends Master's music box launching ceremony, other older attendees tease and question her interpretation of the music just because she is a child. Before Master announced that Le-Le had the correct answer, Le-Le felt insecure and embarrassed for potentially saying the wrong thing.

Interestingly, Light Princess' curse makes her physically vulnerable to floating away from her parents and kingdom, but it also makes her less vulnerable emotionally. Since Light Princess cannot feel any feelings besides happiness, she is unable to recognize her parents' love, loneliness, hurt, anger, or sadness. This situation seems to frustrate other people, like King and Prince, more so than Light Princess herself. Due to this situation, the play is more about King's and Prince's journey of saving and courting Light Princess, rather than Light Princess herself.

On the opposite side of this vulnerability is protection. Adults in these children's lives try to offer protection as often as they can. These protections are not limited to parents alone. For Light Princess, her parents, Great, Awesome,

Prince, other staff in the palace, and flower spirits are all trying to protect her from flying away or to help cure her curse. Mikey is protected by his teachers and by God. Adults in A-Cheng's village also care for him whenever they can. Granduncle's present helps A-Cheng escape his bullies. Even though young Le-Le survives on her own, she tries her best to provide comfort to her own children without physically being there.

Although adults cannot provide protection to children all the time, they try to offer protection whenever they can. The image of children as vulnerable and the idea that childhood means protection is clear in my data.

Childhood is Adults' Reminiscences

"Childhood is adults' reminiscences" is a significant theme in two plays: *The Light Princess* and *Music Box*. The main adult characters, Babayoujia and Shop Owner, are both haunted by their childhood, albeit for different reasons. Babayoujia's reminiscence is bittersweet and results in a curse. Shop Owner never makes his reminiscence of his childhood explicit, but it is definitely hinted at by the playwright. Childhood is extremely influential in these two characters' lives.

In *The Light Princess*, the entire fiasco happens due to Babayoujia's one childhood memory with King. It all happened when Babayoujia got lost, broke her broom, and was late for school. She was frightened and started to cry. King came by and offered his bottle of candy to cheer her up. Babayoujia is upset because King has completely forgotten that this exchange ever happened. Even when King tries to make amends and repair the friendship for Light Princess's

sake, Babayoujia refuses to accept King's attempts at reconciliation. The details of this scene in production changed quite differently from the original script. In the script, it was not clear why Babayoujia would hold this memory so dearly against King and curse Light Princess as her revenge. In the production, King made a deal with Babayoujia to meet again and share candy. King also promised Babayoujia that he will never forget her. Therefore, Babayoujia held a deep grudge toward this broken promise from her childhood. When they met again in the palace, Babayoujia's original intention was to find her good friend. She wanted to know who he loves the most in the world. Babayoujia looked anguished knowing that King's beloved person was Light Princess. She decided to cast spell on Light Princess so King would think about Babayoujia every time he sees his daughter. She was willing to sacrifice the entire kingdom to keep Light Princess away from happiness as revenge.

Shop Owner, on the other hand, opens his antique shop in search of something he lost in childhood. What he is actually looking for is implied throughout the entire play. However, I could also interpret that childhood itself is what he seeks⁴. For example, during the first scene we hear this exchange:

Shop Owner: I opened this shop because I am looking for one thing. One thing that I lost in my childhood. I collect all of the old stuff in hopes of finding the thing I lost in my childhood.

Child: Childhood? Are you looking for me?

Owner: You?

Child: Me!

Owner: I can't remember.

Child: I want a story, please.

Owner: I once begged like this from adults before. Ha...but, for what? ...ha...It's been too long. I don't remember...¹¹

At the end of the play, a similar exchange between Child and Owner happens again:

Owner: You should go. It's time to close the store.

Child: I'm always here. Did you find what you lost in childhood?

Owner: I don't know.

Child: You know. Because I'm here.

Owner: Hmm. Kid, you are ...

Child: Special!¹²

This is how the story ends. Owner never directly says what he is looking for nor admits whether or not he found it. Nonetheless, something from his childhood, perhaps his young self or a certain childhood memory, moves him to maintain the shop and continue his search. Child's character helps Owner to find that for which he has been looking. Child is certain that Owner has found what he is looking for, even when Owner himself is unsure about it. Childhood, in both

¹¹ My translation. Original Chinese quote is: 老板：我開店是因為我一直在找一個東西，一個我小時候遺失的東西，我收集所有舊東西，希望找到那個小時候遺失的東西。小孩：小時候？你在找我嗎？ 老板：你？小孩：我！老板：我不記得了。小孩：我要一個故事，拜託你。老板：我也曾這樣拜託過大人呢，呵...為了什麼事呢？.....呵...太久了。記不得了... (Lee, *Good* 3)

¹² My translation. Original Chinese quote is: 老板：你可以走了，我要打烊了。小孩：我一直在這裏的，你找到你小時候遺失的東西了嗎？老板：我不知道。小孩：你知道的，因為我在這裏了。老板：噢，你這小孩還真...小孩：特別！(Lee, *Good* 13)

instances, is definitely a time about which adults reminisce, and something they cannot always let go of.

Children's Agency

In all of the plays, child characters display varying levels of agency. Children's agency, as discussed here, refers to children's abilities to make decisions and carry out actions independently. In *Music Box*, Child is able to tell the story alongside the shop owner, and he also acts out the story by being the puppeteer for Le-Le and many other characters. In Child and Owner's story, Le-Le demonstrates her agency by helping others. For example, after Le-Le finishes Master's test about the expressions of three different music boxes, Master gives those music boxes to Le-Le as a gift. On her way back to the ocean, Le-Le finds a baby bird left behind in its nest because it was too afraid to start flying. Le-Le gives the music box of bravery to the bird and encourages it to fly. Listening to the music, the baby bird gains the courage to fly and does so successfully.

During Mikey's training, it is the adult, Gabe, who drags him to different lessons for the majority of time; however, it is Mikey who is given the responsibility to help Jennifer when Spot passes away. Mikey writes the dream message and sends it to her. After receiving the dream message, Jennifer is able to understand the meaning of death and changes her attitude toward God. During another scene, when Gabe was sad, Mikey and others decide to visit Gabe and cheer him up. In the original script, children, including Mikey and his school friends, are the ones to visit Gabe, the adult, and give him comfort. When Mikey meets his friends, they are en route to Gabe's place and ask Mikey to join them.

In the production, however, all child characters except Mikey were replaced by adults. This eliminated the images that represented children's agency by showing children making group decisions and actively comforting an adult. Mikey becomes the person who suggests visiting Gabe to his four teachers. This might be the director's strategy to move the plot along; however, the idea of children's agency has not been completely stricken from this scene.

Besides these examples of Mikey's agency in *Ten Lessons of Angels*, Mikey's character as a puppet being manipulated by an adult actress shows a contradictory image of children's agency. Here, a child is essentially constructed as a "small" person (Mikey's puppet was about chest height, compared to other adult performers) without any agency, completely manipulated by an adult. From my previous theatre viewing experience, puppets are commonly used in all professional Taiwanese TYA. Occasionally, the main child character will be played by a puppet, especially when he or she is only one of a few child characters in a play. This use of a puppet is a compromise between using children and using adult performers acting as children. However, it presents an intriguing adult/child dynamic regarding children's agency.

Light Princess' character is passive and demonstrates minimum agency. She simply plays most of the time and awaits protection and salvation from others. Even while accompanying Prince at the lake, she was only following and keeping King's promise. Prince, on the other hand, demonstrates his own agency throughout the play. When he thought Light Princess was drowning, he jumped into the lake to save her. He is willing to disguise himself as a shoe-shiner in the

palace to get closer to Light Princess. He is even willing to sacrifice his life for love by blocking the hole in the lake. This construction of Light Princess' lack of agency contrasted with Prince's strong sense of agency reinforces a stereotypical gender construction of the passive female.

A-Cheng, in *Ghost Lady*, demonstrates the strongest sense of child agency among any of the characters. His actions ultimately save the entire village. A-Cheng feels sympathy for White Lady's situation, and believes that he can help by healing White Lady. He is determined to become brave, and so he buys medicine and ventures into the forest to find White Lady. Eventually, White Lady is moved by A-Cheng's kindness and decides to help the village by eliminating Black Lady and herself. Following White Lady's instructions, A-Cheng finds the special net, hides villagers in the temple, and places the net on White Lady, eliminating Black Lady and saving the village. Throughout his journey, adults give him advice and offer some help; for example, Granduncle encourages him to be brave, the owner of medicine shop gives him the medicine, and White Lady tells him the secret to eliminating Black Lady. However, A-Cheng is ultimately the one responsible for instigating these interactions and making everything possible.

The idea of children as individuals who possess their own agency is one of the more powerful messages in these plays. It shows children as able-bodied and capable of executing actions in the world. Children in these plays have diverse ways of using their agency. Interestingly, these characteristics of children, as written by the playwrights, are sometimes contradicted by other aspects in the production or in the scripts.

Children have Power vs. Children are Powerless

In these four plays, children frequently struggle with the idea of power. These power struggles are mostly shown as being between adults and children. Even though power struggles also happen between children, the representations of such struggles are comparatively fewer in quantity, because the adult characters outnumber child characters. There are only a few scenes where we see children interact with one another. Therefore, it is harder to observe power relations between children, but easier to observe these struggles between adults and children. Regardless of the type of power struggle, the power status is often fluid among characters and not stagnant.

There are, however, a few examples of power struggles between children. In *Ghost Lady*, because A-Cheng is afraid of toads in the beginning of the play, his friends have the power to bully him. However, the situation changes completely when A-Cheng forces himself to become a brave person, and A-Cheng's friends no longer have this power over him. Instead, because of A-Cheng's newfound courage, he is able to take power, overcome his friends' tricks, and even save their lives. Another example of power struggles between young people is found in the relationship of Light Princess and Prince. Their power struggle is more straightforward and imbalanced. Since Prince loves Light Princess, but Light Princess cannot experience feelings toward other people, Light Princess seems to have more power over Prince in the relationship. Mikey, in *Ten Lessons*, also seems to have power over the people he helps. However, Mikey's power is unknown by those characters, and therefore harder to quantify.

Other examples of power struggles may be found in the stories' secondary issues, depicted as interactions between child and adult characters. For example, A-Cheng's friends are afraid of Granduncle. Telling on his friends to Granduncle often works to A-Cheng's advantage. For Light Princess, most of her life is controlled by the power of Babayoujia's curse. She is less capable of taking care of herself, so in order to protect his daughter, King becomes overbearing and controlling. He asks his courtiers to tie ribbons around Light Princess or he will give Light Princess metal shoes to prevent her from floating away. Princess was forced to stay in the palace most of the time. In one instance, King spans Light Princess in hopes of having her listen to him and to behave. As an adult, parent, and king, King has plenty of power over the young princess. However, due to Light Princess' inability to feel, King's power was muted.

Mikey is a trainee guardian angel in the angel school. Like children in regular school, he does not choose what he learns or where he goes. Gabe drags Mikey to different lessons around the world. Even when Mikey expresses his desire to stay in the campsite longer to enjoy the barbecue and nature, Gabe is adamant about continuing lessons without stopping for leisure. Mikey is not even allowed to be sad on his own. Gabe decides that the best thing for Mikey to do is to enjoy pretend dancing. Gabe turns out to be right, and Mikey does feel better afterward. In the context of a school, and within the teacher-student relationship, Mikey is powerless without the explicit guidance of Gabe.

In *Music Box*, the dynamic between Child and Owner is different from other plays. Although Owner remains the more experienced person of the two,

Child also contributes to their journey together. During the storytelling, Owner plays the more knowledgeable roles, giving Le-Le help and advice. Child only plays Le-Le and other minor characters, and is therefore portrayed as the receiver in many situations. Only in the fifth act do Child and Owner's roles reverse, because Le-Le has grown into an adult turtle and Owner takes on the roles of the three little green turtles. Child gives Owner directions on how to laugh like a little turtle and compliments Owner when he does well. Child becomes the more powerful person because of his more intimate knowledge of children and childhood. Beyond this storytelling event, Owner and Child both possess abstract things that are desired by the other. Owner owns stories that Child wants to hear. Child owns the knowledge about what Owner is seeking. Both in the play, and in the play within the play, Child and Owner's power dynamic alternates back and forth.

While Owner and Child's interactions represent an intricate power relationship between an adult and a child in the script, an added scene in the beginning of *Music Box*'s production tells a very different story. This is a short scene to establish Owner's store as an antique shop. A family of four, Mom, Dad, Grandma, and a boy, come to the store. The following conversation takes place between the boy and his father when the family enters the store:

Boy: Dad, I want this!

Dad: No.

Boy: Can I have that, then?

Dad: Wait a second. Be patient and just look around.

Boy: Ohh... (He sounds disappointed).¹³

Shortly after this brief conversation, Dad picks up a robot. With nods of approval from the two other adult family members, and without consulting the boy, the dad buys the toy and gives it to the boy, who is very happy and excited. The play begins immediately after the family leaves the shop. In this scene, the adult has complete power over the child. Boy was not only denied what he wanted, but was not involved in ultimately deciding what he should have. This represents a totally different power structure between an adult and a child when compared with the rest of the play.

Children are Capable vs. Incapable

As Child said in *Music Box*: “[a]nything adults can do, children can do.”¹⁴

This seems to be a basic premise for child characters in all four of these plays. Children are depicted as people who can help, protect, comfort, save, and play tricks on others. They are also capable learners and givers who are able to initiate and carry out actions. On an emotional level, children are also capable of loving, caring, sympathizing, empathizing, and enduring sorrows. They are independent thinkers who are entitled to their own opinions and perspectives. A-Cheng, Mikey, Prince, Light Princess, Le-Le, and Child all demonstrate varying levels of these abilities throughout their individual stories.

A-Cheng, among all of the child characters, demonstrates the most growth in *Ghost Lady*. He transforms from an easily scared person to the brave hero of

¹³ My translation. Original Chinese quote is: 男孩：爸爸，我要這個。爸爸：不行。男孩：那我要那個。爸爸：等一下喔，你看一看。男孩：喔...(A Good Time)

¹⁴ My translation. The original quote is: 大人會的，小孩也都會。(Lee, *Good 10*)

his village. His quest to save/cure White Lady is completely self-driven by kindness. He does not believe in the adults' strategy of sacrificing White Lady in order to kill her other evil personality, Black Lady. He would rather solve the village problem by saving White Lady and thus maintaining the balance between her personalities. A-Cheng's plan did not work out because White Lady was already too sick and old to be cured, but his journey does not end there. Following White Lady's advice, he is able to kill Black Lady and save the entire village. In the script, A-Cheng's kindness and desire to save White Lady are what stimulate him to gain courage. He is no longer afraid and is even able to execute a difficult life-and-death decision at the end. A-Cheng showcases children's capabilities to grow and make difficult decisions on their own.

However, in the production, A-Cheng was stripped of some of his self-driven attitudes. Instead of A-Cheng being the only person who desires to prevent the killing of White Lady, Granduncle also reminds people about White Lady's benevolence toward the villagers in the past. In an added scene, the head of the village summons a village meeting to solve the recent turbulence. While other people support the plan to kill, Granduncle brings a different opinion into the discussion. Although this scene did not make A-Cheng less capable than in the original script, it did make A-Cheng's contribution as a child less singular and provided less contrast between children and adults than before.

Children's abilities are also constructed with differing levels in comparison to adults. Children are sometimes depicted as more capable and sometimes as less capable. For instance, Child and Owner have a discussion

about sorrow. When Child mentions that Le-Le is still feeling sorrow for her children, her missing mother's love, and the burdens she put upon Master, Owner doubtfully asks if Child even understands what sorrow is. Child says, "Of course! When my mom scolds me, or my best friend ignores me, I feel sad."¹⁵ Owner immediately responds that Le-Le's sorrow is more than a thousand times worse than that. Owner's comment seems to indicate that children are incapable of feeling the same level of emotion that an adult can.

In *The Light Princess's* production, children are portrayed as being less capable in their abilities to comprehend professional terminology. In the pre-show portion of the production, Fruit Grandma greeted the children and introduced some theatre etiquette. During her introduction, she referred to the theatrical performance (看戲或看表演) as storytelling (說故事), theatre school (戲劇學校) as storytelling school (說故事學校), and the auditorium (劇場) as a big room (大房間). The simplification of theatre terminology seems to question children's abilities to use and comprehend new vocabulary.

Other data shows a contradictory perspective which presents children as being more capable than adults. One example is from the same pre-show discussion with Fruit Grandma. During her introduction to Great and Awesome, these two teachers were bickering and arguing about every single thing. Fruit Grandma tried to stop this by telling them that even children know it is better to not bicker and argue, but better to listen to the story. She credited children's

¹⁵ My translation. The original script: 當然懂，被媽媽罵，好朋友不理我了，都會覺得悲傷呢！(Lee, *Good* 11)

abilities to know better than these two adults in this instance. Personally, I think these two contrasting examples from Fruit Grandma offer a fascinating view of the Taiwanese child and childhood.

Other examples of children being depicted as more capable can be seen in Le-Le's ability to interpret Master's music better than adults and to recognize other people's efforts. Young Le-Le is the only person, including all other adult attendees, who is able to accurately interpret Master's music. The adult's interpretations are quite incorrect in comparison to Le-Le's. Besides understanding Master's music, Le-Le is also able to recognize that Master's assistant has the same passion for making music and music boxes as Master himself. Master is surprised, because even he did not realize how dedicated his assistant was. Because of Le-Le's recognition, Master promises his assistant that he will teach him everything he knows and he apologizes for not recognizing his assistant's dedication sooner.

The data based on capability represents a complex view of Taiwanese children. Capable, incapable, and varying degrees between these two characteristics are all part of the images represented here.

Gender

There exists an apparent gender imbalance in the main protagonists between all four plays. There are more boy protagonists than girl protagonists. In *The Lessons of Angels* and *Ghost Lady*, the main protagonists are boys. Even though *The Light Princess* is a story about Light Princess, the main protagonists of the story are King and Prince rather than Light Princess. She is a passive

reactor to the things happening around her. In *Music Box*, the gender of the characters is not specified in the original script. In the production, the two characters, Owner and Child, are both male characters.

It is important to note that when calculating the gender ratio between actors and actresses who portray the major characters, it is quite balanced. Ghost Lady in *Ghost Lady* was manipulated by one male puppeteer. Therefore, he played all characters regardless of their gender or age. Prince, in *The Light Princess*, was played by a male actor. In *Music Box* and *The Lessons of Angels*, however, Child was played by an actress and Mikey was manipulated by an actress. The rest of the adult characters are distributed fairly evenly among actors and actresses. This distribution ratio also applied to extras on stage.

While some of the productions portrayed characters in a less stereotypical way, they did not challenge stereotypes very much. The angel teachers of *Ten Lessons of Angels* are a good example of upending stereotypes. John Brother and Sister are quirky dancers, Good Job, a male teacher, is a shoe lover, while Notebook, a female teacher, loves technology. In *Ghost Lady*, A-Lai Aunt and Laughing Aunt (愛笑姨), both female, are clown characters in the performance. The representations of females in *The Light Princess*, on the other hand, could be considered problematic. Light Princess, as mentioned before, is a passive character. She seems content with her state of being and does not actively seek resolution to her situation. Even though Light Princess' tears save the crises of Prince's drowning and the kingdom's water shortage, it is only because she is moved by Prince's love. This shows that Light Princess' power lies in her

emotions, an idea which could also traditionally be considered a gender-specific characteristic.

The Queen in *The Light Princess* is portrayed almost like an absent parent within the story. She only appears at the very beginning and end of the play. In the production, she was the bravest, because she had the courage to face and negotiate with Babayoujia. (This was partially because these two characters are double-cast. Queen needed to switch between the two characters in a short time frame multiple times.) However, she was not involved in searching for the solutions to Light Princess's curse. Other than holding the princess prop during the early part of the play, she does not even have any interaction with Light Princess. Babayoujia represents another problematic female image. She is vengeful and cruel, and all of her problems with Light Princess are because of her pining for the King's affection and friendship. Her curse is for Light Princess to be light and fly away until no one waits for her or wants her anymore.¹⁶ Babayoujia's character paints a pretty negative image of an unmarried woman seeking revenge for unrequited love. When she cannot obtain it, she harms a vulnerable young child to punish the person who hurt her. She makes no apologies, and even when the curse does not work, she tries to destroy the entire kingdom in a fit of selfish vengeance.

¹⁶ The original line is: 沒人等沒人耍. (Chao 36)

CHAPTER 7

FESTIVAL REPORTS AND PROGRAM INTRODUCTION ANALYSIS

In the previous chapter, I discussed the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood as depicted in selected TCAF plays and production videos. My interpretation of this data indicated a complex construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. These complex constructions of images led me to examine the differences between adults and children, and between human beings and human becomings. Within this complex web of construction, what distinguishes adults from children? Because these plays and productions did not carry a clear distinction between the two, which in itself is an intriguing finding, I decided to expand my data to include forewords, introductions and afterwords from TCAF reports and programs. Mayors and commissioners' messages generally introduce the themes, goals, and hopes of the festival. The festival organizers also provide similar statements but sometimes this is included with overall festival program information. At roughly three to five hundred words, the majority of these messages are addressed to adults, with only a few addressed to children.

There are a total of thirty-six messages written by the mayors of Taipei City, the commissioners of the City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the leaders from festival hosting organizations that were serving during the times of the festivals from 2000 to 2011. For each festival, mayor and commissioner alike each write a foreword, and others write either forewords or afterwords. After 2008, only mayors and commissioners' forewords remain. These writers include two mayors: Yin-jeou Ma (馬英九) (2000-6) and Lung-Bin Hau (郝龍斌) (2007-

2011) as well as four commissioners: Yingtai Lung (龍應台) (2000-2002), Hsien-hao Liao (廖咸浩) (2003-7), Yong-Ping Lee (李永萍) (2007-9), and Hsiao-yun Hsieh (謝小韜) (2010-11). Yin-jeou Ma is also currently serving as Taiwan's President as of 2008. Yingtai Lung is the current Minister of the Council for Cultural Affairs, which will become the new Ministry of Culture in 2012. These political figures, along with the festival organizers, offer intriguing insights into the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. This is especially due to their use of common terms and phrases about children and childhood. They are considered platitudes that are often used without thinking twice. These sayings are also valuable to my research for this specific reason. I was able to extract many meaningful codes from these messages.

Similar to my previous data, my interpretation of this new data also brings out complex and sometimes contradictory views of the Taiwanese child and childhood from adults' perspectives. I categorized the codes into following categories: "Children are the Future," "Children's Characteristics," "Childhood is Memories," "Children are Powerless and Less Capable," and "Children's Rights."

Children are the Future

In general, children are viewed as "adults' hopes" (希望) (Ma, "Words" 2002, 2003; Lung, "Words" 2002) and "the masters of the adults' futures" (未來的主人翁) (Lung, "Words" 2002; Tung, "Words" 2005; Hau, "Words" 2007).

These are two terms used commonly when referring to children in Taiwan. For all of these writers, children are seen as adults' hopes to build a better future and to make our city (referring to Taipei City) or country better able to compete with

others, either domestically or internationally. Children are considered to be the future creators and ambassadors of our culture. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in and cultivate children in all aspects of their lives. In order to live up to these expectations, teaching and learning become some of the most important elements in TCAF's programming. Their aims are to provide new, innovative experiences and alternative and fun learning opportunities for children.

The arts, cultural values, histories, worldviews, life lessons, virtues, and ethics are all included in TCAF to nurture children as leaders of our future. These different learning subjects were mentioned sporadically in the articles throughout the years. However, most of these themes are, again, gleaned from common sayings in Taiwanese lives. For example, these themes include understanding the meaning of life (了解人生意義) (Hau, "Words" 2009), learning about respect (學習尊重) (Liao, "Words" 2006; Ma, "Words" 2006; Tung, "Words" 2007), and learning about kindness and bravery (學習善良與勇氣) (Liao, "Words" 2004). Theatre arts, as positioned at the center of the festival, helps children internalize ethics education (內化孩子的品德教育) (Tung, "Words" 2007). The festival also plants the seed for later theatre/drama education.

In the Taiwanese educational system, a well-rounded education is considered to be one which contains "*wu yu* (five disciplines) (五育)." These disciplines are "*de* (ethical) (德)," "*zhi* (intellectual) (智)," "*ti* (physical) (體)," "*qun* (social/cooperative) (群)," and "*mei* (aesthetic) (美)." (It is difficult to translate the social/cooperative education to English, because there is not an equivalent word to encompass this concept. It focuses on building a harmonious

team-work spirit, rather than relying on individual social skills.) These five disciplines were included in Taiwan's Civil Education Law in 1979 (Civil Education Law). The first article of the law addresses its mission as cultivating well-rounded citizens with a balance in development among all five disciplines (Civil). These five disciplines were heavily promoted when I was in school, and they appeared as slogans in classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, auditoriums, and even in teacher's offices. Since 2010, Taiwan's Ministry of Education has promoted equal development of these five principles by hosting nationwide school curriculum competitions ("Five"). Although these five disciplines should ideally be evenly emphasized in the educational process, this is not the case in reality. Intellectual education is far more stressed than any other disciplines. One of the main reasons the Ministry of Education decided to hold a curriculum competition is to better promote a balance of the five principles in the future.

TCAF was viewed by Taipei City mayors, commissioners and hosts to be a perfect venue for the aesthetic principle of education. Arts are both the means and the subject of the instruction. Children are able to play, participate in the arts, and appreciate the arts all at once. TCAF introduces various affordable arts to children with hopes to cultivate them as future patrons of the arts. Based on this concept, the commissioner Hsieh proposed three different goals for TCAF in 2011. First, that TCAF would bridge the distance between the arts and children. Because TCAF provides free performances in communities, children can enjoy the arts regardless of their region or social class. Because of easier access to the arts, children could appreciate and learn important life lessons through the arts.

Second, that by seeing themselves through young audiences' eyes, performance artists/companies could rejuvenate their initial passions for the arts. Third, that TCAF facilitates reciprocal relationships between children and adults. The idea is that children and adults can understand and learn from one another. Although the third goal does not focus on arts education, Hsieh specifically pointed out the language distinction between children and adults. She used the term "*xiang dui ying* (both opposite and correspond) (相對應)" to describe children and adults' interactions, and between children and late teens (*er tong* (兒童) and *cheng nian ren* (成年人), and *er tong* (兒童) and *qing shao nian* (青少年)) (Hsieh, "Words" 2011).

Other than the messages about self-growth and arts education, another aspect I found in the material is the cultural cultivation of children as future citizens to expand their worldview. TCAF is an international children's arts festival, and by its hosting of international performances, children are able to learn about cultural differences. As commissioner Liao and President Ma mentioned in 2006, Taipei city had become far more diverse than it was just a couple of decades ago (2-4). It is a combination of traditional/modern, and Eastern/Western. This comes in part from the growth of the city, and also because of tourism, immigration, foreign students, and workers. The ability to understand, appreciate, and respect different cultures became a crucial aspect of children's lives. According to the forewords, TCAF hosted international theatre performances and professionals to introduce various countries, cultures, values, and perspectives to children.

Children's Characteristics

In these messages, children are seen as pure (單純) and innocent (純真) people (Ma, “Words” 2003, 2004, 2005; Liao, “Words” 2004, 2005) with great energy, creativity and curiosity (Lung, “Words” 2000, 2002; Tung, “Words” 2005, 2006, 2007; Hau, “Words” 2008, 2009). They are able to trust, to love and, mostly, to have fun and be happy. The idea of being happy and joyful is in the festival message every year. This quality of “pureness and innocence” is one which will mostly be lost by adulthood. In Mandarin, we call these qualities “*tong xin* (child heart) (童心).” By engaging in the arts and the playfulness of TCAF, the writers imply that adults can rediscover these lost qualities. Culturally, when we use “child heart” to describe an adult, it is expanded beyond the meaning of pureness and innocence to include ways of thinking; an adult with a “child heart” can enjoy things and events as a child would. Interestingly, according to the writers, children and adults could both possess the quality of a “child heart.” For example, Chao-Yang Chang (張肇洋), the Chief Executive Officer of Taipei Children Theater Association in 2007, encouraged adults to find their long lost child heart through TCAF.¹⁷ Children inherently have it, and adults may have a cycle of these qualities, continuing from childhood, losing them, and/or rediscovering them and holding on, if only temporarily.

Play is a vital part of children's growth. Children should be able to play for play's sake and laugh for laughter's sake,¹⁸ and they should also be able to

¹⁷ My translation. 藉由兒藝節找回大人們失去已久的童心. (Chang, “Words” 2007)

¹⁸ My translation. 為玩而玩，為笑而笑. (Ma, “Words” 2005)

have hobbies for the pure joy of having them (Ma, “Words” 2005). While it is important for them to experience a joyful life, it also needs to be meaningful (有意義) (Ma, “Words” 2003; Liao, “Words” 2003; Hau, “Words” 2009). It seems to me that Taiwanese people have a contradictory view in their image of a happy child. On one hand, it is believed that children should be able to enjoy their happiness as pure joy. On the other hand, it is also believed that their joyful moments should be meaningful, which is another way of referring to learning. When the festival was under commissioner Lung’s supervision from 2000 to 2002, the festival emphasized the “wild” aspect of children. Children should be able to be wild and crazy during the summer and enjoy the fun of the festival (Lung, “Words” 2000, 2001, 2002). After 2003, the meaningful/learning elements, alongside the idea of having fun, were brought back to equanimity. The concept of “*yu jiao yu le* (literally means 'to embed teaching in fun') (寓教於樂)” (Hau, “Words” 2007) combined with the conveyance of knowledge might be imperceptible to children, which is the goal of this concept of meaningful playing.

Childhood is Memories

According to these authors, everyone has a childhood, but it is short. You can only have it once. It is the prime time to create memories for people to enjoy in their adulthood. As the commissioner Hsien-hao Liao wrote in 2003, the Iraq War, parents’ advice, and face masks (because of SARS) in Taipei could also be part of the childhood memories (4). However, he wished children would also remember more wonderful and interesting things, such as TCAF’s programs. President Ma brought up his childhood memories of watching theatre (“Words”

2002), playing in nature, playing old time games like whipping top (釘陀螺), and also his memories about the bamboo broom in his mother's hand ("Words" 2000). I believe the last one refers to corporal punishment from the parent. Admittedly, childhood memories are not always bright and peachy. However, it is important for adults to help children create positive and happy childhood memories.

Children are Powerless and Less Capable

In general, these authors paint an overall picture of adults controlling children. Some of these powers are displayed in adults' responsibility to give children care and protection. Adults also provide love and hope for children, giving them an arts festival as a gift. In President Ma's foreword in 2003, he mentioned that parents are willing to take care of children without any expectation of payback, because they are "our children (我們的孩子)" (Ma, "Words" 2003). Again, this is a common and even sentimental way of expressing adults' love and duties toward children. However, the phrase "our children" also presumes a level of ownership over children. Even though it was not explicit in the message whether "our" means only a child's parents or all Taiwanese adults, children are considered, in a sense, to belong to their parents or our collective adult culture.

Other powers illustrating adults' control over children are found in the ability of adults to give children space and other things, abstract or tangible. For example, this might include giving children freedom to dream and a well-rounded growing/learning environment. It is intriguing to me how some of the language was used. In these messages, adults seem to have the ability and power to "give (給)" children many different aspects of their lives. Besides "giving" children

freedoms and learning/growing environments (Lee, “Words” 2008; Ma, “Words” 2005; Tung, “Words” 2006), adults could also “give” children childhood memories (Ma, “Words” 2000), new experiences (Liao, “Words” 2005), love and hope (Chang, “Words” 2006), and “give” their summer vacations back to them (Lung, “Words” 2001; Ma, “Words” 2005). Adults are also able to let children be children, unlock children's creativity and help them to preserve it, and ignite children’s desires to pursue truth, beauty, and kindness.

These authors criticize the ways in which school education focuses more on the intellectual aspect of children, and how children should not be placed under the tremendous pressures of competition, school work, testing, learning extracurricular activities, and aiming to attend better schools. Adults’ expectations could potentially kill children’s curiosity and fun (Ma, “Words” 2005). TCAF should be an opportunity for children to be free from adults’ control. This implies that children should not be wild (野), mischievous, or have as much fun during the school year. While these authors encourage adults to give permission for children to “be children,” adults are also essentially responsible for putting pressure on and taking control of children. Adults are responsible for the educational system, focusing on children’s academic performance, enrolling children in after school lessons, and enforcing school entrance exams. They also hold high expectations toward children and want them to follow the rules and to be obedient. These messages assume that children can be children and have more fun when adults are willing to let go of some of these controls. It was fascinating

to me that the calls for providing children a free and entertaining environment also seem to reveal the level of control adults have over children.

Children's Rights

Children's rights are not a major topic in TCAF. However, as commissioner Lung mentioned in 2002, TCAF is a prime example of putting children's "equality of culture rights (文化平等權)" into practice ("Words" 2002). Because of the festival, children are able to access program information and enjoy affordable (or free) quality arts (local and international) right at their "doorstep." This degree of widespread cultural access to arts had typically been a privilege of adults. Even though children's gatekeepers might still control children's access to TCAF's activities, children at least have more opportunities to enjoy arts than before.

Chapter Conclusion

This new data reinforces some of my earlier codes and opened up new categories for my data. From these messages, it is clear that there is considered to be a distinction between adults and children. Adults' power over children is evident in almost every facet of their lives. Adults are children's protectors, providers, and controllers. Taipei city government gives children the right to enjoy arts through TCAF, yet also as a way to cultivate their own ideal, culturally sensitive citizens. In the grand narrative of TCAF, children are positioned more often as passive receivers than active participants. Children are most active as participants of the workshops and audiences of the performances, but they do not dictate the contents of these workshops or performances. From my data, children

were not involved in the planning process of the festival at all. Even though the 2004 festival offered a webpage for children to post their articles, photos, or drawings (Tung, “Words” 2004 5), this only happened in one year out of TCAF’s twelve year history. Whether this attempt to include children’s voices was successful or not is unclear from my data. Since this activity has not been repeated since, my suspicion is that it was not a popular activity.

The questions emerging from my previous data regarding the point at which childhood stops and adulthood begins during the growth of a Taiwanese person will require further investigation beyond this project.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

After analyzing TCAF data and refining the codes into conceptual categories, I reduced the multiple perspectives into one central category: “Taiwanese Children as Adults’ Futures.” Admittedly, it was challenging to narrow the TCAF data down to one category, because the festival presents complex images of children. Nevertheless, this condensation helps me identify key elements in the representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood in the context of TCAF and the meta-narrative of Taiwanese society. This single category explains the adults’ desires to preserve children’s positive innate qualities, to enhance their agency, teach virtue, ensure their happiness, and to provide children access to the arts through lessons and new experiences that cultivate them as ideal future citizens. TCAF's identity as a government-hosted children’s festival combined with my theoretical research reveals a multi-layered construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood from historical, cultural and political standpoints.

Taiwanese Children as Adults’ Futures

Considering children as adults’ futures implies a sense of ownership and responsibility from adults. Children are constructed to be both their parents’ futures, and society’s collective future. Messages from the Taipei City majors and commissioners from the city’s Department of Cultural Affairs often refer to children as the future of Taipei (台北的未來) (Ma, “Words” 2004), and as the masters of the future (未來的主人翁) (Department 2002, 2005 & 2007). In order

to ensure a better future for children, adults involved in TCAF (including playwrights, directors, mayors, and organizers) demonstrated a strong sense of duty in their desire to nurture children through various modalities.

From a classic Chinese literature perspective, “children as adults’ future” is not a new concept. In the first chapter of *Classic of Filial Piety*, Confucius names filial piety as the root of all virtues.¹⁹ It begins with serving parents, then expands to serving rulers, and ends with cultivating one’s own morals.²⁰ One of the ultimate achievements of filial piety is for an individual to honor his or her parents by making his or her name, and thus the family’s name, famous for generations to come.²¹ Under the strong influence of Confucius’ teaching, children were traditionally regarded as future civil servants and a means of ensuring prosperity for their parents and family. In *Childhood in the Past: A History of Chinese Children*, Ping-chen Hsiung also pointed out that adults often view children as possessions in some sense (159-160). This possession is not necessarily good or bad, but simply a state of being. Echoing the concept of filial piety, parents’ ownership of their children is manifested in the practice of cherishing the body.²² This is primarily because our bodies are viewed as being given to us by our parents and should therefore be treated respectfully, as they are what our parents have left to the world (Shih, *Classic 7*). Based on this view, children are not merely symbolically, but also literally their parents’ possessions and future.

¹⁹ 子曰：夫孝德之本也。(Shih, *Classic 4*)

²⁰ 夫孝始於事親，中於事君，終於立身。(Shih, *Classic 9*)

²¹ 立身行道，揚名於後世，以顯父母，孝之終也。(Shih, *Classic 8*)

²² 身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷。(Shih, *Classic 9*)

The forms of possession, however, have often changed throughout time, place, and culture, evolving from the private familial sphere to the public sphere. For example, public education was historically one of the factors that brought children out into the public sector (Hsiung 160). TCAF demonstrates the public's and government's desire to educate children as future citizens, with the goal of ensuring a better combined future. As previously mentioned, in its 2009 program (the English section), the mission of TCAF is "to cultivate our junior citizens' compassion and values through the enjoyment of arts and culture" (48). My findings clearly resonate with this mission. The forewords of both the award-winning plays and the programs emphasize the importance of providing positive educational opportunities and entertaining arts to "the masters of our future."

The qualities an ideal future Taiwanese citizen needs are not clearly identified, but are often hinted at throughout TCAF materials. Within classical Chinese philosophy, especially from the standpoint of filial piety, possessing the highest morals and virtues is the ideal for adults and adulthood. The contemporary view of this ideal citizen is the cultural capital of Taiwanese society with many positive qualities from childhood. According to the conference forewords, the ideal citizen must possess a wide variety of qualities. If the future of Taipei, as President Ma wrote in 2003, is to be a "cultural [capitol] with a comprehensive knowledge of art education and civic cultural attainments,²³" our future masters will require education and in order to have the ability to possess these qualities. The list of these ideal citizen characteristics is a long one, and

²³ Official translation. (Ma, "Words" 2003)

includes such traits as being “active cultural innovators,²⁴” with problem solving life skills,²⁵ with fruitful and happy lives,²⁶ with “respect for cultural diversity” and having “vision of international culture.²⁷” Most importantly, our future citizens will also have the ability to make Taiwan a better society.

Preserving Children’s Positive Qualities

Children are constructed as possessing both positive and negative characteristics. Of course, the words “positive” and “negative” are subjective and value-laden. I use positive and negative to describe adults’ attitudes toward children within my data, rather than my own personal judgment. For example, the characteristics of being innocent, kindhearted, brave, compassionate, sympathetic, and empathetic are seen as positive traits. Even though there are few negative child characters in these plays, qualities like being mean, cowardly, or unsympathetic are typically considered negative qualities. These scripts demonstrate that some of these attributes could either be considered innate, or that they could be learned by children. For example, from Granduncle’s perspective, A-Cheng’s timid personality seemed to be innate. A-Cheng is the only child character who possesses such a personality in *Ghost Lady*. During the course of his journey, he is able to gain bravery and to conquer his cowardice. This transformation signifies that children could potentially have different innate qualities depending on the individual, but that they can also overcome them. Whether or not this is a boy-specific quality was not clear from my data.

²⁴ Official translation. (Liao, “Words”2005)

²⁵ My translation. “解決問題的生活技巧”(Chang, “Words”2005).

²⁶ My translation. “擁有豐富快樂的人生”(Chang, “Words”2005).

²⁷ Official translation. (Ma, “Words” 2006)

One other positive characteristic, recognized in traditional Chinese culture as universal and innate to children, is: “*tong xin* (a child’s heart) (童心)” (Hsiung, *Tender* 225). As I discussed in Chapter Five, this concept of a child’s heart was first proposed in Chinese literature in the sixteenth century by Chih Li (李贄). For Li, a child heart is the only true and pure essence in the world. This echoes James *et al*’s model of the “innocent” child. This quality is easily tainted and turned inauthentic by language, rhetoric, and politics (Hsiung, *Childhood* 209-212). Even though this quality is easily corrupted by environment and is difficult to maintain, according to Li’s discussion, a “child’s heart” is not unique to childhood. Adults, though unlikely to do so, can potentially sustain this quality if it is preserved well (Hsiung, *Childhood* 212). The concept of “superior purity and precious innocence” (Hsiung, *Tender* 226) was mentioned several times throughout all of the festival forewords. Because preservation of such a superior quality is believed to be both valuable and possible, it is obvious that contemporary Taiwanese adults intend to preserve “a child’s heart” for children as long as possible. Adults are also encouraged to seek their long lost “child’s heart” through TCAF (Chang, “Words” 2007).²⁸ This encouragement indicates the adults’ hopes for children to sustain this superior quality throughout adulthood, and aims to help adults find their “child’s hearts” through arts to create a better society in the future.

Mischievousness, although not often perceived as a positive characteristic, represents another significant childlike quality in my data. The early TCAF

²⁸ 藉由兒藝節找回大人們失去已久的童心 (Chang, “Words” 2007).

aimed to provide a space in Taipei city in which children could act freely without rules (Ma “Words” 2000; Lung “Words” 2000). From adults’ perspectives, being mischievous is not only a characteristic of a child, but also a particular way of being a child. However, this aspect of the festival was less emphasized after commissioner Lung’s period (2000-2002). Even though it was encouraged by the festival, the quality of mischievousness is often restricted, rather than preserved. The festival aims to create an environment for children to be “wild (野)” and free from regular parental controls during summer vacations, but at the same time, it seems to assume that children should otherwise be obedient and docile, especially when interacting with their parents. Arguably, children are not completely free during the festival. They still fell under the influence of the government-controlled TCAF, which aimed to contribute to the shaping of the children into ideal citizens. These limited freedoms are reflected in the stories of the TCAF plays, such as when King punished Light Princess for being mischievous, or when Granduncle scolded A-Cheng’s friends for playing tricks and scaring A-Cheng.

Learning and Teaching

Learning and teaching are some of the most crucial elements to consider when examining the idea of viewing children as adults’ futures. From TCAF data, adults emphasize teaching as a way to mold children into the masters of the future. The concept of using education to establish “high morals and advanced civilization” can be found as early as one hundred BCE in Chinese history (Kinney, *Chinese* 20). At that time, education was focused on creating a Confucian bureaucracy. At best, people could only become servants of the

emperor and his ancestral land. Today, even though a similar concept of creating the ideal citizen prevails, the goal and methods are different. Historically, the Taiwanese people were politically oppressed by various colonial governments; however, the future citizens of Taiwan are now not meant to become servants of an external higher power. Children can become the masters of our country, and therefore the masters of our future. The methods of teaching also expand to multi-modals to include arts and festivals such as TCAF. Despite the inclusion of these other methods, schooling is easily the center of most Taiwanese children's daily lives.

Early TCAF forewords criticized the tendency to place too much emphasis on intellectual education. The competitiveness and testing often prevented children from enjoying their childhoods, especially in a metropolitan city like Taipei. In the forewords of the 2000 festival, commissioner Lung pointed out the overbearing pressure placed on children to exceed in school²⁹ and to take after school lessons. President Ma also mentioned in his 2005 foreword that adults' high expectations could potentially sabotage a child's happiness and desire to learn (Ma, "Words" 2005).³⁰ Therefore, although it emphasizes learning, TCAF also aims to create a positive and fun environment and to provide alternative learning modalities and opportunities outside of schools to cultivate children beyond intellectual education. The arts became both a tool and subject of teaching in the process of nurturing well-rounded citizens. Based on my data, TCAF's teachings cover various learning subjects, from virtues, feelings, values,

²⁹ “升學壓力”(Lung, “Words” 2000).

³⁰ “孩童們會被「大人的期望」消滅掉對學習的好奇與樂趣。(Ma, “Words” 2005)

and behaviors, to language, life lessons, worldviews, and agency. These are either mentioned directly by Taipei City mayors, commissioners, and festival organizers in the festival programs/reports or explicitly or implicitly delivered within the plays and productions themselves.

As Charles Stafford observed in his book *The Roads of Chinese Childhood*, Taiwanese moral education can occur both within schools and outside of schools (5). TCAF is a prime example of learning taking place outside of schools. The festival's various arts programming provides out-of-school learning experiences for children. This is also reflected in the four award-winning plays, all of which take place outside of typical Taiwanese school settings. A-Cheng learns from his community, Light Princess learns from Prince, Prince learns outside of his own kingdom, Child learns in the antique shop, and Le-Le learns in the world and from Master. Mikey is the only character who studies in a "school setting," at an angel school, but even so, his lessons happen outside of the school and around the world.

Interestingly, filial piety, considered one of the most important Chinese morals, is not emphasized overtly in TCAF's materials. As Stafford pointed out, the community-based moral education "almost seems 'not to be taught'" (5). I believe by "not to be taught," means children are expected to have learned more from adults' modeling or implicit teaching rather than the direct teaching of moral lessons. "Children obviously learn from their parents in many ways, but explicit and public moralizing is usually the business of schools, and is in some cases actually frowned upon in community life" (Stafford 5). Perhaps, as mentioned in

the previous chapter, this is the reason that direct teaching of filial piety only occurred once in my data. It is covertly modeled in the plays as a way of respecting adults, rather than in the interactions between a child and his/her parents.

When the plays were transformed into productions, all of them adopted sayings or terms that are familiar in children's lives, or used a simplified vocabulary to explain things. In one way, this makes information more comprehensible for children as I believe the use of simple language is another strategy to make learning more accessible. However, one might wonder whether the production teams are also questioning children's ability to learn. If the productions had not simplified the language, would it have been presumed that children would not be able to understand? It may be asked whether this is a good teaching method, or a form of patronizing children. These questions will require further data to be clarified.

Although learning seemed to be a crucial part of viewing children as adults' futures, learning itself is not limited to children. President Ma's foreword in 2005 mentioned that "[t]his journey of learning is long and neverending" (2). This is similar to a common Taiwanese saying: "*huo dao lao xue dao lao* [learn as long as you live],"³¹ which indicates that learning should not stop in childhood, but rather it should continue throughout adulthood. When discussing Han Confucian thinkers' views about the progress of a child, both intellectually and morally, Kinney indicated that "the mature cultivation of virtue could begin [in

³¹ My translation. The original Chinese saying is 活到老，學到老.

early adulthood] and was supposed to continue throughout the course of a lifetime” (*Chinese* 34). This early philosophy in the Han dynasty recognized that children were expected to continue to learn after growing into “functional” adults, functionality being achieved upon completion of “the moral and intellectual abilities” (Kinney, *Chinese* 34). In this case, the philosophy also suggests a different level of virtue learning in adulthood. The contemporary interpretation of “learn as long as you live” does not imply developmental stages, but is used only to emphasize the lifelong learning process. The data from TCAF suggests that children are able to learn as they are, which is to say, as children, and continue to learn throughout their lifetime.

Children’s Agency

It is easy to suspect that by considering children to be adults’ futures, adults might try to meticulously craft and control all aspects of children’s lives. However, in order to cultivate ideal future citizens, children must learn about agency and practice it. These contradictory concepts of “control vs. agency” are reflected in my TCAF data.

On one hand, children are represented as completely lacking agency. For example, in the added scene of the *Music Box* production, the boy was not allowed to pick his own toys or to participate in the decision making process. Rather, he was given a toy that he “should” like and appreciate. The word choice in the festival program forewords reinforces this view of children as passive receivers of adults’ teaching, rather than active learners with agency. For TCAF, it is the adult’s responsibility to offer children different learning

environments, to grant permission for children to be wild, to give them childhood memories, and to stimulate children's creativity.

Corporal punishment is another method that parents use to control their children, hoping to prevent them from deviating from the path of becoming an ideal citizen. It, temporarily physically strips away children's agency to carry out any actions and mostly, if not always, against their wills. Physical punishment is a common occurrence in children's lives, and has occurred at the hands of parents, teachers, and other authorities throughout Taiwanese and Chinese history as a method of disciplining poor behavior or academic performance (Qian 36-42; Stafford 52-54; Hsiung, *Childhood* 261-262). There are examples of this physical punishment between King and Light Princess in *The Light Princess*, and in adults' childhood memories in the TCAF forewords. Teachers (until recently) also often asserted this kind of control over their students. My parents do not believe in corporal punishment, which is a rare position among my peers. When asked by school teachers, I was the only person or among a few people who did not receive corporal punishment at home from among forty or more students in the classroom. However, all my teachers, from elementary to middle school, frequently performed corporal punishment. Although I considered myself an obedient student with good grades, I was often punished for not reaching the test score my teachers set for me. As mentioned before, it has been illegal to use corporal punishment in school since 2006. However, anecdotally speaking, corporal punishment, both at school and in the home, although less prominent than before, remains common in Taiwan.

On the other hand, child characters in the plays suggest that children possess strong agency to save, help, and even teach adults in various scenarios. For instance, A-Cheng saves his entire village, Mikey executes his duties as a guardian angel, and Child teaches Owner about children and childhood. In Commissioner Liao's foreword in 2003, he invited children to bring their parents to the festival and to create wonderful memories together (2).³² Children are implied in this statement to have the agency to bring their parents along with them, rather than to follow their parents.

Generally speaking, the children in the plays seem to have more agency than the children referred to in the productions and festival forewords. It is possible that these contradictory images in TCAF materials accurately reflected various aspects of Taiwanese children's lives, both with and without agency. However, these TYA plays could also serve as "safe havens" created by adults for children to be what they could not otherwise be in their everyday lives. The actions of child characters could also represent playwrights' methods to encourage children to embody agency.

It is evident that the complexity of children's agency in Taiwanese society is beyond the scope of my research. However, these TCAF award-winning plays suggest some adults' and also the government's belief that children have or should have agency to become our future citizens. From my data, children's agency is innate to all the main child characters in the plays. At the same time,

³² 而你們，記得帶著爸媽，一起釀造 2003 年最甜美的回憶。(Liao, "Words" 2003).

human agency is presumed to be a quality that can be learned or honed by children through arts and education.

Children's Happiness

The idea of children's happiness seems to be another important component of children's lives. The concept of happiness here includes being healthy, happy, and living a meaningful life. For example, when King realized that solving Light Princess' floating problem by restricting her to the ground might interfere with her happiness, King decided that he preferred Light Princess to be happy more than anything else. Besides the scripts themselves, all of the productions have strong elements of entertainment and fun. Even when dealing with difficult life issues like life and death, the performances are punctuated with joyful elements through funny movements, exaggerated gestures, and silly jokes. In the forewords, the words, happy, happiness, meaningful, laughter, joyful, and colorful are all commonly used to describe lives that children should have or that adults should provide for children. It appears that adults considered children's happiness a major contribution to the positive development of Taiwan's future masters.

Beyond the Central Category

Following the research process of grounded theory, my goal is to develop a theory to cover all of the findings in my data. Because of the unique nature of this research, I did not develop an overarching comprehensive theory. Instead, although difficult, I decided to use "children as adults' future" as my central category. This is because it encompasses most of the significant codes in my data and provides insights on the representation of the Taiwanese child and childhood.

However, TCAF materials represent a multifaceted construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood, one that does not entirely fit under this umbrella. Therefore, I provide the following crucial codes beyond the central category.

Children's Family Relationship and Friendships

Some aspects of children's lives are absent in my data. These aspects include parents' relations with their children and children's relationships with each other. This is possibly because children have less agency in their parents' presence within the Taiwanese culture of filial piety and parental control. Therefore, when needing to display a child's agency, they need to be in a space without parental interference. All of the main child characters from the selected plays, besides Light Princess, operate with other adults in their lives but without parental engagements. For example, Prince in *The Light Princess* is an independent young man from another kingdom. His freedom away from home gives him the opportunity and permission to give his life away to save both the princess and her kingdom. Light Princess, on the other hand, was heavily controlled by her father, living in the palace throughout the play. Once, her mischievous behavior resulted in physical punishment. She also obeyed King's wishes regardless of her seemingly rebellious attitude at times. For instance, she followed King's order to sit next to Prince at the lake without even knowing the purpose until Prince tells her later in the scene.

Family structures are only vaguely demonstrated in these plays. For *The Light Princess* and *Ten Lessons of Angels*, Light Princess and Mikey both seem to have a nuclear family with both parents. Light Princess is a single child and

Mikey has a brother. In A-Cheng's case, we only hear his mother's voice once, and in the script read about his father giving A-Cheng money to buy medicine. These plays provide no other family information. Le-Le is a green turtle. We could speculate that she did not have parents growing up. However, this is also the green turtle's nature. Children without parents might associate with Le-Le as a child character; but, it would be a stretch to say that Le-Le's situation reflects family structures in Taiwan. The character of Child is unique. As an audience member, I was not sure if Child is a real child or is symbolizing Owner's imagined childhood. Child's family background is definitely not a concern here. As a result, the amount of data is not sufficient to provide any significant insight about Taiwanese family structure.

Friendship is another aspect of children's lives that was not emphasized in these plays. The only friendships between children are in *Ghost Lady*, and even then, they are ambiguous in many ways. A-Cheng's interactions with his friends are minimal. It seems that these friends' characters were created to elevate A-Cheng's character; they help demonstrate how easily frightened A-Cheng was in the beginning, and how A-Cheng outshines them at the end. Before A-Cheng travels to the dark forest, he invites his friends to come with him. They were afraid and ran away almost immediately, leaving A-Cheng behind to continue his journey. The person who mocked A-Cheng's timid personality trembles when Black Lady attacks the village. This is in contrast to A-Cheng's bravery in saving the village. Generally speaking, friendship occupies a significant part of

children's lives. The lack of representation of friendship is worth investigating in future research.

The Unconscious Child

Although not completely the same as James *et al*'s models of unconscious child based on Freudian ideas, my data also shows a significant amount of perception of childhood as an adult's past. This concept in my data does not "accuse" childhood as being the root cause of adults' deviant behaviors, it merely posits the concept of childhood as an adult's past as a commonly acceptable normal Taiwanese view of childhood. The Taiwanese concept of the unconscious child is demonstrated through Owner's search for his childhood in *Music Box*, and in many examples of adults reminiscing about childhood in the program forewords throughout the years.

Gender Issues

The plays and productions raise questions about gender-related issues. These include having negative or stereotypical female characters, having females play male characters, and having mostly boy characters. Among all of the plays, *The Light Princess* has the most problematic portrayal of female characters, especially Light Princess, and Babayoujia. Light Princess is a passive receiver who awaits rescue and Babayoujia is a witch; vengeful and evil in the name of love. The relationship between Light Princess and her parents is also worth mentioning from a gendered perspective. It differed from the traditional Chinese view of a strict father and loving mother as mentioned in Chapter Five. In Light Princess' case, the Queen represents an absent mother. In the original script,

besides the very beginning of the play, Queen was not mentioned or would appear in any other scenes. On the contrary, King was very involved in Light Princess' life, and he was both caring and strict. King cares deeply about Light Princess and tries to find a cure for her throughout the play. The depiction of the relationship between King and Queen is an unconventional view of gender roles in traditional Taiwanese parenting.

Having female actresses playing boy characters presents another complex gendered image. Is it because females share similar qualities with boys? Or, is it simply because actresses' voices fit better as boys? These gender choices made by directors do not fit my central category of seeing children as adults' future. Mikey and Child are both boy characters who are either manipulated or played by actresses. To further complicate the gender casting in these productions, one could ask whether these boy roles could be replaced by girl roles? In my opinion, if Mikey's character had been a girl in *Ten Lessons of Angels*, it would not have affected the overall play. If Child's gender had been switched to female in *Music Box*, the Owner's character might also need to be changed into a female, if Child is a representation of Owner's past. This change would have a greater effect on the overall tone of the production. This is because, without specific indication in the script, Owner fits the image of a Taiwanese man in his forties without family obligations, immersing himself among toys and antiques, and searching for his childhood. If Owner was played by a female character, it would further complicate the gender stereotype.

Overall, boy characters dominate the four selected plays when compared to girls. After realizing this gender imbalance, I conducted a quick quantitative survey of characters' genders for the top twenty-four award winning plays from 2002 to 2008. I categorized the main protagonists of these plays into four categories: boy, girl, boy and girl, and animal/plant characters. In my data, half of the plays feature boys as main characters. Seven plays have two main characters, a boy and a girl (or a man and a woman). Two of the plays feature plant or animal characters. Only three plays have girls as the main characters. The lack of female characters in these plays raises a question: are girls the minority of the audience? From my personal experience attending Taiwanese TYA, this does not seem to be the case. So why are there more male images than female? Are boys' experiences more universal than girls' from a Taiwanese perspective? Or is this because Taiwanese society values boys more than girls? Are we still repeating, albeit subtly, the traditional Chinese concept of “*zhong nan qing nv* [male preference] (重男輕女)” (Hsiung, *Tender* 217)?

TCAF's data implies a complicated gender construction within the Taiwanese child and childhood. Detailed comparisons between boy and girl characters among other materials from TCAF are needed to further examine the different cultural constructions of Taiwanese boyhood and girlhood.

Religion for Children

As Sin Yee Cheung described, Chinese people have a very liberal view toward religion. Besides paying tribute to ancestors, the general public are spiritual and tolerant (Cheung 304). In *Ghost Lady*, although no specific religion

is mentioned, the village people hide in a temple to seek protection from Black Lady. *Ten Lessons of Angels* is obviously a play about a Western religion, Christianity. And yet in all of the marketing materials, and even in the foreword of the play anthology, *Ten Lessons of Angels* was never depicted as a primarily religious play. All of the descriptions focus on Mikey's lessons about the difficulty and beauty of life and the importance of family and friends. Evidently, as long as a play has a positive message and is well-written, the particular religion featured did not matter for the audiences with different religious beliefs, even for a government chosen production.

A Mixture of Western and Eastern Culture

The plays, productions, and forewords all demonstrated a blend of Eastern and Western cultures in various aspects. Because of tourism, schooling, immigration, and foreign workers, Taipei is not as homogenous as it once was (Ma, "Words" 2006). This new diversity definitely affects children's perspectives on life and the world. TCAF is essentially an international children's arts festival that includes various foreign performing groups each year. Due to copyright issues, I was unable to obtain any international performance data for my research. However, the child participants in the festival experience arts from both Taiwanese and international arts communities, mostly from Western countries. The four selected TCAF plays and productions also reflect different levels of this mixture between East and West.

Both *Ten Lessons of Angels* and *The Light Princess* are adaptations of Western stories. Therefore, some of the angel outfits in *Ten Lessons* and most of

the outfits from *The Light Princess*' productions reflected certain Western fashions. For instance, the angels had halos and white wings, and the royal family had crowns and robes. Several of the actors/actresses in both productions even wore light colored wigs for their characters, so they look like characters from a foreign land. In *Music Box*, the design elements all represent modern Taiwan, and yet Le-Le and her children's puppets are extremely similar to the sea turtles from the Disney movie *Finding Nemo*, which adds an interesting layer to the complex Eastern and Western images on stage. These aesthetic choices echo other aspects of Taiwanese children's lives, such as the viewing of domestic and foreign television programs. Japanese culture, which is prevalent in mass media in Taiwan, was not obvious in the festival.

Another subtle mixture of East and West lies in the distinction between the individualistic and the group aspect of childhood. As mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the "five disciplines" in Taiwanese educational system, "*qun* (social/cooperative)," emphasizes the group effort rather than the individual. Due to the adaptations from Western stories, *Ten Lessons of Angels* and *The Light Princess* definitely have individualistic themes and story lines. They focus more on individual achievement than group mentalities. Even though Le-Le, Prince, and A-Cheng also help bring joy to or save their communities, their stories also remain more focused on their individual accomplishments. This focus diverges from the social/cooperative mentality rooted in modern theatre as an art form. Originating in the West, Taiwanese modern theatre follows many Western theatre

traditions where individualism prevails. Whether or not this is a common thread in other TCAF plays requires the inclusion of other data.

Are Taiwanese children human beings or human becomings?

“Learning is a lifelong journey,” is a frequent saying in Taiwanese culture. Even though the data presented a large amount of learning and teaching, this does not necessarily indicate that children are somehow less than human beings because learning is an important part of our culture. The concept that “children are not worthy of study in their own right because they are not fully formed individuals, and their lack of maturity and rationality makes them unreliable as informants” (Freeman 5), was barely witnessed in my studies. Children are viewed as possessing fewer capabilities, and are sometimes powerless, but they are not necessarily unreliable informants. What factors contribute to the lack of sociological and philosophical studies of the Taiwanese child and the childhood in academia is worth further inquiry.

For Hsiung, Chinese culture traditionally considers one to have been born with a complete human being within:

In traditional Chinese culture, children and childhood are different from adults and adulthood. However, child/adults and childhood/adulthood both exist at the same time. Different qualities might grow and decline at different times throughout a lifetime.³³ (*Childhood* 164)

³³ My translation. The original quote in Chinese is “傳統中國文化以兒童或童年確實有別於成人或成年,但兩者在人生的歷程中呈一互為消長而彼此兼有的狀態” (Hsiung, *Childhood* 164).

In this sense, both children and adults are considered human becomings rather than human beings. They are in a state of constant learning/growing and gaining/losing at different moments in time. Even though my data did expose the ambiguity between adults and children, it was not clear whether contemporary Taiwan values Western distinctions between adults and children more, or if it places more value on this classic Chinese philosophy.

While my research demonstrated an intriguing array of information regarding the constructions of the Taiwanese child and childhood, it also shows that more in depth analysis about contemporary views of the Taiwanese child and childhood is needed. It is my hope to continue working on this subject in my future studies.

Final Thoughts

Based on the data from TCAF, the construction of the contemporary Taiwanese childhood is complex and multi-dimensional. It definitely does not fit into a simple dichotomy between the “East” and the “West,” as between “tiger mother” and her counterparts. On the contrary, my data shows convergence between Taiwanese and “Western” cultures. Even on fundamental philosophical levels, many Chinese and Western philosophers, including Foucault, Rousseau, Locke, Xunzi, Mencius, Yang-ming Wang, and Mozi, come to similar conclusions regarding the child and childhood, despite their respective varieties of methods and time periods. This is not to say that cultural differences do not exist. For example, *Ghost Lady* represents the distinctive art of Taiwanese glove puppets and folktale, while the overall TCAF data makes clear the implications of

filial piety. However, the representations of the child and childhood in TCAF are not as different as people might assume.

Ten Lessons of Angels and *The Light Princess* are adaptations from US American and Scottish stories respectively. Regardless of whether they were closely or loosely based on the original stories, both plays carried various Western ideologies and were transmitted directly to young Taiwanese audiences. Even though Western adaptations are in the minority of TCAF award-winning plays, they are popular in Taiwanese TYA in general. TCAF, as an international children's arts festival, also annually imports performances to Taiwan. All of these stories – Western, Taiwanese and Western-Taiwanese mixtures – along with other media in children's lives, make the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood more fluid than ever before. It is absolutely a misconception to view Taiwan as a pure “oriental” society, as demonstrated by TCAF's materials.

From TCAF's data, I propose a hypothesis of viewing Taiwanese children as adults' future. This central category, along with the other analytical codes, such as childhood as adults' pasts, gender issues, and religion, demonstrates the complexity in the construction of the Taiwanese child and childhood. While these elements come from uniquely Taiwanese materials, they are not necessarily qualities unique to Taiwan. Our world is only going to become more fluid as cultural exchanges become easier. The “Eastern” and “Western” binary is based on myths and inconsistent with the reality, even if it is used to attract audiences/readers.

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APPENDIX A

A LIST OF TAIWANESE CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANIES

Professional Children's Theatre:

1. Cup Theater (杯子劇團) (1983~)
2. Mokit Children's Theatre (摩奇兒童劇團) (1986)
3. Song Song Song Children's & Puppet Theatre (九歌兒童劇團) (1987~)
4. Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (鞋子兒童實驗劇團) (1987~)
5. Eyuan Puppet Theatre (一元布偶劇團) (1987~)
6. The Paper Windmill Theater (紙風車劇團) (1992~)
7. A Big Fish Children's Theatre (黃大魚兒童劇團) (1994~)
8. Little Frog Theatre (小青蛙劇團) (1994~)
9. Little Tea Pot Children's Theatre (小茶壺兒童劇團) (1995~)
10. Apple Theater for Kids (蘋果兒童劇團) (1997~)
11. Bean Theatre (豆子劇團) (1997~)
12. The Puppet & Its double Theater (無獨有偶工作室劇團) (1999~)
13. Neverland Theater Group (飛行島劇團) (1999~)
14. If Kids Children's Theater (如果兒童劇團) (2000~)
15. Puppet Beings Theatre Company (偶偶偶劇團) (2000~)
16. The Coma Theater Company (逗點創意劇團) (2000~)
17. Hyper Kids Theatre (海波兒童劇團) (2001~)
18. Taiyuan Puppet Theatre Company (台原偶戲團) (2001~)
19. Wow Wow Theatre Troupe (哇哇劇場) (2003)
20. Only Puppet Children's Theatre (只有偶兒童劇團) (2008~)

Professional Theatre:

1. Tainaner Ensemble/Tainan Jen Theatre (台南人劇團) (Formerly known as Hua-Den Theatre (華燈劇團)) Their children troupe (華燈兒童劇團) only existed during early 90s. (1987~)
2. Newcool Theater (牛古演劇社) (Began to perform primarily for children after 1997) (1995~)
3. Morning Star Theatre (晨星劇團) (began to produce TYA performances in 2005.) (1995~)
4. High Sun Taiwanese Opera (海山戲館) (2000~)

School Theatre tropes:

1. Pu-Qian Elementary School Puppet Troupe (埔墘國小皮影劇團) (1978)
2. Wei-Wan-Jan (微宛然) (1984)
3. Chiao Wan Jan Puppet Troupe (巧宛然) (1988~)

Armature Children's Theatre Troupes:

1. Happy Children's Troupe (快樂兒童劇團) (1982)
2. Square and Circle Theatre (方圓劇場) (1983)

3. Spoon Theater Troupe (湯匙劇團) (1983)
4. Cloud Gate Experimental Theatre (雲門實驗劇場) (1983)
5. Shui Qin Chai Children's Troupe (水芹菜兒童劇團) (1985)
6. Taitung Theatre (台東劇團) (Formerly known as Taitung Government Employees and Teachers Troupe (台東公教劇團)) Their children children's troupe (台東公教劇團附屬兒童劇團) only existed during early 90s. (1986)
7. Mommy Children's Theatre Troupe (媽咪兒童劇團) (1989)
8. Cobbler Children's Puppet Troupe (皮匠兒童布偶劇團) (1989-1990)
9. Rainbow Tree Theatre Troupe (彩虹樹劇團) (1989-1999, 2005)
10. Children's Troupe of Taichung Culture Center (台中市立文化中心兒童劇團) (1990)
11. Lanyang Children's Troupe (蘭陽兒童劇團) (1992-2005)
12. Hualien County Children's Troupe (花蓮縣立兒童劇團) (1993)
13. Little Kangaroo Storytelling Troupe (小袋鼠說故事劇團) (1994)
14. Port City Theater (港都劇團) (1993)
15. Bigfeet Team (大腳丫劇團) (1993)
16. StageNet Theatre (童顏劇團) (1994)
17. Taitung County Children's Troupe (台東縣兒童劇團) (early 1990)
18. Washing Face Children Theatre (洗把臉兒童劇團) (1997)
19. The Little Sweet Potato Children Troupe (小蕃薯兒童劇團) (1997)
20. Mikado Children's Theatre (米卡多兒童英語劇團) (1998)
21. Angel Egg Troupe (天使蛋劇團) (1999)
22. Magic Children's Troupe (奇幻兒童劇團) (1999)
23. Conscience Enlightenment Troupe (天恩良心光明劇團) (1999)
24. New Generation Troupe (新世代劇團) (1999-2001)
25. Ya Creative Troupe (芽創造力劇場) (2000)
26. The Little Star Troupe (小星星劇團) (2001)
27. Dark Hunter Story Theatre (穿裙子的獵人英語故事小劇場) (2001)
28. Personal Arts Troupe (人文劇團) (2002)
29. One Two Three Troupe (壹貳參劇團) (2003~)
30. Corny Chicken Children Theater (玉米雞兒童劇團) (2003)
31. Hanlin, More! Children's Folklore Theatre Company (漢霖魔兒說唱團) (2003)
32. Magic Mommy Theatre Troupe (魔法媽咪劇團) (2005)
33. Orange Charitable Children's Troupe (橘子泥公益兒童劇團) (2006)
34. Show Theatre Troupe (Show 影劇團) (2008)
35. Tia'n SUGAR Children's Troupe (台南甜甜兒童劇團) (2008)
36. PiPi Troupe (拍拍劇團) (2009~)
37. ZhiZhiJu Children's Troupe (紙芝居兒童劇團) (2010)

APPENDIX B

2011 TCAF PLAYWRITING COMPETITION AND PRODUCTION RULES

(ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND CHINESE VERSIONS)

2011 TCAF PLAYWRITING COMPETITION AND PRODUCTION RULES

1. Mission:

In order to promote new works for and to elevate the quality of children's theatre, the Department of Cultural Affairs at Taipei City and the Taipei Cultural Foundation (hereafter referred to as "TCF") host this children's theatre playwriting competition. This competition is also to advance the new creation of the field of children's theatre, and to provide children with opportunities to see more productions of creative theatre. The competition's ultimate goal is to foster a strong foundation for arts and culture through theatre education.

2. Qualifications:

- Group: Playwright must be a citizen of the Republic of China (R.O.C., Taiwan). The production team must be a registered performance group with R.O.C., Taiwan.
- Individual: Must be a citizen of R.O.C., Taiwan.

3. Competition rules:

- a. The play should cultivate children's creativity and imagination.
- b. There is no restriction on the subject matter or the format of the play. It can be an adaptation or a new play. However, the play must be new, without previous publication.
- c. The play can be for any type of theatre performance.
- d. The target audience should be between three and twelve years old.
- e. The length of the play should be about fifty to ninety minutes.

4. Required documents:

- a. Application form: Please complete the form according to different categories and attach related materials.
- b. Script: The script should be typed, printed, or written clearly on size A4 paper. The words should be typed from left to right horizontally with page numbers. However, playwrights' and production teams' names or any other hinted sentences or symbols should not be appeared on the script.
- c. Attachments: Please attach the materials indicated in the application form. Additional materials which could help understanding of the content of the play are also welcome.

5. Dates:

- a. Application date: From today until Monday, May 9, 2011. (Post mark date)
- b. Winner announcement date: Before Wednesday, June 30, 2011. The winners will be recognized publicly during the 2011 Taipei Children's Arts Festival.

6. Judging:

TCF invites related professionals and scholars to participate in the judging committee for the judging process.

7. Awards:

- a. Winning categories:
 - 1) Group

- First Place: NT\$150,000 cash award.
- Second Place: NT\$100,000 cash award.
- Third Place: NT\$50,000 cash award
- Runner up selection: Several runners up will be selected; the exact number depends on the committee. The selected winners will receive a certificate of merit.

2) Individual:

- First Place: NT\$120,000 cash award.
- Second Place: NT\$80,000 cash award.
- Runner up selection: Several runners up will be selected; the exact number depends on the committee. The selected will receive a certificate of merit.

If the judging committee fails to find suitable winners, they have the right to withhold both the title and the prize.

b. Group production and performance subsidy

- 1) Arrangements will be made for the top three winning plays from the group category to debut at the 2012 Taipei Children's Arts Festival, and each will receive a production and performance subsidy in 2012.
- 2) The judging committee will determine the amount of the subsidy based on the play, theatre size, and budget within the limit of the maximum dollar amount. The subsidy standards are as follows:

Theatre Size	Amount	
	Production Subsidy	Performance Subsidy (Per performance)
Under 200 seats	Maximum of NT\$450,000	Maximum of NT\$54,000
200-600 seats	Maximum of NT\$750,000	Maximum of NT\$80,000
Over 600 seats	Maximum of NT\$900,000	Maximum of NT\$130,000

- 3) The production and performance subsidies are sponsored by the 2012 Taipei Children’s Arts Festival budget. If the city council’s approved festival budget is lower than the total amount granted by the judging committee, the subsidized amount will adjust proportionally based on the actual festival budget.
- 4) If the actual subsidy is lower than 40% of the original awarded amount, the awardees can arrange additional performances with ticket sales, and as such are not subject to the restriction of the “no public performances before the 2012 TCAF” rule.
- 5) The production team and the playwright should sign a contract identifying the rights and obligations within this collaborative relationship. The contract should be reviewed by the TCF by January 2012. If any legal dispute occurs, the two parties should resolve the matter themselves according to the contract.

8. Additional information:

- a. The script should be written in Chinese. Please do not bind your script.

- b. The same production team may only submit a maximum of three scripts. Please select the best plays to enter the competition.
- c. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited. Plays should not have any previous publication, regardless of format. If violating these rules, the participant will have his/her rights of participation revoked. For award winners, the cash award and certificate of merit will be returned.
- d. For elevating the quality of participating scripts, please do not reenter previous plays or plays from any performances from 2008 to 2010.
- e. The copy rights for the award-winning scripts (the top three ranking plays and runners up in both the group and individual categories) belong to the playwrights. However, TCF reserves the right to arrange media presentation and publish/reprint them in anthologies. The playwrights will not receive additional compensation for the publication. If awardees cannot accommodate these rules, they should address any issues to TCF in written form.
- f. The top three winning plays in the group category should not produce any form of public performance before the 2012 TCAF. The production team should assist in marketing efforts for the 2012 TCAF.
- g. If any of the subsidized groups make significant changes in their plans of performance before the premiere of the 2012 TCAF, a written request must be approved by TCF by January 31, 2012. Otherwise, the group is considered to have automatically given up all of the subsidy.

- h. After the premiere of the play, the group can produce the play elsewhere. However, the reproduction should thereafter be indicated as “the winner of the 2011 TCAF Play Writing Competition.”
- i. Individual category winners should arrange performances themselves. TCF will not recruit production teams for them.
- j. Cash awards and subsidies are subject to related tax.
- k. Plays or related documents not in compliance with the above rules will be excluded from the judging process.

9. Festival website: www.taipeicaf.org

10. Contact number: (02)2528-9580 x 193 or 191

11. Mailing address: Send two copies of all documents (including the application form and the scripts) to the following address:

Taipei Cultural Foundation

Performance Arts Festival Organization Department

3F., No. 99, Sec. 5, Civic Blvd., Songshan Dist., Taipei City 105, Taiwan

(R.O.C.)

(Please note on the outside of the envelope: “2011 Children’s Play Competition Plays”)

2011 年兒童戲劇創作暨製作演出徵選辦法

一、目的：

臺北市政府文化局及台北市文化基金會(以下簡稱本會)為推廣兒童戲劇之創作並提昇兒童戲劇之水準，辦理兒童戲劇創作之徵選，以促進兒童戲劇界之創新，讓兒童可欣賞到更多更有創意的戲劇、並藉由戲劇教育達到藝術文化紮根之目標。

二、參加資格：

- (一) 團隊組：劇本創作者須具有中華民國國籍，演出製作團隊須於中華民國立案登記者。
- (二) 個人組：具有中華民國國籍者。

三、徵選條件：

- (一) 可導引兒童創造力、想像力之創作作品。
- (二) 主題、形式不拘，改編、自創等均可，但需為創新劇本，且未曾公開發表。
- (三) 戲劇演出形式不限，可以各種戲劇型態呈現。
- (四) 以 3-12 歲兒童為主要觀賞對象。
- (五) 作品演出時間長度約為 50-90 分鐘。

四、應附文件：

- (一) 報名表格：請依組別分別填寫報名表格，並檢附相關資料。
- (二) 劇本：劇本以 A4 紙張，由左而右，橫式謄打，並加註頁碼，打字、電腦列印或謄寫均可，字跡務求工整。但於劇本上不得出現劇本創作者姓名、製作演出團隊名稱，或任何暗示之文句記號。
- (三) 附件資料：依報名表格之相關資料，或其他有助於瞭解創作內容之資料，歡迎自行附上。

五、活動日期：

- (一) 徵件日期：自即日起開始收件，至 2011 年 5 月 9 日（一）止（以郵戳為憑）。
- (二) 揭曉日期：2011 年 6 月 30 日（三）前，並於 2011 年臺北兒童藝術節活動中公開頒獎。

六、審查方式：由本會邀集相關領域之學者專家組成評審委員會進行審查。

七、獎勵方式：

- (一) 優勝獎項：
 - 1. 團隊組
 - (1) 第一名：獎金 15 萬元。
 - (2) 第二名：獎金 10 萬元。
 - (3) 第三名：獎金 5 萬元。
 - (4) 入選：若干，由評審委員會決定，致贈獎狀乙紙。
 - 2. 個人組
 - (1) 首選：獎金 12 萬元。

(2)優選：獎金 8 萬元。

(3)入選：若干，由評審委員會決定，致贈獎狀乙紙。

以上各獎項，如經評審委員會決議無合適之作品，得從缺。

(二) 團隊組製作演出補助：

1.前三名優勝作品，將安排於「2012 臺北兒童藝術節」中首度公開演出；並將於 2012 年獲得製作費及演出費補助。

2.前述之製作演出補助費由評審委員會依戲劇、劇場規模及經費預算表等，於補助標準額度內定之。補助標準如下：

劇場規模	支付金額	
	製作費	演出費
200 人以下之劇場	每名以 45 萬為上限	每場 5.4 萬為上限
200-600 人之劇場	每名以 75 萬為上限	每場 8 萬為上限
600 人以上之劇場	每名以 90 萬為上限	每場 13 萬為上限

3.前項製作及演出補助費由「2012 臺北兒童藝術節」預算支付。如該預算金額經市議會審定後低於評審委員會核定補助之總金額，則依相對比例換算發給應得之補助費，即實際補助經費=(該項核定補助費/委員會核定補助總額)X 議會核定預算。

4.如該相對比例低於 40%，則得獎者可自行安排售票、演出，不受「2012 年臺北兒童藝術節公開演出前不得演出」之限制。

5.獲補助之製作演出團隊需與劇本創作者簽訂契約書，規範劇本創作者與製作演出團隊之權利義務關係，並於 2012 年 1 月前送本會備查。倘有任何法律糾紛，請依該契約自行處理。

八、注意事項：

(一) 劇本需以中文撰寫，並請勿裝訂。

(二) 團體組每製作團隊至多參選三件，請審慎挑選最優秀的劇本參選。

(三) 參選之劇本作品嚴禁抄襲，作品須未曾於任何形式之媒體公開發表；經發現有上述情事者，將取消參加資格，已經得獎者，將追回獎金及獎狀。

(四) 為提升參選作品水準，請勿提出曾經參選 2008 年至 2010 年由本會辦理之兒童戲劇創作暨製作演出之作品或活動。

(五) 得獎作品（團體組前三名及入選者；個人組首選、優選及入選者）著作權屬於得獎者，惟本會有權安排媒體發表、將劇本集結成冊出版及自行再版；如本會於作品發表、集結出版並再版時，均不另致版稅及稿酬。入選者如無法配合上述事項，應具文向本會說明。

(六) 團隊組前三名優勝作品於「2012 臺北兒童藝術節」公開演出前不得發表，獲補助之演出製作團隊並應配合「2012 臺北兒童藝術節」之宣傳工作。

(七) 團隊組獲補助於「2012 臺北兒童藝術節」首演之作品，其演出計畫如有重大變動，需於 2012 年 1 月 31 日（二）前以書面徵得本會同意，否則視同放棄。

(八) 團隊組獲補助製作演出之作品，於首度公開演出後，得自行安排演出，惟需標明為「臺北兒童藝術節 2011 兒童戲劇創作徵選優勝作品」。

(九) 個人組首選及優選作品之得獎者可自行接洽演出團隊，本會不另行徵選演出團隊。

- (十) 本案之獎金、製作演出補助費等請依稅法等相關事項辦理。
- (十一) 劇本及相關文件不合規定者，將不列入評選。

九、活動網址：www.taipeicaf.org

十、洽詢專線：(02)2528-9580 分機 193、191

十一、寄件地址：應附文件(含報名表格及劇本)一式兩份郵寄至
台北市文化基金會 表演藝術節統籌部
105 臺北市松山區市民大道五段 99 號 3 樓
(請於信封註明：「2011 年兒童戲劇創作暨製作演出徵選作品」)