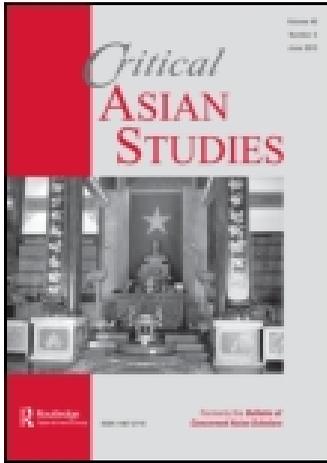


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The Possibility of Liminal Colonial Subjecthood: Yayutz Bleyh and the Search for Subaltern Histories in the Japanese Empire

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The Possibility of Liminal Colonial Subjecthood: Yayutz Bleyh and the Search for Subaltern Histories in the Japanese Empire

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ABSTRACT: This article examines whether writing histories of colonial subjects is possible. Traditional colonial histories subsume the colonial subject's individual history under a larger narrative of subjugation, which often does not allow room for people to exist outside the dichotomized role of collaborator/resister. This approach has left a gap in the scholarship for histories of colonial subjects whose lives do not easily fit either category. This article addresses this gap by detailing the life of Yayutz Bleyh, an Atayal woman who became one of the most important participants in the Japanese colonial administration of Aboriginal Affairs in Taiwan. For over six years, the author gathered fragmented pieces of information regarding Yayutz from a multitude of sources – visuals, as well as oral and written materials from inside and outside the colonial archive – in order to sketch the contours of an extraordinary woman and her life. Through the process of filtering these disparate sources, it was the silences regarding certain issues and the discrepancies that emerged among sources that proved to be the most revealing about Yayutz as someone who straddled both the world of the colonizer and the colonized.

Keywords: Japanese colonialism; Taiwan; indigenous; visual culture; oral history

In this article I discuss the life of Yayutz Bleyh, an Atayal woman who became one of the highest paid females to work for the Japanese colonial administration of Aboriginal Affairs in Taiwan. Some things about Yayutz may never be known, but what I hope to illustrate here is that the writing of histories of colonial subjects *is* possible, although the effort requires a careful evaluation of the colonial archive and at times a willingness to disavow the reconstructed versions of colonial subjects that they try to maintain.¹ By filtering colonial documents against information

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¹This article references Gayatri Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (originally published in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* [Nelson and Grossberg 1988]). Spivak's essay is controversial because some have misread Spivak to be saying that subaltern people can never attain a voice. The editors of *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* remark, however, "In fact Spivak's essay is not an assertion of the inability of the subaltern voice to be accessed or given agency; it is only a warning to avoid the idea that the subaltern can ever be isolated in some absolute, essentialist way from the play of discourses and institutional practices that give it its voice" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, eds. 2007, 79). In other words, any attempt to write a history of the subaltern is obstructed by the imperial power relationships embedded in the discipline of history, which prevents a "true" understanding of the subaltern, thus leaving the subaltern to be unknowable. I disagree with this premise because it reifies the idea that certain people seem to be

and images that are not in the colonial archive, discrepancies and mistruths can be revealed, casting light onto areas of the forgotten past. This article tells not only the story of one extraordinary woman, but illustrates the challenges to writing histories of colonial subjects. I argue that some colonial subjects like Yayutz Bleyh came to occupy a liminal space in between the Japanese and Atayal. Most colonial subjects were unable to make such a liminal space their own, but those who were enable us to understand better the messy and complicated nature of the imperial project.

A Composite Image of a Colonial Subject Emerges

In this article I examine the competing images of Yayutz that emerge from three different groups of sources. The first, the colonial archive, presents Yayutz as a model colonial subject that advanced relations for the Atayal people and Japanese colonial government. Second, sources from the mass media trumpeted the colonial tale of how Yayutz, a daughter of a powerful chief, saved a Japanese man from being killed by fierce Atayal savages and later fell in love and married him. Finally, the oral history from the Atayal elders of Yayutz's home village reveal accounts that depict her as a highly respected mediator who commanded respect both among the Atayal people and Japanese colonial officials. She was seen as a person of incredibly high standing, whose final word was adhered to by both the Japanese and Atayal. While I have just generalized these three types of sources that I have utilized in my research, it was often the subtext and in-between reading of all three kinds of sources that revealed a more personal view of Yayutz. At times these views were conflicting; on the one hand she was seen as an undisputed star, a beauty with a tattooed face, who caused a stir wherever she went; on the other hand, she was depicted as a shy woman who was embarrassed by her facial tattoos and concealed them. In addition, there are other sources that do not fall neatly into any of the three aforementioned categories, like her Japanese husband's relative's writings about Yayutz, her grandson's recollections, as well as Yayutz's own writing, all which corroborate some details and offer at other times conflicting narratives. Furthermore, there is a large visual record of Yayutz – remarkable for an early twentieth-century Atayal woman – that suggest the multifaceted roles she took on as well as the liminal position she had. I borrow Victor Turner's definition of liminal to describe Yayutz as one of the "liminal entities [who] are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial."² While Turner used the term liminal as a mode of analysis for understanding rites of passage in reference to the various African people, his discussion of liminality is useful in the context of understanding the in-between place that certain colonial subjects found themselves in when they were in the process of assimilating many aspects of their life to the norm of the colonizer all the while always remaining a colonized subject. As Turner writes in a later work, "liminality represents the midpoint of transition in a status-sequence between two positions."³ This use of liminal should not be misunderstood as being applicable to everyone who during times of colonialism occupied ambiguous positions; rather I am using it to refer to Yayutz who as a colonial subject is *in the process of* still being Atayal and becoming Japanese. This liminal state is one in which the colonial subject has neither lost her/his identity as a colonial subject, nor become

without history shall always remain in that state. In contrast, I argue that while it may be impossible to uncover everything about the lives of colonial subjects, a full uncovering of all aspects of non-colonial subjects is equally impossible. The difficulties with source materials and challenges to writing histories of colonial subjects should not be confused with the impossibility of their histories ever being able to be written or that somehow their histories are intrinsically tainted due to their colonial status.

²Turner 2011, 95.

³Turner 1974, 237.

like the colonizer (something Albert Memmi contends is impossible); thus, this type of colonial subject occupies a liminal space.⁴ The discussion of whether Yayutz was Atayal or someone who became Japanese is therefore moot, as she was *neither here nor there* but somewhere *betwixt and between*.

In some cases, the visual record of Yayutz defies colonial records, one photo suggests her extremely high status and when viewed in conjunction with oral history offers a competing narrative to the one that suggests Yayutz's role was defined solely by her work as a teacher and translator. By examining all of these documents, images, and oral history, the composite image that emerges may not be one in which all pixels in all the areas are clear and defined, but is one that emerges nonetheless.

My approach to uncovering the lives of colonial subjects through a utilization of a vast array of sources, from historical documents, to oral history, visual imagery and material objects has been demonstrated most recently in an article I wrote about the experience of colonial subjects put on display in a Human Pavilion at an exposition in Japan in 1903 (2014). Within the field of Japanese history, however, work on the colonial empire still has tended to focus on analyzing how the colonized and colonizer were configured as conceptual categories, especially with regard to exclusion and assimilation.⁵ While there is much work on how colonial politics and laws were implemented in the colonies or work on how colonial discourses were constructed, there is less work whose object of study is on the actual lives and experiences of colonial subjects themselves. Some exceptions to this general trend are the work of Paul Barclay and Richard Siddle who both have focused on colonial subjects as the object of study.⁶ As Ann Stoler and Frederick Cooper have pointed out, the problem in writing colonial histories is that "the task is unwieldy and not easily carried out. ... We need to create as Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (1992) suggest, a new archive of our own."⁷ My work therefore draws inspiration from the methodological techniques utilized by historians who work on colonial histories outside of the Japanese field including Pekka Hämäläinen, Clare Anderson, and Saloni Mathur, who all utilize a range of sources in order to excavate voices of those who are said to be lost.⁸ Hämäläinen's groundbreaking work *The Comanche Empire* argued that the Comanches ruled an empire of their own – an argument that Hämäläinen was able to substantiate using a "wide array of historical and ethno-historical methods in order to recover meaning from flawed evidence." He "prioritized accounts that recount, even in a mutated form Comanche voice – while keeping in mind that the voice is recorded through a cultural colander." He cross-checked multilingual "documents against one another to create more stereoscopic and arguably more accurate portrayals of Comanche intentions and objectives."⁹ This awareness of a cultural colander is important, and I like, Hämäläinen, have cross-checked sources in Japanese, Chinese, and English.

Clare Anderson in a similar vein utilized an array of sources, meticulously combing through the colonial archives plucking names out of obscurity – from penal records and the like – to try to follow a trail of people who history usually leaves forgotten. Saloni Mathur and her work on colonial India, illustrated the value of using visual imagery as a mode of historical analysis in discussing the lives of colonial subjects.

⁴Memmi 1965.

⁵For example, see Morris-Suzuki 1996; Oguma 1998; Ching 2001; and Tierney 2010.

⁶Barclay 2005 and Siddle 1996.

⁷Stoler and Cooper 1997, 16.

⁸Hämäläinen 2008; Anderson 2012; and Mathur 2007.

⁹Hämäläinen 2008, 13.

The Theoretical Place of Yayutz

To some, the very fact that Yayutz worked for the Japanese colonial government easily places her into the collaborationist category. What my research illuminates however, are the boundaries and limits of collaboration, especially the dependency of the Japanese on the Atayal people to help them govern. Never a mere pawn of the colonial government, Yayutz's influence and presence as an intermediary between the colonial government and the Atayal people placed her in a position that can subvert our traditional view of what the role of colonial subjects entailed. Most recently, historians have addressed this issue of resistance vs. collaboration with the illuminating debate between John Whittier Treat and Timothy Brooks in 2012 in the *Journal of Asian Studies* regarding the ethics of collaboration. Whittier Treat views Korean collaborator Yi Kwang-su and his actions supporting Korean assimilation in the Japanese empire as immoral, while Brooks – focusing on Chinese collaboration with the Japanese during wartime – argues that one should not associate nationality with morality. He asserts that collaboration with the enemy must be viewed in the context of the time. Brooks urges us to hesitate in “passing judgment” and to consider the unique circumstances in which each collaborator made choices and acted. I, too, caution against the inclination to judge Yayutz as a collaborator and thus necessarily opposed to the Atayal people. Rather, the Atayal elders I have spoken with in the village where she is from assert and promote an image of a strong woman who did everything in her power to help the Atayal people. What their testimony and that of her grandson illustrates is that the issue of her working with the Japanese was not as significant as the *effect* of her working with the Japanese had on the Atayal people. Her legacy is that she made things better for the Atayal people and advocated for them.

What makes Yayutz's story all the more compelling is how the colonial government presented one view of her to the world, one that downplayed the amount of power and influence she had in administering the local regions of Taiwan. The large gap between the way she was presented to the public and her actual influence is demonstrated through visual, material, and oral documentation. The colonial government presented her as a “leading pioneer in education,” however in reality she had a multifaceted role in the imperial governing apparatus that was never revealed to its actual extent to the public at the time. The colonial authorities often elided consciously the complexities of her colonial subjecthood in order to present her as a model colonial subject. One example of the careful crafting of her image had to do with the Atayal tattoo on her face. Historical documents and records repeatedly talk about her as a beautiful woman who could speak Japanese so well that if it were not for her tattooed face one would never be able to guess that she was not Japanese. Even the engraved epitaph on her gravestone, which uses her Atayal name, refers to her tattooed face. How shocked was I to learn from her grandson that she had her tattoo removed after spending some time living in *naichi* or the metropolis (内地).¹⁰ No colonial record mentions her tattoo removal, only her grandson – who had heard stories from his father and had seen numerous pictures of his grandmother – attests to this as truth. A document written by Yayutz herself refers to the embarrassment she felt due to her tattooed face while in the metropolis, suggesting the motivation for such a removal (through she never mentions removing it). Furthermore, according to her grandson, Yayutz had taken a

¹⁰*Naichi* is a Japanese term that means the metropolis and was used frequently during the Japanese colonial period to refer to Japan. The counterpart to *naichi* was *gaichi* (外地) which referred to the areas outside of Japan. The lines were often blurred between *naichi* and *gaichi*, in some cases, for example, colonies of Japan traditionally thought of as *gaichi* later became referred to as *naichi*. In this article however, the term *naichi* or metropolis is used to denote the Japanese colonial modern in general as a place, a concept that became more reified especially in the eyes of those living in the colonies like Taiwan.

Japanese name. This was never printed in any of the Japanese colonial records nor was it used to identify her gravestone.¹¹ For a colonial regime that often touted its civilizing effects and celebrated the Japanization of non-Japanese subjects, the hidden nature of Yayutz's own Japanization may at first be puzzling. I contend that colonial authorities and documents maintained and celebrated the markers of Yayutz's Atayalness because that is what made her pioneer spirit all the more noteworthy. Her tattoo – although later removed – remained indelibly linked to her image as ethnic other, and the persistence of colonial sources to maintain this image of her, despite its removal, suggest that her importance to them as both an ethnic other and a symbol of progress was obviously more important than representing her actual character. Albert Memmi has written extensively about the colonial relationship as one of interdependence between the colonizer and colonized, neither of whom are able to exist without the other.¹² This quandary, which requires the colonized to always be a step behind the colonizer, explains why the removal of her tattoo is never discussed and her representation as an ethnic other is so forcibly maintained. Therefore, these anomalies and silences are what we need to gravitate to when writing colonial histories. As Stoler and Cooper contend, “We cannot just do colonial history based on our given sources; what constitutes the archive itself, what is excluded from it, what nomenclatures signal at certain times are themselves internal to, and the very substance of, colonialism’s cultural politics.”¹³

The spark that ignited my research into Yayutz's life began when I was researching the tours to the metropolis policy (*naichi kankō*) that had been implemented in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period.¹⁴ This program took the indigenous people of Taiwan (those of Han ethnicity were not allowed to participate) to Japan in the hopes that upon seeing civilization and modernity so-called savages would be turned into modernizers and interlocutors who would then assist the Japanese imperial regime. Part of the intrinsic logic fueling the tours of the metropolis program was a depreciatory view of the supposed limited capacity of Taiwan's indigenous people and the belief that learning through sight was the most effective way to educate the “savages.”¹⁵ It was in this context that I came across mention of an Atayal translator who had been attached to one of the tours: Yayutz Bleyh. Because my research project's aim was to uncover the life histories of various colonial subjects of Japan's empire, Yayutz seemed to be an ideal research subject. The fact that as a woman, she was named stood out to me, when articles about the tours, typically referred only to one or two leaders by name if any. Moreover, not only did Yayutz work for the colonial government, suggesting a possibility of a paper trail, but she had also married a Japanese man. At this time in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Japanese colonial administration commonly used interracial unions as a strategy to govern the “savage territories” of Taiwan.¹⁶ But Yayutz's marriage was different. The Japanese man she married was not a colonial official sent to Taiwan to help in the management of the Aborigines. Rather, their love story involved an everyday Japanese man and an Atayal woman and this is why their relationship garnered so much attention in the press.

¹¹Chen 2014b.

¹²Memmi 1965.

¹³Stoler and Cooper 1997, 18.

¹⁴Senjū 2006 documented the tours to the metropolis in relation to the Micronesians. For discussion of the tours with relation to the Taiwanese Aborigines, see Chang 2003; Zheng 2005; Yamaji 2008; and Matsuda 2013.

¹⁵Taiwan sōtokufu keimukyoku 1942, 18.

¹⁶Barclay 2005.

At around the same time I had started my research in Japan in 2008, an Atayal researcher, Dr. Li Hui Hui, in Fuxing (長興), Taiwan, had stumbled across a noteworthy granite gravestone a year before in the Atayal Toujiao (竹頭角) tribe's cemetery. Li wondered what sort of person was buried there and what he or she had done to merit such a gravestone. Li interviewed the village elders in Fuxing and found out that the gravestone belonged to a woman named Yayutz Bleyh. To her surprise, Li found she was actually related to her. Five years later, in 2013, I met Li in Fuxing and saw Yayutz's gravestone for the first time (Figure 1).

The heft of the gravestone was a tactile remnant of Yayutz's legacy and its bulk had metaphorical implications as well. The substantial weight of this material object – still intact after 80 years – confirmed the hunch I had had five years earlier when I began looking into Yayutz Bleyh's life, that this was no ordinary woman. Not until I met her grandson and the Fuxing village elders, however, did I start to comprehend *how* significant of a person she had been during the colonial administration. Prior to my 2013 visit to Taiwan, I had gathered a significant amount of information about Yayutz, primarily from Japanese documents that celebrated her advancement of education for the Atayal people. But what I learned in Taiwan shaped my understanding of this data and in some cases altered it completely.



Figure 1. Yayutz Bleyh's gravestone. On the side that is shown is an epitaph written in Japanese and dated 1933, one year after her death in 1932. On the other side, written in Japanese, is "the grave of Yayutz Bleyh" (ヤユツベリヤの墓). According to Yayutz's grandson, the gravestone was made in Japan. It took over three years to make the gravestone and ship it back to the cemetery in Fuxing. (Credit: Kirsten L. Ziomek)

Yayutz Meets Nakano Chūzō

Japanese books, articles, and documents written by various people, including high-profile Japanese contemporaries like Mori Ushinosuke and Inoue Inosuke, have detailed the fateful encounter between Yayutz and her future husband-to-be. The story of their meeting goes more or less like this: In 1899, an eighteen-year-old Japanese pharmacist from Kyoto, Nakano Chūzō, stumbled into one of the most dangerous of Taiwan's Aboriginal territories, while collecting samples of medicinal plants. Chūzō's unwitting entry into the settlement of Dakekan (大崙炭 / Taikokan), an area known for its early resistance to the Japanese, quickly resulted in his capture. Brought before the chief, he was told that he would be beheaded the following day. Yayutz, the sixteen-year-old daughter of the chief, intervened on Chūzō's behalf and implored her father to spare his life. The chief hesitated for he feared losing his dignity if the others heard of his weakness. In the end he gave in to his daughter's wishes and let Chūzō live. The couple had to flee the mountains under the cover of night after being told they could never return due to the shame they would bring Yayutz's father for being so weak as to spare the life of a foreigner and enemy.¹⁷

Writing in 1925, Mori Ushinosuke, a Japanese scholar who spent years in Taiwan as a chronicler of various Aboriginal groups, gives a more violent and less romanticized account of their meeting. He wrote,

Yayutsu Beriya [*sic*] married Mr. Nakano and left the mountains with him at the time of the Dakekan incident. The settlement that Yayutz had been born in was at war with the Japanese, and while fire was being exchanged, she was unable to abandon Chūzō who she promised to marry but who was still nonetheless the enemy. While it pained her greatly she broke with her familial ties and obligations and followed him to Taipei.¹⁸

In June 2013, I met the grandson of Yayutz Bleyh. In her later years, Yayutz had adopted an Atayal child whose Japanese name was Takeno Tsutomu (Atayal name Silan Lesa). After Taiwan's retrocession, he changed his name to Chen Wanfu. His first son, Chen Xing Sheng, told me, the Japanese colonial accounts of how his grandparents met are far from accurate. While Chūzō was indeed in Taiwan to collect camphor plants, the occasion did not involve Yayutz saving Chūzō's life. Chūzō had been collecting plants by the Daxi (大溪 / Daikei) river-side, near Shixiuping brook, when he spotted Yayutz swimming naked in the river. Yayutz was fourteen at the time with tattoos on her face; Chūzō was eighteen. Soon after their meeting, Chūzō brought Yayutz to the Daxi police station, where her parents agreed that she should go with Chūzō to Taipei. When I asked Yayutz's grandson what motivated Chūzō to bring Yayutz to Taipei with him, he said only the people who were there at the time knew why. He did say that Chūzō had wanted to improve Yayutz's "life and thoughts" and that he thought bringing her to Taipei to study would help do that.¹⁹ The difference between the colonial account of Yayutz and Chūzō's meeting and their grandson's account is remarkable. The colonial account relies upon a typical trope of the time that of the chieftain's daughter saving a young man from her own savage people. The colonial version, which was clearly more intriguing, allowed those in the colonial regime to celebrate Yayutz's transformation from chieftain's daughter to now-almost-but-not-quite Japanese girl. By contrast, a chance encounter between a young man collecting camphor plants and a young girl swimming in the river is banal. Tellingly, the colonial version that was circulating at the time and remains the official version of their meeting highlights

¹⁷TNNS, 4 May 1912; Nojima 2001, 51.

¹⁸Mori 1925.

¹⁹Chen interview, Taiwan, June 2013.



Figure 2. Photo of Nakano Chūzō in Chen’s father’s photo album. The description reads: “Kyoto born Nakano Chūzō, the husband of my foster mother.” (Credit: Photo courtesy of Chen Xing Sheng)

Yayutz’s willing embrace of Japanese culture and outright rejection of her own people, the Atayal, in order to save Chūzō’s life. On the surface there appeared to be no room for ambiguity in the colonial regime: it was one or the other. Yet the documents, images, and oral stories about Yayutz clearly show that her position was more in between. If anything, while her outward appearance and speech became more Japanized, other evidence points to her continued attachment and service to the Atayal people.

Yayutz and Chūzō’s Early Life in Taipei

Nakano Chūzō (Figure 2) was said to be the only one of five siblings to make something of himself. Because his father had lost trust in his eldest son, he had transferred all his hopes to his second son, Chūzō, who he wished to be his heir who would one day take over the family pharmacy in Kyoto.²⁰ Chūzō did not follow his father’s dream, however, venturing out to Taiwan to collect medicinal plants. After he and Yayutz met, the couple moved to Taipei, where Chūzō began work at the pharmaceutical division of the hospital affiliated with the Taipei Imperial University.²¹ In April 1904, Yayutz began to study at Taipei Mengjia Girl’s

²⁰Nakano 1981a, 16, 19.

²¹Takezawa 1932, 7.

School (台北萬華女子學校), now in Wanhua District, Xinbei City.²² In writings published in 1933 by the high school she later attended (the No. 3 Girl's High School in Taipei), Yayutz wrote about her experiences at Mengjia Girl's school when as a first-year student she arrived not knowing how to speak Taiwanese let alone Japanese. She credits her Japanese teacher for translating for her and describes how she learned the Japanese characters one by one. Yayutz credits her Japanese teachers for helping her get through hard times and for always providing her with extra help, including private tutoring. While she had fond memories of her Japanese teachers, her schoolmates often ridiculed her and made her the target of pranks. Oftentimes they said "horrible things" like "although that barbarian doesn't understand anything, the teacher is always so nice to her." Yayutz credited her Japanese teachers for helping her get through hard times and for always providing her with extra help.²³ Here it is noteworthy that Yayutz notes that the poor treatment she had received at the school was from the Taiwanese students of Han ethnicity who internalized and utilized the dominant Japanese terminology of the time that referred to Aborigine people as *seiban* (生蕃 barbarian/savage). Her Japanese teachers (the colonizers) rather than participating in and encouraging Yayutz's marginalization as a *seiban*, actually were her allies and in Yayutz's writing, were her saviors in those early times.

According to Japanese records, Yayutz graduated from Taipei Mengjia Girl's School in 1910 and was given a job in the Police Bureau's Aborigine Affairs Division (Keimukyoku ribanka).²⁴ There is visual evidence of Yayutz's early work for the colonial government. In 1912, a photo album entitled *Seiban shuzoku shashinchō* (Photo Album of the Barbarian Tribes of Taiwan) featured a woman in a kimono speaking to a group of Atayal (Figure 3). I believe that the woman is Yayutz.²⁵ The description accompanying the photograph reads,

During the submission ceremony (帰順式), this photo illustrates the scene of that time's formal ceremony held for the Nan'ao (南澳 / Nanoku) settlement.²⁶ At the top of the photo is the head of the branch office of the Nan'ao jurisdiction, and the woman next to him is a singular woman, revered by the Aborigines as the "Mother of Japan." Presently this woman is also a translator and is giving them instructions about the do's and don'ts of good behavior in the future.²⁷

Furthermore, in the colonial records of the Taiwan police members published in 1912, Yayutz is listed as one of the employees located as a *hontōjin* (person from Taiwan); in 1913 she is listed as being from Taoyuan.²⁸

Around the time Yayutz began working for the colonial government in an official capacity, Chūzō and Yayutz married. Yayutz had graduated from Taipei Mengjia Girl's School in 1910 and soon afterward both Yayutz's and Chūzō's parents gave their blessing for their marriage.²⁹ Yayutz's grandson stated that Chūzō went back to Kyoto to ask in person for his parents' permission to marry Yayutz. From Kyoto he sent a telegram to Taipei to arrange her registration

²²Chen 2013. According to Takezawa (1932, 7) and *Fujin gahō* the school in Japanese was referred to as 台北艋舺公學校 (Taipei Mankō Public School).

²³Bleyh 1933, 438.

²⁴Takezawa 1932, 7.

²⁵Thank you to Paul Barclay for bringing this photograph to my attention.

²⁶This is an Atayal settlement. In 1938 a seventeen-year-old girl named Sayun Hayun died trying to carry the luggage of her Japanese teacher across a river. This true story was made into a film called *Sayon no kane* (Sayon's Bell) in 1943.

²⁷Narita shashin seihanjo, 1912, 155–156.

²⁸Taiwan sōtokufu minseibu keisatsu honsho 1912, 60; 1913, 16.

²⁹Nojima 2001, 51.

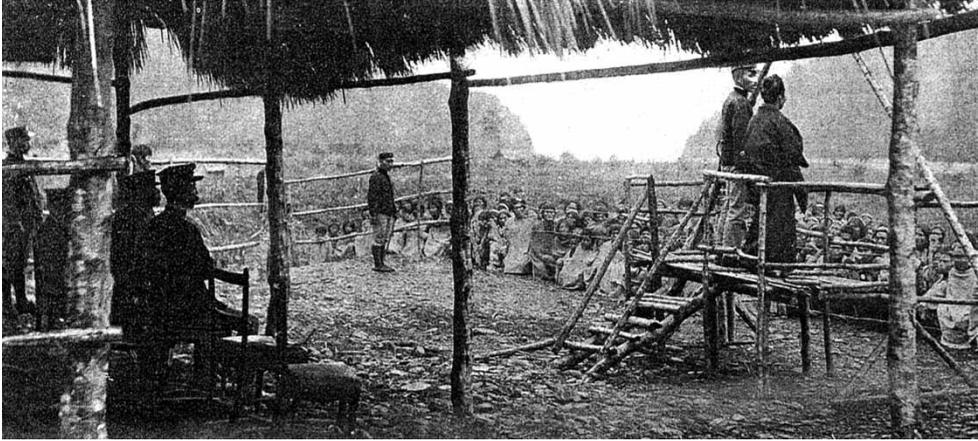


Figure 3. Yayutz on stage in 1912 during a submission ceremony (婦順式) for the Atayal tribes of the Nan'ao settlement submitting to Japanese rule in Taiwan. (Credit: Narita shashin seihanjo 1912, 155)

for a girl's national high school.³⁰ In 1911, she began school at a national (Japanese) school called the No. 3 Girl's High School in Taipei. Yayutz writes that when she saw the girl students walking on their way to the high school,

[I had] the unbearable urge to attend. Furthermore, the teachers at the public school told me that the girls' school would be a great place. Also, at the time I visited the Japanese colonial government and the former head of Barbarian Administration also strongly encouraged me to attend.³¹

Yayutz wrote, that from her heart, she knew attending the school was the right choice.

1912 Tour and Emergence of Yayutz as Media Darling

In 1911, the year Yayutz entered the national language school in Taipei, Chūzō fell gravely ill.³² Diagnosed with a pulmonary illness, he was advised to return to Japan for his health. Chūzō returned to Kyoto and was bedridden in a house near the Nanzenji Buddhist temple.³³

Yayutz told metropolitan newspapers at the end of April 1912 that Nakano's illness and the separation it necessitated were the reasons she returned to Japan as the translator for a tour group (*naichi kankō*) of Atayal leaders and men of influence. When Yayutz arrived at the Moji port, reporters – having heard about their love story – were waiting.³⁴

Chūzō met Yayutz when she arrived in Kobe and the couple went to a hotel in Kyoto.³⁵ Chūzō's relatives later recalled how she caused quite a stir when she arrived in Kyoto by rickshaw, dressed in Japanese clothing. People gathered everywhere she went and newspapers reported on

³⁰Chen 2014a.

³¹Bleyh 1933, 438.

³²*Tokyo asahi*, 30 April 1912.

³³Nakano 1981a, 21.

³⁴*Tokyo asahi*, 30 April 1912; TNNS, 4 May 1912. Although she had already entered the No. 3 Girl's High School in Taipei, it was misreported that Yayutz was a student at the Taipei Mengjia Girl's School. *Tokyo asahi* has "third-year" student, *Fujin gahō* has "first-year" student.

³⁵*Tokyo asahi*, 30 April 1912.

her reasons for coming to Japan.³⁶ Yayutz became an instant sensation with the press not only because of her characterization as an unusual beauty – her facial tattoos marked her as distinct – but also because she spoke Japanese fluently. Widespread reports about their romance and about how she met her Japanese husband heightened her allure. Cast in the colonial trope typical of the time – the chieftain’s daughter – Yayutz was said to have saved the life of her husband. Yayutz’s grandson explained to me, however, that Yayutz’s father was not an important chief. He contends that it was Yayutz’s own prominence that made it necessary to elevate her father’s status to fit her story.³⁷

Yayutz’s activities in the metropolis were reported on regularly and she was constantly photographed with the tour group (Figure 7). A photograph in the Mitsukoshi department store’s monthly magazine showed a view of a tour group that visited in 1911 taken from the department store’s roof (Figure 4). The spectacle of the tour group, as well as the crowds it attracted, puts into context how these tour groups were media events.

Similarly, during the tour group’s April–May visit in 1912, the media showered the tour group and Yayutz with attention. Yayutz was interviewed by *Fujin gahō* (Women’s Pictorial) one of the leading magazines for women at the time. Part of the caption accompanying her photo (Figure 5), identifies her as the interpreter of the tour group. “Because she can speak Japanese very well, she has accompanied the group as a translator and is treated as an official (*toku ni kanshi no taigu wo motte*).” The caption describes her clothing carefully, noting a white cotton layer underneath a striped fabric and her purple-lined kimono, with her white *tabi*, as well as her fashionably styled hair and a tattoo that ran from her cheeks to her ears. The description continued,

This girl is the daughter of the chief of the Dakekan settlement. She saved the life of Kyoto resident Nakano when he had gone deep into the mountains searching for plants and was captured and going to be killed, having received their parents’ blessing they exchanged marriage vows, she is the girl of this romance.³⁸

There are hints to how Yayutz felt about all this attention directed toward her. The *Tokyo asahi* noted her fine clothing as well as her embarrassment caused by her tattoo. The article noted that she wore a veil over her head, which had been lent to her by women who had initially greeted her. The reporter remarked that whenever the photographer asked her to turn toward the camera, she quickly hid behind the others.³⁹ Her embarrassment due to her tattoo was hinted at in her own writings. In a section titled “Happiness and Sadness,” she mentioned the things that had made her the happiest and the saddest. Regarding moments of happiness, she referred to leaving the mountains of her Atayal village:

I had come from the barbarian world of mountains and more mountains and the first time I entered the plains and I saw their appearance I had thought to myself were there really places such as this in our world. Repeatedly I gazed as far as I could see and saw luscious green trees and in between the trees pretty large houses were constructed. From the depths of my heart I was overjoyed.

However, she also commented on what made her feel sad, and that had to do with how she was often looked at. “Every day, I was embarrassed, not only during the times when I went out, but

³⁶Nakano 1981a, 21.

³⁷Chen 2013.

³⁸*Fujin gahō*, 1 June 1912, 41.

³⁹*Tokyo asahi*, 20 April 1912.



Figure 4. A Taiwanese Aborigine tour group being paraded down the street in Tokyo. The caption accompanying this photograph in *Mitsukoshi* magazine reads, “On the afternoon of September 2, 1911, forty-one members of the Second Savage Tour Group, who are visiting Japan, were led by Chief Police Inspector Taniyama as they visited Mitsukoshi. As they went up and down the road, the police officers’ voices were hoarse as they cut their way ever so slightly through the crowds of spectators packed both in and outside the store.” (Credit: *Mitsukoshi* 1911, 3)

also when I went into town, everyone looked at my face, I felt embarrassed and sad – even now I will never be able to forget this.”⁴⁰ According to Yayutz’s grandson, this embarrassment was enough that Yayutz eventually had her tattoo removed in the metropolis.⁴¹

Photos taken at this time show Yayutz walking with the officials leading the tour group. One report described the scene as chaotic, with many people lined up along the road to watch the procession. In [Figure 6](#), Yayutz is at the center of the group. Walking next to her, holding an umbrella, is Shige the proprietress of Hanseikan (繁星館),⁴² the *ryokan* where Yayutz was staying and which was famous during the Taisho period.⁴³ On the right of Yayutz is Shige’s daughter. Shige, the proprietress, seems to have taken Yayutz under her wing due to Yayutz’s discomfort at being the only female member in the tour group of men. At Akasakamitsuke Shige came to meet her, and Yayutz was said to be happy for the female company, as it had been embarrassing

⁴⁰Bleyh 1933, 439.

⁴¹Chen 2014b.

⁴²See crd.ndl.go.jp/reference/modules/d3ndlcrdentry/index.php?page=ref_view&ldtl=1&dtlts=1&mcmd=25&st=update&asc=desc&fi=2_2&tt=2210008&tt_lk=1&tcd=2210008&tcd_lk=1&id=1000142773 (accessed 15 December 2014).

⁴³An article in *Fūzoku gahō* (5 June 1912) described Yayutz as walking hand-in-hand with the mistress of the Hanseikan while they were sightseeing on 5 May (p. 16).



Figure 5. Yayutz Bleh pictured in Tokyo in May 1912 at the *ryokan* Hanseikan, where the tour group was staying. (Credit: *Fujin gahō* 1912, 41)

being the only girl. “Yayutz attached herself to the proprietress and walked under the same umbrella as her.”⁴⁴

Despite her unease with her appearance,⁴⁵ her employment by the colonial government and her marriage to a Japanese man led to deferential treatment. According to one newspaper, “since she came to the capital, the bureaucrat Yayutz of the much-talked-about love affair has been invited along with the landlady of her hotel to the estate of Count Shimazu.”⁴⁶ Another report described her as follows:

Among the group there is one star, a beautiful woman with a tattooed face, Yayutsu Beriya [*sic*] wears a patterned kimono and carries a dark crimson parasol. Along with the police officers she oversees numerous things and is always busy, she is seen as the right-hand person in charge.⁴⁷

Hints of this deferential treatment are illustrated in a photograph of Yayutz in a Ginza café during her visit to the metropolis (Figure 8). Yayutz’s kimono-clad body and laughing face distinguish her from the three other Taiwanese Aborigines pictured in the photo (to the right) in their native dress. Yayutz’s merriment, shared with her Japanese male companions, as well as the position of her body,

⁴⁴“Taiwan seiban no naichi kankō” 1912, 299.

⁴⁵Yayutz was reportedly embarrassed by her tattoo, which went from her mouth to her ears. It was noted that she wore a scarf to cover the tattoo.

⁴⁶TNNS, 26 May 1912.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 1 June 1912.



(目頭の社十四族ルヤイヌ) 行一名二十五團光觀蕃生るせ京入

Figure 6. Proprietress of Hanseikan identified as Shige holding an umbrella (left) and Yayutz (middle) with Shige's daughter on the right, walking down the street in Tokyo on 5 May 1912. The caption of the postcard reads, "The Savage Tour Group that has entered Tokyo has fifty-two people in its group (chiefs from forty Atayal villages)." An article in *Nihon* (6 May 1912), "Asakusa kenbutsu," gives the name of the proprietress of the *ryokan* Hanseikan as Shige and identifies her daughter as the woman walking to the right of Yayutz. (Credit: Courtesy of National Central Library [Taiwan Collection], Taipei, Taiwan)

facing away from the other Aborigines, illustrates her coeval position with the Japanese. The picture of Yayutz printed in *Niko niko* (Smile) magazine shows a rare moment where Yayutz is completely off guard. She is candid and her eyes are the only ones not looking directly at the camera. Yayutz remarked in an article accompanying the photo that it would not do if they were not smiling in the photo because it was being published after all in a magazine called *Smile*. When you contrast this photograph with the picture published in *Fujin gahō* (Figure 5) it is clear that despite Yayutz's apprehension about being an oddity to be stared at, she did have moments when she was carefree.

In all of the media coverage of Yayutz's presence in the metropolis, the continual references to Yayutz's civilized behavior were emphasized, from repeated references to her fluency in Japanese to admiring comments in newspapers about her signature being proof of her civilized ways. (The association between a signature and civilized behavior was not unusual. Throughout my research I found newspapers that printed the signatures of Ainu written in their own hand.) (Figure 9)

After her return to Taiwan, a thank you note she sent to Internal Affairs official Tayama Yasujiro was printed in newspapers in Japan. The note read, "We arrived back to Taiwan without incident. Thank you for helping me enjoy my stay. In Taipei it is raining; the climate is better in the metropolis."⁴⁸ Her thank you note was more akin to someone thanking a host for their hospitality rather than a formal letter from an employee of the colonial government. This contrasts with sensationalized efforts – comments on her signature, for instance – that aimed to show that this

⁴⁸*Tokyo asahi*, 20 June 1912; TNSN, 25 June 1912.

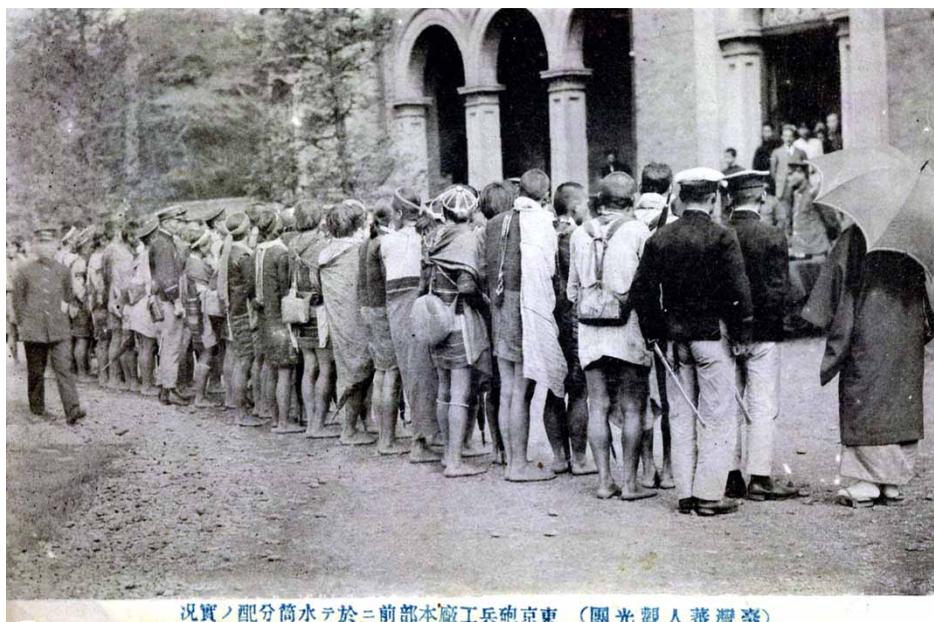


Figure 7. Tour group with Yayutz on the right holding an umbrella in Tokyo on May 1, 1912. The caption on the postcard reads: “[Taiwan Savage Tour Group] The actual scene in front of the head branch of the Tokyo Artillery Arsenal when water bottles were being distributed.” (Credit: Courtesy of National Central Library [Taiwan Collection], Taipei, Taiwan)



Figure 8. Yayutz in a Ginza café in Tokyo in May 1912. Yayutz is pictured laughing on the left-hand side, with her face slightly turned. (Credit: *Niko niko* 1912)

woman who had a tattoo and could speak fluent Japanese was in fact really civilized. No wonder Yayutz hid her tattoo and was ill at ease in crowds of spectators who wanted to see her face. As much as the colonial government would later praise her for helping educate Atayal by teaching

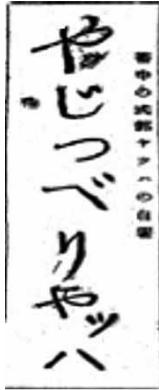


Figure 9. Yayutz’s name written in her own hand was offered as proof of her “civilization.” (Credit: “Seiban nyūkyō ikkō go jū nin” 1912, 3)

them Japanese – and teaching the Atayal language to Japanese – in many ways Yayutz was clearly displayed as a spectacle of the colonial subject. Beneath every layer of media praise was a subtext that reminded the reader that this was really too unbelievable to believe.

Yayutz’s Time in the Metropolis

According to Yayutz’s grandson, at some point after Yayutz and Chūzō married in 1910 Yayutz transferred to a girl’s school in Kyoto. Due to her tattoos, people in Kyoto were curious and surprised when they saw her. In Kyoto she began working for the Japanese colonial government, first as a sergeant, then an internal officer; later she was involved in integrating Aboriginal affairs.⁴⁹

On life in Kyoto during her short stay,⁵⁰ she remarked,

At first because I didn’t know one thing about the metropolitan lifestyle when I went to buy vegetables, or went shopping at the general store, I didn’t understand anything at all and so I was very much in trouble. That wasn’t all, I didn’t know how to wear a kimono, and didn’t know how to tie it so when I had to wear a kimono I asked how to do it at the dressmaker’s. Because I didn’t know how to wear a kimono and how to tie an obi it was extremely distressing. As the days went by, I became a little more accustomed to the metropolitan lifestyle. Although I began to enjoy myself a little bit more and more and although I had thought that I wanted to adapt to the customs and the lifestyle of the metropolis it was early in this time that my husband had died and it was extremely regrettable.⁵¹

Yayutz’s recollections about her time in the metropolis show a progression from her initial experiences in Taipei. In Taipei Yayutz had been embarrassed by her tattoo and was singled out by her Taiwanese classmates. In the metropolis, Yayutz had her tattoo removed a year after enrolling in the girl’s school.⁵² Interestingly, in her own writings Yayutz never mentions the removal of her tattoo; her concerns seem more mundane: how to wear a kimono and how to shop in the grocery store. Evidently

⁴⁹Chen 2014b.

⁵⁰While I have been unable to find additional details about when and for how long Yayutz lived in Kyoto, her writing makes it clear that she lived in the metropolis for only a short time. Although in her writing Yayutz refers to her time in Japan as her “time in the metropolis,” Chen asserts that she had lived in Kyoto, making it reasonable to assume that she is referring to her time in Kyoto.

⁵¹Bleyh 1933, 438–439.

⁵²Chen 2014b.

adjusting to metropolitan lifestyle encompassed more than just speaking the language (in which Yayutz was now fluent): it was the small everyday things that separated Yayutz from other Japanese.

Chūzō's Death

Yayutz's writings seem to suggest that she had to leave Japan due to her husband's death. It is unclear, however, from talking to Yayutz's grandson, whether she had lived in Japan sometime between 1910 and April–May 1912 (when she came from Taiwan with the tour group). The second possibility for when she lived in Japan is sometime between May 1912 and her husband's death in 1913. Complicating matters in determining when she lived in Japan is the fact the newspapers all suggest that she was not at her husband's side when he died. In fact, by April of 1913, while Chūzō was bedridden in Kyoto, he continued to send to Yayutz, who was in Taiwan, fifteen yen a month for school supplies and other expenses, and they exchanged photos. The climate in Taiwan was not suitable for his health so he had to stay in Japan. It was reported that she remained in Taiwan because of her elderly father, but that with her impending graduation, it was now thought to be an appropriate time for her to go to Japan. Yayutz implored him many times to let her come visit and these requests moved him. In April 1913 Chūzō made arrangements with a man identified as Honda, who was the *America* ship's purser, promising to compensate him for Yayutz's safe passage back to Japan.⁵³ According to a couple of reports in April 1913, Chūzō and Yayutz were planning to have a wedding ceremony after she returned to Japan.⁵⁴ This suggests that although she was called Chūzō's wife (*tsuma*), their marriage had never been officially celebrated. Nine days later, the same paper reported that Yayutz's trip to Japan was going to be delayed. The newspaper report stated that not only was the Aboriginal Administration office not happy that Yayutz wanted to return to Kyoto, but furthermore, *seiban* (barbarians) were still not allowed to live in the metropolis. Therefore, even though Yayutz worked for the colonial government, the government demanded more paperwork detailing the course of their relationship. This delayed Yayutz's journey to Japan.⁵⁵

The next mention of Yayutz was in July 1913 when a reporter found her in the third-class section of a ship bound for Japan. Overwhelmed with grief, Yayutz had received a telegram notifying her that her husband was critically ill. The newspaper reporter revealed that the colonial government had accepted her request to go and nurse him.⁵⁶ No further mention was made of a formal wedding.⁵⁷ Chūzō died that year. Chūzō's relatives recall there was interest in her not just because she was an Aborigine, but also because the people of Kyoto remembered her and could not help but sympathize with her.⁵⁸

A Colonial Government Official

Yayutz graduated from the national language high school in Taipei in 1914, the year after Chūzō's death. Around this time, she started to assist linguist Ogawa Naoyoshi in his studies of the Atayal language. She continued her association with him and with his family until her death.⁵⁹ On

⁵³ *Osaka mainichi*, 19 April 1913; 28 April 1913.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 19 April 1913.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 28 April 1913.

⁵⁶ *Tokyo asahi*, 13 July 1913.

⁵⁷ Nakano remarked that while she appeared to be an actual wife (*genchi tsuma*), in reality she was not (1981a, 20).

⁵⁸ Nakano 1981a, 22.

⁵⁹ Nojima 2001, 51. Yayutz's grandson later told me that when his father – who had been adopted by Yayutz – studied in Japan, one of his professors was Ogawa. See Chen 2014b.



Figure 10. Yayutz pictured when she worked as an instructor at Neihengping Aborigine Language Institute. This photograph was taken sometime between 1915 (when she was transferred to Hsinchu Province) and 1920 (when the book with this photograph was first published). (Credit: *Taiwan sōtokufu banzoku chōsakai banzoku chōsa hōkokusho* 1920)

6 September 1915, she was transferred to Hsinchu Province (新竹) and was ordered to work at the Sugina branch office (樹杞林支庁), currently Zhudong (竹東町). She was also appointed as a lecturer and translator official at the Neihengping Aboriginal Language Institute (内横屏蕃語講習所 / Neiheipin), where she taught Japanese officials the Atayal language. (See Figure 10.) In addition, she taught Japanese to Aborigines who had been selected to be police officers. This institute, also functioned in the same capacity as a village office, for it was in charge of administrative affairs of the mountainous regions of the Taozhumiao region (桃竹苗地區).⁶⁰

Because of her work at Neihengping, it was said that not one official in the savage lands of the Hsinchu Province had not received instruction from her.⁶¹ In Figure 10 Yayutz's white clothing makes her the focal point amid the darkly clothed Japanese police officers and Aborigines figures.

Although documentation about her work at Neihengping is sparse, in 1917 Yayutz reportedly attended the sixth annual inauguration ceremony for the Neihengping Aboriginal Language Institute in Hsinchu Province – along with several high-ranking colonial officials – to commemorate the admittance of seventeen Japanese students. After the ceremony, fifty Aborigine men and women of influence from neighboring settlements who had also attended the ceremony received official government orders; afterward they were all given souvenirs to bring back to their villages.⁶²

⁶⁰Kang 2009, 419. Taozhumiao is an abbreviation that refers to the Taoyuan, Hsinchu, and Miaoli regions of Taiwan.

⁶¹Takezawa 1932, 7.

⁶²TNNS, 4 December 1917.



Figure 11. Yayutz seated on the right with the tour group on 5 May 1912. The postcard caption reads, “[Taiwan Savage Tour Group] The commemorative photograph taken inside the Tokyo Nihonbashi Shirokiya Department Store.” This postcard depicts the April–May 1912 tour group. The caption of the postcard is written in the same style as the postcard in Figure 7. Furthermore, the number of participants pictured, fifty (including Yayutz), just about matches the fifty-two number given for the tour group. Lastly, according to a newspaper report in *Nihon* on 6 May 1912, the tour group visited Shirokiya Department Store on 5 May.

In 1918 Yayutz, came once again to Japan as a translator for another tour group. On this occasion, she visited Chūzō’s grave and saw his family. Chūzō’s father (his mother had died in 1901) and brothers went to meet her at the port as they had many things they wanted to talk with her about.⁶³

This very intertwining of personal and public life – with Yayutz seeing Chūzō’s family members and visiting his grave while also working as a translator for a tour group – can also be seen in the visual record. The postcard shown in Figure 11 was meant for public sale, while the photo of Yayutz in Figure 12 was of a personal nature. These dual characteristics – a mass consumption item vs. a personal memento – show that Yayutz’s position in the empire was not just that of a model colonial subject, or in the case of the tours, a translator. She also had deep ties with the Nakano family, as their possession of her photograph demonstrates. In their eyes she was a daughter-in-law and, in the case of Chūzō’s nephew, Nakano Takashi, an aunt. The dual representations of Yayutz are further amplified because she is wearing the exact same clothing in both pictures. As the medium of the image featuring Yayutz changes – as a postcard or personal portrait – what the image signifies changes as well. Despite the change in medium, however, Yayutz remains the same, as the continuity in her physical appearance reminds us. Writing about his Atayal aunt, Nakano Takashi recalled meeting her at the end of the Taishō period when he was

⁶³*Tokyo asahi*, 25 April 1918.



Figure 12. Formal portrait of Yayutz in Nakano Takashi's family album in Kyoto. Yayutz is dressed in the same clothing she is wearing in the commemorative photo taken at Shirokiya department store (Figure 11) taken in May 1912. However, Nakano Takashi dates the photo as being taken in 1913 after Nakano Chūzō had returned to Kyoto due to his illness and when Yayutz had come to Kyoto to visit him. Nakano notes that in comparison to her appearance in Figure 10, Yayutz is younger looking and her face is drawn (due to concern over her husband). (Credit: Nakano 1981, 38)

around five years old.⁶⁴ He and his mother were eating at a restaurant when the waitress told them that a strange dark-skinned woman with a tattooed forehead – wearing Japanese clothes and speaking Japanese – had to come to see them. His mother rose to greet the woman. Nakano wrote, “I grew brave although I was very young. I still hid behind [my mother’s] kimono, but peeked through the lower region of her sleeve and what I saw I clearly remember.”

“Are you not Yajutsu [*sic*]?” said his mother, suddenly seeming to understand.

“I am Yajutsu Beriya [*sic*]. It has been a long time. I have come to visit you,” she replied in a polite manner, and my mother treated her as any normal guest. I was very surprised but calmed down when I saw that she was deserving of respect.⁶⁵

Years later relatives confirmed the circumstances of her visit. Yayutz had been working as a translator for a tour group that had come to Japan. When she arrived in Kyoto, she had slipped out of the hotel and visited Nakano’s mother, who was the same age as her.⁶⁶

Details about Yayutz’s work for the colonial government are clearly defined at the start and end of her employment with the government. In the early Taishō period, she instructed police

⁶⁴Nakano 1981b, 38.

⁶⁵Nakano 1981a, 17–18.

⁶⁶Nakano 1981b, 38.

officers in the Atayal language and toward the end of her life she was teaching Atayal children Japanese in the remote regions of Taiwan where she had been raised as a child.⁶⁷

In 1930 one of Chūzō's relatives, Chūjirō, who was in the imperial navy, tried to find Yayutz when their ship stopped in the port of Keelung, Taiwan. Ship personnel were allowed to hike Mt. Jiabon (角板山 / Kappanzan), near Yayutz's birthplace. Chūjirō talked to a waitress at their lodging about Yayutz and mentioned his connection to Chūzō. To his surprise the waitress knew of her and said that she was teaching in the elementary schools in the area. Sending an express messenger to tell Yayutz that one of her relatives was in the area would have taken three days round trip. Chūjirō had to return to the ship the following day and was disappointed not to be able to see her.⁶⁸

Details about Yayutz's work in language education and her work as translator are clear, but information about her other positions in the colonial government between 1915 and the 1930s are murkier. Yayutz's grandson says that when she was around 30 years old she became the assistant in charge of Aboriginal Affairs in the Taiwan governor general's office (Section 1, Bureau 1) (台灣總督府第一局第一課原住民事務). Ten years later, she was promoted to be in charge of this office.⁶⁹ I have not yet found colonial government records that corroborate this information, but several key pieces of evidence indicate that she indeed held a high position of power in the colonial government, beyond that of a translator. First, she was one of the highest paid, if not highest paid, female Aboriginal employees. Tracing colonial documents that record her pay, her pay increased almost without fail each year. Starting in 1912, the first year her salary was recorded, Yayutz was paid three yen a month. In the years that followed her monthly salary increased from eight yen in 1913 to sixty-two yen in 1926 and 1927 (twice the amount that male Aboriginal patrol officers [*jūnsa*] earned).⁷⁰ Her grandson says that Yayutz's monthly salary was closer to about 100 yen. He recalls that she saved over 5000 yen, all of which she gave to her son. To put this into context, her grandson relayed that his father as a civil engineer made about eighteen yen a month, meaning it would take him twenty-three years to earn the money Yayutz had saved.⁷¹ When the Nakano family business fell on hard times, long after Chūzō's death, Yayutz continued to send money to his relatives in Kyoto.⁷²

A photograph of Yayutz in her grandson's possession (Figure 13) is another indication of her elevated position in the colonial government. The photo of Yayutz in her thirties shows her in a position of authority: not only is she seated in the front row, but she is in the center seat, which according to Japanese photo etiquette is usually reserved for the most important person in the group.⁷³ Her tailor-made colonial uniform, designed for a woman, illustrates that she was a colonial government official, not a mere indigenous attaché.⁷⁴

Lastly, and perhaps most convincingly, the oral stories told about Yayutz even today in her home village attest to her high status. When she died in 1932, a grand and elaborate funeral

⁶⁷In their book *Seibanki*, published in 1926, Inoue Inosuke and Uchimura Kanzō described a visit with Yayutz in the school where she was teaching Japanese to Atayal children. Inoue and Uchimura 1926, 146; Nakano 1981b, 40.

⁶⁸Ibid., 39–40.

⁶⁹Chen 2014b.

⁷⁰Taiwan sōtokufu minseibu keisatsu honsho, 1912, 60; 1913, 53; 1914, 56; 1915, 57, 1916, 218; 1917, 226; 1918, 234; 1919, 262; 1920, 266; 1921, 269, 1922, 279; 1923, 287; 1924, 292; 1925, 279; 1926, 290; 1927, 304.

⁷¹Chen 2014b.

⁷²Inoue and Uchimura 1926, 146.

⁷³Chen 2014a.

⁷⁴In all the numerous photographs I have seen of the Japanese colonial period, this is the first one that shows a Japanese colonial uniform designed for a woman.



Figure 13. Photo of Yayutz in her thirties, seated in the center of police officers in Taiwan, in Chen's father's photo album. The description underneath the photo reads in Chinese *yimu* (義母 / foster mother) and then in Japanese katakana "Yayutsu Beriya [*sic*]." (Credit: Courtesy of Chen Xing Sheng)

was held in Taiwan in her honor and a substantial stone monument marked her gravesite.⁷⁵ Her influence reportedly was so great in the Taozhumiao region that Japanese and Atayal people all readily bowed to her judgments when resolving conflicts between the two groups.⁷⁶ In 2007, Atayal Watan Pilaw recounted stories about Yayutz heard from other senior Atayal elders. The Atayal respected Yayutz highly due to her achievements. She was remembered as a very tall and strong Atayal lady with tattoos on her face. According to the elders' stories, whenever she came to her home in Qara village, police officers carried her in a sedan chair and assisted her when she got out to walk. Most of the Atayal people could only watch her from afar; they could not approach her. They also had to line up and salute her, welcoming her when her sedan chair passed by.⁷⁷

Yayutz's sudden death in 1932 shocked those who had had seen her recently in good health. According to Boya Maray, Japanese officials sent Yayutz's body back to Fuxing along the push-car railway. All the Atayal people wore white (mourning) clothes and

⁷⁵At this time the Japanese government had banned the traditional Atayal practice of burying bodies underneath houses, thus Yayutz's body was interred in a cemetery. The colonial government had ordered a special gravestone made from granite. The gravestone, which stands at least three feet tall, was shipped from Japan to the remote mountains of Fuxing, Taiwan, several years after her death.

⁷⁶Chen 2013.

⁷⁷Kang 2009, 420.

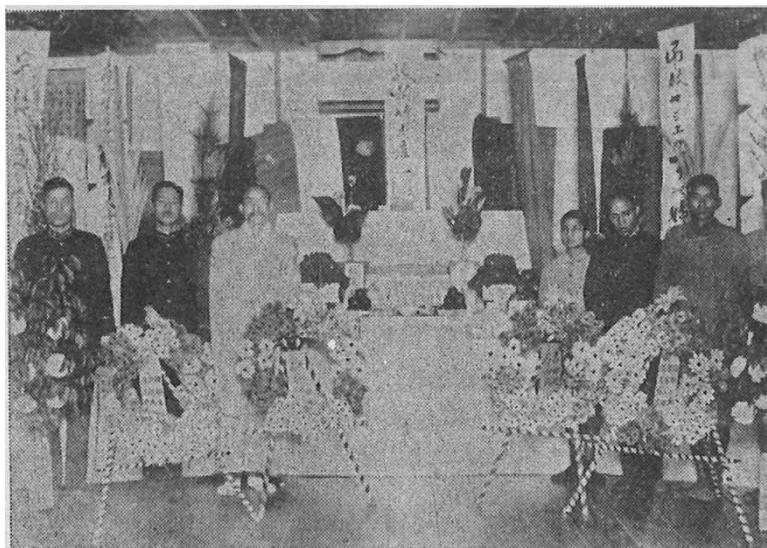


Figure 14. Photo of Yayutz's funeral in Taiwan in 1932. From Nakano Takashi's family album in Kyoto. Flower wreaths from "all the savage children" and "from all the students of the savage language" are arranged in front of her coffin, which is in the center of the photo. Nakano Takashi wrote that he believed her funeral was most likely held in the classroom where Yayutz had taught in Taiwan. Note that the chart in the background of the photo shows the fifty sounds of the Japanese language. (Credit: Nakano 1981, 42)

gloves, and lined up on the both sides of the track in order to pay their respect and condolences as her body passed by.

Yayutz's nephew in Japan, Nakano Takashi, recalled finding a photograph of her funeral among his mother's belongings, along with a card announcing her death. (His mother was the woman Yayutz had met in the restaurant.) (Figure 14). The photo of her funeral, which was held in a classroom, shows four Aborigine children and three Japanese police officers. White flags in the background read "From all the Aborigine children" and "From all students of the Aborigine language."⁷⁸ The eulogy the police department wrote revealed that the several thousand yen Yayutz had saved was being given to her adopted son, who was known as Tsutomu, ensuring him "a happy and prosperous future." Tsutomu was a sixth-grade elementary student at that time.⁷⁹

The lengthy inscription on Yayutz's gravestone praised her as honest, pretty, intelligent, and "elegant, with a tattooed face." After listing her efforts in education, primarily her language teaching, Yayutz's chastity is mentioned. She is praised because she never remarried after Chūzō's death, but instead devoted her energy to teaching and writing. Some of her ashes were buried in Japan, next to her husband Chūzō's gravesite in Kyoto, a place their son visited often. In Taiwan Yayutz's burial site was located at the Toujiao tribe's cemetery for the Atayal people.⁸⁰

⁷⁸Nakano 1981b, 41–42.

⁷⁹Takezawa 1932, 7.

⁸⁰Kang 2009, 423.

Conclusion

While no one alive today remembers her directly, her name and the stories associated with her activities in the region are still passed on. One Atayal elder told me during the Japanese colonial period that although she had never met Yayutz, her Japanese teacher would take her elementary class to visit Yayutz's gravesite. There they would learn about a remarkable Atayal woman who had married a Japanese man and had done a lot for the Atayal people.

Yayutz's story is one of competing narratives. In the metropolis, the image that resonated with everyday people was that of a sensational love story. The Shizuma Shōjirō company, which was part of the New School (*shinpa*) movement, produced a *sōshi shiba* ("a type of play that began dramatizing contemporary material in the news, and eventually established itself as the Shinpa tragedy style toward the beginning of the Taishō Period (1912–26)") based on Yayutz and Chūzō's life. The play, which Chūzō's father attended, was performed before large audiences in Kyoto's Minamiza and Meijiza theaters.⁸¹ But in the eyes of the Japanese colonial government, Yayutz was eulogized as the "sole pioneer [*senkusha*] in the northern savage territories." She is remembered for her work in education, though visual images and oral history hint that Yayutz's position in the colonial government was far greater than that of an instructor.

Rather than opt for one story over the other, it is best to recognize that Yayutz's position was a liminal one: neither here nor there, but somewhere betwixt and between. Her own writing illustrates this liminal position, as do the memories about her that are kept alive in both Japan and Taiwan, as well as the burial sites located in both countries.

Remarkably, her own writing in her high school commemorative book mentions little about the most sensationalized aspect of her life: her husband. She gives no details about meeting her husband or their life together. She briefly describes his death and says that she had to leave the metropolis. That is all. Given that her account was written for a memorial book on the No. 3 Girl's High School in Taipei, it is perhaps fitting that Yayutz dwells on her experiences in education and teaching (the article is after all titled: "A Teacher of the Aboriginal Language and Various Recollections"). However, it is the silences that stand out. Her failure to mention her husband is notable because in all the written documents and oral history about her, it was the meeting of her husband and their romance that had been the most publicized aspect of her life. Meeting her husband triggered her move to Taipei, the start of her studies, and her later employment with the colonial government. When she speaks about leaving the mountains and entering school it is never explained why she was there studying in Taipei in the first place. Her silence might indicate perhaps a desire to protect what was most close to her heart or that she did not – as the colonial authorities often did – define herself in relation to her husband. In her writing, Yayutz's primary struggle was with the trials and tribulations involved in her attempts to learn Japanese and fit into a different world.

Yayutz's writing illustrates the insecurities inherent in her liminal position especially with regard to living in the metropolis, or being singled out in school by her Taiwanese classmates. On the other hand, her use of *seiban* (barbarian) throughout her writing to talk not only about where she grew up, but what she was called in school, demonstrates an internalization of the colonizer's rhetoric.

⁸¹Nakano 1981a, 20, and see www.performingarts.jp/E/overview_art/1005_06/1.html (accessed 16 December 2014). Political activists who performed *sōshi shiba* promoted the democratic ideals of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement and were known for dramatizing contemporary material in the news during the Taishō period. I have been unable to locate the name of the play that was based on their love story, but will keep searching.

Both sides of Yayutz's family have kept alive the duality of her memory. On the Nakano side, her nephew describes the close ties Yayutz had to their family. Nakano Takashi wrote of his treasured mementos of his Atayal aunt: a photograph of Yayutz standing, dressed formally in a kimono; another photo of her funeral. In Taiwan, Yayutz's grandson's memories of his father telling him about his grandparents, as well as the stories of the Atayal elders in Fuxing village describe a woman of status who helped the Atayal people and was highly respected. During my visit to Fuxing, I asked the elders as well as Yayutz's grandson, what impression the Atayal people had of her and how Yayutz viewed herself: as Japanese or Atayal. Responding to my first question, the elders all had nothing but good to say about her, emphasizing that she was the one who was sent to mediate the problems that arose between the Japanese officials and other Atayal. Yayutz would always rule fairly, they said, and never against the Atayal's best interest. Whatever she decided, the Japanese accepted. Her grandson added that she never denied requests from the Atayal people and she tried her best to foster good relations between both the Atayal people and the Japanese.⁸² With respect to the second question, how did Yayutz view herself, her grandson replied that she always viewed herself as an Atayal and never thought of herself as Japanese. He remarked that she always tried to understand her people's way of life and customs and was the bridge that connected the Japanese and the Aborigines.

Perhaps, this then is the legacy of colonial subjects that is often elided. In the rush to define and categorize, to represent and symbolize, the very transitional nature of colonial identity as a process that is ongoing and never complete is obfuscated. For someone of Yayutz's status appeared differently to different people and she is thus remembered in different ways. This very multiplicity about her life and the competing refractions of her and her image illustrate the destructive and reconstructive forces of colonialism. Trying to piece together these refractions into one coherent image requires dismissing the aspects that do not fit a specific narrative. Trying to smooth out the wrinkles actually works to obscure that it is these very discrepancies that remind us importantly of the colonial context in which people like Yayutz lived. Therefore, I argue it is the journey and not the destination that clearly matters in attempts to understand the larger concern of whether one can write histories of colonial subjects. For whatever composite image of Yayutz that may emerge it is necessarily incomplete, being an inevitable byproduct of obfuscations and reconstructions inherent in the colonial archive. Moreover, Yayutz's grandson told me that his father had recounted many love stories about his grandparents: stories about Yayutz's time in Kyoto and even about their lives together after they married and she was working. He has kept many of these stories private, as is the right of a grandson who holds the stories of his father close to his heart. It is the role of the historian to utilize other sources and techniques to try to sharpen the contours of the images of colonial subjects. Histories of colonial subjects must be written. Colonial subjects such as Yayutz run the risk of being forgotten – and their stories deemed unwritable – if historians decide that the evidence is insufficient.

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⁸²Chen 2014b.

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