懷舊：一個被建構的歷史

Why Should Nostalgia Exist at all？
The Secrets from the Past

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摘要

文化認同與歷史記憶是當代台灣文化重要的議題，同時台灣建築專業亦強調歷史建築對城市地景與形塑共同記憶的重要性。這樣的堅持也意涵著歷史是客觀的且不可變。然而，後結構論述宣稱歷史是一被建構的事實，是一社會產物，並非一客觀且中立的事實客體，因此當歷史成為文化生產的基礎，同時亦須揭露其中所隱藏的政治意圖(the political intention)。本文企圖從布希亞的「擬像秩序」檢視歷史再現的本質。當台灣建築文化強調歷史性的同時，本文指出所謂的歷史再呈現(re-present)並不符合「再現」(representation) 法則，而是如同布希亞所宣稱，歷史的再呈現與任何事實並無關聯，它是純粹的擬仿物，有效地誘惑主觀意識沉溺於某種無意義的懷舊氛圍。

關鍵字：懷舊、歷史、擬仿物、擬像、布希亞

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Abstract

This paper develops a new understanding of the relationship between architecture and cultural identity that is often elaborated on the basis of the grand narrative of history. While nostalgic sentiment has come into being, there are certain attempts, theories and practices of reviving our historical past. Likewise, Taiwanese architects and theorists often stress the importance of integrating historical elements of a city or building into new architectural design as a way of generating a city's totality and a cure for sustaining or restoring collective memory as if our sense of history is universally and objectively determined.

Nevertheless, when history is considered as a *re*-constructive product of power/knowledge exercises, its unchangeable nature is untenable. Fredric Jameson has implied that the political might be more privileged than the historical. While history serves as a prior source of governing cultural patterns and making cultural artefacts, we shall not omit the political implication that history serves as a mechanism of producing knowledge and shaping cultural identity. In no sense can history be more "autonomic" and "privileged" than other political apparatuses that also have effects on our cultural identity and its representation.

As poststructuralist historicism argues, the past can never have the capacity to reveal itself again, or repeat the primitive originality of itself, to the present world. Instead, the past is endlessly deferred in images that are deployed to amount to the same thing. History has lost its meaning and been mutated into a pure object. Those signs or images about the past are not the historical, but the simulative, *simulacra* as Jean Baudrillard claims. Taiwanese architecture appears to anticipate a return to tradition, to generate an atmosphere of the historical, but in reality is trapped in symbolic exoticism. Such a nostalgic symbolism is not dominated by the logic of representation but by the logic of simulation. It bears no relation to any reality. It is its own pure simulacrum, and has turned itself into a hyperreal world, as an alternative world, that effectively seduces the subjects into an illusive nostalgic sentiment.

I. The Resurrection of the Past

Besides the place-related theme, our cultural identity is also expressed by a notion of shared historical backgrounds. Doreen Massey suggests that "debates over how to think the relationship between past, present and future can help us to reinvigorate the way in which we conceptualise geographical places (Massey, 1995: 186)." She also indicates that "the assertion of any place-bound identity has to rest at some point on the motivational power of tradition (Massey, 1995: 184)." Each claim of or attempt at identity-definition depends on presenting a particular reading of that history (Massey, 1995: 188-189). As Homi Bhabha points out "[t]he recognition that tradition bestows is a partial form of identification (Bhabha, 1994: 2)." However, Massey claims that there is a felt dislocation between the past and the present, the I and the world (Massey, 1995: 182). As Christine M. Boyer claims, "[a] memory crisis is provoked, perhaps, by the very desire to establish a rupture, to break with recent traditions, to slay the father as the modernists did and the postmodernists propose (Boyer, 1996: 26)." "To neglect history, to neglect memory, that which is owed to our ancestors, is then to deny oneself; it is to begin suicide (quoted by Boyer, 1996: 16)." Such an awareness of memory crisis leads to an urgency: the return to where we got lost and where our encounters with discontinuity and incoherence started.

Confronting memory crisis, a city, as a place of everyday experience, has to be imbued with a historical sensibility. Many have looked at the past as a solution to the anxiety of city totality and coherence. A complex and purposefully selective process of historical collection is an apparent task for the development of most metropolitan cities in order to reconstitute an identity through constructing the coherence of their cityscapes. Inspired by Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, Boyer claims that "[a]ddressed to the eye of vision and to the soul of memory, a city's streets, monuments, and architectural forms often contain grand discourses on history (Boyer, 1996: 31)." Yi-fu Tuan also suggests, to strengthen our sense of self and of identity the past needs to be rescued and made accessible (Tuan, 1977: 187). Not only are historical monuments and historical remnants preserved, but also the elements derived from these historical buildings have to be applied to new architecture. In attempting to create the uniformity of a city, retaining the visible marks of the passage of time and symbolising and totalising a cultural identity, most regionalist architects in Taiwan have the desire to recapture historical scenes. In this era, lacking in substantial references on which our identity can be

substantively projected, nostalgia has taken on its full meaning. There have been many debates, opinions and efforts, from both outside and within academic realms, to preserve and restore Taiwan's many, but neglected, historical heritages.

Many Taiwanese architectural professionals have stressed how the valuable aspects of Taiwanese architectural heritages have to be preserved and how these historical images have to be applied to new buildings. They often suggest that the development of a city should follow its historical track and had best preserve historical heritages in order to reinforce the collective memory of the city. Among governmental policies, the Cultural Heritage Preservation Law （文化資產保存法） requires local government to stop any plans to demolish potential heritage sites, and to ask academic scholars to review their statuses. It is suggested that, in the course of urban growth and development, historical heritages have to be preserved in order to represent the city's collective memory and experience. There are certain buildings that are regarded as pivotal to cultural heritages standing in the centre of metropolitan cities in Taiwan. Such buildings as the Chienkuo Beer Factory （建國啤酒廠）, built by a Japanese colony, are labelled as city historical landmarks, spiritually unifying totems, in a highly transnational and hybrid city. As Yu Chao-ching （喻肇青） asserts "[t]he preservation of the mansion (the Chienkuo Beer Factory) is not merely based on nostalgia for the past. The site also provides citizens with an image to remember Taipei's glorious history by (Lin, 2000)." The preservation of Longsheng Sanatorium （樂生療養院）, built in 1930 during the Japanese occupation, becomes "a new kind of consciousness that deals with local culture, local history," according to John Liu （劉可強）(Brownlow, 2007). Those historical heritages have appeared too important to be left to image-making, while people's nostalgic sentiment emerges.

A city's history has to be used as the resource for the future development of the city's centre in order to reproduce the Taiwanese collective identity (Too, 1997: 82). As Wang Chun-hsiung （王俊雄） claims, "[a] process of de-geometrization, the return of history becomes one of the most important defenses against architectural geometrization because it enables us to identify with our culture once again (Wang, 1997: 75)." Taiwanese architects endeavour to create a modern structure that is based on the principle of traditional architectural formalism and show a contemporary style within the framework of history (Wang, 1997: 75). Many Taiwanese architects have been trying to

bring about a solution of adjustment in a situation where, nevertheless, tradition has already lost its power over cultural representation. However, I would like to argue that their version of history is rather an essentialist one that conceives history as an unchanging truth. On the other hand, Taiwanese architecture appears to anticipate a return to tradition, to generate an atmosphere of history, but in reality is trapped in symbolic exoticism.

II. The Unseen Dimension

History echoes in our daily lives and penetrates our mind. One may notice that our behaviour in the present very largely follows traditional values and depends on our understanding of the past. Such theories as regionalism have appealed to recuperation of historical elements from the premise that cultural identity is necessarily accompanied by the representation of historical past. To mend the discontinuity of historical tracks, to construct imaginative roots, and to restore the lost collective memory, they have found their impetus to expressing nostalgic sentiment and evoking a romance of renaissance (Massey, 1995: 187). Richard Sennett claims that "[t]his is how traces of the need for a coherent identity remain through the connection between the panoramic past and a concrete thing cared about right now (Sennett, 1971: 127)." A cultural identity along with a sense of belonging is a result of the accumulation of everyday experiences and memories in relation to the past.

History is often cited to serve as the ground of ideas, values, and practices for the present as if history is universally and objectively determined. However, I would like to argue that this version of history is rather an essentialist one that conceives history as an unchanging truth. Joan Scott undertakes "democratic history," calling into question the orthodox mastery of history. As each generation could be said to reinvent its own past, there is no such thing as pure, fixed and singular history. History is no longer taken as a fact of "nature" that is irreducible. History does not reveal truth, but rather constructs truth. The past can never be repeated. History is not purely referential but is a *re*-constructive work that is related to the present context. History that we have received is thus not a "pure" narrative of the past after all. Rather, the construction of history is always involved with a more specific practice that is best termed the purposeful activity of reconstruction. The narration of history is about the remaking of the past.

Massey observes, "traditions do not only exist in the past. They are

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actively built in the present also (Massey, 1995: 184)." Stuart Hall claims that it is "[n]ot an identity grounded in archaeology, but in the *re-telling* of the past (Hall, 1990: 224)." As poststructuralist historicism argues, history should be conceived of as an "action" rather than an epistemology. Scott attempts to rethink history as an epistemological problem. She claims, "history is inherently political (Scott, 1989: 681)." She states that

> By "history," I mean not what happened, not what "truth" there is "out there" to be discovered and transmitted, but what we know about the past, what the rules and conventions are that govern the production and acceptance of the knowledge we designate as history (Scott, 1989: 681).

Fredric Jameson also implies that the political might be more privileged than the historical. History is a politically rooted project of reconstruction, of re-telling. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily re-tell "truth." A "truth" is politically constructed and contextually conceptualised. The act of reconstruction or representation is always engaged with a political purpose. Therefore, we can infer that the salvage of the disregarded debris of historical things is fraught with political intentions.

Perhaps, the substantial question we need to address here is not really the question of the facticity of some history; but rather the question of "historicity" – the knowledge of history itself, the relation of history to the present and the legitimacy of what and how we perceived as history. "[H]istory is powerful – rather than accurate or inaccurate – because knowledge about the past helps to construct knowledge in and for the present (Payne, ed al. 1998: 246)." History is not a "pure" thing. Such a political intention appears to have often been bypassed by historians by bringing scientific methods into the area of historiography. In other words, the reconstruction of history, by means of the advancement of present-day information technologies, can hardly be purely a technical matter. Modern historians attempt to narrate a true and objective picture of how the past must have been. However, there is always a hidden attempt. As Scott argues, "history is an interpretative practice, not an objective, neutral science (Scott, 1989: 690)." The premise of science has been the trick by which one can easily assert a cold, clear, value-free fact of the past as if the meaning of historical reality can be unprejudicedly congealed into social values or cultural representation. The action of reconstruction always bears on a certain political stances. What is at stake is not a technique for re-constructing or re-presenting the past, but a political intention participating in the process of reconstructing or representing history. In these senses, we can infer that history is not a "pure" thing. The act of reconstruction or representation is the play of

power and knowledge that compiles the lexicon of the past. The problem with history is no longer about the things that happened in the past; instead, it is about how the meanings or significations of the reconstructed things are understood. We should be aware of any mindless celebration of historical contents without seeing it as a part of political and cultural programs.

III. The Logic of Simulation

There are certain attempts, theories and practices of reviving our historical past while nostalgic sentiment has come into being. Nevertheless, bringing the past into being is always being engaged in a process of reconstruction. Reconstruction literally implies something that has been destroyed or disappeared, something that no longer exists. Baudrillard states the impossibility of the existence of the past. He claims that "[h]istory is our lost referential, that is to say our myth (Baudrillard, 2000: 43)." The term history indicates death, the death of events of the past, the death of objects, and even the death of history itself. The past can never have the capacity to reveal itself again, or repeat the primitive originality of itself, to the present world.

The meaning of history may have evaporated, but there is no lack of images that are intended to relive the past. The reconstruction of the past is not the recuperation of the events of the past. Rather, what appears to us are the "sediments" or "images" of the past in different forms and shapes, crossing over different representations. The disappearance of the past is endlessly deferred in images which are deployed to amount to the same thing. Those signs, images or texts about the past are not the historical, but the simulative, *simulacra* - "pastiches of the past" - "the identical copy for which no original has even existed (Jameson, 1993:74)." There is no lack of images referring to the past. History is caught in objects or images that make the past visible in order to constitute the connection of the present with the past. A world of simulation is created.

In Baudrillard's view, our world has moved from the order of representation to the order of simulation. "[W]e are in a logic of simulation, which no longer has anything to do with a logic of facts and an order of reason (Baudrilalrd, 2000: 16)." The real has nothing to do with representation, but has everything to do with pure simulacra. Iin other words, the signifier has been

disconnected form the signified. "Whereas representation attempts to absorb simulation by interpreting it as a false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itself as a simulacrum (Baudrilalrd, 2000: 6)." From now on, simulacra are the *real* for us. The principle of simulation and simulacrum governs now.

By means of simulation, we create the reality of lost referentials, of non-existence. Baudrillard indicates that "[t]o dissimulate is to pretend not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign to have what one doesn't have. One implies a presence, the other an absence (Baudrillard, 2000: 3)." In this sense, Baudrillard's theory might be the appropriate one to consider history which indicates the non-existence of the past. We require a visible past while nostalgic sentiment comes into being, and therefore we need to create this non-existent reality by means of simulation. History, spoken of in the name of absence of the past, makes its appearance and defers its death in the form of simulacra through simulation. The past is invented by simulation and duplicated through the form of simulacra, despite the lack of the substantial existence of the past. Only simulacra can meet our nostalgic sentiment. Jameson says:

> *But nostalgia art gives us the image of various generations of the past as fashionable plate images, which entertain no determinable ideological relationship to other moments of time: they are not the outcome of anything, nor the antecedents of our present, they are simply images (Jameson, 1989: 60).*

Similarly, Baudrillard indicates that "[i]ts reinjection (of the past) has no value as conscious awareness but only as nostalgia for a lost referential (Baudrillard, 2000: 44)." History, represented in different forms by different means of reproductive technologies, is an empty figure of representation or resemblance, to which no meanings or values are attached. Following Baudrillard's synopsis of the stages by which simulacra supplant reality,[2] we can infer that the reconstruction of the past is the reflection of a basic reality in the first stage. In the second stage, it perverts the reality and then masks the absence of the reality. In the final stage, the reconstruction of the past bears no relation to any reality. It is its own pure simulacrum. Hence, we can suggest that history is no longer about whether its content is true or false since truth,

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[2] Baudrillard charts the successive phases of how imulacra supplant reality: it is the reflection of a profound reality;it makes and denatures a profound reality;it makes the absence of a profound reality; it has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacra （Baudrillard, 2000: 6）.

references and objective causes have ceased to exist. Rather, it is about making a new reality – a *hyperreality* – living with the empty form of representation, empty of value.

IV. A Hyperreal World

The launching base for a new cultural order is dominated by simulation that creates a hyperreal world beyond the real, and where the system of representation that designates the meanings to signs disappears. Simulacra are pure images through simulation, *absolute manipulation*, *abyssal repetition*. Simulation resembles the real and supplants the real. Simulation, implicitly announcing the death of the past, creates a world of the images of the lost past. History has lost its meaning and been mutated into a pure object. Jameson refers the simulacra to the "pseudo-events" and "spectacles" of our time – a time "with a whole historically original consumers' appetite for a world transformed into sheer images of itself and for pseudo-events and 'spectacles' (Jameson, 1993: 74)." For Baudrillard, images have moved from the logic and order of representation to the logic and order of simulation. Baudrillard claims that it is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (Baudrillard, 2000: 12-13). Histories of the past are neither true nor false, but a pure images. "History has stopped meaning, referring to anything – whether you call it social space or the real. We have passed into a kind of hyper-real where things are replayed *ad infinitum* (Baudrillard, 2987: 69)."

Today the whole system is swamped by indeterminacy, and every reality is absorbed by the hyperreality of the code and simulation. The principle of simulation governs us now, rather than the outdated reality principles（Baudrillard, 1993: 2）." The real no longer precedes images. On the contrary, the images construct the real world. They define the real as maps define territories. We would rather believe in a map than in a real territory. Simulation is an effective tool by which a reality, or hyperreality, is made up, and pretends to be merely "re-constructed" or "re-presented" out of origin （Bauman, 1993: 40）. In the world of simulacra, the real is not much referred to what can be reproduced; but rather what has been reproduced has become the reality we live with （Baudrillard, 1993: 73）. In the end, simulacra supersede the real. The state of simulation is more real than real, it is the hyperreal and it fascinates

（Gane, 1991: 152）. We no longer need to approach the reality. Eventually, we abandon the reality. Simulacra have said everything about it.

Simulacra do not result from the reproduction of reality. They have no relation to any reality. Rather they are purely signs. We bypass any reality, abandon any representational system which makes things meaningful, and enter into the world of hyperreality that allows a mythical engagement. The world dominated by the order of simulation is the world of the game of seduction at the level of pure appearance without depth (Gane, 1991: 58). The simulative seduces, and the hyperreal fascinates. There is strong seduction in simulacra. Simulation penetrates the world of the real, the imaginary and the referential, abandons reasoning system, and creates a world of seductive myths. Hyperreality is a space that regenerates the imaginary of the absent. It has no relation to the real, and even more, it supplants the real that we always believed in. Hence, history is a hyperreality that has no relation to a historical real. Everything about the past dissolves into the simulation of the past and into the form of simulacra that can be reproduced again and again. History survives its disappearance in a state of simulation. History is passing into the state of inanimate simulation and simulacra with which we are ecstatically obsessed.

Baudrillard regards the order of simulacra and simulation as a ubiquitous mode of postmodern society, an epoch of the decline of strong referentials and meanings. Following Baudrillard, one may conclude that, in the postmodern era, there is no context that can be independent of simulation. Or, from the beginning, history never has a real existence. Instead, the reconstruction of the past is governed by the logic of simulation that does not need any genuine reality as a necessary base. The lost past is stimulated, created, invented, or reified through simulation. "At the end of history, the historical may disappear as a real or true movement of time, but it proliferates as a reference in simulation (Bogard, 1994: 313)." The death of historical reality is deferred by stimulation. History isn't over, it is in a state of simulation, like a body that's kept in a state of hibernation. We no longer consider moral values concerning truth or falsity. Rather, we desire for simulacra and proliferate them to fulfil our nostalgia. The question of history is not what we restore in documentary images that are re-produced an indefinite number of times, but what is documented has become the real history. Within the logic of simulation, what is striking is that we use these images to construct our sense of the past. History presents a hyperreality, or itself is a hyperreality. It strives for an effective simulation of the past. The impossible facts, that the future had already

happened and that the past has reoccurred, can only take place in hyperreality through simulation (Bogard, 1994: 316). Living with and in history is living with and in what Baudrillard calls "hyperreality." History only survives in the death of the real. It bears no relation to any reality. It is its own pure simulacrum.

V. Nostalgia and the Hyperreality of Architecture

The past can never repeat itself in the present world. The reconstruction of the past does not represent the real or the true. Reconstruction, engaged in simulation, is about creating a set of signs or images for another reality replacing non-existent past. Simulacra take us into an experience of non-existence by creating a hyperreal world where we can model time and space. They allow us to elude the question of the absence of substantial existence so that we can carry on believing in what has already disappeared or what does not exist.

"When the real is no longer what it was, nostalgia assumes its full meaning (Baudrillard, 2000:6)." While this contemporary era is one of nostalgia, but there is no real or referential to be found, society has to seek to conjure up a new reality that can accommodate our nostalgic sentiment. The romanticist ideal regarding the adoption of the historical language is still powerfully at work. Many Taiwanese architects have been trying to bring about a solution of adjustment in a situation where tradition has already lost its power over cultural representation. Among architects, Lee Chu-yuan's （李祖原） works have become the mainstream interpretation and manifestation of Taiwanese regionalism in attempting to reflect historical origins and the Chinese worldviews and to correspond to this postmodern era (Wang, 1998: 102-103). For example, Hung-Kuo Building "presents its use of historical elements seriously, oblivious to its own state of architectural caricature. Or to put it another way, the authenticity of the architecture rests on its appeal to the grand old edifice known as Chinese traditional architecture (Ho, 1997: 99)." Jameson quoted his conversation with Lee: "Lee attempts to adopt Chinese tradition and produce something which is original and irreproducible. To a certain extent, this expresses one kind of locality (Jameson 1991: 30) (My translation)." Lee himself explains that "some of my designs are irrational. I have included Chinese forms in my designs. Integrating these forms into my architecture is, however, artificial (Lee, 1997: 63)." Taipei 101 (2004), currently the tallest building in the world, is fraught with symbolism of

traditional Chinese symbols. Lee seeks to conjure up a new architectural form that can also accommodate his nostalgic sentiment. Nevertheless, following Baudrillard concepts of simulation and simulacra, we may see Lee's work as a hyperreal object that bears no relation to the real and becomes a pure sign although he attempts to pay his homage to history. Those adopted elements, purely formal, iconic and exaggerated, are separated from their original contexts and therefore their meanings do not come with these elements.

These historical referents, which belong to the past, being over and done with, have to be represented in a contemporary society, even though these historical elements have been detached from their denotative meanings. Therefore, the relationship of Taiwanese architecture with history is given to the fate of simulacra. It bears no relation to any reality. It is its own pure simulacrum. When values and meaning decline and where the concept of spatiality and temporality are severely disengaged, one is obsessed with a series of images and objects until all sense is lost. There exists a sense of hyperreality as if the experiences from the outer world just a moment ago become remnants of the real. By using the means of symbols, Taiwanese architects turn a living space into a hyperreal world. Hyperreality presents itself as an alternative world, effectively seducing the Taiwanese into an illusive nostalgic sentiment.

History reveals itself in images and signs. Temporal identity is represented as a pure simulacrum without any depth of meaning. Pushed to an extreme, history bears no relation to any reality. Without the absolute meaning of history as a fact of nature, the reconstruction of the past is not the historical, but the simulative as Baudrillard claim. The restoration of tradition is passing into an inanimate state of simulation and simulacra. Those buildings in Taiwan are preformed for expressing and exercising nostalgic sentiment. Such a nostalgic symbolism is not dominated by the logic of representation but by the logic of simulation. The image of the past has to be recreated, has to be mutated into images, signs, simulacra. The disappearance of the past are deferred in architectural images, created within the logic of simulation and simulacra.

Many Taiwanese architectural professionals find substance in nostalgia and yearns for the recurrence of the historical configuration of architecture, and have suggested that a city, as a place to experience life, must be closely related to civil society and imbued with a historical and cultural sensibility. Nevertheless, following Baudrillard concepts of simulation and simulacra, we may see a historical re-construction as a hyperreal object that bears no relation

to the real and becomes a pure sign. Those adopted elements, purely formal, iconic and exaggerated, are separated from their original contexts and therefore their meanings do not come with these elements. We can use Baudrillard's ideas, and indicate that Taiwanese architecture is passing into an inanimate state of simulation and simulacra that possesses a strong figurative quality which serves to mark the dissociation from the reality. Taiwanese architecture, composed with much attention to the visual dimension, seduces the subject into a hyperreal realm. Without a signifying ground on the basis of historical meta-narratives, Taiwanese architecture might seem trapped in symbolic exoticism. Taiwanese architecture has passed into an inanimate state of simulation and simulacra that possesses a strong figurative quality which serves to mark the dissociation from the reality. Taiwanese architecture, as a living space, bears no relation to any reality. It has nothing to do with meaning. It is its own pure simulacrum, and has turned itself into a hyperreal world, as an alternative world, effectively seducing the subjects into an illusive nostalgic sentiment.

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