

Island Fantasia

The Matsu archipelago between China and Taiwan, for long an isolated outpost off southeast China, was suddenly transformed into a military frontline in 1949 by the Cold War and the Communist–Nationalist conflict. The army occupied the islands, commencing more than 40 long years of military rule. With the lifting of martial law in 1992, the people were confronted with the question of how to move forward. This in-depth ethnography and social history of the islands focuses on how individual citizens redefined themselves and reimagined their society. Drawing on long-term fieldwork, Wei-Ping Lin shows how islanders used both traditional and new media to cope with the conflicts and trauma of harsh military rule. She discusses the formation of new social imaginaries through the appearance of ‘imagining subjects’, interrogating their subjectification processes and varied uses of mediating technologies as they seek to answer existential questions.

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Located in the heart of Asia, Taiwan has always been a critical node for a variety of historical forces and a treasury of humanities and social sciences research. Its economic development during the 1970s and 1980s was described as a “miracle” by the World Bank, and it quickly became a focus of research in the academic world.

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Island Fantasia

*Imagining Subjects on the Military Frontline
between China and Taiwan*

Wei-Ping Lin

National Taiwan University



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For Pinaki

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Note on Transcription

The Chinese characters in this book, unless specifically marked, are in Mandarin. Romanization is done according to the Hanyu Pinyin system. The dialect spoken in the Matsu Islands is the Fuzhou dialect, which I have romanized according to the system explained below, but without any indication of tones; this is given only when there is no equivalent Mandarin translation, and is marked by an F.

The phonetic transcription used in this book, based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) with minor adjustments, is consistent with *Matsu fuzhou hua pinyin fang'an* (the phonetic alphabet program of the Fuzhou dialect in Matsu); see the website of *Matsu mindong (fuzhou) hua richang shenghuo changyong cihui* (Common vocabulary of everyday life in the Mindong (Fuzhou) dialect in Matsu).¹

The consonant symbols are shown in the table below.

Place Manner		Bilabial	Alveolar	Postal-veolar	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	Unaspirated Voiceless	p	t		k	h (coda)
	Aspirated Voiceless	ph	th		kh	
Nasal		m	n		ng	
Fricative		(β)	s	(ʒ)		h (initial)
Affricates	Unaspirated Voiceless		ts			
	Aspirated		tsh			
	Voiceless					
Lateral			l			

¹ www.study.matsu.edu.tw/1000/images/paper.html

xvi Note on Transcription

The vowel symbols are shown in the table below.

	Front		Central	Back
	Unrounded	Rounded		
Close	i	y		u
Mid	e	œ		o
Open			a	

Below is a brief explanation.

1. The consonants *b* and *j*, which are respectively equivalent to /β/ and /ʒ/ in IPA, are produced only when “initial assimilation” occurs. Initial assimilation in the Fuzhou dialect is a process in which the initial of a syllable in a polysyllabic word changes under the influence of the coda or the final sound of the preceding syllable. This phenomenon appears only in syllables after the first one.²
2. *h* is a glottal fricative when used to indicate an initial and a glottal stop when used to indicate a coda.
3. *y* is a close front rounded vowel.
4. *œ* is a mid-front rounded vowel, equivalent to /ø/ in IPA.
5. This book uses the symbols as shown in the tables above without any indication of tones.

² In a word with two or more syllables, the initial of each syllable other than the first one can change based on the features of the preceding sound, i.e. the final phoneme of the preceding syllable. In Chinese, every syllable is composed of an initial and a coda, and the initial is also the beginning consonant. In the Fuzhou dialect, if a word is composed of more than two syllables, then the initial of each syllable other than the first one may change based on the preceding sound.

Abbreviations

BBS	bulletin board system
CCA	Council for Cultural Affairs
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
KMT	Kuomintang, Nationalist Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China, Taiwan
WZA	Warzone Administration
WZAC	Warzone Administration Committee