

Taiwan Through the Lens of Museums

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NTU Exploring Taiwan Courses

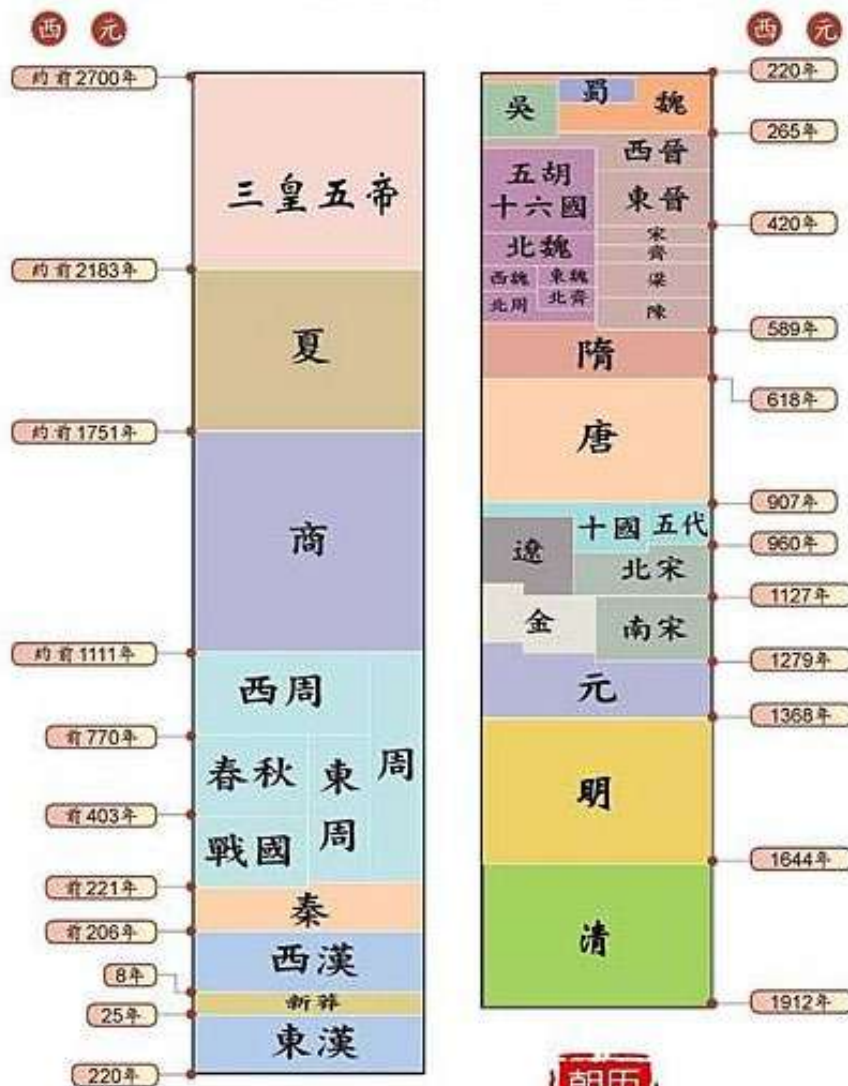
March 12, 2024



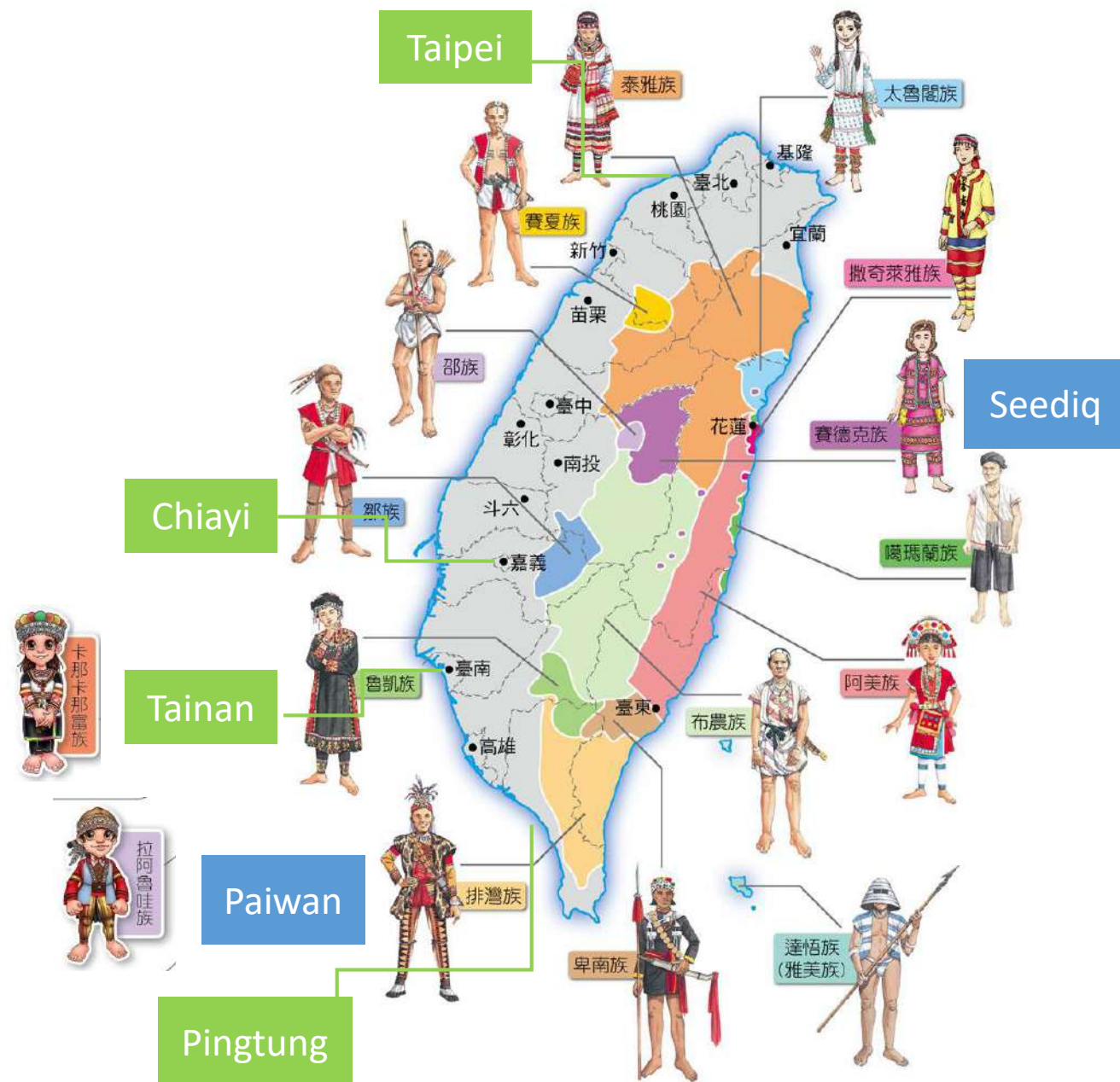
Today's Agenda

TOPIC	DURATION
National Museum of Taiwan History (Est. 2011) —New Takes on Taiwan's History	20 MINS
National Taiwan University's Anthropology Museum (Est. 1928) —Aboriginal Treasures and Issues of Repatriation	30 MINS
BREAK	10 MINS
National Palace Museum (Est. 1925) —Chinese Cultural Legacy and Political Controversy	50 MINS
Q&A	10 MINS

中國歷史朝代演進圖



<http://114.xixik.com/chinese-dynasties/>



Glossary

- Japanese (Colonial) Period of Taiwan (1895-1945) 日治(據)時期
- Taiwan Strait
 - Black Trench 黑水溝
- Chiayi 嘉義
- Tainan 台南
- Pingtung 屏東
- Indigenous Peoples (Aborigines) 原住民
- Austronesians 南島民族/語系
- Seediq People 賽德克族
 - Wushe Incident 霧社事件
- Paiwan People 排灣族
 - Flat-rock houses 石板屋
 - Hodgson hawk-eagle 熊鷹
 - Three Treasures of Paiwan (排灣三寶): Glass beads (琉璃珠), Clay pots (陶壺), bronze daggers (青銅刀)
- Repatriation 文物返還

Further Readings

- **On NMTH' s curatorial and acquisition philosophy:**

Chen, H. Y. (陳星穎), 2020. "Everyone' s a curator for Taiwan' s history: Interview with National Museum of Taiwan History' s Interim Director Xianfei Yang" (每個人都是台灣歷史的策展人:專訪國立臺灣歷史博物館代理館長楊仙妃), November 5, *Verse*, accessed August 14, 2022 from <<https://www.verse.com.tw/article/2020-vol2-verse-museum-07>>.

- **On NTU-AM' s aboriginal treasures:**

Buchan, N., 2017. "Taiwan's National Treasures: Plunder or Preservation" May 25, *Taipei Times*, accessed August 14, 2022 from <<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2017/05/25/2003671243>>.

- **On NPM' s cultural legitimacy:**

Wu, C.H. (吳介祥), 2022. "National Symbols in Cultural Diplomacy: The Changing Strategies and Interpretations of the Taiwan National Palace Museum' s International Exchange" (國家符號的文化外交：故宮國際交流展的詮釋與演變), pp. 365-394. In: Liu, C.Y. and Wei, C.Y., *Taiwan' s International Cultural Relations: Culture as a Method* (台灣的國際文化關係--文化作為方法), Taipei: Chuliu Books.

- **On NPM' s Three Treasures:**

[許雅惠](#)，故宮「國寶」命運知多少？《毛公鼎》、《谿山行旅》與《翠玉白菜》2020.12.11，〈典藏古美術〉第339期（2020年12月號）<https://artouch.com/art-views/content-29339.html>

Video Clips

- 故宮A咖人氣國寶片單：

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfr5zCilDSqB1pE3UVj4Wdx8NCazQGfxq>

- 國寶總動員 (2007) (12 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGGY0Vftxvs>

- 「帶著故宮走APP」微電影 (2012) (5 mins)

<http://digital.npm.gov.tw/Article.aspx?Lang=1&SNo=02000116&P=1>

- 原住民共4組入列國寶3組出自這2間千年祖屋！【zalan見識南島S5】EP4 | 國家寶藏4 | 主持人：劉益昌 | 講者：何致傑 Rata Looh、莊德才 adrucangalj taluviljav

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CUQx8u4wgs>



National Museum of Taiwan History— New Takes on Taiwan's History

Rich architectural symbols



國立臺灣歷史博物館
National Museum of Taiwan History

<http://www.nmth.gov.tw/>



1

Crossing Rough Waters: The Black Trench in the Taiwan Strait



「十去，六死，三留，一回頭。」

“10 went, 6 died, 3 stayed, 1 returned”
--on the difficulty of crossing the Strait



《台灣縣志》：「黑水溝險冠諸海，其深無底，水黑如墨，湍激悍怒。」
The Taiwan County Gazetteer: 'The Black Water Gully stands out among the seas in terms of its roughness, its depth unfathomable, the water as black as ink, turbulent and fiercest.'



2

Mythical Whales (鯨鯨): Coastal Sandbanks, References to Taiwan



Detail of coastal sandbanks, earliest colored map of Taiwan, 1699-1704
《康熙臺灣輿圖》局部 國立臺灣博物館藏



3

Local Built Environments Embedded in Architectural Design



inspired by stilted flat-rock buildings



Taiwan's History Museums



From left to right: National Museum of History (Taipei); National Museum of Prehistory (Taidong); Academia Historica (Taipei); Taiwan Historica (Nantou); National Museum of Taiwan History (Tainan).

1

From a history of governance, to a **museum for everyone**

指導單位 文化部

主辦單位 國立臺灣歷史博物館

http://www.nmth.gov.tw/exhibition_236_337.html



20%
collection
= personal
items &
family
heirlooms
of ordinary
people

2011-2015
館藏受贈選要特展
Exhibition Of Donated Collection

大——家
的——博 物 館
Museum
For
Everyone

2016
01.13 —
10.30

國立臺灣歷史博物館
第②特展室



五

山

同益號
紙庄
特製

台光示現可北海

門火馬四十一

2

From collecting the past, to collecting the present

A new focus on
contemporary social
issues

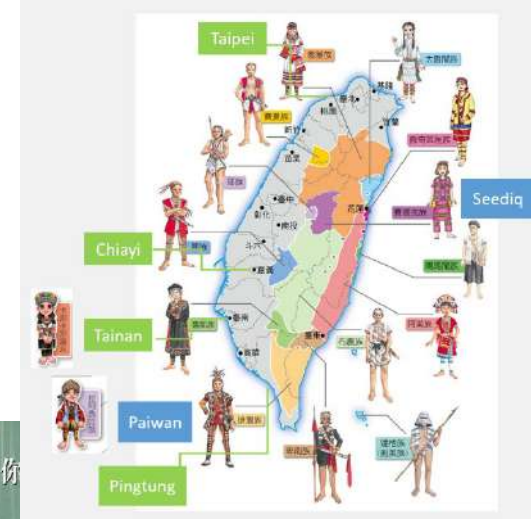


Source: <https://decing.tw/tainan-historymuseum/>

From single perspective to multiple voices

Wushe Inci

Wushe Incident (霧社事件)—the most famous, largest-scaled armed uprising against Japanese colonial rule by aborigines in 1930





NTU's Anthropology Museum— Aboriginal Culture and Issues of Repatriation



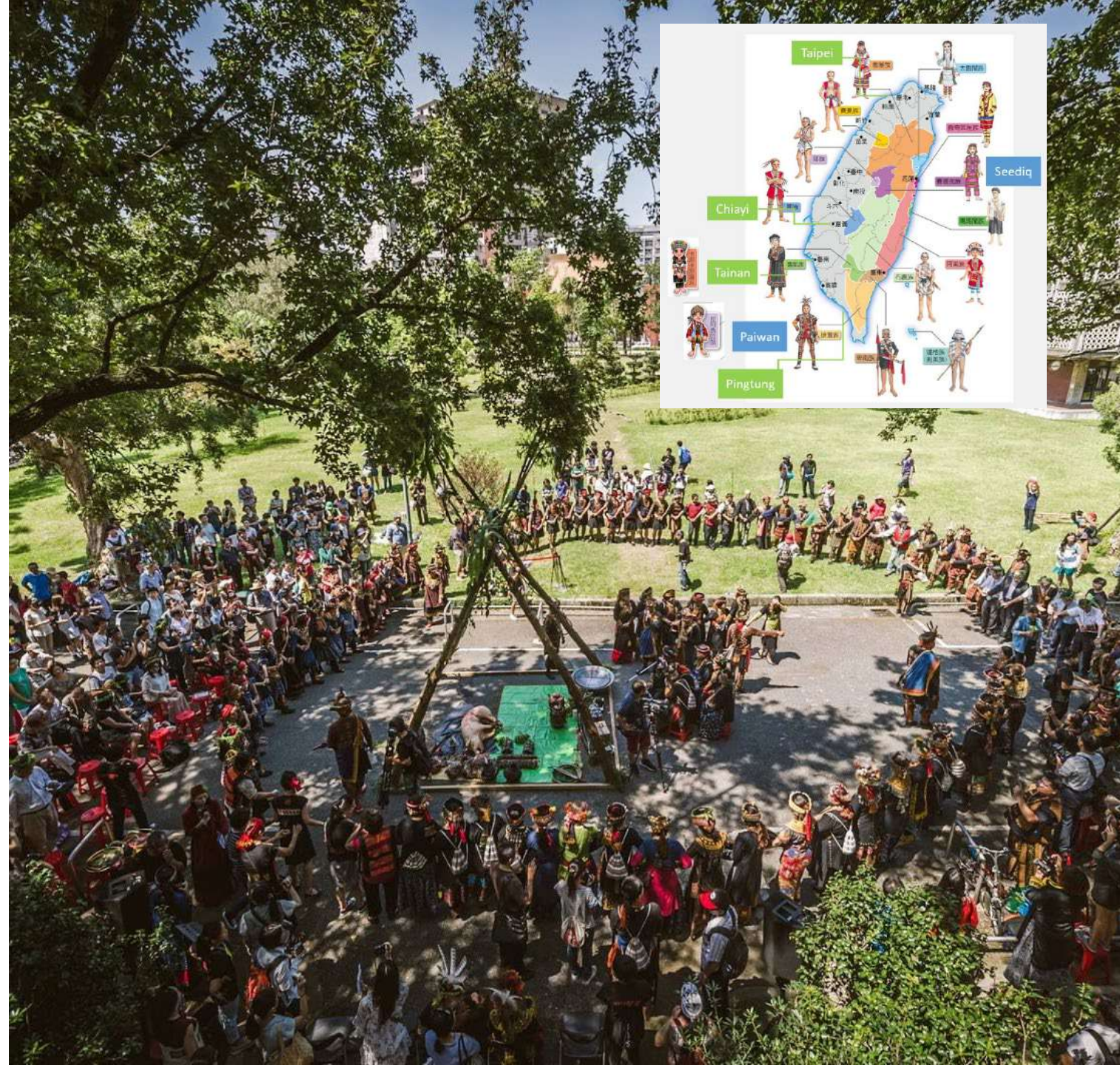
Traditional Paiwan Tribe Wedding

(排灣族佳平部落
金祿勒頭目家族傳統婚禮)

Date: 2015. 09. 12

Place: NTU
Anthropology Museum

(Photos courtesy of the Ministry
of Culture; Photographer: 趙守彥)





2015. 09. 12

攝影 趙守彥



5. 09. 12

攝影 趙守彥

Qemayam 點聘、驗聘

- Tribe elders inspect the groom's gifts.
- One of them finds fault with the lower-quality of Hodgson's hawk-eagle (熊鷹) feathers received.
- The groom apologizes and offers a wok as a compensation.



2015. 09. 12

攝影 趙守彥

Tjumulen 敬酒禮

Head princess drinks millet wine from a conjoined cup (連杯) with then Minister of Culture to honor the five prominent families of the Paiwan tribe.



2015. 09. 12

攝影 趙守彥

Papukizing 成為一家人

The groom is given a wood-carved spoon (*kizing*) to dine with his new family with.

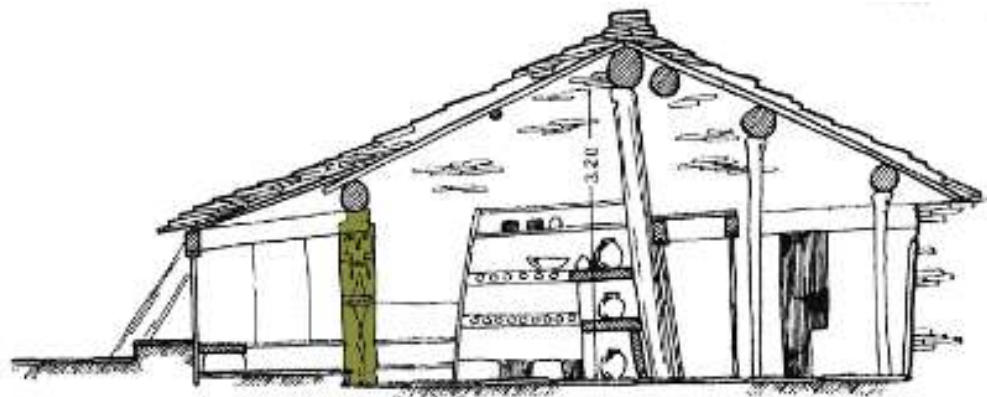






Three Treasures of the Paiwan Tribe: Glass Beads, Clay Pot, Bronze Dagger

Image Source: Wikimedia Commons, Author: Amanda1050427



圖版 2-2 排灣族佳平舊社 Zingrur 頭目家屋與四面祖靈柱配置圖 (參考千千岩 1960 重繪)



Wooden ancestral pillar from the chieftain Zingrur's house, Former Kab(v)iyangan Village, Pingtung County

(排灣族佳平舊社金祿勒頭目家屋四面木雕祖靈柱)

50%
of all
Aboriginal
National
Treasures are
in the NTU
Anthropology
Museum!

四大原住民國寶文物



典藏單位

台大人類
學系

指定日期

2015年

排灣族阿盧夫岸
(望嘉舊社)佳邏夫岸
頭目(馬扎扎依藍)家
雙面祖先像石雕柱

應是目前所知
台灣僅存的一件



排灣族佳平舊社
金祿勒頭目家
四面木雕祖靈柱

雕像的頭形略方，面
部眉鼻相連，表現典
型的佳平式特色，極
具藝術代表性



排灣族佳平舊社
Zingrur頭目家屋
祖靈柱

保存良好，深富「
佳平式」人像雕刻
特色，刻劃仔細繁複
，寫實圖紋具代表性
及獨特性



阿美族太巴壠
部落Kakitaan
祖屋雕刻柱

有人物、動物及花紋
雕刻，生動記述太巴
壠部落的傳說故事，
亦成為該族群近年祖
屋重建之依據

Taiwan's National Treasures: Plunder or Preservation?

Does a law protecting national treasures have the effect of keeping ancestral objects permanently out of the Aboriginal communities from which they originate?

By Noah Buchan / Staff reporter
Taipei Times, May 25, 2017



RIGHT: Alingin Zingrur, the chief of the Kaviyangan community, sits beside a replica of Muakaikai (partially visible) at the family's home in Pingtung County's Taiwu Township. (Photo: Noah Buchan, Taipei Times)

Four-sided Muakai female ancestor pillar

- An interior pillar in Zingrur chieftain's house
- Purchased from a Japanese collector in 1932;
- The house was designated cultural heritage in 1935
- The owning tribe couldn't afford to preserve it according to national treasure standards (?).
- The original was "married" into NTU in exchange for other cultural relics; a replica was taken back to the tribe



Two-sided male and female ancestor pillar

- On a sacrificial platform in front of Charoboyan chieftain's house
- Taken under tribesmen's consent in 1929
- The chief dreamt that the ancestors



Male ancestor pillar (1st Gen ancestor or 2nd Gen ancestor's younger brother)

- An interior pillar in Zingrur chieftain's house; related to NTU's four-sided pillar (2nd generation ancestor's wife)
- Taken from ruins of Zingrur's house in 1956



Wooden carvings of tribal legends

- From Ami tribe ancestral house, center of belief
- Family forced to move out of house in Japanese colonial period; house made a historic site in 1935; pillars taken to Academia Sinica with chieftain's consent after a typhoon destroyed the house in 1958
- Tribal youths felt the pillars were





National Palace Museum— Chinese Cultural Legacy and Political Controversy



Top 10 Art Museum Attendance 2015

1	Louvre, Paris	8,600,000
2	British Museum, London	6,820,686
3	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York	6,533,106
4	Vatican Museums, Vatican City	6,002,251
5	National Gallery, London	5,908,254
6	National Palace Museum, Taipei	5,291,797
7	Tate Modern, London	4,712,581
8	National Gallery of Art, Washington DC	4,104,331
9	State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg	3,668,031
10	Musée d'Orsay	3,440,000

NPM ranked most visited museum in Asia, No. 6 of top ten most popular museums in the world (2015).

Attendance suffered due to Cross-Strait political tension and global Covid-19 pandemic.

Data: The Art Newspaper

Twins

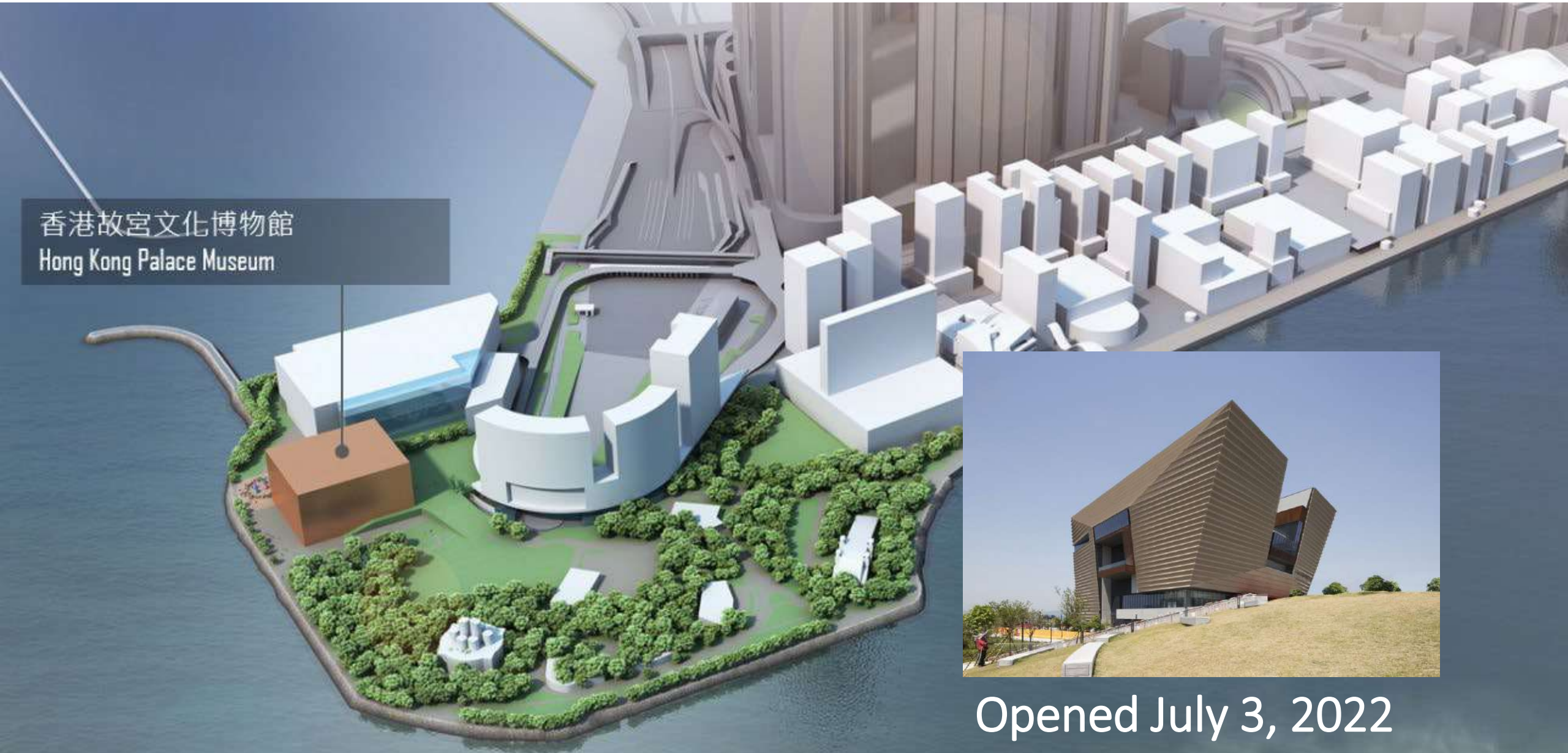


Triplets!



And the franchise continues to grow...

香港故宮文化博物館
Hong Kong Palace Museum

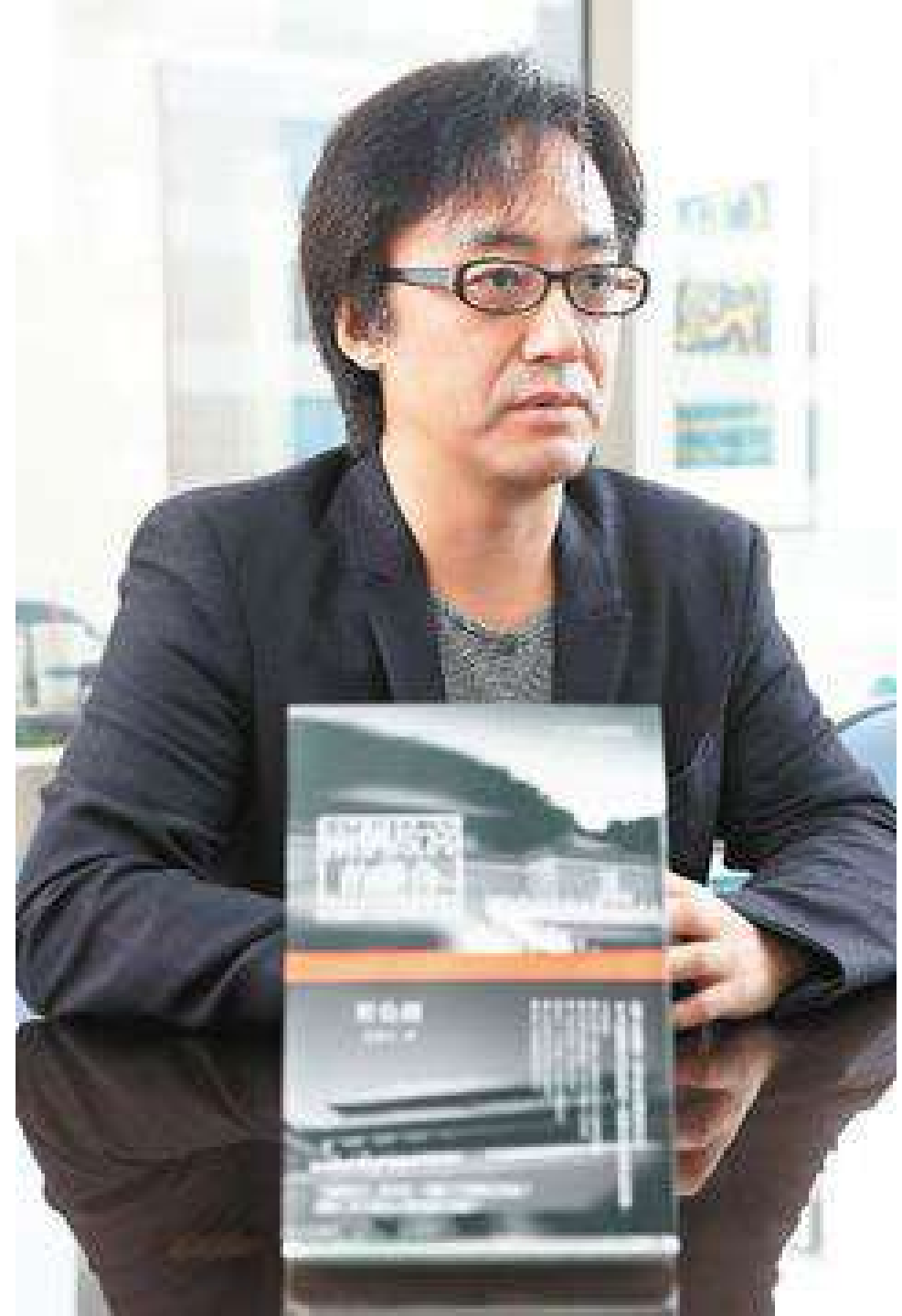


Opened July 3, 2022

So does the controversy...

“If **two Chinas** resulted in two Palace Museums, then the Northern and Southern branches of the Museum represents **two Taiwans**.”

--Nojima Tsuyoshi
(*Asahi Shimbun* foreign
correspondent in Taiwan)



Controversial beginning for HKPM....



"This is the best and greatest gift to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland."

--Chief Executive
[Leung Chun-ying](#)

The opacity of the project planning was "absolutely inappropriate" and undermined Hong Kong's autonomy.

--Legislator

[James To](#)



HISTORY

- War-Torn China and NPM's “Travelling Collections”

COLLECTION

- Overview and Highlights of the Collection

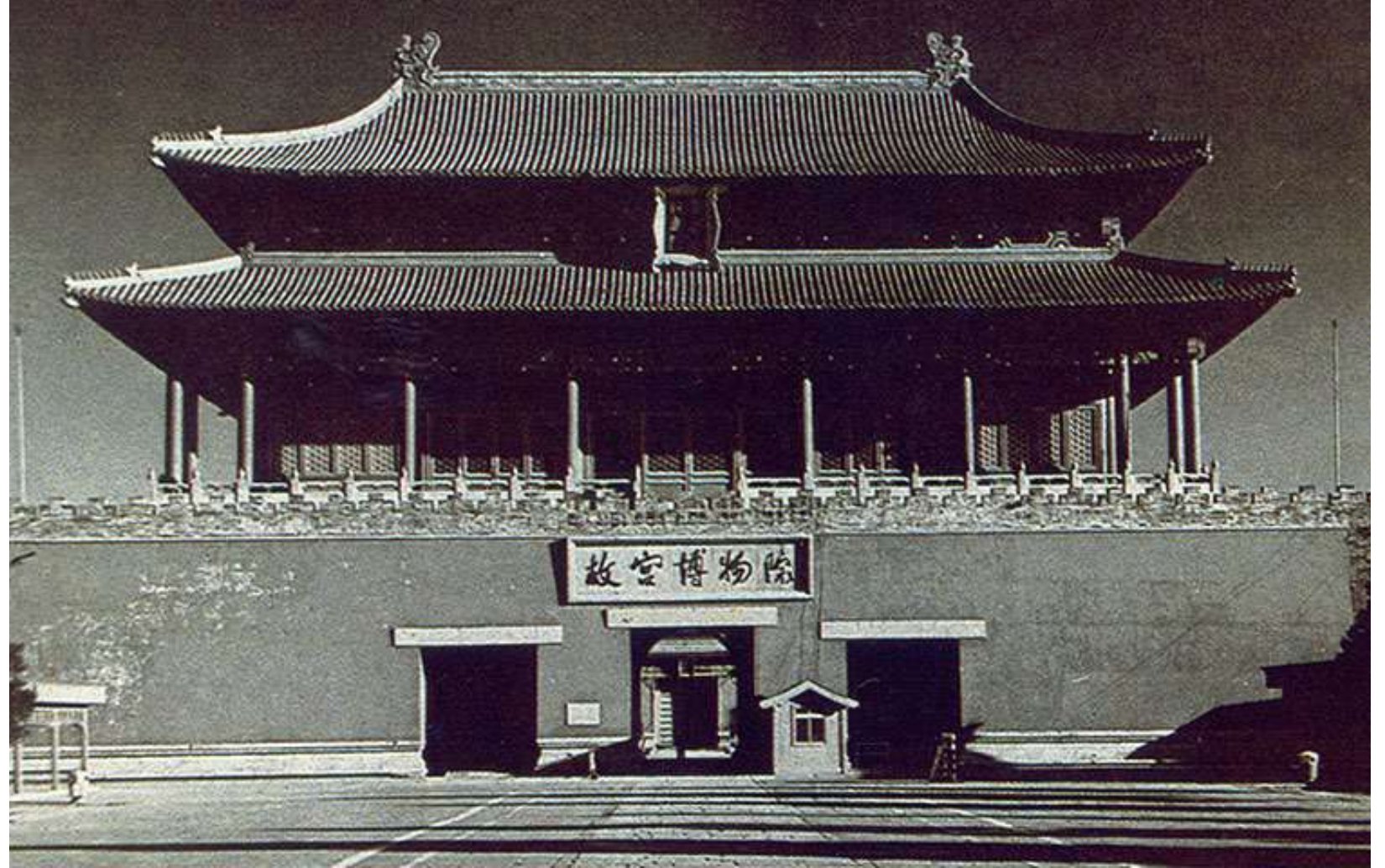
SIGNIFICANCE

1925

Museum vs. Nationalism

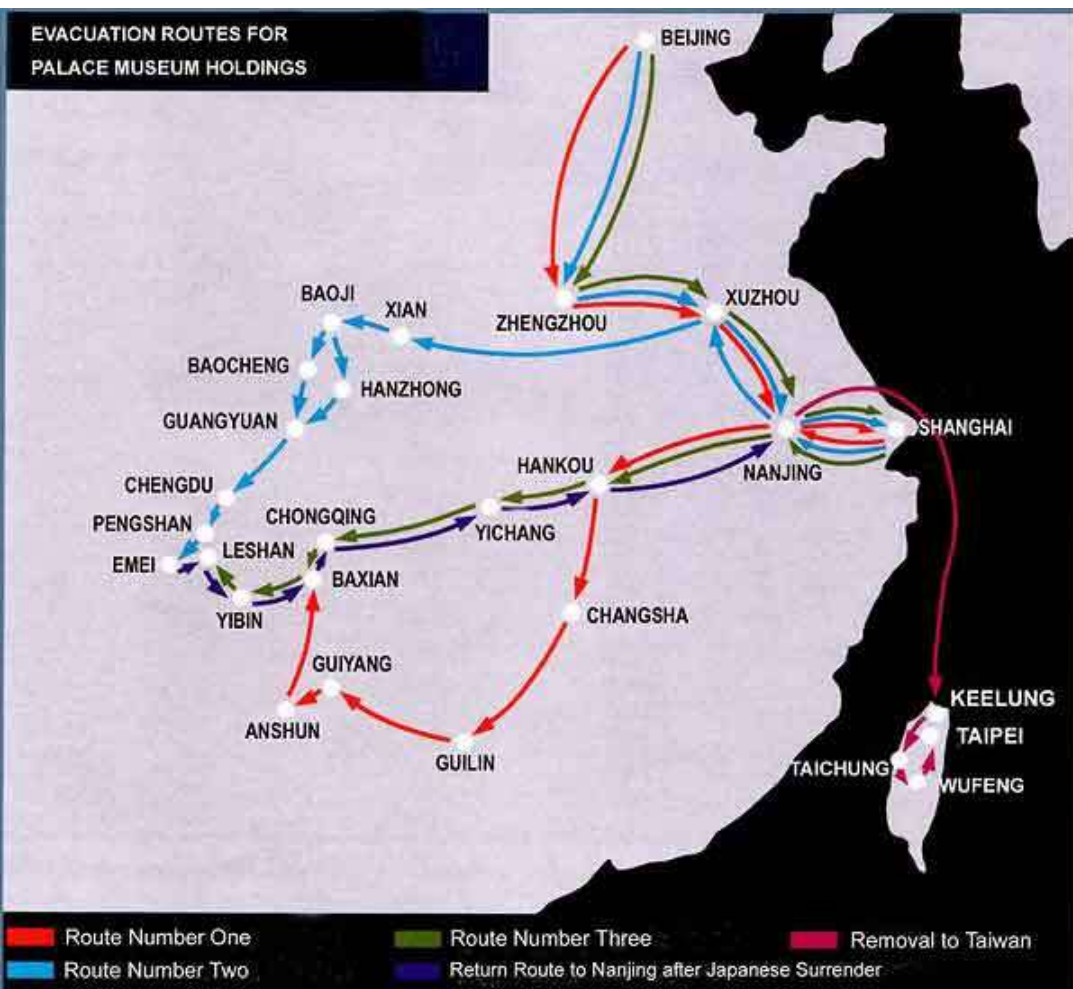


Last Emperor of China,
Pu Yi (1906-1967),
taken around 1934



1930s “Travelling Collections” in War-Torn China







1948

Setting Foot in Taiwan



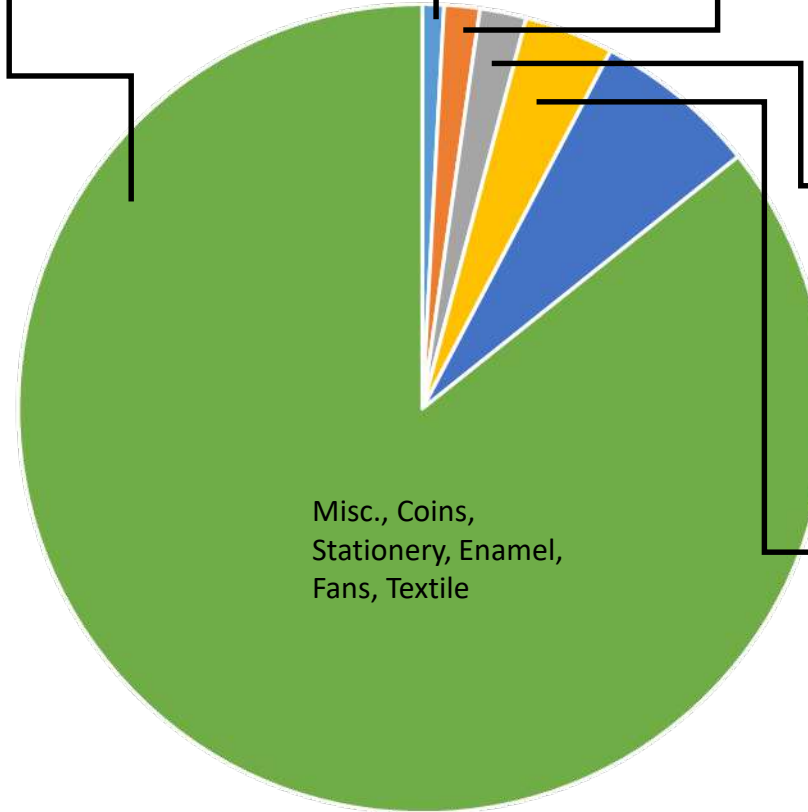
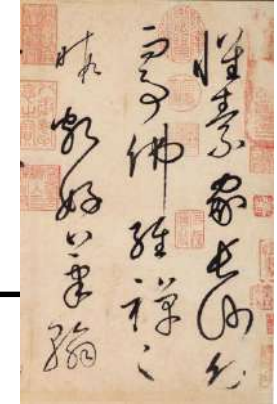
1965

Moving to Current Location in Taipei



NPM Collection

- Bronzes 6,000
- Paintings/Calligraphy 10,000
- Jades 13,000
- Ceramics 25,000
- Others 46,000
- Rare Books/Qing Docs 600,000
- TOTAL 700,000



■ Bronzes
 ■ Paintings/Calligraphy
 ■ Jades
 ■ Ceramics
 ■ Others
 ■ Rare Books/Qing Docs



**Duke of Mao's
Cauldron:**
(毛公鼎)
History chapter
on a cooking pot



The Jade Cabbage: (翠玉白菜)

Clever transformation of
“flawed” piece of jade



The Palace
Museum's
“Sour Cabbage
and Pork Strip
Hot Pot”





**The Lotus-Shaped
Warming Bowl:
(汝窯蓮花式溫碗)
An early thermal
device?**



How to appreciate *Ru* Ware:

- 2 **The crackles:** “as tiny as fish’s eyes”

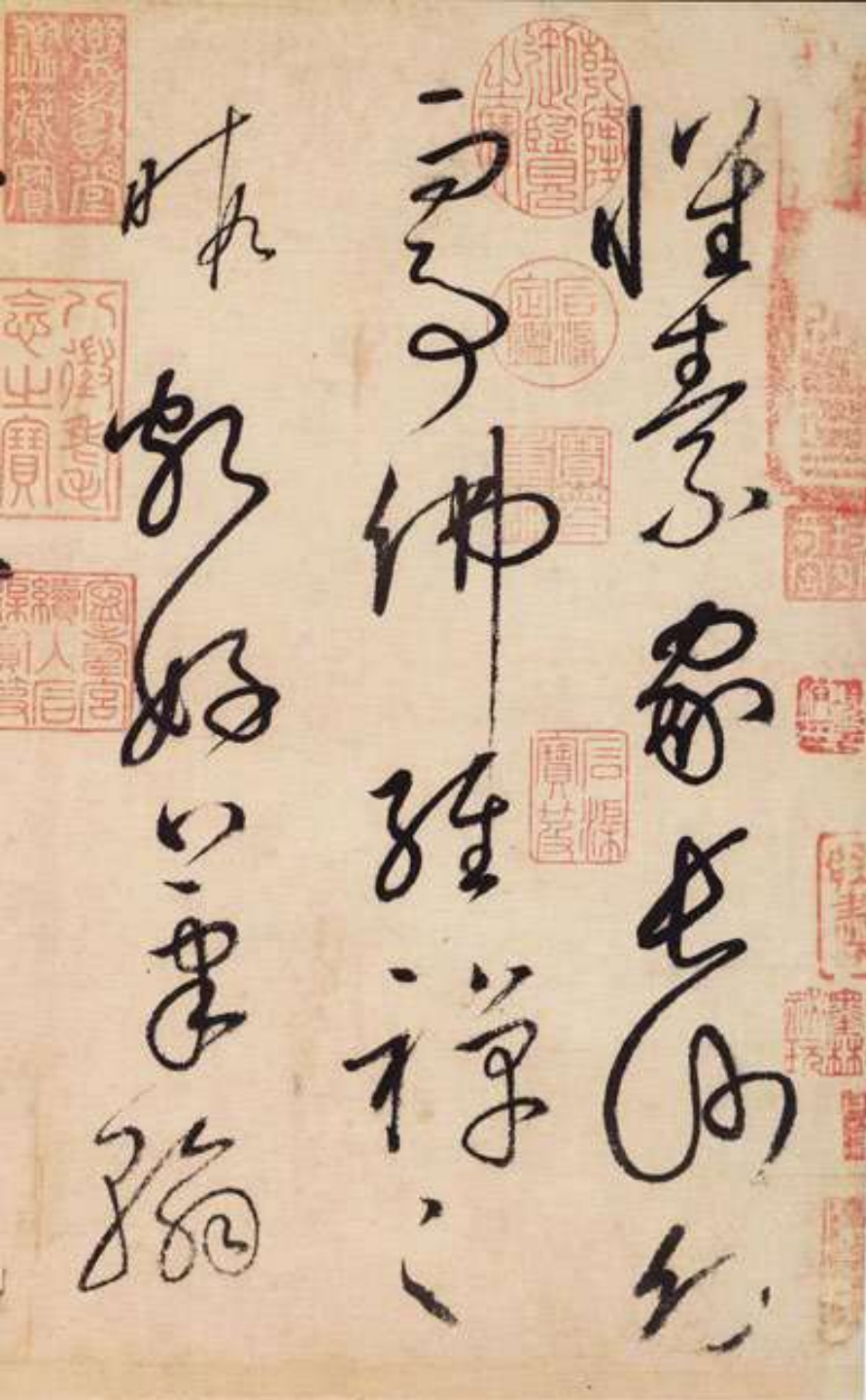


- 1 **The glaze:** “like the clear sky behind heavy clouds after a rainstorm”
- 3 **The spur marks:** “as tiny as sesame seeds”



書畫

Paintings &
Calligraphies



Huaisu's Autobiography
(懷素自敘帖):
**A crazy monk's illegible
handwriting**

性素家女如
子仲雅之
時朝好い事
輪

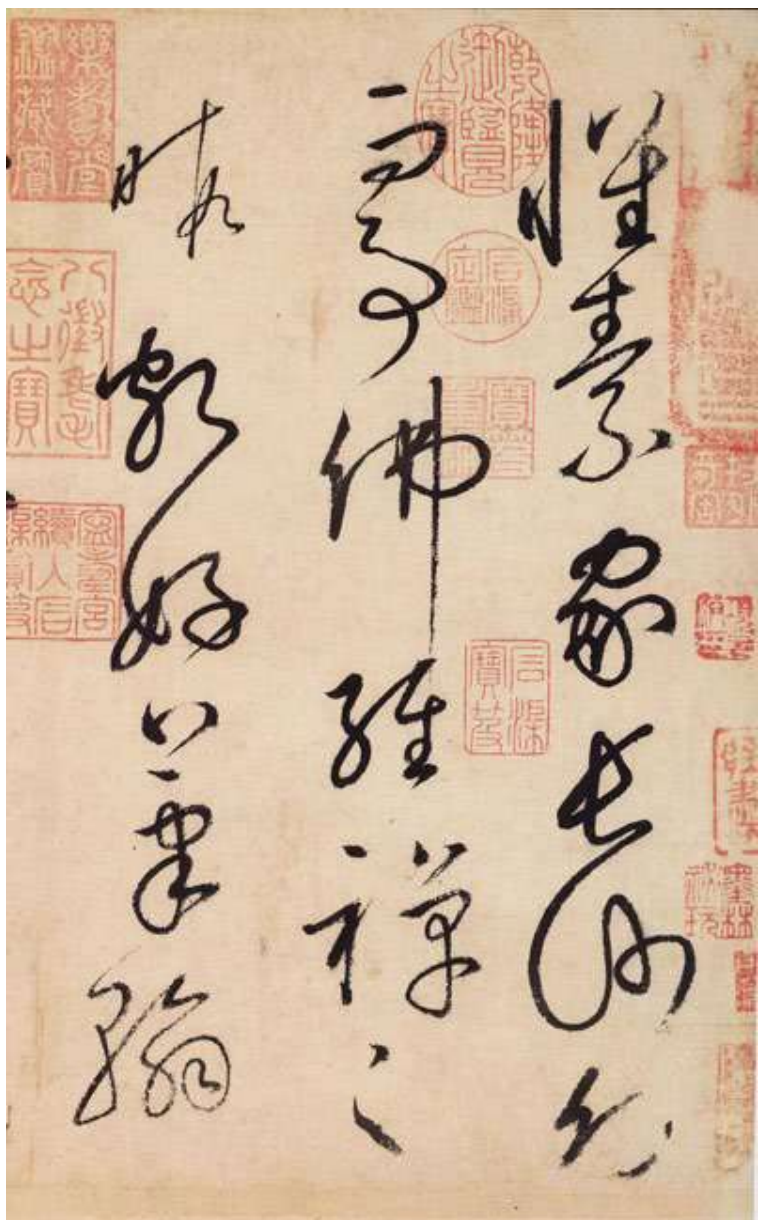
性素家女如
子仲雅之
時朝好い事
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性素家女如
子仲雅之
時朝好い事
輪

性素家女如
子仲雅之
時朝好い事
輪

懷素家長沙。幼
而事佛。經禪之
暇。頗好筆翰。





**The Tibetan
Dragon Canon:
(龍藏經)**
**A sutra
bestowing seven
lifetimes of good
luck**



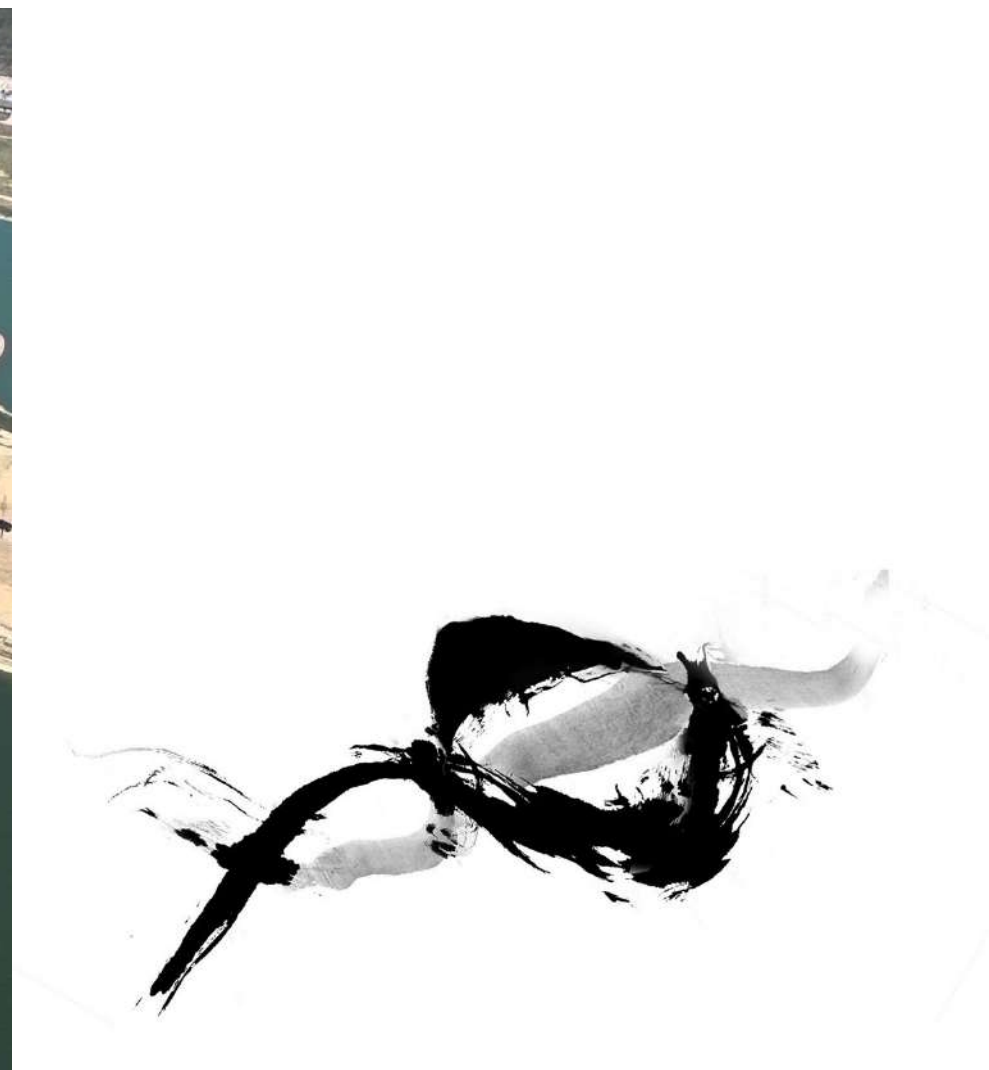
མཛེས་
འཕྲུལ་

ཀུན་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱི་ཕྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་
དཀོན་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱི་ཕྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་

NPM's Southern Branch:

from China-centric to **local-focused**
from single-culture to **pan-Asian**





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3r0oXyxpFo>

最大智慧綠建築 故宮南院搶先看

Image: 建築空拍巡禮系列---「故宮南院開幕」篇-MG S空攝影像工作室

“If we represent [NPM’s collections] in the same way [as Mainland China], we can just go to the Beijing Palace Museum.”

“The NPM has been in Taiwan for 66 years... it’s become part of Taiwan, there’s no denying its ties with the island.”

—Tu Cheng-sheng, former Director, NPM



The exhibition *Formosa: Taiwan, Holland and East Asia in the 17th-Century* features hundreds of artifacts on loan from over thirty public and private collections around the world.



Textile Gallery

Photo by Joyce Tsai

Ceramics Exhibition





Children's Activity Center



Photos by Joyce Tsai

Hiroshi Senju (Japan)
“Timeless Waterfall”





http://www.bluedragonart.com.tw/npm-southern-branch/progress_04.html



www.gtes.ilc.edu.tw



Couple Vandalizes
Two Zodiac
Animal Sculptures
on SNPM Campus,
Calling the Set an
Attempt at
“Cultural
Colonization”

D r a f t

Museum Profiles

- NTHM
 - Location: Tainan City
 - Est. 2011 (~ROC's 100th anniversary)
 - Collection: Local history
 - Milestones:
 - Proposed in 1992 (during President Lee Yunghui's tenure)
 - Established in Oct., 2011.
 - Reinstalled and reopened in Jan., 2021.
 - Upgraded in Oct., 2021.
- NTUAM
 - Location: Taipei City
 - Est. 1928
 - Collection: Ethnography and Archaeology
 - Milestones:
 - First collections: 1895
 - Reopened 2011
- NPM
 - Location: Taipei City
 - Est. 1925 (~ROC's 100th anniversary)
 - Collection: Qing court collection
 - Milestones:
 - Relocated to Central Taiwan in 1948
 - Reopened at current location in 1965
 - Southern Branch opened in 2015

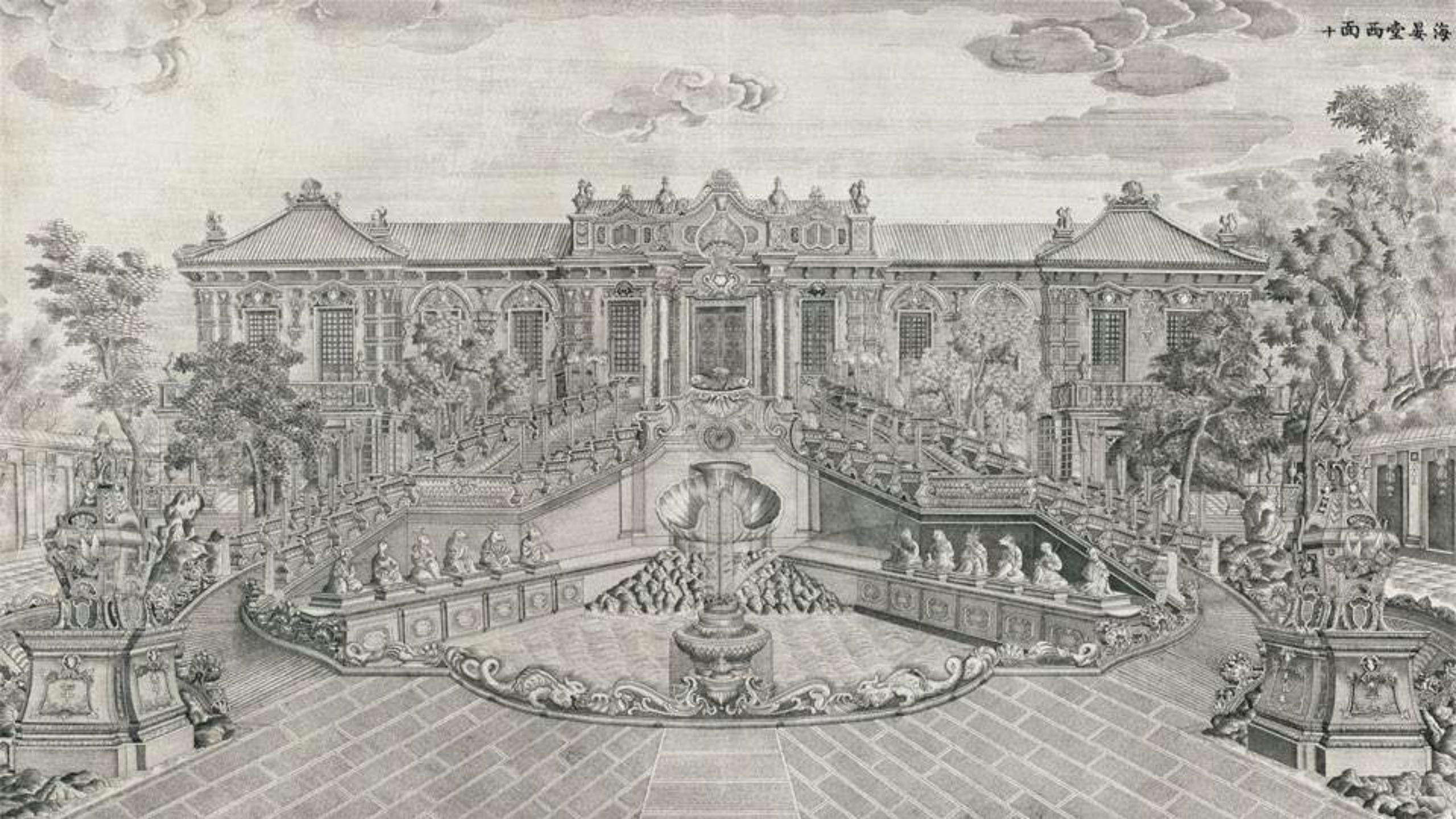
Reasons the set was unwelcome:

1. **The donor**, Jackie Chen, is a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)
2. The set, is a **reproduction** (“fake”) of a now dispersed and partly missing set of 12 fountainheads in the Yuanming Garden from the 18th century
3. The set represents **national shame** and the **looting** of Chinese artifacts by Western countries

Negative interpretations:

Imply “looting” and “repatriation” by KMT of imperial treasures?

Attempt at “cultural colonization” by PRC?





Taiwan's Anthropology Museums

