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THE STORY OF OLD STONES

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**THE STORY OF OLD STONES**

**By**

**Yi-Le Sung**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to**

**Michigan State University**

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## ABSTRACT

### THE STORY OF OLD STONES

By

Yi-Le Sung

In Taiwan, there are around 200 historic sites. These historic sites are valuable assets, which witness the history and tell stories of our ancestors. However, historic sites have been ignored by both the government and the public for a long period of time.

The 28-minute video documentary thesis *The Story of Old Stones* is intended to trigger the viewer's emotional response, to evoke people's interest in historic sites through the aesthetic appreciation of their beauty, and to awaken people's concerns about the succession of cultural values.

This paper is a supplement to the video program in which the producer's motivation and video design methods are revealed; important documentary theories and methods are briefly reviewed; and the result of a group evaluation and its implications are presented.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First of all, I would like to thank my parents for their never-ending love and support. Without them, I cannot become what I am today. Thank my sister and cousin for their comforts when I was down; they can always make me laugh.

I owe a big thank you to my advisor, Robert Albers, for his endless patience and valuable guidance for my project. He has had a great influence on me. I knew nothing about video production when I came the MSU two years ago. Under his teaching, now I can produce, shoot, and edit my own project. I am especially grateful for his help in finishing this thesis.

My sincere appreciation to my committee member, Lisa Whiting, and our engineer Gary Roettger, for their time to help me when I need it.

I am grateful to Mr. Tao-Tsung Cheng, expert in the historic and folk arts field, and Chao-Ching Fu, Chairman of Tainan Cultural Assets Preservation Association, for being my interviewees although their interview footage was not used in the program under the consideration of the whole piece's unity.

I would like to thank people who attended the group evaluation and devoted their time to viewing the video and answering the questionnaire.

Finally, I want to thank Collin for his companionship in the past two years. I always felt complete when he was with me.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

“Historic Sites” are relics of humanity and the witness of history. Taiwan’s historic sites and their architecture styles and symbolic meanings are “a combination of prehistoric, Dutch, Spanish, Chinese (the Koxinga period and the Ching Dynasty), Japanese and the post-retrocession culture.”<sup>1</sup> They are not only a record of Taiwanese’s ancestors’ lives but also representative of reborn cultural values.

For decades, the succession of traditional culture and the preservation of cultural heritage had been overlooked by both the government and the multitudes. Before 1970, the government viewed Taiwan as a developing country, which implies Taiwan’s legitimacy is built on its capability to develop economically.<sup>2</sup> The government paid little attention to historic sites, especially their preservation. Many valuable historic sites had suffered serious deterioration, or fallen to disuse.

The earliest preservation movement of historic sites was sparked during the 1970s. A group of intelligentsia called for the government to look into

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<sup>1</sup> Chien-Lang Lee, “Understanding Historic Sites”, *Theory and Practical Use of Historic Sites* (Taipei: Ministry of the Interior, 1995) 37-45.

<sup>2</sup> Chu-Chiu Hsia, “Important Tasks of Historic Sites’ Conservation in the Present”, *Tsao-Yuan*, Sep. 1992: 19-23.

the problems and do something for Taiwan's cultural property. However, not until 1982, when the *Appropriation for the Preservation of Cultural Assets* was initiated by the legislature, were Taiwan's historic sites first appraised and ranked by the Council for Cultural Planning Development.<sup>3</sup> The maintenance and conservation of 200 officially declared "historic sites" was begun.

Nevertheless, a problem exists in the appropriation and the government's attitudes. The so-called "historic preservation" only focuses on the historically significant buildings but neglects the most essential element of the culture, that is, people and their connection to historic sites. Scholar Chun-Lan Feng once pointed out that "preserved buildings" are like the "goods" piled in the storage; they don't have much to do with the public's lives."<sup>4</sup> Except for those religious pilgrims who are the "frequent users" of historic temples, other historic sites such as fort battlements, grave yards, old city walls, and tablets have few connections with people's lives. For the general public, these sites are merely old architectural structures with a "historical label."

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<sup>3</sup> According to the appropriation, the Council for Cultural Planning and Development takes charge of the historic sites' maintenance and preservation. In 1982, The Council organized an ad hoc team of scholars and experts to investigate 460 potential historic sites throughout Taiwan. After twenty-seven phases of investigations over more than three years, 200 sites were ranked and declared as official historic sites. See Chien-Lang Lee, et.al. Forward. *Historical Sites of the First Rank in Taiwan and Kinmen* By Chi-Lu Chen. (Taipei: Council for Cultural Planning and Development, 1987) i-iii.

<sup>4</sup> Chun-Lan Feng, "The Study of the Conservation of Taiwan's Historic Sites", *Shih-Lien Magazine*, Nov. 1995: 1-22.

Another problem faced by historic sites nowadays is the general public's attitude toward them. Owing to the increasing influence by western countries, traditional culture has declined to a lamentable degree. A common phenomenon is that most people are willing to accept western values but are indifferent to their own.<sup>5</sup> People generally take no notice of these valuable historical sites' preservation and they don't even go to visit these places. As for people who visit historical sites, they don't have much concern about these sites; they only view historical sites as places for recreation instead of meaningful records of humanity. For instance, scholar Heng-Tao Lin did a survey several years ago. He asked 76 visitors about the history of the first-ranked Hung-Mao Castle in Tanshui and found that very few of visitors could answer questions and none of their answers were complete. Most people did not take Hung-Mao Castle as a historic site but as a park. Half of the visitors are lovers who are seeking a place far away from the city.<sup>6</sup>

Tao-Tsung Cheng, an expert in the historic and folk arts field, pointed out in an interview with the producer:

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<sup>5</sup> Chin Hsueh, "The Urban Development Strategy for Conservation of Historic Sites and Historical Building", *Chu-Tu*, Apr. 1992: 39-43.

<sup>6</sup> Heng Tao Lin, Interview. "The Problems of Historic Sites Nowadays - Interview with Heng-Tao Lin", ed. Yi-Hsuan Kao and Shou-Chih Yen, *National Historical Museum Periodical*, 5: 4 (1995): 6-14.

.....The main reason that most people don't value historic sites is because of the deviation of the historical education. After the Retrocession, the ruling party has had a particular selection on the content of history textbooks under the consideration of regaining Mainland China. As a result, most Taiwanese do not understand the whole development of Taiwanese history and its exact orientation. The general public views historic sites as spots for sightseeing and for recreation but not living records of social development.<sup>7</sup>

In an interview with Chao-Ching Fu, Chairman of Tainan Cultural Assets Preservation Association, he suggested that some methods can be adopted to motivate people's interests in historic sites, such as adding more introductory brochures and explanation tablets on location, making use of media like video, audio, and internet as a propaganda tool.<sup>8</sup>

This video documentary thesis entitled *The Story of Old Stones* is produced with the intention of provoking people's interest in historic sites, and awakening people's concerns about the succession of cultural values and preservation of the historic property. In Taiwan, folk religion has played a significant role for hundreds of years. As a result, there are more than 5,000

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<sup>7</sup> In May in 1997, an interview with Tao-Tsung Cheng was shot in front of the Tainan Confucius Temple. The original footage of this interview was merely a reference and not used in the video.

<sup>8</sup> This interview was shot in July 1997. The original footage was not utilized in the video program.

temples in Taiwan, which make up a large proportion of historic sites. Old temples can be taken as the most representative historic sites. Thus, two of Taiwan's oldest temples, Tainan Confucius Temple and Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple, are chosen as the filming subjects. The video text is designed with the attempt to provoke the viewer's interests by guiding them with the camera to experience the beauty of these two temples. The camera leads the audience to view areas of each site and provides background information including the history, spirits, and symbolic meanings. By using juxtaposition of details such as specific camera movement and unconventional angles, the projected world the producer creates for the viewer is different from that of a purely informative documentary. It is rather a poetic one in the sense that the program de-emphasizes arguments and stress an aesthetic function. Focusing on the beauty of historical sites, *The Story of Old Stones* has emotional appeal as a strong component. It is intended to help the audience form a new conception that will enable a change in the way historic sites are perceived; and, hopefully, to stimulate the viewer's empathy, allowing them to cherish historic sites.

This paper is a supplement to the video program. Chapter Two consists of the general introduction of the history of two selected sites. Three other Tainan's historic sites' stories that could not be put into the video are also included in this chapter to help the viewer have a comprehensive understanding. Chapter Three briefly summarizes contemporary

**documentary history and important filmmakers and their approaches. In Chapter Four, how the documentary is defined and categorized is outlined. The results of a group evaluation will be discussed in the final chapter.**

## **CHAPTER II**

### **HISTORIC SITES IN TAINAN**

#### **History of Tainan**

In 1982, under the *Appropriation for the Preservation of Cultural Assets*, about 200 sites were evaluated and ranked as per their national and local historical meanings. From old wells, resident houses, shrines and temples, forts and battle sites, graveyards, to arches and portals, the types and contents of Taiwan's historic sites are full of variety.

Among 200 relics, there are a total of 52 historic sites in Tainan. Tainan, located in the south-western plain, is the earliest developed city in Taiwan. From the Dutch occupation period to the Japanese governing period, it had been the political, cultural and economic center of Taiwan. Its history can be generally divided into six periods: the aboriginal and the early immigration, the Dutch occupation period, the Koxinga governing period, the Ching governing period, the Japanese colony period, and the post-retrocession period.

#### **The Aboriginal and the Early Immigration in the Ming Dynasty: (?-1622)**

The aboriginal people were said to live in Taiwan perhaps beginning 6,000 years ago. The aboriginal's record was first found in the official

documents of the Ming dynasty. In the middle decades of the seventeenth century when the Japanese pirates harassed the western coasts, the emperor of the Ming dynasty sent the military to help the aboriginals. Thus is the first contact between the Chinese and the aboriginal culture, and this hence opened the door for the Han people's immigration.<sup>9</sup> Since this time, more and more immigrants from the coastal provinces such as Fukien and Kwangtung moved to Taiwan and most of them landed in Tainan and lived there.

#### **The Dutch Occupation Period: (1622-1661)**

From 1622 to 1624, the Dutch invaded the Pescadores and set up a military base, expanding their garrison and taking Taiwan as a trading center. In 1624, the Dutch were exiled by the army of Ming Dynasty. They moved to the south of Taiwan and transferred the trading center to Tainan. In Tainan, they built Fort Zeelandia,, Fort Provintia, Taiwan Street, and Provintia Street.<sup>10</sup>

#### **The Koxinga Governing Period: (1661-1683)**

The rule of the Dutch ended in 1661 when the force of a loyalist of the Ming dynasty Koxinga (Cheng-Kung Cheng) expelled them. After Koxinga

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<sup>9</sup> Before the influence of the democracy, "the Chinese" generally refer to five major peoples living in the Mainland China: the Han, the Manchu, the Mongolian, the Uiqurs, and the Tibetan.

<sup>10</sup> Fort Zeelandia is now called Fort An-Ping; Fort Provintia is now named Chih-Kan-Lou, Taiwan Street is now Yen-Ping Street; and Provintia Street is called Min-Chuan Road.

regained the rule of Taiwan by driving out the foreign invaders, he made Fort Zeelandia his house. He also changed Fort Provintia's name to Cheng-Tien-Fu and made it an administration organization. Koxinga died in 1662, his son Ching Cheng became the new governor. Under the General Yung-Hwa Chen's assistance, Ching Cheng made Tainan a cultivated community. Immigrants began to expand to other areas of Taiwan from Tainan. Many historic sites such as the Confucius Temple and thirty other temples were founded in Tainan during this time.

#### **The Ching Governing Period: (1683-1895)**

In 1683, troops of the Ching dynasty defeated the Chengs and took over Taiwan. The rein of the Ching government lasted for 200 years. In the first forty years, the Ching government prohibited immigration because they were afraid that the Han people would take Taiwan as a base to regain the regime. By 1725 an embryonic model of a city was formed and the Ching government sent high-ranking officials to Taiwan and made the island a province. There was much concern for Tainan's security; the city walls and moats were constructed.

#### **The Japanese Colony Period (1895-1945)**

As per the Treaty of Shimonoseki, 1895, Taiwan and the Pescadores were ceded to Japan in 1895. The Japanese government took Taiwan as a colony

and imposed colonial laws in governing Taiwanese people. In order to control people's thoughts and to consolidate their regime, the Japanese government asked people to destroy Chinese cultural assets and establish Japanese shrines and schools. On the other hand, the colonial government changed the look of Tainan City by constructing modern public buildings, such as the present District Court and the city government building.

### **The Post-Retrocession Period (1945-present):**

In 1945, Japan was defeated in War World II and returned Taiwan to the Chinese Nationalist's government. In 1946, Tainan was divided into seven districts. Being defeated in the Chinese civil war in 1949, Chiang Kai-Shek withdrew his regime to Taiwan and moved the capital to Taipei, and thus Tainan gradually lost its political status. Its economic priority was also taken when an international harbor was built in its neighbor city Kaosiung. However, one thing that is not replaceable is its cultural essence and long history.

### **Historic Sites in Tainan**

Tainan is a city for temple hoppers. Every religion and every major deity is lavishly represented in the city's many shrines and temples. Besides temples, Tainan boasts several historically significant forts and battlements.

### **Ruins of An-P'ing Fort (Fort Zeelandia; Construction Date: A.D. 1624)**

An-P'ing Fort was the earliest fort built in Taiwan. Today there remains only part of one wall, a well, the semicircular base of a lookout tower, and the outer wall of what was once Fort Utrecht. At first known as Fort Orange (which was built by the Dutch in 1623), the name was subsequently (1634) changed to Fort Zeelandia. When the Dutch were defeated by Chinese on the Pescadores, they retreated to Tainan and spent seven years completing this fort. The Dutch used bricks from Java and a mixture of sugar syrup, glutinous rice and crushed oyster shells as plaster to build the walls of fortification. The walls are over thirty feet high, with a circumference of 2776 feet. It was the residence of the governor-general and the point from which the Dutch controlled administration during their occupation of Taiwan. When the Dutch were expelled by Koxinga in 1662, the site-name was changed to "An-P'ing", meaning "Calm Peace." In 1863, when Taiwan was brought to the jurisdiction of the Ching dynasty, the administrative center was shifted to nearby Tainan City. The fort then became the Bureau of Military Supply. In 1871, when the British invaded Taiwan, the arsenal inside the fort exploded, destroying the walls. The structure of what we see today as An-P'ing Fort was built by the Japanese governor of Taiwan to entertain visitors during the Japanese occupation period. Time moves constantly. The ownership of this beautiful island changed hands five times, but this site remains with traces of its past.

## **Tainan Confucius Temple (Construction Date: A.D. 1665)**

In the past, Confucius Temple was the center of Traditional Chinese culture and learning. The Tainan Confucius Temple is the oldest and historically the most significant one among all in Taiwan. Because of its existence, Chinese culture was able to take root in the island. The temple was founded in 1665 by Ching Cheng at the recommendation of the General Yung-Hwa Chen. Chen held that education insures the prosperity of the nation and only when the country is served by wise officials can its foundation be solidly built. He suggested that a Confucian temple should be constructed in order to educate young talent and to revive scholastics.

The temple complex is organized on a principle called “left school, right temple,” which means that the eastern side of the complex was for studying and the western side was where homage was paid to Confucius. Since then there have been 36 repairs or renovations. The basic layout remains much as it was during the Ching dynasty. With its fourteen buildings and nineteen rooms, the Tainan Confucius Temple has been a symbol of traditional Chinese architecture. The worship and sacrificial ceremonies carried out here throughout the past three hundred years together with the repeated restoration works are sufficient to prove the spirit of benevolent love for the Confucian scholars. The spirit of five thousand years of orthodox ethics finds its appropriate expression here in this temple complex.

### **Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple (Construction Date: A.D. Ca. 1660~1680)**

The Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple, together with the Temple of Civic Culture (Wen-Miao), represents two of the most completely preserved and beautifully constructed temples in the old provincial capital. Originally established before the Ching dynasty assumed jurisdiction over Taiwan, the present structure of the Kung-Ti Temple follows the layout of the temple as it was rebuilt during the closing years of the Kang-Hsi period (1662-1722). In 1727, the temple was designated as the site for official sacrifices, or *Ssu-Tien*; hence its current popular designation is *Ssu-tien Wu-Miao* (An official Kuan-Ti Temple). This temple is the only one used for official sacrifices; the most important sacrifices are held in spring and autumn. Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple is famous with its vast wall and roof styles. Major gods and goddesses worshipped are Kuan-Ti, Kuan-Yin, Kuan-Ti's ancestors, Five Wen-Chang gods, and the Fire god.

### **Shrine of the Five Noble Ladies (Construction Date: A.D. 1683)**

This shrine stands before the tomb of the five concubines of the Prince of Ning-Ching. The Prince of Ning-Ching, who was a descendant of the royal house of the Ming dynasty, was brought to Taiwan by Koxinga in 1662. He dwelt in a palace built for him and his household until the advent of the Ching armies in 1683. In June of that year, when the Commander Liu Kuo-Hsuan negotiated with the Manchus for terms of surrender, the Prince resolved to

martyr himself for the cause of his collapsing dynasty. His concubines were the first to take their own lives as a sign of their fidelity to their lord; they hanged themselves in the palace hall. Their bodies were buried at a tomb on Cassia Bud Hill. In honor of these women, a mortuary temple was established and the memorial tablet inscribed with an epitaph was set up in front of the site.

#### **Erh-K'un-Shen Fort (Construction Date: A.D. 1875)**

Under the direction of the Commissioner of Naval Affairs of Fukien Province, this fort was erected in connection with the Moutan-She Tribal Incident in 1871.<sup>11</sup> The incident revealed the strategic weakness of Taiwan's defense, and this site was built to serve as an important step toward a defense network. A French construction expert was invited to design and direct the construction work. The fort's floor plan is square with a parapet in each of the four corners. There were food storage area, bunkers, a mess hall, and an arsenal. The castle could accommodate 1500 persons and was equipped with five big cannons, six small cannons, 272 gunners and a squadron of shooters. The firepower of the arsenal was brought into play during the short-lived resistance to the Japanese takeover in the summer of 1895. In the Japanese occupation period, the Japanese built a bridge over

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<sup>11</sup> In 1871 when some Okinawan fishermen were blown ashore near the southern tip of Taiwan, they were killed by the aborigines living in Mu-Tan Village. The Japanese government used this as a pretext to launch an attack against Taiwan.

the moat. The old artillery was sold off in exchange for modern arms at the time of the World War I. Later, the expansion of Tainan city resulted in the commercial development of the land around the site, so that its military usefulness further declined and eventually disappeared altogether.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> All background information for the historic sites introduced comes from the following brochures: *The Historical Sites of the First Rank in Taiwan and Kinmen*, *Brief Introduction of the Historical Landmarks of Tainan*, *The Tainan Confucius Temple*, and *Tainan's Historic Sites*.

## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY AND THEORY OF DOCUMENTARY

The term “documentary” was first used in French to refer to “travelogue.” At almost the same time in the early 1920s, the American Robert Flaherty and the Russian Vertov began laying the groundwork for documentary moving pictures, and the continental realists films, part of the avant-garde, were starting in Western Europe.<sup>13</sup> Not until British John Grierson was documentary used as a social instrument. In the late 1950s, the evolution of production technology occasioned direct cinema and *cinema verite* which represent two different approaches regarding the role of camera and filmmakers. This chapter briefly reviews influential figures, their theory, and their movement in the contemporary documentary history.

#### **French Lumiere and the Pre-Documentary Origins**

The prototype of documentary could be retraced to French Louis Lumiere. With his invention of *cinematographe*<sup>14</sup>, Lumiere brought the documentary moving picture closer to a reality. Lumiere had aspired to

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<sup>13</sup> Jack C. Ellis, *The Documentary Idea: A Critical History of English-Language Documentary Film and Video* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989) 46 & 271.

<sup>14</sup> *Cinematographe* is the first light-weight, portable camera launched in 1895.

catch life “*sur le vif*,” and for him, the *cinematographe* was “an ideal instrument for catching life on the run.”<sup>15</sup> William Guynn credits Lumiere as “the first practitioner of a natural cinematographic language”. He says, “Lumiere's portable apparatus moves out into the world to encounter the camera's natural object -- the real.”<sup>16</sup> In 1895, Lumiere's short one-minute films were first shown in public. His *Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory* (*La Sortie des Usines*) involved “actuality items” (the workmen) from his own factory. Camera movements of long shots and close-ups that Lumiere adopted as an approach to the arriving train and the passengers in *Arrival of a Train* (*L'Arrivee d'un Train en Gare*) gave the viewer a novel experience different from that of the theater. And newsreel tradition may be said to have started with his newsworthy “interest films,” in which the subjects were heads of state and ceremonial occasions. In this pre-documentary period, Lumiere and his operators played many potential roles of a documentary maker: he was a promoter in *Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory* (1895), a reporter in *The Arrival of the Conventioners* (*Arrivee des Congressistes*, 1895), a genre painter in *Wood Cutters in the Street in Paris* (*Scieurs de Bois*, 1897), and in many Lumiere's operators' films, such as *Coolies at Saigon* (*Coolies a Saigon*, 1897) and *Elephant Processions at*

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<sup>15</sup> Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: a history of the non-fiction film*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press) 6.

<sup>16</sup> William Guynn, *A Cinema of Nonfiction* (Lutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990) 21-22.

*Phnom Penh (Promenades des Elephants a Phnom-Penh, 1901)*, a travel lecturer.<sup>17</sup>

### **Robert J. Flaherty and American Documentary**

Without Robert J. Flaherty, the documentary conception might not have arisen. John Grierson designates Flaherty as the Father of Documentary -- the creator of documentary methodology.<sup>18</sup> In the 1920s, Flaherty and his *Nanook of the North* first drew world-wide attention to the camera as a powerful tool for natural observation. The silent film *Nanook of the North* tells a story of a real-life Eskimo family and their struggle against the bleak Arctic. It was a whole new kind of film different from the contemporary Hollywood melodrama and the precedent travel films. Its commercial success in the box office brought Flaherty a contract by Paramount to go to the South Seas and shoot his other *Nanook* -- *Moana* (1926), in which the native Samoans' lives were shown with the beautiful ceremonial prayers, dance, and the almost extinct ritual art-- tattoos.

It is in *Moana* that the term "documentary" was first applied in English by Grierson<sup>19</sup>; it is in *Moana* that Flaherty's elementary demands for documentary were demonstrated and become absolute principles:

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<sup>17</sup> Barnouw, 29

<sup>18</sup> Gynn, 23.

<sup>19</sup> Carl R. Plantinga, *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 27.

‘...the story must be taken from the location, and that it should be (what he considers) the essential story of the location. His drama, therefore, is a drama of days and nights, of the round of the year's seasons. Of the fundamental fights which give his people sustenance, or build up the dignity of the tribe.’

(John Grierson, *Cinema Quarterly*, vol. I, no. 2.)

In other words, the theme of Flaherty's documentary arose from an observation of natural material on its actual location and an interpretation of that material must occur by “a complete understanding 'from the inside' of such material and its relationships.”<sup>20</sup> Flaherty is taken as the initiator of the naturalist tradition in cinema as he “merges himself into the real life of the people and brings back a dramatic record of their daily lives.”<sup>21</sup> Flaherty shot his first *Nanook* and subsequent films with the main interest in the theme of “humans versus nature” and cultural practices. His films *Man of Aran* (1934) and *Louisiana Story* (1948) feature a “poetic” and rhythmic camera

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<sup>20</sup> Paul Rotha, *Documentary Film*, 3<sup>rd</sup> rev. ed. (New York: Hastings House, 1952) 106.

<sup>21</sup> Helen van Dongen “Robert J. Flaherty: 1884-1951” in *Film Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (Summer 1965) 2-14.

movement, in which Bill Nichols associates Flaherty with poetic realism.<sup>22</sup> Flaherty's example was followed by other American anthropological filmmakers, such as Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack with *Grass* (1925) and *Chang* (1927), and Martin and Osa Johnson with films *Congo* (1931), *Baboon* (1935), and *Borneo* (1937).

### **Dziga Vertov and the Soviet Union's Documentary**

The pioneer Soviet filmmaker, Denis Arkadievich Kaufman, was the most influential filmmaker in Russia's film history. His pseudonym Dziga Vertov, which translates as "turning," "revolving," or "spinning top," well-characterized his role in the early years of the Soviet Union's documentary development. Before becoming a filmmaker, Vertov was an experimental futurist poet. In June 1918, he joined the Cinema Committee in Moscow and edited the first newsreel project *Kino-Nedelia* (*Film Weekly*) in Soviet Russia. During this period, Vertov had functioned as an editor of footage supplied by others. His compiled releases included *Anniversary of the Revolution* (*Godovshtchina Revolutsii*, 1919) and *History of the Civil War* (*Istoriya Grazhdanskoi Voini*, 1921). In 1922, Vertov began to produce the irregular film series *Kino Pravda*. The title *kino pravda*, which literally means *film truth*, was itself a kind of manifesto. *Kino Pravda*, serving as a newsreel and propaganda film series, was released for 23 issues. Each issue

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<sup>22</sup> Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) 182.

comprised three or more reports on separate subjects; all of which related to social, economic, and political problems being solved and things remaining to be done.<sup>23</sup> What *Kino Pravda* intended to achieve was to provide its audience a close relationship with ongoing events around them, to awaken interest, and to encourage action. The nature of the film was persuasive and informative. The production method used in the film was to shoot events unnoticed as they were occurring, in “reality caught unawares,” known as the technique for *cinema verite*.<sup>24</sup>

Two points were emphasized in Vertov's continuing manifestos. One was the camera's mechanically “superhuman versatility.” He described in his futurist poetry “...use of the camera as a cinema-eye more perfect than the human eye for exploring the chaos of visual phenomena filling the universe.”<sup>25</sup> Vertov meanwhile stressed the editor's role. Compared to Flaherty, he did much more shaping in the editing by fully choosing the frames and by thematically organizing them in order to make a clear communication with his audience. His adoption of rapid intercutting between related action within a single scene in *Kino Pravda* also marked the beginning of Soviet montage.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ellis, 32.

<sup>24</sup> This French term appeared around 1960, which means “film truth.”

<sup>25</sup> Barnouw, 58.

<sup>26</sup> Ellis, 34.

Vertov's production theory and methods of *Kino-Pravda*, along with his gradually-appearing artistic development, were practiced in some of the Soviet Union's early documentaries, including *Cinema-Eye (Kino-Glaz, 1924)*, *Forward, Soviet! (Shagai, Soviet!, 1926)*, and *One Sixth of the World (Shestaya Chast Mira, 1926)*.

In 1929, Vertov created one of the most complex and experimental films -- *The Man With a Movie Camera (Chelovek s Kinoapparatom)*. Carl Plantinga calls this film a "metadocumentary" among the four groups of alternative nonfiction films.<sup>27</sup> Metadocumentaries, as Plantinga says in *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*, are explicitly reflexive in that "they are fundamentally 'about' the documentary and 'about' the representation itself," which draw attention to its own making at every turn.<sup>28</sup> With technological reflexivity, Vertov's *The Man With a Movie Camera* manipulated the formal elements of image and sound to represent the phenomenal world, creating a new form of communication in the post-revolutionary Soviet Union.

### **John Grierson and British Documentary**

John Grierson and his movement changed the expectations aroused by the word "documentary" since Flaherty; his documentary directives and his

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<sup>27</sup> Plantinga, 172.

<sup>28</sup> Plantinga, 179-180.

propagandist approach of selective dramatization of actuality have long been an exemplar. Financially supported by the Empire Marketing Board (E.M.B.), a government organization at that time intended to cement the British Empire by promoting trade and a sense of unity among its various parts, Grierson shot *Drifters* in 1929. *Drifters* was Grierson's first and only personally directed film, which combined some of the techniques of Flaherty and Eisenstein. It is a story of an "adventure of the herring fishery." Paul Rotha says Grierson, in his book *Documentary Film*, "took a simple theme (there for the taking), took actually existing material (there for the shooting), and built a dramatized film by interpreting the relationships of his theme and material in the sphere of daily existence." It not only "brought alive" the labor of the North Sea herring catch but also "the whole drama" of emotional values that underlay the task.<sup>29</sup> *Drifters* laid the foundation for documentary in the Anglo-American tradition with a greater aim than mere description or observation.<sup>30</sup> *Drifters* made clear the Grierson deviation from Flaherty in the way of presenting social point of view. Instead of showing the beauty and workings of the natural world and the cultural practices of the past, Grierson was concerned more about the relation of his subjects to contemporary industrial society. He wanted to "bring the citizen's eye in from the ends of the earth to the story, his own story, of

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<sup>29</sup> Rotha, 97-98.

<sup>30</sup> Plantinga, 28-29.

what was happening under his nose...the drama of doorstep.”<sup>31</sup> This “first-hand” drama from a real life was undoubtedly revolutionary in 1929.

The success of *Drifters* made Grierson a creative organizer of the EMB Film Unit (1930). John Grierson had been trained as a sociologist and spent three years in the U.S. on a Rockefeller Research Fellowship in social science. He studied all the instruments of public opinion and recognized that the power to motivate people to social action lies in the popular media. In the belief that documentary was best used as an instrument of propaganda and public persuasion, he told his staff in EMB Film Unit that they should take themselves as propagandists first, film makers second.<sup>32</sup> Documentarists Paul Rotha in “Some Principles of Documentary,” William A. Bluem in *Documentary in American Television*, Lewis Jacobs in *The Documentary Tradition*, Michael Rabiger in *Directing the Documentary*, and Bill Nichols in his book *Representing Reality*, repeat Grierson’s claim of the documentary’s social function.

In 1934, the Empire Marketing Board was abolished by the U.S. government, and the film unit was moved into the General Post Office to become the GPO Film Unit. *Song of Ceylon* (1935), a project under both the EMB and the GPO Unit, is the beginning for documentary to explore the world of sound: “the voices of commerce” were heard in the sound-track

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<sup>31</sup> Barnouw, 85-88.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 90.

montage. *Night Mail* (1936), directed by Harry Watt and Basil Wright, was the first film edited to the rhythm of its sound track and soon became a model for numerous imitations. In Edgar Anstey and Arthur Elton's *Housing Problems* (1935), slum-dwellers appeared as spokesmen for themselves. This novel method was later used extensively in television.

Documentary filmmakers take Grierson as godfather and under his influence, films gushed forth throughout the 1930's: Elton's *The Voice of the World* (1932), Rotha's *Contact* (1933), Anstey's *Granton Trawler* (1934), Legg's *BBC: the Voice of Britain* (1935), John Taylor's *The Smoke Menace* (1937), Watt's *North Sea* (1938), and Elton's *Transfer of Power* (1939).

### **Direct Cinema and *Cinema Verite***

When the major breakthroughs occurred in the development of production equipment in the late 1950s, documentary was moved closer to the dividing line between art and life. New technology, such as a 16mm shoulder-mounted camera together with the 1/4" magnetic tape sound recorders which could be synchronized with the camera, made an intimacy of observation possible. All the actions (what could be seen and what could be heard) taking place in front of the camera and microphone could be now recorded without interruption.

In the U.S. in the early 1960s, an observational approach known as "direct cinema" was pioneered by Drew Associates (in the *Close-Up!* Series on ABC-TV), and articulated by Robert Drew and Richard Leacock. They

asserted that filmmaking must fit into an ongoing event in an unobtrusive way in order to capture spontaneity. Filmmakers play a role as a mere observer; they don't direct or participate in the scene in any way. In order to represent reality free of preconception, they refuse to use lighting equipment on location and avoid to apply an omniscient voice-over narrator and nondiegetic music in the post-production. Their attitude toward the viewers is to merely provide them more freedom to interpret events. Drew Associates found that in such films as *Primary* (1960), *Mooney vs. Fowle* (1961, a.k.a. *Football*), *The Chair* (1962), *Jane* (1962), their methods worked best "if the situation they chose had its own drama which would come to a climax within a limited time."<sup>33</sup> Direct cinema techniques were favored by the Maysles brothers, who made *Showman* (1962), *What's Happening! The Battle in the U.S.A.* (1964), *Meet Marlon Brando* (1965), *Saleman* (1969), *Grimme Shelter* (1970); and by Frederick Wiseman, the filmmaker of *Titicut Follies* (1967), *Law and Order* (1969), *Hospital* (1970), and *Welfare* (1975). As Plantinga points out, what direct cinema implies is "a method of filming, a stance toward representing reality, and an attitude toward the spectator."<sup>34</sup> The direct cinema documentary trend soon appeared throughout the world during the mid-sixties.

Although direct cinema proponents try to remain as unobtrusive as

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<sup>33</sup> Ellis, 224.

<sup>34</sup> Plantinga, 117.

possible while making a film, they are criticized for their ostensible objective stance. Unless the camera is completely hidden, subject persons are usually aware of the existence of the camera and adjust their behavior accordingly. Absolute objectivity is hard to obtain. David Maysles and Wiseman both admit the impossibility of representing objectivity. David Maysles says that there is no such a thing as “being strictly objective in anything that is at all artistic is impossible.”<sup>35</sup> Wiseman also rejects the claims of objectivity although his films are prototypical examples of observational cinema. He says “I don’t see how a film can be anything but subjective.... They are not objective, because someone else might make the film differently.”<sup>36</sup>

Jean Rouch also denies that the filmmaker can achieve objectivity or that the camera can be unobtrusive.<sup>37</sup> Instead, he assumes that the camera acts as a stimulant in provoking events it films, and the artist as an avowed provocateur. He first applied the term *cinema verite* to his film *Chronicle of a Summer*.<sup>38</sup> *Cinema verite*, as Michael Rabiger stated in *Directing the Documentary*, “legitimizes the camera's presence and gave a director the role of catalyst.” It “encourages the interaction between subject and director” and “authorizes the director to initiate characteristic events and to prospect

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<sup>35</sup> Quoted in James Blue, “Thought on Cinema Verite and a Discussion with the Maysles Brothers”, in *Film Comment* 2, 4 (1964), 27&29.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in B. Roy Levin, “Fred Wiseman”, in *Documentary Explorations*, ed. G. Roy Levin (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 318.

<sup>37</sup> Ellis, 225.

<sup>38</sup> The term *cinema verite* refers back to the Russian equivalent, *kino pravda*.

for privileged moments.”<sup>39</sup> For instance, in *Chronicle of a Summer*, people were stopped on the street and asked questions. Rouch and Morin (co-producer of the film) together with the camera served as “psycho-analytic stimulants” to enable people to think and to express their feelings in a way they don't usually do. Other examples of the American approach to *cinema verite* methods includes Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* (1986) and *Time Indefinite* (1994).

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<sup>39</sup> Michael Rabiger, *Directing the Documentary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston: Focal Press, 1992) 23.

## CHAPTER IV

### WHAT IS DOCUMENTARY ?

#### **Definition of Documentary**

The word “documentary” as a concept or practice has no fixed territory.<sup>40</sup> It has been defined in many ways by documentarists. Maybe John Grierson's definition for documentary as “the creative treatment of actuality” is the most oft-quoted one. In his stipulations “first principles,” Grierson claims that documentary must meet the requirement of creativity and dramatization and that the treatment in a documentary “must be of actuality,” which is, to use the original actor and the original scene to interpret the modern world.<sup>41</sup> Bill Nichols, Jeanne Allen, and No'l Carroll define the documentary as a film which makes an argument rather than entertains or diverts.<sup>42</sup>

Jack Ellis characterizes documentary and makes distinctions between documentary and other film types in terms of documentary's five-part

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<sup>40</sup> Nichols, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Plantinga, 12.

<sup>42</sup> Bill Nichols writes in *Representing Reality* that a documentary requires “a representation, case, or argument about the historical world.” Similar arguments made by Jeanne Allen in “Self-Reflexivity in the Documentary,” *Cine-Tracts* 1, 2 Summer (1977), 37, and No'l Carroll, “From Reel to Real Entangled in the Non-Fiction film,” *Philosophical Exchange* 14 (1983), 15.

formula: subjects; purpose, points of view, or approaches; forms; production methods and techniques; and the sorts of experience documentary offers audiences. Generally, the documentary focuses on something specific and factual concerning public matters; consequently, its “subject” must be actual people, places, and events. As for the “purpose” of documentary, most filmmakers are trying to record and interpret the actual social and cultural phenomena in order to inform or persuade people “to hold some attitude or take some action related to their subjects.” A “form” of a documentary includes the film-makers’ original conception, the sight and sounds selected for use, and the structures into which they are fitted. It is the formative process determined by the subject, and the purpose of the film. “Production method and technique” refer to the ways images and sounds are recorded and then edited together. Finally, documentary filmmakers seek to provide their audience an aesthetic “experience” on the one hand; and, possibly, “an effect” on attitudes leading to action on the other.<sup>43</sup>

Most documentarists have centered their definitions around the purpose, functions, and effects of documentary. “Documentary,” described by Wolverton, “reveals and reshapes reality in a universal language that compels attention and involvement regardless of one’s interest in, or need to know about, the subject of the documentary.”<sup>44</sup> In *Theorizing Documentary*,

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<sup>43</sup> Ellis, 1-8.

<sup>44</sup> Mike Wolverton, *Reality on Reels: How to Make Documentaries for Video/Radio/Film* (Houston: Gulf Publishing Company, 1983) 18.

Michael Renov defines documentary as a film “to record, reveal, or preserve, to persuade or to promote, to analyze or interrogate, and to express.”<sup>45</sup> Willard Van Dyke views documentary as a film “intended to bring about change in the audience -- change in their understanding, their attitude, and possibly their actions.”<sup>46</sup> Jack Ellis put more emphasis on the actuality of the material than documentary’s purpose and its possible effects on audience.

Grierson was the first filmmaker and documentarist who claimed the documentary's social functions. For Grierson, a documentary must have a serious social purpose to educate the audience and to enable them to have better understanding about their place in society and the public institutions that organize their lives.<sup>47</sup> This social aspect of documentary is agreed to by most theoreticians. Paul Rotha, for instance, writes that one of the primary requirements of the documentary is “the expression of social analysis”<sup>48</sup>; the documentary ... brings alive the realities of the modern world in which he lives ... so as to base our themes on the relationship of Man to the world in which he lives.”<sup>49</sup> Lewis Jacobs in *The Documentary Tradition* also asks for

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<sup>45</sup> Michael. Renov, ed., “Toward a Poetics of Documentary,” in *Theorizing Documentary* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 21.

<sup>46</sup> Plantinga, 6.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Rotha, "Some Principles of Documentary;" in Richard Meran Barsam, ed., *Nonfiction Film Theory and Criticism* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1976, 42-?).

<sup>49</sup> Rotha , 115.

a clear social purpose.”<sup>50</sup> Michael Rabiger in *Directing the Documentary* points out a film can only be called a documentary when it “invites the spectator to draw socially critical conclusions.”<sup>51</sup>

### **Modes of Documentary**

In an article “The Voice of Documentary” in *New Challenges for Documentary*, Bill Nichols identifies that four major modes of representation stand out as the dominant organizational pattern in documentary films, “each with distinctive formal and ideological qualities.”<sup>52</sup> These categories of documentary -- expository, observational, interview-oriented, and reflexive -- follow a chronological order in the development of documentary and represent four alternative styles and assumptions about the appropriate functions of the non-fiction film.

*Expository documentary, or direct address*, with its authoritative “Voice of God” commentary, was the first mode developed from the Grierson tradition. In expository documentary, the texts directly address the viewer with “titles or voices that advance an argument about the historical world.” In most cases the narration dominates the visuals; footage only serves as illustration or counterpoint. Filmmakers of direct address mode stress the

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<sup>50</sup> Louis Jacob, *The Documentary Tradition* (New York: Hastings House, 1974), 2.

<sup>51</sup> Rabiger, 6.

<sup>52</sup> Alan Rosenthal, *New Challenges for Documentary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) 48.

impression of objectivity and the viewer of the expository mode expects to see a “commonsensical world” unfold through the linkage built between sequences and events. The expository mode of documentary is the primary mode for “relaying information and persuasively making a case” since the 1920s.<sup>53</sup>

*Observational documentary* comes after the expository style. As Nichols argues, the observational mode promised an increase in the “reality effect” with its directness, immediacy, and impression of capturing untampered events in the everyday lives of particular people.”<sup>54</sup> Observational filmmaking allows control over the subjects in front of the camera and makes use of editing to improve the impression of real time. Without any implicit or explicit commentary, the observational mode offers the viewer unfettered access to people in action and leads the viewer to draw a conclusion about the filmed subjects. Two methods within observational film are direct cinema and *cinema verite*.

Observational documentary seldom provides its viewer a sense of history, context, or perspective. As a result, the third type of documentary, the *interview-oriented films* emerged. The interactive mode incorporates the style of direct address, in which the major part of the film’s argument comes from the social actors’ comments or responses in the forms of monologue or

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<sup>53</sup> Nichols, 34.

<sup>54</sup> Rosenthal, 48.

dialogue. "Sometimes profoundly revealing, sometimes fragmented and incomplete," says Nichols, "such films have provided the central model for contemporary documentary."<sup>55</sup>

*Reflexive documentary* had gradually formed in the 1970s and 80s. It "mixes observational passages with interviews, the voice-over of the filmmaker with intertitles, making patently clear what has been implicit all along."<sup>56</sup> In reflexive mode, the representation of the historical world is the topic of cinematic meditation. Instead of speaking to the viewer about the historical world, the filmmaker addresses "the process of representation itself" and about "the question of how the viewer talk about the historical world". The filmmaker of reflexive mode is "always a participant-witness and an active fabricator of meaning, a producer of cinematic discourse rather than a neutral or all-knowing reporter of the way things truly are."<sup>57</sup> What this mode of representation emphasizes is not the encounter between filmmaker and subject but that between filmmaker and viewer. The film serves as a stimulant to awake the audience's consciousness of their relationship to the text. Editing is used to enhance the consciousness of cinematic form rather than of the historic world.

Plantinga points out in *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 49.

that Nichols' four modes don't deal with poetic and experimental nonfiction film, such as Flaherty's *Nanook* and Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of the City*. Although Nichols assigns them as "poetic exposition" according to the historical period, he overlooks that their primary functions don't fit into the expository film conceptually and stylistically. Plantinga thus suggests there should be a category for the poetic nonfiction film.<sup>58</sup>

### Voice of Documentary

All documentary films have a voice. Plantinga gives the "voice" a definition as "the visual vantage point of the spectator or character, the attitude of a character or narrator toward events, or the attitude of the film's discourse overall."<sup>59</sup> In other words, a "voice" of a documentary expresses the information of the documentary's projected world. Plantinga also proposes an heuristic typology for documentary voices by attributing them into three categories: *formal*, *open*, and *poetic*.

Films of the *formal voice* tend to be "classical" in form, style, structure, and technique, with "the classical aesthetic characteristics of harmony, unity, and restraint." Documentary films of formal voice "pose a clear question or a relevant and coherent set of questions and then answer every salient question they pose." An overt position of knowledge is assumed. It is

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<sup>58</sup> Plantinga, 103.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 99.

“relatively omniscient”; it “possess ostensible knowledge and imparts it to the viewer.” The formal voice tends to be highly communicative and reliable in the sense that it functions to teach, to direct, and to explain.

*The open voice* is an alternative to the formative. Unlike the formal voice, the open voice exploits the capabilities of cameras and microphones to observe, to provoke, and to explore. Its attitude toward the project world differs from that of the formal voice. It avoids making broad claims about its subject, and offers “neither contextualizations nor a strong sense of closure.” The open voice is “more hesitant in its <sup>epistemological</sup> epistemological position” and “in an unwillingness to offer neat explanations.” It emphasizes the iconic and indexical functions of image, allowing the viewer to come to their own conclusions.

*The poetic voice* is more concerned about the documentary film as art and as “a means of exploring representation itself.”<sup>60</sup> The poetic voice “foregrounds the aesthetic qualities of what it presents”; meanwhile, the narration in poetic voice films “maintains a sort of epistemic aestheticism.” Four groups within the poetic voice are: poetic documentary, avant-garde non-fiction, metadocumentary, and documentary parodies.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 109.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **VIDEO PROGRAM DESIGN**

#### **Title Interpretation**

The program is entitled *The Story of Old Stones* for it presents stories of historic sites. Historic sites are not mere piles of old stones and old buildings but relics of humanity. They witness the history, architectural skills, and standards of beauty in earlier periods of time. Therefore, to understand historic sites may be the best way to know about Taiwan. Recognizing the beauty of historic sites and the value of cultural property can help Taiwanese gain insight of their roots and their living realities in the modern world.

#### **Purpose**

According to David Smith, "a major source of the power of television and video to communicate effectively is their stimulation and extension of our experience and emotions through empathy and sympathy."<sup>61</sup> This video program *The Story of Old Stones* is intended to trigger the viewer's emotional response, to evoke the viewer's interests through the aesthetic appreciation of the historical beauty. The viewer is expected to be led with emotion through the pictorial presentation of the historic sites, finally arriving at a

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<sup>61</sup> Smith, 129.

feeling that they should pay more concern to historic sites and take action to preserve the valuable treasures.

### **Audience**

The target audience are Taiwanese people who only have a superficial understanding about the historic sites and people who are indifferent to Taiwanese traditional culture, especially those who are adults with more capability to influence the society.<sup>62</sup>

### **Mode and Voice**

Like most documentary films which rarely fall into only one category to the exclusion of the others, the video text *The Story of Old Stones* mixes some modes and voices. It applies both expository and observational mode. For most scenes such as the buildings and the decorations, expository mode is adopted to directly address the audience. The off-screen narration effectively dominates the scenes, offering “epistemic knowledge” and background information. Editing for this expository part generally serves to maintain rhetorical continuity. Observational mode is used in the scenes of the users of two historic sites and the scenes of the music performance of Pei-Kuan and Nan-Kuan. Both direct cinema and cinema verite are adopted to observe people’s activities. The sounds and images were recorded at the

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<sup>62</sup> The “adult audience” generally refers to people who are 18 years old or above. According to Taiwan civil law, these people are considered “adults.”

moment of observational filming. In order to get most spontaneous shots for the visitors of two historic sites, the camera was “hidden” and set in the corners of the historical buildings and the producer played the role of uninvolved bystander. When shooting the musicians in Kuan-Temple, on the other hand, the camera used in *cinema verite* took an active role in provoking the events, and the producer served as a provocateur. The observational cinema provides the spectator a chance to be an ideal observer to look in and overhear the musicians’ live performance. The formal voice applied in the parts of historic sites’ introduction is “relatively omniscient”. Through narration and visuals, it functions epistemically to explain the historical world to the viewer. Similar to the observational mode, the open voice observes or explores rather than explains in the shots of the music performances and the users of both temples.

## **Content**

This 28-minute video program focuses on the historical, cultural, and architectural beauty of two selected sites -- Kuan-Ti Temple and Confucius Temple in the city of Tainan. The whole program is divided into seven sections and three montages: the opening, the front halls of Kuan-Ti Temple (including Montage One), the back halls of Kuan-Ti Temple, the outer courtyard of Confucius Temple (including Montage Two and Three), the inner courtyard of Confucius Temple, the eastern complex of Confucius Temple, and the ending. Both historic sites were shot according to their

geographical order, which is, from south to north.

The opening attempts to lead the viewer to what they are going to see in the program. It begins with a set-up question, which is proposed to stimulate the viewer to question whether they ignore the historic sites around them. Then comes a description of the importance of historic sites. The second part starts with an introduction of historical background of Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple, followed by the architectural forms and the gods of the front halls. A live performance of the traditional music Pei-Kuan is shown to the viewer and Montage One in this section shows the gorgeous atmosphere the candles and incense build for the temple. The third part focuses on the architecture and gods of the Three-Generation Hall, the Kuan-Yin Hall, the West Society, and the Liu-Ho Hall. Another segmentation of live Nan-Kuan performance is shown at the end of Kuan-Ti Temple sections. Confucius Temple is introduced in the fourth section. After a description of its history, the beauty of the outer courtyard unfolded. The architecture in this area and its symbolic meanings are unveiled, including the Gates of the Sage, the Gate of Propriety and its corresponding Way of Righteousness, the Door of Achievement, and the Pool of Higher Learning. Montage Two of the user's collective shots is inserted between the scene of the frontyard and that of the entrance to the inner courtyard, providing a relaxing moment after an intense informative narration. Montage Three, which shows the details of the decorations of the Door of Achievement, intends to lead the viewer's aesthetic empathy to a climax. The fifth section

shows the audience the main architecture of the inner courtyard, including the Hall of Achievement, the Eastern Corridor, and the Western Corridor. The sixth section mainly introduces the eastern side of the complex, the Min-Lun Hall and its interior design. Following that is the ending of the video program, which echoes the opening, re-emphasizing the importance of historic sites and pointing out the argument the producer makes for *The Story of Old Stones*: we ought to cherish and understand these valuable assets.

### **Production Process and Strategies**

The *pre-production* phase covers all the decision-making and arrangements before filming, from selecting the subjects, doing the research, choosing equipment, and deciding the methods, details, and timetable of shooting. In order to be familiar with the topic's background and current status, the producer watched five video tapes on the topic of historic sites. This also helped the producer gain some expertise in the subject area. Libraries provided useful resources in focusing and organizing in the topic. Apart from the visual and written references from the libraries, the producer got lots of background information from the interviews with the management of both temples and Tao-Tsung Cheng, the President of the Chih-Kan Literature and History Workshop, and Chao-Ching Fu, Chairman of Tainan Cultural Assets Preservation Association.

The *production* occurred on the locations of Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple and Confucius Temple in the summer of 1997. Effective cinematography is

strictly required by the producer because good cinematography helps create a series of strong moods and predispose viewers to enter the film's world wholeheartedly. Frequently used movements consist of tilts, pans, and zooms, each with different paces depending on the feeling the producer wanted to create. Since lighting equipment was not allowed in these two temples, the light source is usually what exists at the location, supplemented by the camera's internal gain device only when necessary. A major problem the producer encountered was with the audio. Since these two temples are located in the downtown besides busy streets, a lot of noise was simultaneously recorded with the visuals.

*Post-production* comprises narrating, script writing, and editing. Script and narration are based on the materials gathered from the libraries and personal interviews with experts on historic sites. The complete voice-overs/subtitles can be found in Appendix A. The producer was the narrator based on experience with the earlier production phases, the producer knew the best pace of the program and could have the maximum control of the whole piece. The editing was completed at the Digital Media Lab of the Michigan State University Telecommunication Department. Basic editing transitions such as cuts, fades, and dissolves dominate the whole piece. Each shot is motivated logically by the previous ones. Three idea-associate montages also serve as a transition that shifts the viewer's attention from the general presentation to highlight an upbeat and exciting feeling. In addition to selecting scenes and achieving continuity of the visuals, much effort was

made to deliberately design the sound composition and mixes. Music plays a crucial role for its capacity of manipulating the tempo. Thirteen pieces of music are adopted throughout the whole program to establish mood and to increase the aesthetic energy of scenes. The narration serves only as a supplement to offer necessary information.

## CHAPTER VI

### EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

#### **Group Evaluation**

As mentioned in Chapter I and Chapter V, the purpose of this video program is to evoke the viewer's interest in historic sites through the aesthetic appreciation of their beauty. It helps the viewer to form a new conception toward historic sites, and the viewer is expected to be led to an emotional feeling that he or she should pay more attention to historic sites and take action to preserve these valuable treasures. To test if the objectives of *The Story of Old Stones* are achieved, there was a viewing session held on January 9, 1998, with seventeen Taiwanese in attendance. In order to maintain objectivity, people of the sample group were all drawn from the Ann Arbor area through the internet; they did not know the producer before they viewed the video. ~~Their age ranges from 18-56; ten of them are students; three are housewives, and four are working people.~~ Belonging to the target audience the producer wants to reach, these people all come from Taiwan and only have a rough ideas about Taiwan's historic sites. The evaluation consists of a questionnaire with "before viewing" and "after viewing" sections and followed by a free-discussion. The first two questions are designed with the intention to learn about the participants'

perceptions of historic sites before viewing *The Story of Old Stones*; the rest are questions for testing the effectiveness of the program. The following is the summary of their evaluations from the questionnaire as well as the discussion session:

- 1. Have you ever been to any historic sites when you were in Taiwan? If the answer is “yes”, how many sites did you visit so far? And, why did you visit the historic site (s)? If the answer is “no”, why didn’t you visit the historic site (s)?**

*number.*  
*reasons*

**Sixteen** people said that they have been to historic sites before and all these people visited more than three sites. The **reasons** that they visited these places are informative: ten of them said that they had no choice because it was a field trip of schools; four said that they wanted to take some pictures; and some other said there is nowhere to go in a city, so they went to historic sites for relaxing. Only one person has never been to historic sites because of no interest.

- 2. Before viewing the program, what do you know about historic sites?**

Fourteen viewers admitted they did not know much about historic sites. For them, historic sites are just old architecture. They knew only a little about the story behind the historic sites even after visiting the places. One wrote, “No interest! Why bother!” The other wrote, “I learned the history for some historic sites from some books. But now, I almost forget....” Three people in the group could briefly tell segments of stories of the historic

sites they visited but none of them have a complete understanding toward the sites.

**3. What is your first impression, reaction, or feeling after viewing this video?**

They all agreed that the video is an impressive one, especially in revealing the beauty of two selected sites. Fourteen viewers appreciated the cinematography very much; ten viewers liked the program as a whole; six said they like music selected; and four people pointed out that they especially like the intercutting montages of the program. Most of them thought that this video gave them a new experience of appreciating and understanding two temples. One said, "I've been to the Tainan Confucius Temple three times, but never noticed that it is so beautiful. The video offers me a chance to look at them from a different perspective."

**4. Did this program make you feel interested (or bored) in any way?**

The interesting parts the viewer wrote in the questionnaire are: scenes of the music performance, scenes of the drums and bells, montages of the users, candles, and the detailed decorations. When asking if the program is boring in any part, three people left this part blank but the rest of people said they are surprised that they did not feel as bored as they thought they would be in the beginning of the program. After discussion, the viewer found the

strategy that the producer used in the editing is effective in keeping their interest while watching the program.<sup>63</sup>

**5. After viewing this program, are your attitudes the same or changed ?  
If changed, in what aspect?**

All of the viewer's attitude towards historic sites changed. One said that maybe this is the first time he found that there are so much value in these two historic sites. Five viewers thought that this video made them have the desire to see more about other historic sites not introduced in the program. Ten people said that they changed their previous attitude of taking historic sites as some "dead buildings" and "boring places."

**6. After viewing the program, are you concerned about doing  
something for historic sites?**

Eleven viewers said that the video raised their interest in visiting two filmed sites and other ones. Four viewers had no comment. Five people said that if there is something they can do to bring alive the historic sites, they are happy to do that. Three viewers wrote "Maybe"; two said, "I am not sure if I have time or not"; and one said "we paid taxes, the government should take good care of historic sites for us." One participant felt that apart from the historical beauty, the only implication from the video is that

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<sup>63</sup> To avoid boredom, the producer intercut the informative scenes with shots of activities and montages. The adoption of a variety of music is also a strategy to avoid monotony.

“people need to cherish historic sites,” which seemed to be too abstract a concept for him.

**7. Please give any other comments and suggestion about this program.**

When asked for additional comments in this question, four had no further comment while twelve thought the program was well-done. Two participants encouraged the producer to engage in producing more series for other historic sites. Two viewers pointed out that the producer should incorporate interviews with what existed in the video while the other two viewers didn't like the idea of interviews because they prefer the historic sites telling their own stories. Four viewers suggested that the producer should make her assertion of “cherishing historic sites” stronger.

**Conclusion**

From the result of the group evaluation, this documentary succeeded in fulfilling its first objective of evoking people's interests in historic sites, especially in uncovering the beauty of two historic temples and offering their historic contexts. It creates for the viewer a new angle of looking at the historic sites and helps the viewer have better understanding of two selected sites. As for the objective “to stimulate people to be willing to concern more about historic sites”, there is still a room for improvement. For some viewers, the messages of “taking action” carried in the video is not as strong as that of the beauty of the historic sites. Overall, *The Story of Old Stones*

successfully achieves its emotional appeal to its target audience through aesthetic appreciation.

From the response of the seventeen viewers, we also find that people's interest can be provoked if there is an appropriate medium by which historic sites are introduced. If this video or others like it can be shown to a real audience in Taiwan, it will be a meaningful and helpful experience for them, with the potential of changing attitudes and increasing interest. The more people are exposed to this video, the more understanding of historic sites they may have. As a result, this video will be dubbed and sent back to the corresponding management of various historic sites in Taiwan. The management then can then use this tape as an introductory material to guide the visitors.

In addition to showing this video to the visitors of historic sites, some other means can be used to attract people to come to visit historic sites or help people have a comprehensive understanding about historic sites. TV is a powerful medium which can be used to reach more audience throughout Taiwan. If a series of videos of this kind can be broadcast on TV, people's indifferent attitude may change. The management can make more introductory brochures and pamphlets and make them available in public locations like movie theaters and schools. In modern society, historic sites can be revitalized if they provide economic value. Thus, historic sites. May be brought alive by holding money making activities, such as cultural festivals, traditional folk arts exhibitions, and traditional art performances.

**Other devices, such as explanatory tablets and audio and multimedia guidance system, can be set up on location at the sites to help people have a better understanding about what they are seeing. Besides conventional printed and visual media, a web site about Taiwan's historic sites can be created for people who have interests but live in remote areas. It may be possible, through these and other communication programs and technologies, to build a new and higher level of interest in Taiwan's historic sites when people begin to understand and care about these valuable sites, they may be more willing to visit and support them.**

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **SUBTITLES OF THE PROGRAM**

#### **THE OPENING**

When you are shuttling in busy streets  
whether you enjoy the city's prosperity  
or hate its hullabaloo --  
do you ever take notice of the valuable assets  
our ancestors left us -- the historic sites  
These sites are not only piles of old stones  
and old buildings  
but relics of humanity  
which witness the history and architectural skills  
and standards of beauty in earlier periods of time  
Therefore  
to understand historic sites may be the best way  
to know about Taiwan and our ancestors' lives

## **THE FRONT HALLS OF TAINAN KUAN-TI TEMPLE**

**Here is the ancient Kuan-Ti Temple  
which has a 337-year history  
Kuan-Ti Temple is one of the shrines  
most worshipped by the Chinese people  
The Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple  
is the only one used for a site for official sacrifices**

**The Tainan Kuan-Ti Temple features  
a long and narrow architectural form  
Its well-known vast wall is  
5.5 meters high on average  
and about 66 meters in length  
From south to north are the Front Hall's  
"Three-River Swallowtail Ridge"  
the First Hall of Worship's  
"Firm Mountain Horse Back Ridge"  
the Second Hall of Worship's  
"Roll-up Shed Gable and Hip Ridge"  
the Main Hall's  
"Hanging Mountain Double Eaved Ridge"**

**and Posterior Hall's**

**"Firm Mountain Swallowtail Ridge"**

**These dips and curves**

**form a spectacular wave-like skyline**

**which gives the wall**

**the most grandeur of its kind**

**Standing in front of the Three-River Gate**

**we see the embroidery on the lintel is gorgeous**

**Many exquisite sculptures**

**such as a sparrow base**

**and an elephant base**

**Between the roof and the pillar**

**these decorations provide visual interest**

**After entering the Front Hall**

**we can see plaques suspended above**

**which praise Kuan-Ti's mightiness**

**On the left side is a big drum**

**on the right is a big bell**

**They both are struck in every lunar month's first**

**and fifteenth day and other important days**

Two days a week, enthusiasts of  
traditional music -- Pei-Kuan  
get together practicing and competing with each other

Looking up from the patio  
we can see two brick representatives of  
the cloth used as currency in ancient China  
The incense in the bronze burners  
and candles lighted by pilgrims  
create a beautiful scene

**(Montage One: Gorgeous Atmosphere Built by Candles and Incense)**

When entering the Main Hall  
we sense a solemn and peaceful atmosphere  
Kuan-Ti -- the god in the niche  
is the most-worshipped deity in the temple  
This general in the Period of Three Kingdoms  
is adored by pilgrims across four religious fields  
He is deified as a god of business  
brotherhood  
bravery

and exorcism.

We can see the pilgrims follow the rites to worship

Their piety shows clearly

in their utterance and manner

Two guards standing besides Kuan-Ti

are Kuan-Ping and Chou-Tsang

who represent the civic and the military respectively

They are antiques of Kang-Hsi period

Hanging above the niche

is the largest plaque in the temple

“A paragon for all generation”

is under the handwriting of the emperor Hsien-Feng

Scrolls on the pillars around

are subscribed with narration poems

which glorify Kuan-Ti’s great virtue

## **THE BACK HALLS OF TAINAN KUAN-TI TEMPLE**

Let’s move to the back of the complex

The atmosphere here is totally different

from that of the front hall

The atmosphere here is calmer and more relaxing

And the buildings in this area are simpler  
in their construction and their embellishment  
The Three-generation Hall is the shrine  
for offering sacrifices to Kuan-Ti's ancestors  
three generations ahead of him

The tablets on both sides are for those officers  
who contributed to building the temple and for  
other diligent officers who served at that time  
The details of the roof  
and the calabash-like decoration  
show us the craftsman's ingenuity

The Kuan-Yin Hall is located at the west wing  
It is very common in Taiwan to see  
many deities worshipped in a temple  
The benign Kuan-Yin is the goddess of Mercy  
She is always listening to people's suffering  
The goddess of Birth is in the right niche  
and the gods of Land in the left niche  
They all have close relationships with people  
The exorcists "18 Arhans"  
whose facial expressions are so life-like that

people sometimes feel terrified  
The column plinths shaped  
as wax apples and octagons  
The octagonal plinth with highly detailed  
relief decorations on each face is rarely seen  
When we look outside from the hall  
The red bamboo palisades create a gorgeous scene  
  
Right beside the Kuan-Yin Hall is the West Society  
In the Ching dynasty, it was the gathering place  
where scholars and intellectuals met each other  
Today it is used as the shrine  
for worshipping the Five Wen-Chang gods.  
In folk beliefs  
these five gods take charge of civil service exams  
and can bless the examinees with good luck  
In summer time when various entrance exams are held  
we can see many red pray sheets  
on which the examinees write down their names  
to let the gods know who they are  
and thus the gods know whom to bless  
In the back yard  
there is a little pond

where captured turtles are released by pilgrims  
People believe that by such charitable deeds  
the turtles' life-savers' luck can be accumulated

The Liu-Ho Hall is the shrine  
where the Fire god is worshipped  
The members of Chen-Sheng Association  
usually get together in front of this hall  
to practice the traditional opera -- Nan-Kuan  
Beautiful music spreads through the whole temple

### **THE OUTER COURTYARD OF TAINAN CONFUCIUS TEMPLE**

The Tainan Confucius Temple used to be  
the only school of Confucianism in Taiwan  
In 1665, the General Chen Yung- Hwa held that  
education insure the prosperity of the nation  
He thus suggested that the governor  
Cheng Ching construct a Confucius Temple

In front of the Arch of the Palace of Higher Learning  
is the main entrance to the temple complex --

**the Eastern Gate of the Sage**

**On its “hanging-mountain” roof**

**are six swallowtail eaves elegantly uptilted**

**Lines and colors are proportionately beautiful**

**The so-called “Tablet of Dismounting” is erected**

**at the right of the Eastern Gate of the Sage**

**It directs visitors to proceed from this point on foot**

**to show great respect to Confucius**

**Across the gate**

**we see green trees and shade**

**The Western Gate of the Sage which has**

**the same structure with the eastern gate**

**is seldom opened today**

**Facing the western gate**

**and looking toward the right is the Gate of Propriety**

**This gate and its corresponding Way of Righteousness**

**are now symbolic buildings which represent that**

**“Following Confucianism**

**is following propriety and righteousness”**

**The beautifully constructed lattice windows**

**with black frames are fascinating**

**On the ridge is the mythical dragon-fish of old legends  
protecting the building from fire**

**Located in the downtown  
the Confucius Temple serves as a shelter  
where people may get away from the hullabaloo  
We run into many types of visitors**

**(Montage Two: Visitors of Confucius Temple)**

**The Door of Great Achievement  
is the main entrance to the inner courtyard  
It has three sets of double doors  
Each set of double doors  
is decorated with 108 nails  
Usually only the doors on the right are open daily  
The middle set of doors is opened twice a year  
when there are sacrificial ceremonies  
Skillful paintings signify auspiciousness and nobility  
Plain “stone drums” at the entrance  
counterbalance the weight of the doors  
which also symbolically show respect to Confucius**

Lavish wooden carvings adorn the underside of  
the roof system and thus enrich the interior

**(Montage Three: The Details of the Decorations of the Door of Achievement)**

The Pool of Higher Learning

is located on the southern side of the complex

Water represents success in academic pursuits

**THE INNER COURTYARD OF CONFUCIUS TEMPLE**

The center of the inner courtyard

and the main hall for offering sacrifices

is the Hall of Great Achievement

Its color system is simply unified in vermilion

The front of the balustrades

are decorated by 8 granite lion-cubs

These lion-cubs are vividly carved

and different in their gestures

The roof style of the Hall

is the “ Hanging Mountain Double Eaved”

There are many sumptuous sculptures on the ridge

The Tung-Tien Tung symbolizes scholarship

The bronze bells on either side of the ridges

represent the notion that teachers serve as

the bells to wake up the world

At each corner of the balustrades

we see a common feature in Chinese architecture

which is the drainpipe in the shape of

the head of a sea dragon

When the rain comes, it will appear as

a sea dragon spewing water from its mouth

When entering the hall,

the first sight that

catches our eyes is the altar that

holds the spirit tablet of Confucius

Around the altar are tablets that list 16 sages

such as Zenzi, Mencius,

and some of Confucius' understanding students

Looking upward, we see many valuable plaques

showing reverence to Confucius presented by

successive emperors and four presidents over 300 years

The Tainan Confucius Temple possesses the most  
plaques which extol the virtues of  
Confucius in all of Taiwan

The inner courtyard is flanked  
by the Eastern and Western Corridors  
These two long buildings are the houses  
where we can find the 159 spirit tablets of  
famous sages and scholars of the past 2.500 years  
These sages' names are engraved in gold letters  
on the bright red wooden tablets  
and honored through the generations to come  
The corridors' gallery-like space reflects  
the plain architectural style in the early era of Ching

## **THE EASTERN COMPLEX OF CONFUCIUS TEMPLE**

Let's go to the other side  
The eastern side of the complex used to be a school  
Shaded under the green foliage is the Gate of Virtue  
Once the disciples entered this gate,  
they had to respect their teachers

and follow their words during their lifetime  
The former classroom “Min-Lun Hall”  
has the Hsuan-Tin in front  
and the Moon Gates on both sides  
There is a huge screen with the inscription which  
is the imitation of Men-Yin Chao’s calligraphy  
Under the palace lantern,  
the interior of this hall is extraordinarily magnificent  
Nine doors separate the space and admit the light  
When the light penetrates into the hall  
the space thus created within and without the hall  
is unified in a highly dynamic rhythm

## **THE ENDING**

While we are desperately pursuing  
economic prosperity and modernization,  
do not forget these valuable historic sites  
These old stones and pillars  
contain the stories of our ancestors  
They are priceless treasures  
which we must cherish and understand

**When a city's past is forgotten,  
it loses its soul**

## **APPENDIX B**

## APPENDIX B

### GROUP EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

**Dear Participants,**

**Thank you very much for participating evaluation process of this video documentary, *The Story of Old Stones*. Please answer the following questions from your own perspectives. Please feel free to ask questions if there is any. Your time is very appreciated.**

1. Have you ever been to any historic sites when you were in Taiwan? If the answer is “yes”, how many sites did you visit so far ? And, why did you visit the historic site (s)? If the answer is “no”, why didn’t you visit the historic site (s)?
  
2. Before viewing the program, what do you know about historic sites ?
  
3. What is your first impression, reaction, or feeling after viewing this video?

✓ 4. Did this program make you feel interested (or bored) in any way?

5. After viewing this program, are your attitudes the same or changed ? If changed, in what aspect ?

6. After viewing the program, are you concerned about doing something for historic sites?

✓ 7. Please give any other comments and suggestion about this program.

Sex: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

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