1 **'War, the Anthropocene and its Discontents:**

Visual and Poetic Perceptions of Russia's War in Ukraine across the Taiwan Strait, 2022-Present'

Daria Berg
Qian Cui
(University of St.Gallen, Switzerland)
EACS, Venice, Italy, 25 July 2026

2 **I.**

THREE GRAND DREAMS

upend geopolitical order

3 **Trump's inward-looking**

MAGA American Dream

4 **Putin's outward-looking**

Dream of Imperialist Expansion—

or: Peter the Great 2.0

- AI-artist Carl de Keyzer, "Putins Dream", art using AI

5 **Xi's global 'China Dream' (Zhongguo meng 中国梦)**

29 Nov 2012

- Xi Jinping:
  - speech at Exhibition in National Museum, Tiananmen Square
- 'Great revival of the Chinese nation'
- China Dreams?

6 **"One World, One Dream"**

= Old favourite motto of Xi Jinping who masterminded Beijing Olympics 2008:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jA78Kf1vbM

7 **China's Geopolitics & the Opening of Beijing Winter Olympics**

4 Feb 2022: Beijing Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony,
China & Russia pledge 'no limits' friendship

8 **II.**

Where there are Dreams, there are also…

NIGHTMARES

9 **Joint Statement: No limits Friendship & Media Mirroring**

10 **National Radio & TV Administration 国家广播电视总局 (2018)**

- 2021 NRTA under Central Propaganda Dept of CCP
  - Additional agreement with Russia's Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media: Chinese media to repeat & amplify Russian propaganda
- Since Feb 2022: converging media narratives Russia / China
  - China amplifies Russia's fake news: Ukraine prepares biological warfare (cf. Hvistendahl & Kovalev, 2022)

11 **Why all this Russian propaganda in China?**

- Interview Ai Weiwei, 7.4.2022
- 'Ukraine-conflict is a testbed for China's Taiwan plans'
- https://www.monopol-magazin.de/ai-weiwei-ukraine-konflikt-ist-probe-fuer-chinas-taiwan-plaene

12 **China's Dream?**

- Art / poetry on taboo topics in China's media sphere: Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong
- Ai Weiwei: 'There is no Chinese Dream, only Chinese nightmares.'

13 **III.**

VOICES

ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE

in Sinophone Mediasphere

14 **1.**

VOICE FROM BEIJING

15 **"Falling Matryoshka © Cao Fei 2022**

Cao Fei (b. 1978), Instagram, 25 February 2022: The day after Russia's invaded Ukraine:
"Falling Matryoshka © Cao Fei 2022. Photo from the border of China and Russia. Project commissioned by @garagemca."
Collaboration Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Jan 2022.

16 **'My Future is not a Dream'**

- Video clip - Whose Utopia? (2006) + interview: https://youtu.be/zB9NFRWREec?t=7m28s
- >> from 7:28 until 8:42

17 **Voice from Beijing:**

Cao Fei

- b. 1978 Guangzhou,
- Beijing & Singapore
- Cao Fei: 'Comments on China's society, not criticism' (NYT, 2015)

18 **2.**

HAN CHINESE VOICE FROM TAIPEI

19 **Voice from Taipei:**

yAnG xiaObiN 杨小滨: 'Post-Epitaph Quatrain: On the Steps of Odessa' (Hòu juéjù: Áodésà táijiē shàng 後絕句：敖德薩台階上), Instagram, 2022

你不是刺刀下的第一個死者，也不是最後一個反抗者。

你不是滑落台階的第一個嬰兒，也不是滾下的最後一顆頭顱。

你不是第一個驚恐的母親，也不是最後一個美少女戰士。

你不是第一個轟然倒塌的雕像，也不是歷史懸崖下的最後一個瘋子。

20 **'Post-Epitaph Quatrain: On the Steps of Odessa'**

- Title: Lament / Post-Epitaph *jueju* 絕句: in classical Tang poetry 4 lines, 5 or 7 characters, rhyme, strict tonal pattern.
- but explodes rules: more & irregular number of characters, no rhyme
- 'Post': frames poem not only as a eulogy for a single event or individual, but a meditation on pattern of suffering and resistance.

21 **Allusion to Potemkin Stairs, Odessa**

- iconic for their role in Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 film *Battleship Potemkin*.

22 **yAnG xiaObiN: 'Post-Epitaph Quatrain: On the Steps of Odessa'**

- *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) dir. Sergei Eisenstein.
- Fictional massacre of civilians

23 **yAnG xiaObiN: 'Post-Epitaph Quatrain: On the Steps of Odessa'**

- *Battleship Potemkin* (1925)
- including the image of a baby carriage tumbling down the steps.

24 **yAnG xiaObiN: 'Post-Epitaph Quatrain: On the Steps of Odessa'**

- *Battleship Potemkin* (1925)
- Stairs as a symbol of: revolution, martyrdom, state violence, trauma, memory, cinematic myth-making.

25 **yAnG xiaObiN 杨小滨**

- Poet & Artist, born in Shanghai
- 1980s joined avantgarde movement in Beijing
- 1985 BA Fudan University, Shanghai
- 1985-89 Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
- 1996 PhD Yale, Chinese Literature

- 1998-2004 University of Mississippi
- 2006- Academia Sinica, Taipei

26 **3.**

INDIGENOUS VOICE FROM TAIWAN

27 **Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples' & Ukrainian Voices: Iverson Rangi & Yana**

'Ukrainian Lion & Taiwanese Bear', Fundraising Exhibition for Ukraine, Epic Taipei Nightclub, Taipei, July-Aug 2022

28 **Multiple layers of trauma & memory**

Solidarity (Ukrainian/Chinese, 'fallen character') - infinity symbol - Taiwan indigenous peoples - graffiti subversive street art
mocking Putin and Xi's no-limits friendship by applying solidarity & endless friendship to Ukrainian-Taiwanese context.

29 **Iversøn Rangi**

- Iversøn Rangi Miciq
  - indigenous artist from the Taroko (Truku) tribe, Taiwan
- Yana
  - Ukrainian artist,
  - LBWS Ukrainian artist group
- Picture: Iverson Rangi Instagram

30 **4.**

TAIWANESE (HAKKA) VOICE FROM TAIWAN

31 **Collaboration between photographer Sean Wang and painter Mariia Kazanets, Ukraine**

Art exhibition
- "There is no war here"
- Taipei, May 2025

32 **Sean Wang & Mariia Kazanets**

Art exhibition
'There is no war here'
Taipei, May 2025

33 **Sean Wang & Mariia Kazanets**

34 **Sean Cheng-Hsiang Wang**

- *Taipei
- M.A., History, National Taiwan University
- Masters course, Art Practice, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (unfinished).
- Visually impaired artist / macular degeneration
- Career in photography despite disability

35 **2025 Interview with Sean Wang**

- Interview,
- Taipei,
- Sep. 2025
- Photo: AI-generated artwork, Sean Wang, 2025

36 **Sean Wang**

37 **5.**

VOICE FROM HONG KONG

38 **'Martyrs' ('Xundaozhe' 殉道者),**

Liao Weitang 廖伟棠

为什么这乌克兰的微笑似曾相识
原来他也曾属于那个西藏男孩。

就像一朵桃花那样的微笑。

她珍爱生命，去拯救被人类放弃的
他珍爱自由，放弃生命去喊出它。

地球没有放弃你们，山和水奔走相告
在炮弹开始流亡的时候， 你们

只有你们知道回家的路。路也追随
你们，渐渐涌起巨浪来。

温柔的，坚定的，一亿朵桃花那样。

39 **Liao Weitang 廖伟棠**

- b. 1975 Xinxing county 新兴县, Guangdong
- Moves to Hong Kong (Cantonese name: Liu Waitong, pun on *liuwang aitong* 流亡哀痛, 'Grief in Exile)
- Poet, photographer, writer
- Literary prizes in HK, Taiwan, abroad
- Assoc. Prof. National Taipei University of the Arts 國立臺北藝術大學 (Literature Dept.)

40 **IV. Concluding Remarks**

41 **Take-away: 'Online poems & visual art on Russia's war in Ukraine**

reveal connections

across Taiwan Strait in vernacular culture'

1. Russia's war in Ukraine invokes
2. Sinophone artists react across Taiwan Strait
3. Such visions portray how utopia turns into anti-utopia in Sinosphere
4. Provide rare insights into Sinophone vernacular cultures

Thank you — looking forward to your comments & questions!