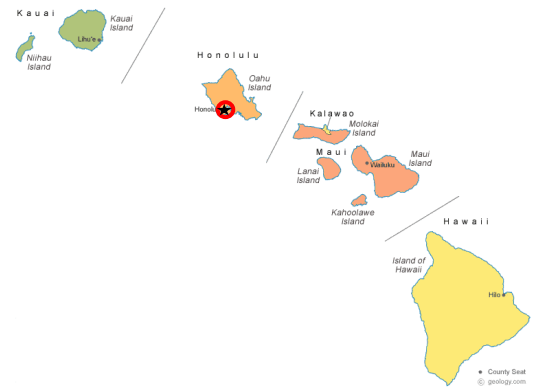


Chapter 12 Taiwan-Hawaii 1998



Hawaii Islands Map with County Seat Cities



Saturday, August 22, Detroit

This time I'm making a quick start here in Detroit, at the airport, as I wait for my flight. The main reason is that I am waiting for some files to download onto my laptop, and this is a good thing to do while I wait.

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I am heading for Taiwan for a conference, followed by a stop in Hawaii on the way back, where I'll give a paper and have a weekend to explore. The start of this trip was already atypical. One of my graduate students, Chul Chung, called me yesterday wanting to deliver a paper to me and talk about his work. When I said to come to the office then, he said he wasn't ready, and asked if he could drive me to the airport. So today at ten he picked me up at home, and we talked as he drove. It certainly made my life easier.

One thing that we talked about was some data that we had asked to be sent to us, but that hadn't arrived. At the airport, in the club, I found a place where I could hook up my laptop to the Internet, and I signed on, only to find my first e-mail message containing these data. I forwarded them to Chul, to his surprise I'm sure, and, I am downloading them to my laptop since they take up enough space on the server that I got a message to delete some files. I may or may not be able to log on from Taiwan, but in any case, I'm glad I got the message, since I don't know what the server would do to my files if I didn't clear space within the next few days.

Today is just two days after the U.S. attacked sites in Afghanistan and Sudan. The news is full of concerns about security since there might be further terrorist attacks against us. I expected therefore that getting through the airport here would be slow, but it wasn't. In fact, there were fewer people here than I can recall seeing in recent memory, and I sailed through security and check-in. Perhaps the threat of a Northwest strike is keeping people away, or perhaps I just hit it at a good moment.

Speaking of security, I wasn't surprised when after x-raying my bags they asked me to pull out my computer. For a few years that has been common, as they ask us to turn it on to prove that it really is a computer, and not a bomb in disguise. But this time they didn't turn it on. Instead, the security agent fitted a disposable cloth pad to a holder, rubbed it along several outside surfaces of the computer, then put the pad into a machine. This, he explained, would pick up any traces of plastic explosive that would surely have been left on the outside of the computer had I tried to fit it as a bomb. I passed the test.

Thursday, August 27, Taipei

The conference is over, and I am starting my last, extra day here. The heat and humidity are awful, and I have sweated through more shirts than I had planned to wear. I have just started a load of laundry downstairs, and will work on this while I wait.

My first flight took me to Osaka, 14 hours nonstop, and for a change I didn't sleep very much, although I tried. I did see two movies with Robert DeNiro. The first was *Wag the Dog*, which I'd seen, so I didn't listen much now to the dialogue. The second was *Great Expectations*, which I hadn't known included him. It wasn't very good.

In Osaka I met Henry Wan, who was on his way to the same conference. Henry has been at all the conferences in this series, and I also spent time with him recently when he invited me to give a seminar at Cornell, so I've gotten to know him fairly well. He is originally from Taiwan and of course speaks Chinese, so I was doubly glad to see him

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since he'd be able to negotiate the transportation from airport to hotel better than I could. He was carrying a white cardboard box, a cube about ten inches on a side and with a handle made of tape. He explained that this was a wedding present for a friend in Taipei, some sort of glass ornament that can be found only in Ithaca, New York. Because he had it to carry, he'd been forced to check his suitcase, so I realized that I'd be waiting with him for his bag when we got to Taipei. I did that, as well as immigration, customs, and changing money with him when we arrived, two or three hours late.

As we'd been instructed, we found the bus outside the airport that would take us to the Hyatt Hotel. Its luggage compartments were open, and we put our suitcases in, then boarded the bus. The driver indicated (to Henry) that we needed first to buy tickets inside the terminal, so we started back toward it. Uneasy, though, I stepped back to the bus and called to Henry that perhaps we should take our bags back out, just in case the bus were to leave before we got back. A young blond woman standing by the bus interrupted me though, to say that the bus wouldn't leave until 10:30, and we had plenty of time. I looked at her, thanked her, and went after Henry. Sure enough, when we returned the bus was still there.

We boarded and I found myself sitting next to the blond (and across the aisle from Henry). We compared our destinations and soon found that we were going to the same place. Furthermore, she was a graduate student in economics from Princeton, spending the month doing research at the institute that was hosting the conference. She hadn't known about our conference, since she was working on development economics (of Taiwan), not international economics, and she didn't seem to have heard of Henry or me. She was delighted to see us, however, because the last stage of our trip would be to take a taxi, and she'd been told that taxis could be dangerous for women alone late at night.

It was a long bus ride from the airport to downtown Taipei, long enough that we saw most of the movie *Hard Rain* on a television mounted in the bus. We didn't pay much attention to it, however, since we talked most of the way, about economics, Taiwan, and other things. At one point she asked me for advice about how to tell her advisor that she didn't want to go into an academic career.

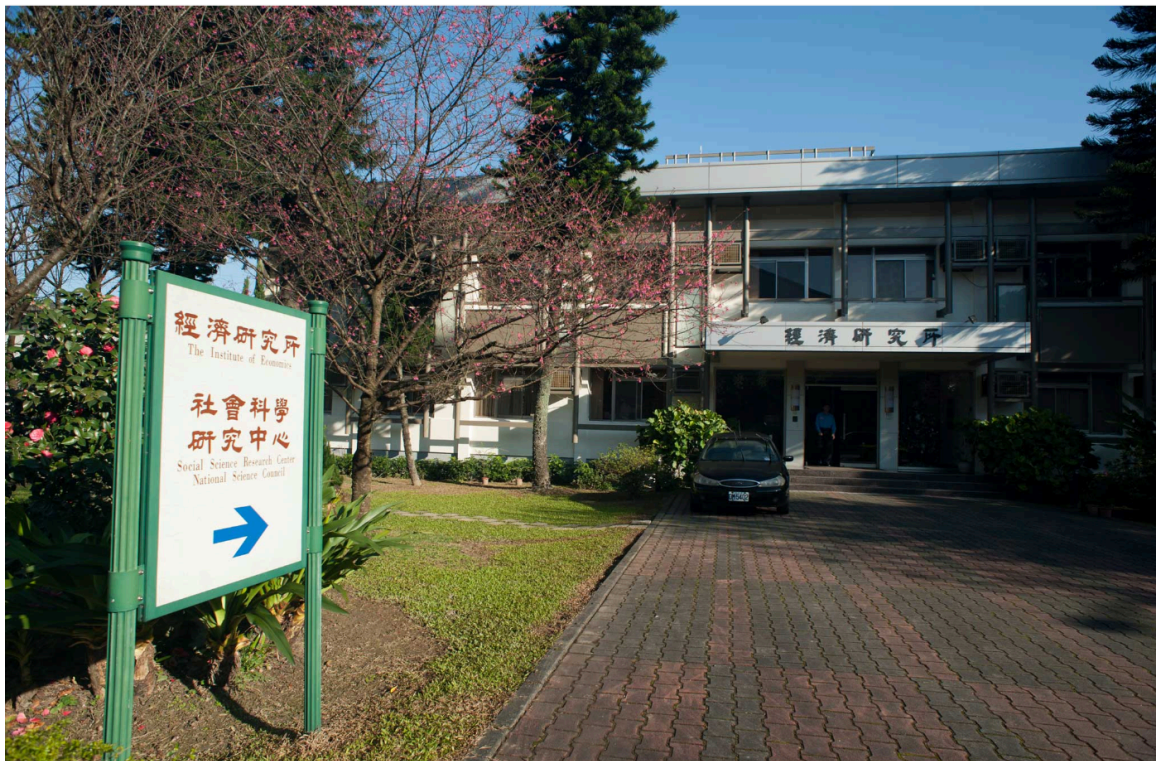
I have spent most of my time so far either with the conference or in my room here at the Activity Center of the Academia Sinica, where the conference was held. The Academia Sinica is like a university without students. It has a good-sized campus near the edge of Taipei, with separate buildings for each of many disciplines. But the activity is all research, no classroom teaching, although there are graduate students doing research here as well.

The Activity Center is mostly a very cheap hotel (about \$20 a night) with dining facilities and other amenities that guests would need. It is pretty Spartan, and reminds me somewhat of the India International Center where I stay in Delhi, although this is definitely nicer.

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Academia Sinica Activities Center from Web 2023



Academia Sinica Economics Institute from Web 2023

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The Economics Institute, where the conference was held, is only a ten-minute walk across campus. This wouldn't be bad if it weren't for the heat. Others don't seem to mind it, but the first morning, as I followed the map, I was feeling sorry for myself. The sun is hot, the humidity is high, and there is very little shade (many women carry brightly colored umbrellas for shade). I was relieved when I successfully found the Institute, only to find the door to it standing open suggesting the absence of air conditioning. Fortunately, that signal was incorrect – it turns out to be common here to leave doors open in spite of air conditioning – and the conference was in fact held in a nicely cool and well-equipped conference room.

My paper was the second in the first session, so I got my formal duties out of the way quickly. The first day of the conference, however, was not very good, in my opinion. Perhaps it was my jet lag, but I didn't much care for the presentations that day of several people I usually enjoy, including myself, and there were some papers that were truly awful. The second day turned out to be much better, however, and I ended the conference feeling that it had been worthwhile and enjoyable.

Each day I have eaten breakfast downstairs with several other conference participants. We have a choice of a Chinese or a Western breakfast. The latter looks so awful that I haven't tried it: a fried egg and some dry toast, with pale orange juice and coffee. There are several choices for the Chinese breakfast, but the first day I happened to be with a Chinese colleague, Henry Wan again, who ordered for a group of us, and I have mainly eaten what he ordered each day since then. This has always included an "egg cake," which I like very much. This is a single egg that is lightly scrambled and cooked in a circle on griddle, topped immediately with a thin pancake, almost a crepe, that has been made previously. When the egg is done, they flip it over and fold it like an omelet, then slice it and drizzle a bit of red sauce over it on the plate for serving. I could do this at home if I knew what the sauce was, which I don't.

The other components of the Chinese breakfast include a bowl of either "bean milk," which is warm soybean milk that is bland but pretty good, and "congee," which is a watery porridge made from millet (a grain). Also, each day I have had either a "green vegetable bun" or a "smashed bean bun." These are more like a dumpling than a bun: a ball of warm white dough around a filling, fully cooked, I guess, but not very bread-like. No drink seems to be included, so I always go up afterwards for a cup of coffee.

On Monday, during the mid-afternoon break and after a particularly bad paper, my former students Jon Haveman and Janet Netz, who were attending the conference, asked me if I wanted to play hooky with them and do some sightseeing. It was an easy call, and we embarked together with their Taiwanese co-author, Vivian Lei (really) who drove us around Taipei in a Honda Civic.

This involved a lot of driving for Vivian, and it gave us all a lot of time to talk. I asked a question that I've asked before, and keep forgetting the answer: How do the Chinese arrange names in their phone book, since they don't have an alphabet to let them do it

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alphabetically? Vivian explained that they do it in the order of the number of strokes in the Chinese characters.

We first stopped at the hotel they are all staying at, the Grand Hotel, so that they could change clothes. The Grand Hotel is by far the fanciest hotel in Taipei. It was built, apparently, by Madame Chiang Kai-shek and it is a gloriously ornate bright red pagoda-style structure on a hill overlooking the city. Jon and Janet wanted something nicer than the Activity Center, and when they found they could get a room without a window for just over \$100, they took it. I can't tell if it was worth it, but I'm glad they did since it gave me a chance to see the hotel while they changed.



Grand Hotel from Wikipedia 2023

Next, we went to the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial, which is an impressive marble structure in a large plaza that also houses the Taipei concert hall and another building. We'd just missed the closing time for the Memorial, so we couldn't go in, but we strolled the plaza and got some good pictures.

Most interesting was a pond with a nice arched bridge crossing over it, with people on the bridge and on the shore feeding the fish and turtles. Yes, there were dozens of large turtles swimming among the fish and grabbing eagerly for the food. On the rocks at the edge of the water, the turtles had an advantage over the fish in reaching the food, since



Liberty Square with National Concert Hall (left) and Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall
from Wikipedia 2023

they could walk up on shore. But mostly they stayed in the water, swimming, with their necks stretched out further than I knew was possible.

There was one small fish, by the way, who did manage to compete well with the turtles. He swam so fast onto the rock that he left the water entirely for an instant, grabbed some food, and then managed to flop back into the water. I can't believe that his mother would have approved.

We walked from there to the restaurant where Vivian had proposed we eat. This was one specializing in much the same sort of "buns" (I forget the Chinese name) that I'd had for breakfast. Unfortunately, when we got there, we found it closed on Mondays, so we spent the next half hour wandering the neighborhood in search of another restaurant that Vivian would accept. There certainly was no shortage of places to eat, but most didn't meet her standards, for reasons we never understood. Eventually she picked one, and we had dinner.

We entered this small restaurant walking past the kitchen, or at least a counter where much of the food was on display. A stairway took us to the second floor, which had the feel of the upstairs at an urban McDonalds. I don't quite know what I mean by that, but the phrase crossed my mind, and then Janet also noted it.

But this was certainly not a fast-food place in the usual sense of getting minimal service. A waitress spent a long time at our table discussing with Vivian what we would order. Which was mostly these buns, of various sorts. But having seen another customer eating noodles, I asked for that too, and ordered noodles with beef, which sounded good. When it arrived, the noodles were in one bowl, with nothing added. The beef was in another, totally immersed in a broth of some sort. I never figured out quite what I was supposed to do with this, and I can't say I liked it as much as I'd hoped.

After we ate, since the others were going a different direction, I took a taxi alone back to the Academia Sinica. Since taxi drivers cannot be counted upon to speak English, the conference organizers had given us a sheet of instructions in Chinese to show them. Unfortunately, I had left mine in my room, not thinking ahead. That was not a problem, however, since Vivian could easily tell the driver where to take me. Still, I felt somewhat ill at ease, knowing that if he didn't understand and took me someplace else, I'd have no

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idea how to correct it. Fortunately, that didn't happen. I got back to my room safely and easily, and immediately went to bed. I slept soundly from about 8:00 PM to 7:00 AM.

The second day I didn't play hooky, although Jon and Janet did, again for the final session of the day. I stuck it out and was rewarded with an excellent and interesting paper on trade and environment by Ngo Van Long. Ngo is originally from Viet Nam, by the way, but he hasn't been back there for thirty years. He teaches at McGill University in Montreal. Because he looks Asian, everyone here assumes he is Chinese. It must be frustrating for him, but he takes it in stride.

I haven't mentioned the food that was provided during the conference. At both morning and afternoon breaks they always had an assortment of tidbits for us to eat. I seldom knew what these were, but they were always good, and I looked forward to them. In the afternoon breaks the food included fruit, one of which was a yellow watermelon that I'd never seen but that was much better than the usual pink kind.

For drinks we were less well fixed, unless you wanted Chinese tea. There was a dispenser of hot water and a jar of Nescafe, for us coffee drinkers. But there was also an espresso maker. This device ground its own beans after you pressed the button, then dripped a half cup of decent espresso. There was no steamed milk to go with it, but I quickly learned to drink it straight, since it was better than the Nescafe.

Lunches were also provided, in boxes. That is, each day at lunch we were given a box about the size of a hardback book, and inside there was a hot Chinese meal. This included rice, of course, plus assorted other animal and vegetable goodies. Some of this was fine, but I never quite ate everything. We were on our own to find places to sit while we ate, in the conference room or elsewhere, and I usually found myself in conversation with somebody.

The best food of the conference was supposed to be the conference banquet, which was at the Hyatt Hotel on Tuesday. In fact, I think I liked some of the snacks at the breaks better, but that is typical of me.

A Chinese banquet is apparently a slightly different art form than a Chinese meal. For one thing, there is no rice. For another, all the dishes are served one after another, rather than all at once. And finally, we were each given our portions on our own plates directly, rather than being left to serve ourselves from the central turntable. The turntable was there, nonetheless, but it held mainly condiments and, for some of the courses, an extra plate of the dish we'd each been served. Apparently, we were free to pick from this plate if we wanted extra. You'd think I would have, but I didn't like most of the dishes well enough to want that.

I've kept the menu from this banquet, since it gave names in English as well as Chinese. The very first course put me off a bit, with its marinated cuttle fish and jelly fish, but in fact these weren't bad. The jelly fish wasn't nearly as jelly-like as I'd expected, and I was easily able to eat it. On the other hand, it didn't have much flavor. There was a

prawn fritter that I liked a lot, but there was only one, and if extras of that were provided, I missed them. Duck breast with chestnuts was good too. Then came shark fin soup. It tasted fine, and I was never entirely sure which of the pieces in it were shark fin. All of them were easily edible, and some quite tasty.

The soup preceded the course I'd been dreading since reading the menu: "braised sea cucumber and goose web in rich brown sauce." I remembered being unable to stomach sea cucumber when I was here before, and it was just as slimy and wobbly as I remembered. I did take a small bite, just for the record, but I didn't like it. The goose web was misnamed, really. It was the whole goose foot, web included. This seemed to bother others more than it did me, and I had no hesitation picking it up with my chopsticks and nibbling at it. Unfortunately, it was mostly bones, and I found it very hard to gnaw any meat (or skin, I suppose) off it. What I got was tasty, but it wasn't worth the effort.

The rest of the meal was not worth reporting, probably, except perhaps for the short ribs that were served western style, with a knife and fork, which were necessary because of the size of the serving. Why it was served this way, I don't know, since the flavor was still very Chinese.

Friday, August 28, Taipei International Airport

I'm in the VIP lounge at the airport, with two hours to kill before my flight to Honolulu via Tokyo. While I think of them, let me mention a few of the oddities I've noticed while I've been here.

Dogs. There are a surprising number of dogs wandering around here, apparently strays. I hesitate to think what will become of them, especially since I seem to recall that people here are not averse to eating them. Most of them seem surprisingly well fed though, and even well groomed, making me wonder if they really are strays. And most striking, most of them seem to be very sure of what they are doing, trotting along as though on their way to appointments. One pair that I saw were the same breed and going along together, like man and wife. I wanted their picture, and when my first try failed I started to follow them. They looked around at me rather suspiciously, I thought, so I got my pictures and moved on.

Cars. Nothing odd here, but I'm always interested in the assortment of cars in a country. Here they are a wide variety, from many countries, and largely very well maintained. The most common are Japanese – Toyotas, Nissans, and Hondas – but there are also a great many Fords. I saw one black Honda that seemed especially luxurious, somehow (from fancy wheels, a spoiler, and some decorative painting). Then I noticed a small emblem of an eagle behind the rear side window. I couldn't quite make out the writing below it, but I think it may have said "product of America."

Traffic, of which there is a lot, consists mostly of cars and motor scooters, huge numbers of them. There are some buses and a few trucks, but not so many. The scooters are

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ridden by a wide assortment of people, both in age and in dress. It is not uncommon to see women riding them in heels and hose, and men in ties, both with briefcases at their feet. Also common are families: dad driving, mom seated behind him, and a small child standing between dad's legs. Without exception, all these folks wear helmets.

There are a few freeways winding through and around Taipei, but my drivers seldom used them, supposedly because they are too clogged with traffic. It's hard to see how the surface streets could be any better, though, since there is construction everywhere and the scooters often seem to make better time than the cars. The construction is partly to build more freeways, I think, but also to complete a subway system that they started a few years ago. Right now, they have two completed subway lines that do not intersect, and they are working on the line that will cross them both. I got a glimpse of the entrance to one of the completed subways, and it looked very modern. I'm sure the system, when it is done, will be excellent, and perhaps it will reduce all the traffic on freeways and streets.

Buildings in downtown Taipei include many large modern structures, which are bringing Taipei close to looking like a very modern city. But interspersed among them are both empty plots of land where construction is beginning, and also some older structures that look increasingly out of place. It was explained to me that Taiwan's inheritance law requires that property be divided equally among all children, and then among their children when they die. Property therefore comes to be owned by huge numbers of people, any one of whom can veto a sale. That makes it hard to develop the land, and it has hindered the modernization of Taipei. Since the old buildings, from what I've seen, are not at all attractive or interesting, I agree that this is a problem.

Returning to my narrative, the conference ended on Wednesday noon. During the lunch and various good-byes, the head of Academia Sinica, Dr. Hu, invited me to dinner on Thursday evening, and Jon and Janet invited me to join them for dinner at their hotel that evening. So, after wondering how I would occupy my time after the conference, I suddenly found my schedule partially filled in. I returned to my room and rested for a little while, however, since it seemed just too hot to go out.

I did force myself to go out for a bit, though, and wandered through the streets near the institute. Being on the edge of Taipei, I thought the neighborhood might encroach on agriculture nearby, but it didn't within the distance that I was able to explore. Instead, what I found was still very much city, the street lined with shops, but it was all much poorer than I'd seen in the rest of Taipei. It felt a lot like the streets I'd explored in Cairo. Most shops were the size of a small garage, with fronts that were wide open when not closed at night with roll-down corrugated metal doors. What was most striking, however, was how little there was in most of these shops. If they even had shelves at all, they were half bare, and many shops didn't have enough to warrant shelves. I sometimes couldn't tell what the shops were selling, although this was probably explained by the Chinese signs. The sidewalk that ran in front of these was very crude and uneven, and you had to be careful walking so as not to trip.

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My dinner at the Grand hotel with Jon and Janet was disappointing. It was a Chinese buffet, but I found only a couple of dishes that I really liked. It was good to have more chance to talk with them, however, and I enjoyed the evening. After dinner we took a taxi to a nearby night market and walked through it. As expected, it had lots of booths selling both food and merchandise. To my surprise, though, it also had lots of carnival games to play for prizes – throwing darts at balloons, tossing rings over bottles, etc. There was nothing very exotic or unusual, however.

At one point, Janet thought she spotted something interesting, though. There was a tray filled with what she thought were condoms, lying in a pile and unrolled. I picked one up and it turned out to be part of a plastic glove.

Thursday was to be my day to tour, although I didn't have a lot that I wanted to see, especially in this heat. I'd already visited Taiwan's main attraction, its National Palace Museum, on my trip in 1991. At breakfast Murray Kemp told me about a food court on the second floor of the main train station that he found interesting, so I decided to wander downtown and end up there for lunch. That's what I did, taking a taxi first to a temple nearby, and then working my way through the streets and parks toward the train station.

The streets were again full of shops, but much more prosperous than I'd seen the day before. These still were not "stores" in the Western sense, which were abundant nearer to the hotels. These were still like small garages, but they just had a lot more in them, and they seemed to have more purpose.

I happened upon a block of such shops that was rather out of the way under a freeway ramp and that specialized in birds. Before seeing the birds, I heard them, and thought for an instant I was approaching a park. But no, this was just several dozen shops all with many cages of birds. A few of the larger birds were in single cages, but mostly there were many birds to a cage, all identical within a cage. There were many types of birds, but most seemed to be songbirds and types of parrots, some very colorful. There must have been many thousands of them. To whom they were being sold, and for what purpose, I have no idea. Perhaps this was a wholesale market for pet shops around the country. I hope so.

Mixed among them were a few odd cages that didn't seem to fit in. One held several hundred mice, another a few pigeons. And as I neared the far end of the block, I heard the crowing of a rooster. He and another chicken shared a cage that was isolated from the rest.

During my walk I went through a botanical garden and then a city park, both of which I had seen on the map and looked forward to. I thought they would be pretty, and also perhaps cool. They were neither, at least to the extent I'd hoped.

As I approached the train station, I noticed the entrance to an observatory atop an insurance building that seemed to be the tallest building so far in Taipei. I bought a ticket

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and rode the elevator to the observation deck on the 46th floor. It gave me a good view of Taipei, and helped me to put some of what I'd seen in perspective.



Taipei's skyline from Wikipedia 2023

Crossing to the train station, I went up an escalator and found, as Murray had promised, a truly amazing array of food shops. It was a food court, really, much like what we have in malls at home, but here almost all the stalls had Chinese food of various sorts, and if there were brand names, I couldn't read most of them. I walked the length of the station looking at these, stopping now and then to look more carefully. At one point a cheerful voice asked if she could help, and I said I was still looking, as indeed I was. What I wanted was a bowl of noodles, with or without soup, and while I saw a couple of people eating things that looked about right, I couldn't identify them from the signs and displays. I doubled back along the other side of the court, finding still more booths I hadn't seen, and about halfway found one with a sign in English, "beef, pork, & chicken soup noodle." I plopped down on a stool, ordered in English, and soon was in heaven.

From there I returned by taxi to the Academia, where I rested until time for my next dinner. Dr. Hu had first said we'd be having dinner with Murray Kemp, then later said the group had grown to over a dozen. I didn't really know what to expect, but perhaps I should have. Most of the guests were not from the conference but were local economists whom he had invited to one of city's better restaurants to meet and honor Murray. And most of them were in suits, or coats and ties. Dr. Hu picked up Murray and me at 5:15 from the Academia. Neither of us had a coat, and only Murray a tie. That didn't seem to be a problem, fortunately.

As usual, it was a long ride into the city center, about 45 minutes. We talked along the way, all of us, and listened to the classical music that Dr. Hu had playing on his car (Toyota) stereo. It was very pleasant.

At the restaurant, Hu had reserved a room for our group, some of whom were already there waiting for us. We spent a few uncomfortable minutes with introductions and standing around talking before Hu seated us at the room's large round table. He told each of us where to sit, on what basis I don't know. He seated Murray first, then me next to

him, and gradually distributed the rest of the group around the table, leaving himself as far from Murray as was possible, but facing him most directly. I suppose it made sense.

Next to me he placed the only Japanese in the group, Koichi Nakajima (no, I didn't remember it; I just looked at his card), who was visiting for the fall from Nara, Japan. Koichi began his first conversation with me by expressing surprise that we had arrived on time. He himself had come in after us, and was dismayed to be late, since he'd been sure we'd be later. I don't know why.

During dinner I talked alternately with him and with Murray, and occasionally with them both. I learned that Koichi's research consisted of him interviewing elderly Taiwanese who had lived through the Japanese occupation of Taiwan in the early 1940's. Koichi himself does not speak Chinese (although he has a Taiwanese wife whom he met in the US), so he could interview only those who had learned Japanese during their childhoods at Japanese schools during the occupation. He spoke of their fond memories of that period, much to my surprise after hearing the very negative views of the Japanese from, for example, the occupation of Korea. Koichi is an economist, but it was not clear to me what he was hoping to learn from all of this. I agreed though, that it was useful for somebody to gather this information before the subjects all died out.

We talked about many other things, including the various differences between the Japanese and the Chinese, which Koichi was well placed to observe. He noted, for example, that the Chinese are much stricter with their children, in terms of discipline, than the Japanese, and that the Japanese tend to center their lives around their children. Once a Japanese couple has a child, he said, they become Mommy and Daddy even to each other, and their parents become Grandma and Grandpa. We asked him how he and his Chinese wife resolve their differences regarding discipline. She's in charge, he said.

Toward the end of the dinner, the conversation somehow came to include everyone at the table, and Koichi mentioned to the group what he was doing in his research. I made the mistake of asking him then a question I had wondered earlier, but not raised. I said I was surprised that his subjects remembered the occupation fondly, since I thought those experiences were usually negative. Now can you see why this was a mistake? The reason is not that I was telling a Japanese that a Japanese occupation might have been unpleasant. That didn't bother him, as I somehow knew it wouldn't. No, the answer he gave was that everything is relative, and that these people remembered the Japanese occupation favorably compared to what came later when the Chinese – Chiang Kai-shek and his lot – took over. Before saying this, he apologized to anyone at the table who might have been descended from that group, as I'm sure many were. The majority of people in Taiwan since the 1950s, and certainly the most well positioned, have been the Chinese who came from the mainland, not the Taiwanese (also ethnically Chinese but with a different language and heritage) who were already here. I knew that, but I had no idea that the Taiwanese had been persecuted by the newcomers. I should have guessed, and I'll have to learn more about this at some point. Anyhow, nobody seemed upset by this reminder of past frictions in their conversation, but nor were they eager to pursue it. The talk moved to other things, and soon the group broke up.

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I haven't yet mentioned the food at this dinner. If I'm right about the distinction between a meal and a banquet, this was another banquet. The dishes were served one at a time, for the most part, and there was again no rice. This time the menu was printed only in Chinese, so I seldom knew what things were. My Australian and Japanese neighbors usually were no help.

One dish consisted of two large fried shrimp, whole. By fried, I mean fried in oil, but not any sort of breading or batter, so they still looked exactly like shrimp – whole, as I said. Koichi volunteered that because these were so well fried, you could eat the whole thing, shell and head as well as the meat from the tail, and he proceeded to do that. I took a taste of the shell from the tail, to see if I could manage that, but it still seemed like shell to me. I picked it up in my fingers, broke off the head and tried to put it out of sight, then shelled the tail and ate it. The waiters then gave some indication that this might not be totally unusual behavior, by bringing each of us a small wet washcloth to clean our hands with. Koichi didn't need it, but I did.

As before, the meal included many other dishes, some of them very good. But I never got a chance to pig out on something I really liked, and as a result I never felt totally filled. I didn't complain, though, and instead told my host that this was the best meal I'd had in Taipei so far. I doubt he'd have understood the truth that I'd preferred the soup noodle that I had for lunch.

One of the guests at the dinner was K.C. Fung, a trade economist at U.C. Santa Cruz whom I've known for some years. He had just arrived a day before and was spending two weeks at the Chung-Hua Institute. This is the premier think tank in Taiwan, and both its president and vice-president were also at the dinner. One of them told me I should visit them the next time I'm in Taiwan, and as we talked about that, it turned out that I had visited them on my earlier visit in 1991. I confirmed that, because I remembered that one of my Cornell teachers, S.C. Tsiang had been there, and I'd talked with him. Apparently, he was the chairman of their board at the time, though he later died. Another of my teachers, John Fei, had succeeded him as chairman, and he too then died. I commented that it didn't sound like a very healthy job.

Friday, August 28, Tokyo, Japan

I'm at the Tokyo Narita airport, with about five hours to kill between flights. As I've done before when I've passed through here, I asked the gate agents about there being a Northwest World Club, since it is listed on my membership card. They told me, as they have before, that no, there is no longer a World Club here in Tokyo. But I've asked about that in Detroit and been assured that there is one, and I even paid an extra-large membership fee to be sure that I could use the clubs in places like this. So this was irritating. This time I pushed it and was told that there is a club for first and business class passengers only, which I'm not, but at least I was told where it was – up an elevator from the gates. I came up, found the lounge, and entered, prepared to plead my case. The woman at the desk took one look at my card and welcomed me! So here I am,

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comfortably seated at a desk with an electrical outlet for my laptop, and access to all the free drinks I could want and a few things to nibble on. Outside, open to the public, there is a small snack bar where I think I can buy Japanese noodles, so I should be in pretty good shape.

I got up at 5:15 this morning back in Taipei, since that is what I was told I needed to do to get to the airport on time. At that hour, my taxi to the Hyatt made great time, and I caught the bus just minutes before it left, so I got to the airport long before I needed to. My flight was uneventful, except for an interruption by a flight attendant needing change for a U.S. \$50 bill. I had what she needed, surprisingly.

I am now caught up, in this journal, with where I am in the trip, something I usually don't manage. This would be a good place to reflect on my impressions of Taiwan, I suppose, before they fade with my visit to Hawaii.

There is nothing at all wonderful about Taipei, I'd say, or at least not yet. It has a few temples to look at, and some museums, but nothing is distinctive, architecturally or culturally. Nor is there any real character to the place, even though it is a big, bustling, and so-far-successful city. The National Palace Museum is impressive and unusual by any standard, I guess, but there is no ignoring the fact that everything there was essentially stolen from Beijing by the nationalist Chinese. So as a tourist attraction it is slightly embarrassing. In fact, there really isn't much there for tourists, and perhaps that's just as well. The city is primarily for the people who live there, and it has done well, so far, at providing them an increasingly good life.



National Palace Museum from Wikipedia 2023

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The Chinese people in Taiwan are not notably different from those I met in Hong Kong, and I wonder if they are any different from those in mainland China, which I've not visited. They seem to be hard working, sensible, and not very glamorous, to the extent that I can tell anything at all from my limited contact with them.

Tuesday, September 1, over Nebraska:

I got to Hawaii just fine, and then Northwest went on strike. So instead of a nonstop from Honolulu to Detroit that would have had me home several hours ago, I am in the midst of a series of flights, limping across the country. I flew United from Honolulu to San Francisco, United to Denver, now American to Chicago. From Chicago I'll either fly American to Detroit, or taxi into the loop and take Amtrak. The flight I'm confirmed on gives me almost an eight hour wait at O'Hare, so I might as well be riding and end up in Ann Arbor, not at the airport.

I arrived mid-morning in Honolulu, rented a car, and drove it to the hotel where I was pleased that they could check me into my room immediately. After a shower and a short rest, I went over to the campus and had lunch with Denise Konan, the trade economist who had invited me. We went to a café close to campus in what seemed to be a YMCA building. It was vegetarian and very whole-earthly, if that makes any sense. Denise had chili and I had a curry that was decent. She had to go off to a meeting, so I hung out there for another hour, drinking coffee and admiring the vegetation that encroached on the café's courtyard. Leaves seem to grow very big here. At one point, the woman who had waited on me came in and sat down herself with a dish of something that I thought was white. I thought it was ice cream, and I asked her. It was sour cream, she said, but they did carry ice cream. I went and got a dish of that, and soon others were having ice cream too because they thought it such a good idea.

I'd been told that my seminar would run 3 to 4:15, after which there would be a catered reception, both for me and (mostly) for the incoming graduate students. Whether there was a connection or not I don't know, but the turnout for my seminar was huge. All the chairs were filled, more were brought in, and still there were people listening from the hallway. Denise had said that people there were excited about my seminar, so perhaps I believe her. I think, both from my own feel of it and from what she said afterwards, that they were not disappointed.

The reception was an impressive affair, with a very nice spread of catered goodies. Unfortunately, after traveling so long and then standing through my own presentation, I only wanted to sit down, and that was not possible. I ate a few bits, including some fresh pineapple, and then made my excuses. Denise walked me to the car I'd rented and spent a few minutes suggesting things I might want to do and see on the map. Then I left, with a check for an honorarium in hand that would almost cover my expenses for the visit.

That evening I didn't do much, but I did get out for a short walk along the beach to see what things looked like. Lots of sand, palm trees, and beautiful water – just what you'd

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expect, I guess. My hotel, the New Otani, was in Waikiki, but it was not part of the giant cluster of high-rise luxury hotels that makes up most of Waikiki. Instead, it is a smallish one, and it is the first of just a few that are separated from the larger cluster by a park. These are right at the foot of Honolulu's signature hill, Diamond Head, a large bare rock that looms behind them. I suppose the beach is not quite as good here as it is next to the cluster, since there must be a reason why the cluster is where it is. But I could see nothing wrong with it.



Diamond Head from Wikipedia 2023

My walk took me into the park, where I found a fenced-off area that was being used for a fancy picnic. I think it must have been for a group of Japanese tourists, since the guests looked Japanese and the people putting it on did not. A woman with a microphone was chattering in Japanese (I think) the whole time that I was out there, trying to get the guests to do various things like line up and dance. It all seemed rather forced to me.

Back in my hotel after dark, I turned in early. And then I slept, off and on, until one in the afternoon. That blew part of the day, and it certainly missed breakfast, so I went down for the soup and sandwich that I'd tried to order from room service the night before only to find out they didn't serve after 9:00 PM. The soup was great, the sandwich a disappointment. I'm not sure, after all, that I like avocado in a sandwich.

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I spent the rest of the day driving around the southern part of the island. I took the coast road past Diamond Head and around the tip of the island, stopping occasionally for pictures. I also stopped in one small town looking for coffee and found ice cream instead.

Tuesday, September 1, on Amtrak:

I'm on the last leg of my journey, which has gone remarkably well – every flight on time. I got to Chicago early enough to try getting on two American Airlines flights to Detroit, but both were packed, so I took a long subway ride down to Union Station. Now I'm sitting on the train, which should have departed five minutes ago. It's not full, so each passenger has a double seat, and we are all men, half with laptops. One fellow was doing something with his Palm Pilot, which I asked to see, so now I've learned all about that.

Before I forget, in the Amtrak waiting room I listened to Neal Diamond on my CD player while I waited, and I was sitting across from an old black woman and two younger ones, her daughters, I think. What I wanted to relate was that when Neal broke into an especially rhythmic song, I could have sworn they were moving to the beat. I was so sure that I stopped the music for a moment to see if they were in fact singing, or listening to music themselves. But they weren't. They were just ordinary folks, but their conversation was somehow animated in a way that went perfectly with a rock song that only I was hearing.

Now back to Hawaii before my battery runs down. There is an electrical outlet in this railroad car, but one of the other laptop users tells me that the current spikes too much to use.

On Saturday evening I ate again in the hotel restaurant. It was horribly expensive and not very appealing in terms of the entrees. But I had the soup again, plus a spinach salad that was excellent. I slept well and made myself get up this time, to go for a swim before my shower.

I did that, and I can't complain about anything. The beach, the water, the sun, all were perfect. But I was bored and uncomfortable. I'd gone out of my way to protect myself with sunscreen on all parts I could reach, but that didn't include my back. So lying on the beach I felt I had to lie on my back. Nothing wrong with that, but it's weird to be constrained. The water was certainly warmer than what I'm used to in Michigan, and so it was much easier to get into. But it wasn't as warm as I'd imagined. And the sandy bottom was somehow not quite as smooth as I'd imagined either. I crouched in the water (it wasn't very deep) and wondered what to do next. I swam a few strokes, but that didn't do much for me either. In the end I just got out, lay on the beach enough to dry out, and left.

As I showered, I noticed the sand accumulating in the bottom of the tub and realized that I probably should have used the shower that they have at the edge of the beach. But surely many people don't, and in any case, they are bound to still have all sorts of sand on

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them when they shower. What happens to that sand? I can imagine it accumulating at the bottom of the trap in the drain, until it blocks the flow. Is the water pressure from a tub strong enough to force sand to move up through the pipe? I wonder.

This was Sunday, and I'd seen signs for the hotel's Sunday brunch. It cost \$23, and I wasn't sure I'd find it worth it. So I went down and checked it out. I'd also noticed a little snack bar in a row of shops attached to the hotel out front, and I found I could get coffee there, with a free refill. I had that, sat at a table outside in view of the beach, and was quite content.

The most common bird here is some sort of small pigeon or dove. They are everywhere, and always looking for food. Signs say not to feed them, and I didn't. But while I drank my coffee, I did watch two of them hump, I think. Right at my feet, I suddenly noticed this flurry of feathers as they flew at each other, front to front. Can that be right? Then they both backed up a few inches stuck their tails into the air straight up and made a sound that was a cross between whirring and purring. Since they were doing exactly the same thing, and I could see no visible difference between them, I think they may have been confused, or gay.

After my coffee, I set out for more exploring of the island. My first stop, however, was the Internet Café that I'd noticed along Kapahulu Street on my way to the university. My account for dialing the 800 number had gone negative again and I couldn't reach the net from my room. The café charged 7.50 an hour, and I could buy a latte. I spent a little while on the web before I set out to look at nature.

Denise had told me about an arboretum just up the hill from the university, and I started with that. She'd said something about there being rain forest if you went on past it. What I found was a trail that led into the forest along a stream, its destination being a waterfall. The trail started where the road ended, with a fallen tree blocking the path. There was a couple there when I got there, she carrying a baby. He managed to walk around the tree, take the baby from her, and then she walked around. As she passed the baby over to him, he said "Be careful. There are red ants here." Sure enough, there were ants, but they didn't look very red to me, and I'd probably have taken no notice. But it set the tone for the trek as being very close to nature and dangerous!

It was also a bit arduous, if not really difficult. There was a clear path, and rocks or boards to provide steps whenever the climb became steep. But it became increasingly muddy, and it was always wet – I guess that's why it's a rainforest. The stream was way below us, and occasionally I was nervous about the height. I also wondered, as the walk became rather long, what it would be like coming back down all these slippery steps, some of which were kind of high.

Still the forest was an incredible sight. I tried to take pictures, but I doubt that most of them will come out. It is hard to capture the variety of the plants that were growing there, and how interconnected they were. In part they were just intertwined because they were trying to occupy the same space. But in many cases some plants were clearly living off

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others. Most dramatic were tall straight trees that looked ordinary at their tops, to the extent that I could see them. But their trunks were completely hidden from the ground to 30 or 40 feet up by vines that encased them. These vines had leaves that were as big as the biggest rhododendron leaves I've seen, and in fact they looked rather like them. I don't know what they were, of course. If I'd expected this arboretum to label the plants, I was disappointed.



Rainforest Escape, Lyon Arboretum from Web 2023

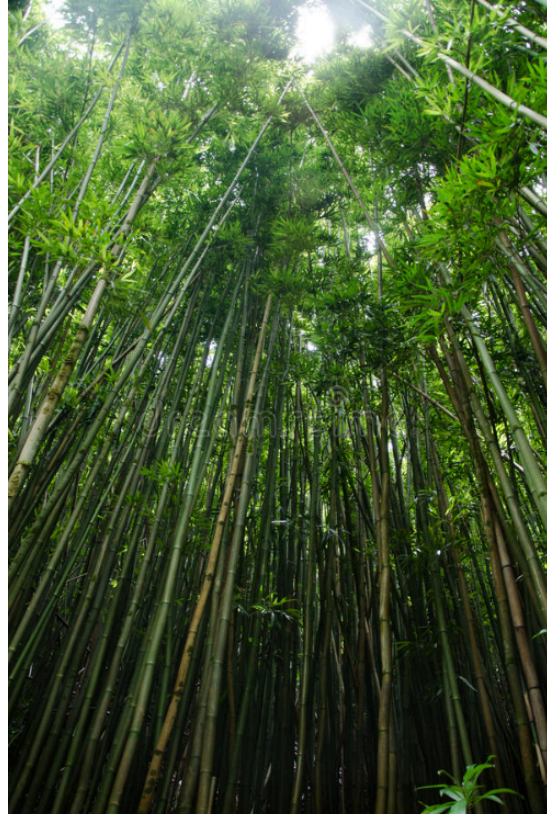
I wasn't keeping track of the time, but I'd guess I had walked twenty minutes or more when I began to wonder if this was worth it. About then, a couple passed me on their return journey, and since they greeted me, I asked them. "Well, there's not much to the waterfall," the man said, "but there's a bamboo forest that's neat. You've got about fifteen minutes to go. It gets muddier, though." Fifteen minutes seemed a lot, and I couldn't imagine how it could get any muddier than it already was. But I stuck with it and sure enough, all he said was true.

The bamboo forest *was* neat. At eye level it was just bare bamboo sticks extending vertically from the ground, some green, some tan, and so much of it that nothing else was visible in any direction. The downside was that seeing it lodged the Peter, Paul, and Mary song, "You take a stick of bamboo," in my mind for the rest of the afternoon.

It did get muddier, but not too much, and eventually I reached the waterfall. There I found eight or ten people sitting and standing around admiring it and resting from their hike. A few were wading in the water at the base of the fall. The fall itself went up (or should I say came down?) about 50 feet, I think, and it was less water than you'd get from a hose. But at least it gave a purpose to the climb.

The walk back down was a little faster, but I could tell it was harder on less-used muscles than the climb up. My calves are still feeling it, every time I stretch my legs. But it hasn't incapacitated me, fortunately. By the time I got back to the car, I was totally drenched in sweat.

My plan had been to drive that day to the north end of the island, but this visit to the rainforest had taken much longer than I'd expected. I decided to postpone that drive until Monday (since by now the Northwest strike had given me a few extra hours before my rescheduled Monday flight), and instead go into the center of Waikiki to eat and shop.



Lyon Arboretum from Web 2023

Getting there was easy. I could hardly miss it. Parking was more of a challenge. I must have driven around for at least half an hour looking for parking, and for all that time the only places I could find were reserved for hotels. Finally, I did find a lot with some meters, and pumped in two hours worth of quarters.

My only known objectives were to find a Hawaiian shirt, partly since I was sweating through the shirts I'd brought, and a pair of shorts. I've needed new shorts for some time, ever since I finally admitted that my favorite pair was too small and gave them to Ryan. In fact, I tried to buy some in the Midwest at the beginning of August and was told they were "out of season." This was true both at K-mart in Ann Arbor and at some fancy shops at the Mall of America. I figured that shorts could never be out of season in Hawaii.

This was only partly true. I did find shorts – lots of them. And when I found a store that had exactly the sort I wanted – which I did – the pair I picked was on sale because it was a "fashion color" and this was the end of the season. I guess they carry shorts all year round, but certain colors come and go. Fortunately, this time the season did me the favor of saving me money.

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After this my wanderings took me into an “international food court” with shops selling foods from many different countries. Fortunately, one of the cuisines represented was Hawaiian, so I got to try some local food. What I ordered was two skewers of grilled mahi-mahi, a fish, served over some sort of thin brown noodles. It seemed to be very well prepared, but the fish itself had such a fishy flavor that I didn’t care for it too much. But now I know that about mahi-mahi.

After eating I returned to my car and continued exploring Waikiki on wheels. I found a marina with a park between it and the water. It was along a stretch where there were just rocks, no sand, and I spent quite a bit of time there, looking at the people and the sights. Lots of people were playing, picnicking, etc., and I think they were mostly locals. There was also a very good view, across the water, of Waikiki beach and of Diamond Head.

My last day, Monday, I started with breakfast at the hotel. I was tempted by the continental breakfast, and probably should have had it, but then I saw their “sausage sampler.” It included six different kinds of sausage, plus eggs and toast. It turned out to be more sausage than I could eat, believe it or not, and I think I only finished one of them. The waitress asked if I wanted rice or potatoes with it, and I chose brown rice. She said something about what a healthy choice that was, and then was also approving when I chose wheat toast. A waitress looking after my health.

Friday, May 21, 1999, Ann Arbor

You may notice that a bit of time has elapsed. Apparently, I never quite completed this one. Or perhaps this isn’t the right computer file. In any case, my account ends abruptly, as you see.

My memory of the rest of the trip is as follows: I spent the day driving around the island. I first crossed over its middle to the northern shore, stopping along the way at the Dole pineapple plantation. This is a major tourist spot, telling you more than you want to know about the growing of pineapple. More appealing are the fresh pineapple chunks and pineapple juice that you can buy and enjoy, which I did.

The drive along the island’s shore was satisfactory, but not very memorable, as I can say now with authority. I ended it by going to the airport where I started my long series of flights. They all went smoothly, and I can’t complain about them, but despite that this awkward delay in getting home due to a pilot’s strike has knocked my opinion of labor unions down yet another notch.