

The Journey of Identity in Taiwanese Bildungsroman

Shu-hui Lin
Department of Taiwan Culture,
Languages and Literature
National Taiwan Normal University
(NTNU)
Taipei (Taiwan)
siokhui103@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Taiwanese juvenile fiction engages with cultural issues, and characters gradually construct their self-identity and grow through travel. This paper uses Joseph Campbell's *Hero's Journey* as a theoretical framework. The fiction mentions themes such as the sense of place constructed by adolescent characters through cycling and the formation of identity. Additionally, sea turtles serve as the narrative's protagonists to address environmental issues and anti-war narratives, in constructing the identity. These are the core aspects of identity, involving how one views oneself and understands the relationship between oneself and the world. Taiwanese fiction is frequently used for educational purposes. It not only aids in understanding oneself but also in observing the world from a cultural perspective.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Identity; Taiwan juvenile fiction; Travel narratives; Hero's journey; Sense of place; XX Century.

Introduction

In the bildungsroman, travel narrative is about the movement of characters through geographical space and spiritual growth. The creation of Taiwanese bildungsroman is related to the changes in educational history, reflecting educational goals, identity, and personal development in the different historical periods. Travel is one of the ways to understand oneself and the world. Travel writing is a ceremony of reproducing weaving, reorganization and re-memory. The sense of the world it presents is told in spatiality and temporality.

Scholars mentioned that since Martial Law was declared on May 20, 1949, Taiwan's Martial Law period had lasted for as long as 38 years, finally being

suspended on July 15, 1987. Aside from Martial Law, relevant laws were promulgated as well. From depriving people of freedom of assembly, association, and strikes to monitoring news, magazines, and almost all publications, the government restricted people's thoughts and behaviors severely. It was at this horrible time of suppression that many intellectual elites were arrested or interrogated by the ruling authorities for their suspicion of rebellion or being communist bandits. The period was known afterward as the so-called *White Terror*¹. The memory narratives in Taiwanese juvenile fiction, influenced by Taiwan's rich historical and cultural background, reveal many academic gaps in exploring the close relationship between Taiwanese juvenile fiction and culture.

Taiwan lifted martial law in 1987 and thus society has become more open and diverse, travel narratives in bildungsroman have begun to absorb more modern elements. In contemporary Taiwanese bildungsroman, travel becomes an important avenue for exploring personal identity, cultural exchange, and transnational experience. For example, travel plots in bildungsroman have an educational function, helping to build a broader perspective based on the flow of geography and culture. Through traveling, young characters will learn to overcome difficulties, enhance self-awareness, and even understand the situations of others, which is closely related to "growth education" in the history of education. As contemporary Taiwanese society gradually opens up from its repressed state, the themes of Taiwanese children's literature are diverse, presenting polyphonic symphony. Taiwanese bildungsroman engages with cultural issues, and characters gradually construct their self-identity and grow through travel and adventure. They learn self-exploration in real life, which includes the role of growth education. A comprehensive review of these texts shows that they have dimensions of cultural thinking and mostly involve identity-related topics, which deserve further interpretation and discussion through cross-disciplinary research.

Roberta Seelinger Trites sorted out the research context of Western children's literature and found that it was related to the research approaches of literary researchers². Reviewing Taiwan's juvenile fiction like Zhang Zizhang leads to observations and research reflections on the development and creation of youth literature. Wu Meiyong uses critical theory to analyze juvenile fiction, focusing on the subject formation of children and adolescents in fiction texts, as well as the issues it involves such as gender, childhood innocence, local iden-

¹ S. Ruiqiang, *White Terror in Taiwan: The Handling of Political Cases in Postwar Taiwan*, New Taipei, Daoxiang Publishing House, 2014, pp. 64-66; L. Shuhui, *Complexity*, «Application of Taiwan's Human Rights-Themed Cultural Assets and Spatial Information», 2020, pp. 1-11; W. Chiarong, *Save the Children: Youth Narratives and Historical Learning in Three Taiwanese Horror Video Games*, «International Journal of Taiwan Studies», 2025, pp. 1-19.

² R. Seelinger Trites, *Mentalités of Theory in Children's Literature: 1972-2022*, «Children's Literature», vol. 50, 2022, pp. 49-62.

tity and (post)modern childhood discourse, which concern modern and contemporary literature and cultural studies. Through the guidance of theory, explore, develop and deepen the multiple perspectives and textual connotations of Taiwanese juvenile fiction³. Because the text provides a voice for exploring inner life through the narrative plot of moving experience. I select A-Guo's *Cycling on the Suva Road* by Zhang Youyu, Liao Dayu's *Solo Cycling Trip*, and Huang Yuwen's *Ocean Youngster* as research materials.

Although the "hero's journey" was originally a research field of mythology and folk literature, the three-stage model of the hero's adventure «Departure – Enlightenment – Return» organized in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* can also be reflected in the results of fiction research. For example, Black and Sharon used Harry Potter as research material, applying Campbell's analysis of the common patterns of heroes in myths, folk tales and fairy tales around the world to explore how Harry Potter realized his extraordinary abilities from being in darkness to going to school or special environments. In this way, the fiction is linked to the development of traditional heroes, allowing young people to grasp the meaning and hope of victory⁴. The research results involve metaphors of real-life life situations contained in the growth of characters in the narrative, and provide *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* as a reference for the theoretical framework of studying juvenile bildungsroman. This article intends to apply the structure of the hero's journey, and the questions include: how to respond to the call of adventure, or how to cross the first threshold and start the journey? What trials have you gone through and what rescues have you faced? What themes of growth in travel narratives are implied in Return? Jung is quoted as saying that psychological development occurs through a process of individuation, ultimately producing a complete individual. This journey, as the developing people become heroes in their inner drama, progresses linearly and contains more content, dialogue, plot, imagery, and thematic development than the mythology presented in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*⁵. This paper interprets the relationship between travel narrative and identity theme in Taiwanese bildungsroman from three aspects: the call of departure and movement route, trial and enlightenment, and the transformative significance of return.

³ W. Meiying, *Subject, Gender, Local Discourse and (Post)Modern Childhood Imagination: A Monograph on Postwar Taiwanese Juvenile Novels*, Tainan, National Cheng Kung University Press, 2017, pp. 5-10.

⁴ S. Black, *The Magic of Harry Potter: Symbols and Heroes of Fantasy*, «Children's Literature in Education», vol. 34, 2003, pp. 237-347.

⁵ L. Butchart, 'What Man Am I?' *The Hero's Journey, the Beginning of Individuation, and Taran Wanderer*, «Mythlore», vol. 38, n. 1, 2019, pp. 199-218.

2. *The Call to departure and the route of movement*

This paper refers to *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* published by American mythologist Joseph Campbell in 1949, to consider the writing strategy of plot arrangement in the fiction, as a theoretical framework for interpreting the text, and to analyze the theme of identity in juvenile fiction. This book points out that the narrative method of the story follows the pattern of ancient mythology: a hero enters the world of adventure from the ordinary world, obtains mythical power, and after winning a decisive victory, he returns from this mysterious adventure with some ability, sharing the benefits with his fellow citizens. The story narrative mode is mainly divided into three parts: separation or departure, the trial of enlightenment, and return to society and reintegration with it⁶. The Hero's Journey shows the story of a person/character's death at a certain level and rebirth as a new person. Changes are constant. The Hero's Journey is a microcosm of our lives, a model that reveals that we can survive life/life changes, face our own failures, and then move on.

Broadly speaking, «travel» means moving across time and space, and the experience of leaving home. «Narrative» is to narrate events and give them a plot, so that independent events are connected and become a meaningful whole. The connection between «travel» and «narrative» focuses on how to weave and reorganize travel memories, and reflect on self-identity and future practices. Travel narratives give memory the power of initiative. Through on-site experience and empathy, they trigger connections between memory and the present and the future, and offer opportunities to explore the meaning of travel. Since this paper focuses on travel narratives, it uses travel-related bildungsroman as research material, and by analyzing the narrative plots of mobile experience, it provides an exploration of the relationship between travel narratives and the theme of growth.

To explore the rites of passage contained in travel narratives in the bildungsroman, the plot or characters in each stage are explored as the driving force for the protagonist's self-awakening or transformation in this journey. The first is the departure, which includes the events and specific characters encountered in daily life before the adventure begins, symbolizing a kind of self-awakening and the impending choice. They have to leave their original lives and embark on an adventurous journey, and need help to face the impending dangers. For example, how does the protagonist face the call of adventure? How do you cross the first threshold and start the journey? How can we experience the crisis of the «belly of the whale»? Campbell calls the «hero's journey» a «monomyth» that explains the myths of the world and reduces them to a main model, which is consistent with Jung's representation of

⁶ J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces 70th-anniversary new commemorative edition of the classic*, Trans. Zhu Kanru, Taipei, Wanderer Culture, 2020, pp. 44-48.

the collective unconscious archetype, the underlying structure of personality formed by the interaction of human experience accumulation and culture, and the hero as the archetypal image. The archetypal experiences and archetypal characters such as the wise old man in the fiction often apply the core concepts of Jungian analytical psychology. The hero archetype appeals to the readers' collective subconsciousness, which allows readers to identify and empathize with the hero. The guide archetype can be seen in all three fictions, providing information that helps accomplish the task at the beginning of the journey.

In *A-Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road*, after Ah Guo fell and was injured at the start of the journey, did he hesitate to ride forward or turn back? Even though he thought about going back downhill, and he was having an internal struggle after transferring trains and returning home, he still continued to face the call of bicycle travel. Covering the trauma of the soul with physical fatigue, the two exchanged each other's unknown secrets hidden at the bottom of their souls during the arduous ride, and used sweat to wash away the dirt accumulated in their hearts about the past. Cycling not only brings riders closer to the natural scenery, but also brings people closer to each other and to the land. Along the way, they can listen to the beating of the pulse of the land and the stories of life on this land, connecting the intimate relationship between nature and humanity. Cycling tour is driven by the labor of the rider. As mentioned in the bildungsroman Ah Guo, cycling uphill is a great test of physical fitness and the rider feels great pain. However, each uphill represents the next downhill. When the rider reaches the top of the slope, he will be greeted by the pleasant feeling of going downhill⁷. This leads to the image of the bicycle as a metaphor for life. The journey of life is like riding a bicycle, with suffering and joy. Each suffering is a training, and it also indicates that the next joy will eventually come.

Cycling is also used as the main narrative axis in *Solo Cycling Trip*. This fiction describes how the protagonist Lu Jiasheng lost her father in a car accident and then embarked on a bicycle trip due to a mistaken kidnapping incident. How to build a positive self-image? In the preface, the author mentioned that in the face of an increasingly complex world, he advocated the following actions: «Instead of protecting our children, it is better to remind them to remind them to believe in themselves, to believe that they have the superpower to educate themselves». The source of the core value of establishing a positive self-image is self-transformation and growth, while spiritual precipitation is the indirect result. These results are formed due to the attributes of longer riding time. Cycling for long periods of time gives the protagonists in juvenile fictions time to think about the future, adjust the direction of their goals and efforts, and even change their thinking about life, thereby re-adjusting their

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

mentality. In addition, the courage cultivated during the cycling tour prompted themselves to change, thus creating a new outlook on life and promoting inner transformation and growth. In addition to Lu Jiasheng's life experience, in the book the kidnapper Ah Yi is arranged to face his own inner demons while getting along with Lu Jiasheng, and after meeting his good friend Dawei, he learns the need to face the future.

A-Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road and *Solo Cycling Trip* both use bicycle travel as the main narrative axis. A cycling trip is driven by the rider's labor and moves to different spaces. As mentioned by Ah Guo in the fiction, cycling uphill is a great test of physical fitness, so the rider will feel great pain. However, each uphill ushers in the next downhill. When the rider reaches the top of the slope, he will be greeted by the pleasant feeling of going downhill. This shapes the image of the bicycle as a metaphor for life. The journey of life is like riding a bicycle, with suffering and joy. Each suffering is a training, and it also indicates that the following joy will eventually come. These two fictions use the island of Taiwan as the scope of the mobile narrative, revealing a sense of place.

Ocean Youngster expands the spatial perspective in the Pacific Ocean and describes the travel process from the first-person perspective of the sea turtle. Author Yueman said that he moved to Hualien with his father at the age of twelve. The experience of facing and staying with the Pacific Ocean at day and night made him always have a mysterious fantasy and awe of the sea⁸. Through *Ocean Youngster*, he conveyed: «While wandering and wandering, enrich yourself, pursue the beautiful ideal, grow up bravely, and live on. How precious the existence of life is!»⁹. *Ocean Youngster* presents the narrative structure of Campbell's *Hero's Journey*. The sea turtle travels and takes risks across the ocean from birth to running away, and gets to know sunfish, dolphins, whale sharks, sperm whales and old fishermen, gradually becoming enlightened and learning life issues such as survival and loneliness. This juvenile fiction not only explores the narrative of life issues, but also incorporates ocean knowledge, environmental protection, history and other issues close to the author's heart. The journey of the ocean is an inevitable journey in the life of a sea turtle, and the title of the fiction clearly presents the theme of experience and growth.

According to Campbell, when heroes are about to go into danger, they will be protected and guided by supernatural aids. These figures appear in the roles of old women, fairy godmothers, wizards, hermits, shepherds, blacksmiths, or even guides, teachers, or ferrymen to provide talismans or advice to the heroes. Regarding the growth ritual of travel in the juvenile fiction, departure includes encountering events and specific characters in daily life before embarking on

⁸ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, p. 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

an adventure, symbolizing a kind of self awakening, and thus you are about to face a choice. In this journey, the protagonist gradually completes the journey under the guidance of the instructor. The guide in the fiction is usually a wise old man who provides the hero with information tools to help them complete their mission at the beginning of the journey, or a group of companions to help them complete their mission. The wise old man, such as the retired teacher represents the power of kindness and protection in destiny. On *Solo Cycling Trip*, Ah Yi's grandma helped him successfully obtain a bicycle and a reflective vest, and was able to start the journey. *Ocean Youngster* depicts Yueman's first encounter with a tornado after going out to sea. He was reminded by a half-length fish/sunfish before he dived to escape the danger¹⁰. Under the guidance of sunfish, he established the destination of the journey – *South China Sea Paradise* and learned about the ocean for the first time. Rules for survival were learned on the road.

In *A-Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road*, Ah Guo's riding route is mainly on the Suhua road. It is speculated from the fiction that he started from Suao and passed through the Xinao Tunnel to Nanao. Then proceed to Wuta Village and pass by Heping Village. Then go to Qingshui Cliff, Chongde Tunnel, all the way south, and finally returns to Kaohsiung. Lu Jiasheng in *Solo Cycling Trip* was kidnapped to Changhua. With the help of Ah Yi's grandma, she set off from Changhua and learned from the supermarket manager's fax information: first ride a bicycle to Bagua Mountain, and then go to Taichung, Daya. And with Angel's help, she headed to Dongfeng Green Corridor, passing Shigang Dam on the way. Through the fax letter, Lu Jiasheng was described all the way to Dahu to pick strawberries, and then to Longtan and Beipu. Then transfer to Shimen Reservoir, then go to Yingge to eat Grandma's sushi, and finally return to Taipei to participate in a speech contest. In *Ocean Youngster*, Yueman set out from the uninhabited island south of Midway Island in the Pacific. She wandered for ten years and met Wanglai Ge by chance. The meeting place with Wanglai Ge is in the northeast of New Guinea Island and about 200 kilometers north of New Britain Island at sea. Then it goes to the Marshall Islands atolls, then turns to the Mathewro Atoll, and then to the Kuyejuenin Atoll. At the end of the fiction, Yueman and Wanglai Ge arrive at La Grande Island.

From the main scenery related to *Ah Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road* and the plot of Ah Guo's movement, a schematic diagram is drawn with DocuGIS in Picture 1.

As shown in Picture 1, the cycling route of *Ah Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road* is mainly based on the Suhua Highway, and the plot description focuses on Su'ao passing through the Xin'ao Tunnel, to Nan'ao, and then to Wuta Vil-

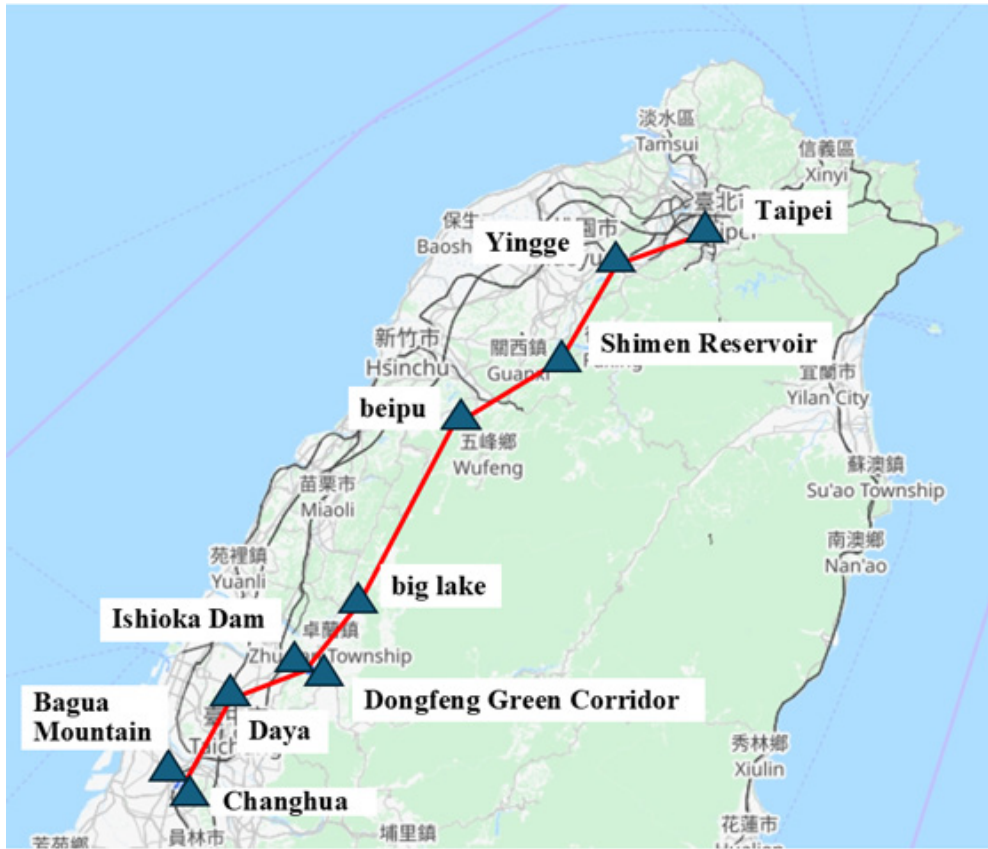
¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-18.



Pic. 1. Schematic diagram of the main path of *Ah Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road*. Source: Drawn by DocuGIS, the author compiled the results of *Ah Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road*.

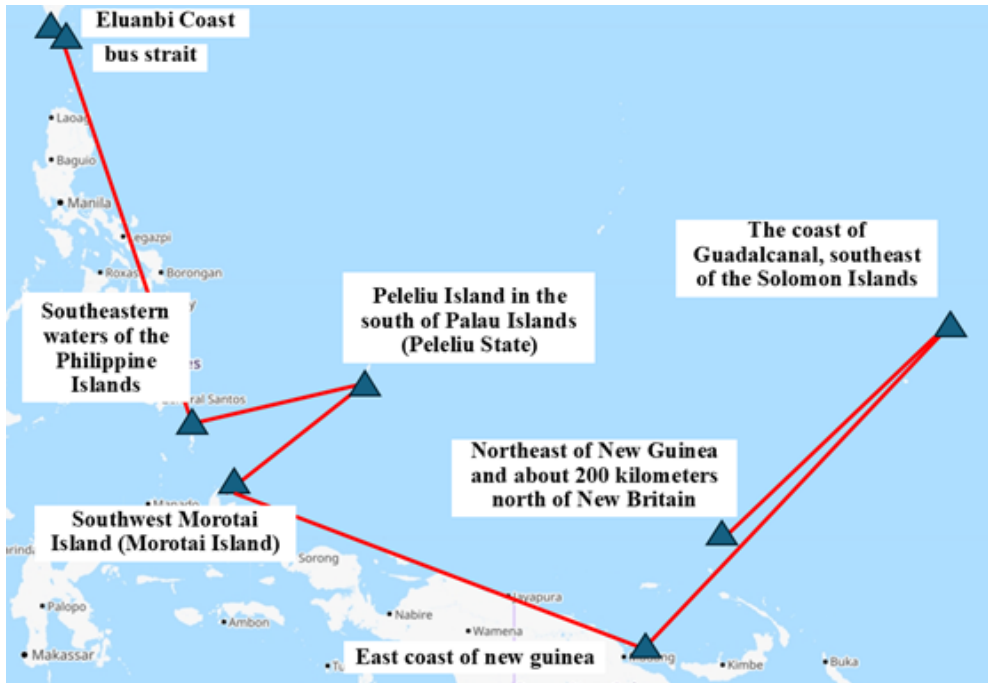
lage. Then pass through Qingshui Cliff and Chongde Tunnel, and finally arrive in Hualien. After leaving the Suhua Highway, continue riding south, and finally return to his home in Kaohsiung. During this period, he fell down and was injured on the Suhua Highway, and was sometimes threatened by large trucks. He regretted impulsive decision to ride a bicycle to this adventure, and cried bitterly thinking about past experiences. He also narrowly encountered a car thief in Heping Village. While chasing the robber, he understood the survival plight of the eastern villages and re-examined his original living environment. He reflected on his life situation when he and Lin Zhengyi encountered an accident on the Suhua Highway and almost died. The two also felt the energy of the eastern coast and the ocean on the Suhua Highway, and the bicycle trip to the natural ecology healed the injured young mind.

In order to infer the landscape and main routes related to Liao Dayu's *The Solo Cycling Trip*, DocuGIS was used to draw a schematic diagram in Picture 2.



Pic. 2. Schematic diagram of the main path of *The Solo Cycling Trip*. Source: Drawn by DocuGIS, compiled by the author from *The Solo Cycling Trip*.

Lu Jiasheng in *The Solo Cycling Trip* was kidnapped to Changhua and set off from Changhua with the help of Ah Yi's grandma. The fax information comes from the store manager: At first ride a bicycle to Bagua Mountain, and then go to Daya, Taichung. With Angel's help, she headed to Dongfeng Green Corridor and passed Ishigang Dam on the way. The fax letter described Lu Jiasheng to Dahu to pick strawberries, and then to Longtan and Beipu. Then she moved to Shimen Reservoir, then to Yingge to eat an older woman's sushi, and finally returned to Taipei to participate in a speech contest. When she climbed the Shimen Mountain hiking trail, the noisy crowds were gradually replaced by the humming of insects, while the forest revealed its original look. When the woods on both sides of the trail suddenly disappear, the view is endless, and she sees the blue light and shadow of the reservoir. These two fictions use Taiwan as the scope of mobile narrative, revealing a sense of place. It not only connects the human and geographical landscape of Taiwan through mo-



Pic. 3. Schematic diagram of the main path of *Ocean Youngster*. Source: Drawn by DocuGIS, the author compiled the results of *Ocean Youngster*.

ble narratives, but also deepens the identity of the characters in the bildungsroman and the dialectics of their own life situations.

The scenery described in *Ocean Youngster* is not a fictional island, but is based on the geographical location of the real world to lay out the ocean journey of the protagonist of the juvenile fiction. According to the narrative of the fiction Yueman and Wanglai, a schematic diagram is drawn using DocuGIS in Picture 3.

As shown in Picture 3, Wanglai recounted that he was born on the coast of Eluanbi, swam through the Bashi Strait, then headed to the southeastern waters of the Philippines, heading to Peleliu in the south of the Palau Islands, then south to Morotai, then southeast to the east coast of New Guinea, then north to Guadalcanal, and met the full moon on the southern way. Yueman was born on an uninhabited island south of Midway in the Pacific Ocean and wandered for ten years. The meeting place with Wanglai is northeast of New Guinea and about 200 kilometers north of New Britain. Then it goes to the atolls of the Marshall Islands, then turns to the Majuro atoll, and then to the Kwajalein atoll. At the end of the fiction, Yueman and Wanglai arrive at Rongelap Island. Bikini Island next to La Grande Island is the island that the fisherman in the fiction said was destroyed by human weapons. Due to their

different experiences, Wanglai who had been to Guadalnacan Island, became not only a companion, but also a guide, leading Yueman to pursue the *South China Sea Paradise* in his mind. The South China Sea refers to the natural ecology of the South Pacific and symbolizes the ideal marine environment:

Scattered in the South Pacific, there are thousands of small volcanic islands and archipelagos composed of coral reefs. They all have beautiful scenery, transparent sea water, fresh air and no pollution. There are no human disputes or wars. Those islands can be said to be the *South China Sea Paradise*, La Shangri on the sea! What a paradise on earth!¹¹ This space is used to create an image of a paradise on the sea, which is also the motivation to summon Yueman and Wanglai Ge to go on an adventure.

Whether it is the protagonist of a bildungsroman across the sea or the mountains, it is because of the movement of spaces that allows oneself to undergo trials and return the experience from this place to that place, allows the character to grow, and then construct self-identity. Fan Mingru points out there are three types of “lines” in the fiction. There are two types of stories that use lines as narratives, emphasizing the risks, dangers, and risks that may be encountered on the road, and even applying the road experience to metaphorize the road of life. These bildungsroman characters all experienced difficulties during the journey, and were also helped by companions and guides to break through the bottleneck, and finally returned to become more sound. This bildungsroman uses sea turtles returning to their birthplace due to traveling far away, which is like passing through a transitional ritual of growth, presenting contemporary issues of species and marine ecology. The moving route is the narrative main goal of the characters from the journey to the return process, not only outlines the fictional scenes in the narrative, but also visualizes the geographical space of the real world. This article uses DocuGIS to draw the moving trajectory of fiction characters, turning the text narrative into actual spatial diagrams, and providing a reference form that focuses on spatial narrative.

3. *The Trial and Initiation*

After the narrative protagonist crosses the threshold of his journey, he will embark on an adventure, and he will experience the adventures during this journey. Camber believes that these heroes will feel the power of goodness at this stage and support them to cope with many dangers.¹² What plots does

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-40.

¹² J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 89.

the writer arrange as a trial for the protagonist's growth? When the protagonist at this stage is facing difficulties or goes deep into danger, he will pass through the various tests of travel through the guidance of the guide, and meet a trustworthy wise man to impart wisdom and help for him to clearly understand the meaning of this journey. Teacher Fu in A-Guo's *Cycling on the Suva Road* represents the power of goodness and protection in destiny. Before Lin Zhengyi came to court for inquiries after illegally following the housing agency, he saw a cyclist traveling around the island jumping into the river of love to save people, and decided to ride a bicycle in the future. The bildungsroman *The Solo Cycling Trip*, Lu Jiasheng met many people during the trip, and therefore sensed the preciousness of life and family affection, rejected the impulse to sink, and developed positive values. She started her bicycle journey by chance and met all kinds of people from all walks of life: grandma who recycles resources, supermarket clerks, police officers riding bicycles, etc. She doesn't have the chance to meet these persons in her daily life, but they lend a helping hand in time during her journey so that she can complete the agreement with her father.

Peter Adey explores how the tactile and multi-sensory dimensions of mobility constitute diverse mobile experiences and processes in addition to visions, involving feelings and emotions¹³. For travelers, in addition to what they see visually, what is more important is what they experience during the journey, as well as the establishment and exchange of interpersonal relationships. The dynamic feelings and emotions continue to play a role in giving birth to their own cultural mobility experience. As a subject of juvenile fiction, travel forms the backbone of the narrative with movement, and many narrative developments overlap with the trajectories or processes of the characters. The author carefully records the motivation for the task, the path taken to complete it, leaving home, and the events encountered in the process¹⁴. Take cycling trip as an example. During the process of a cycling trip, the willpower required by the rider and the scenery along the way give the rider a sense of self-identity and identification with the country/place¹⁵. Kaltenborn, Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, and Watson et al. proposed the concept of place identity, the emotional connection between identification and a sense of place belonging, and discussed the significance of psychological attachment¹⁶. Bricker and Ker-

¹³ P. Adey, *Mobility*, London, Routledge, 2017, p. 18.

¹⁴ W. Zhensheng, Ye Weizhong, *Introduction, Narratology, Stylistics*, Taipei, Cultural Development Committee, Executive Yuan, 2010, p. 63.

¹⁵ H. Changyuan, You Zhilong, Huang Shuqin, Lai Yingxiao, *The value of cycling around the platform: a class analysis of value-based motivations*, «Journal of College Physical Education», vol. 17, n. 4, 2015, pp. 388-391.

¹⁶ B.P. Kaltenborn, *Nature of Place Attachment: A Study Among Recreation Homeowners in Southern Norway*, «Leisure Science», vol. 19, n. 3, 1997, pp. 175-189; D.R. Williams, M.E. Patterson, J.W. Roggenbuck, A.E. Watson, *Beyond the Commodity Metaphor: Examin-*

stetter regard place identity as an attitude, value, thought, belief, meaning, behavioral intention towards a particular place, and a sense of belonging to a particular place¹⁷. The activity of a cycling trip makes the teenagers identify more with the land where they grew up and thus enhances their sense of belonging to Taiwan. This kind of exercise requires the personal experience of a long-term endurance test. In the process, one looks forward to the future by thinking about one's past and past life experiences. The specific exercise of a cycling trip helps to stimulate personal psychological transformation through such a ritual.

In *The Solo Cycling Trip* Lu Jia sheng meets many people during the journey, and through this, she sees the preciousness of life and family, the courage to refuse to sink, and the positive values. Cycling trip is associated with self-transformation and growth, a sense of accomplishment, building a positive self-image, and self-actualization. Because it takes a lot of energy to move forward by pedaling on a bicycle, the activity is difficult and not easy to complete. After the activity, she did not believe that she could achieve her goal. She had the courage and optimistic attitude to break through the bottlenecks in her life. She was more confident in herself and could face various challenges in life in the future. And then she built a positive self-image.

The prototype character of the wise old man, Mr. Fu, in *A-Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road* provides advice and inspiration as a guide, and shapes the kind power of supporting Ah Guo's adventure. During the ride on Suhua Highway, Ah Guo and Lin Zhengyi demonstrated the role of riding a bicycle to heal the trauma of teenagers' lives. During the bicycle journey, for the two teenagers who made mistakes, the hardships of their bodies and minds, heal themselves through the scenery of mountains and seas. The fiction depicts passing through tunnels, from dimness, loud noises, black holes, and other images to finally riding out of the tunnel entrance and seeing a round light. It is like a metaphor of moving towards the light and hope after getting out of the dark corners in life. When both of them passed an uphill section and saw the ocean, they exclaimed the mind is stretched out. The vastness of the ocean stimulates the visual experience of young people who feel depressed by making mistakes and encountering difficulties in life. This experience comes from the outside. Go deep into the heart of a young man and soothe his soul. The trial and enlightenment themes in the bildungsroman allow characters to grow through spatial and tourism narratives, presenting non-daily perceptual experiences.

Hero's Journey proposes the term «purifying oneself», believing that only

ing Emotional and Symbolic Attachment to Place, «Leisure Sciences», vol. 14, n. 1, 1992, pp. 29-46.

¹⁷ K.S. Bricker, D.L. Kerstetter, *Level of Specialization and Place Attachment: An Exploratory Study of Whitewater Recreationists*, «Leisure Sciences», vol. 22, 2000, pp. 233-257.

by experiencing dangers can the protagonist reflect on the portrayal of the current life situation and find ways to rescue themselves¹⁸. When adventure enters a new stage, transforming from familiar things to inconsistent environments, only by crossing these thresholds and escaping traps can we enter a completely new field of experience. The level of enlightenment involves facing several tests, which may be a series of obstacles or failures, during which one learns to use tools and work with partners. You must pass a series of trials, which are the darkest moments in your life for the struggle for survival and you need to slow down to adjust your thoughts/views and figure out the meaning of your changes. How do teenagers face bereavement and life crises? When Lu Jia Sheng, the protagonist of *The Solo Cycling Trip* faces a difficult situation, how does she calm down and clarify the situation? Whether it is a crisis or emotion, she must understand the external and internal situation before she can actively deal with it, ruminate on these processes and thrive. Lu Jia Sheng said, «I am not traveling alone, for my father has always been with me»¹⁹. This unexpected journey prompted by kidnapping is the way for the protagonist to overcome bereavement and life crises. The author designed the convenience store as a very important rest stop for cyclists. The convenience store becomes a guardian angel during the girl's journey. Lu Jia sheng in the fiction is trying to realize the dream of *Cycling Trip* with her father. Many people support her in time during the journey. Although this juvenile fiction does not delve deeply into the flow of inner consciousness when it comes to the emotional transitions of the characters, it cleverly uses convenience stores throughout Taiwanese society to connect the warmth of various places and convey the possibility of love and cohesion by fax. Such creative literary imagination not only makes the characters more emotionally full but also presents the Taiwan's mutual aid energy.

Educational psychology research points out that for bereavement, maintaining a connection with the deceased can help adapt to the feeling of loss of bereavement. The deceased may become a spiritual virtual existence for the bereaved, and there will also be a chance to allow the bereaved to resolve unresolved emotional entanglements with the deceased. The bildungsroman presents the truth that the heroine will fulfill her agreement with her father by chance – riding a bicycle from Changhua to head north, thereby realizing the connection between the bereaved and the deceased²⁰. Through this journey, the heroine is able to face her father's dead traumatic experience, reflecting

¹⁸ J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2004, pp. 92-93.

¹⁹ L. Dayu, *The Whispers Between Me and Guaguai, A Bicycle Trip Alone*, Taipei, Xiaobing, 2018, p. 82.

²⁰ L. Yaoming, *Research on the transformation of the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased and grief adjustment: taking dialogue activities with the deceased as an example*, «Journal of Educational Psychology», vol. 53, n. 1, 2021, pp. 87-89.

the value of Taiwanese bildungsroman in life education. The fiction plot designs the space of the convenience store, which is a very important rest stop for cyclists, and the convenience store has also become the guardian angel in the girl's journey. Everyone has their own reasons for cycling. Lu Jiasheng, the protagonist in the bildungsroman, is to fulfill his engagement with his father. This book also conveys the ethical values of profession that are not distinguished from the high and low, but are good at heart. Although this bildungsroman rarely penetrates the inner consciousness in the emotional twists of the characters, it cleverly uses the convenience stores in Taiwan society that are spread throughout the townships and cities, connecting the warmth of various places and conveying the possible love through fax. Such creative literary imagination not only makes the characters more emotional, but also presents the realistic nature of Taiwan's folk mutual aid energy.

When Kobi Cohen-Hattab and Jenny Kerber discussed the way of tourist's observation, they mentioned that literary works such as propaganda create and strengthen tourists' identity and identification with the place; fictional literature strengthens or challenges the falsehood of these tourist attraction narratives. The particularity of tourism makes it often used as a metaphor. The travel itself is the narrator's spatial movement experience, and is meanwhile influenced by the books and literature he has read, revealing his existing imagination and views on the scenic spots along the way. *The Solo Cycling Trip* shows Lu Jiasheng going to a supermarket to read books about tourist attractions, and then plan for his journey to the north. The Taichung Shigang Dam, Yingge Grandma Sushi, etc. mentioned in the fiction were all information obtained by Lu Jiasheng from travel books. These tourist attractions became the basis for the author to construct the spatial trajectory of the fiction, which implies the intertextuality between tourism promotion and fictional travel narratives. The imagination of places presented in travel narrative works is limited to specific symbols. Although it is beneficial to the promotion of Taiwan's tourism industry, it may lose the opportunity to present local heterogeneity.

Another kind of a hero's journey is a learning journey of animals in different growth environments, with movement as the key to growth. Take Yueman's journey, for example. Yueman is proficient in swimming quickly in the sea, turning over and rolling or holding his breath in the water, and constantly learns the knowledge of ocean life. Yueman has awakened and no longer envy others for having wings. Yueman meets many marine creatures in the fiction, such as sunfish, and whale sharks. These characters are like guides in the "hero's journey". For example, the whale shark said, «You are still young; you must have confidence in your future and live bravely»²¹. Such a guide gives Yueman the confidence to survive in the real world.

²¹ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, p. 29.

The imagination and recognition of marine culture are important to marine education. By ocean space emotions, people can retain their imagination about the ocean and then build a specific ocean culture. This will make people care more about the ocean and thus protect it²². *Ocean Youngster* is a juvenile fiction that attempts to draw readers' attention to environmental protection and natural ecological issues. The author Huang Yu wen made arrangements for Yueman to witness the *Black Devil* oil slick crisis. The black oil clumps leaked from the stranded ship and the cracked bottom of the ship. Seabirds, sea animals, and fish and shellfish were unfortunately stuck in the sticky black oil slick, unable to move, and suffocated to death. The full moon has developed a very rhythmic and efficient diving method. Situational narratives about environmental issues, such as groups of large and small fishing boats, relying on sophisticated fish detectors to detect the location of fish migration, and casting fishing nets with very fine mesh to catch both big and small fish. As a result, the fish in the sea are getting smaller and smaller, and the catch is decreasing year by year. In the future, the days when no fish will be caught will come. Or describe the specific fact that hundreds of rivers on land flow into the ocean with dirty factory wastewater, carrying oil slicks and garbage, polluting the clean ocean. «You should be extra careful when eating plankton. For plastic bags are like floating jellyfish, which are eaten into the stomach; plastic bags will not be digested in your intestines and stomach, and will block the intestines and stomach. If they are not excreted, the stomach will burst»²³. It interestingly conveys information about marine environmental protection to readers, and from the perspective of fellow "marine creatures", readers can empathize with marine creatures facing a large amount of marine debris. Through the eyes of Yueman, readers perceive the beauty of the ocean and the destruction of the ocean caused by human factors. In addition, Yueman and Wanglai Ge went to the Solomon Islands and discovered that the seabed around the Solomon Islands is rich in coral reef ecology, with various fish and shellfish, and rich resources. However, it is also full of shipwrecks that have sunk for many years and have become rusty and dilapidated. There are even many abandoned cannons and tanks stranded on the coasts of various islands. The author of the juvenile fiction reminds readers that life is not just about joy and fantasy, and reality is often not beautiful.

Yueman and Wanglai Ge met an old fisherman at Kuyejuning Atoll. With the old fisherman's explanation, they discovered why there were so many scrap metals in the Solomon Islands. The old fisherman mentioned: «You see many shipwrecks on the bottom of the Solomon Islands, as well as the cannon scraps on the islands. You don't know their origins. I know that those large

²² G. Daxuan, *Cultural Thinking in Marine Education: A Human Geography Perspective*, «Journal of Marine Culture», vol. 9, 2010, pp. 61-63.

²³ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, p. 16.

weapon scraps are leftovers from the tragic Pacific War. At the end of the war, the U.S. Air Force dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, and thus Abanzai finally surrendered. Unfortunately, the Pacific was not peaceful anymore, and the most miserable people were those living on the South Pacific islands»²⁴. War not only destroys human society but also destroys marine ecology. As the old fisherman continued to talk about his life experience, he mentioned that after World War II, to test the power of the new atomic bomb, the U.S. government forced the aborigines of Bikini Island to relocate to Rongelap Island and Kuyejuning Island. The test explosion on Bikini Island on March 1, 1954, was so powerful that the hot winds generated by the explosion blew through the ocean causing an extremely painful disaster. The heat wave destroyed many buildings on the island and even scalded residents. As the blasting dust fell, black rain fell from the sky, and there were bursts of white death soot. Many residents and marine life were poisoned to death by the products of the explosion. And this is the family legend that Whale Shark mentioned. A big explosion occurred on a small island in the South Pacific, causing the surrounding ocean to become a dangerous place spread by words among the dolphin family²⁵. The ocean, which was originally regarded as a beautiful paradise, has turned into a hellish scene under the haze of human war. The clear image reminds readers of the damage caused by humans to the ocean.

In Huang Yuwen's *Ocean Youngster*, the plot of the whale shark roundup is described in detail. Whale sharks swim very slowly. Once discovered by islanders, they are rounded up by fishing boats and die. He also used this criticism: «Whale sharks are reproduced very slowly and are constantly being hunted in the world's oceans. Shortly, they may disappear from the oceans. There are still a few countries in the world that do not comply with the international convention prohibiting the killing of whales. They went all the way to the Antarctic Sea on the pretext of studying the ecology of whales, but they were killing whales there to make money». Compare this to another space: «There are thousands of small volcanic islands scattered in the South Pacific, islands composed of coral reefs, all with beautiful scenery, transparent water, fresh air, and no pollution, without human disputes and wars. Those islands can be said to be the 'South China Sea Paradise', a paradise on earth!²⁶». The space creates an image of a paradise like a peach blossom garden. Regarding ecological issues, it is the interaction between species²⁷. This juvenile fiction depicts sea turtles returning to their birthplace after traveling far away, as if

²⁴ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, p. 54.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-28.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-40.

²⁷ L. Shuhui, *Reflections on Taiwan's Natural Ecology Education – Taking the Subject Matter of Children's Books as an Example*, «Taiwan Humanities», vol. 3, 1998, pp. 227-261.

going through a transitional ritual of growth, presenting contemporary issues on species and marine ecology.

Human overfishing will also cause harm to the ocean. Under the influence of artificial development, overfishing, industrial pollution, climate change, etc., the global ocean has undergone tremendous changes in marine ecology, and wild fish stocks have rapidly declined. Instead, the rise of aquaculture fisheries demonstrates the disastrous consequences humans have had on marine life²⁸. *Ocean Youngster* uses whale sharks to tell the terrifying narrative of the southern Coral Sea being filled with human fishermen fishing for marine life, or the sunfish to talk about the overfishing of fisheries, as well as the environmental pollution and industrial harm caused by humans. Wanglai Ge mentioned that “sea bugs” use fishing nets to plunder coral trees on rocks, and attack marine life with homemade bombs and even poisons, easily catching fish but disregarding the ecological balance. After Yueman arrived at his dream paradise for the first time, Mathiu Luo Atoll unexpectedly saw that Mathiu Luo Atoll was submerged by the rising tide. The islanders had already fled here. The *South China Sea Paradise* that Yueman longed for did not bring happiness. The scenery welcomed her, leaving only a scene of disillusionment. Later, Yueman realized that the reason why Mathewro Atoll was submerged in seawater resulted from global warming. The sea ice at the Earth’s poles and the snow on the mountains melt and flow into the sea, causing the Earth’s sea level to rise²⁹. Through the words of others, the fiction uses the full moon’s first-person perspective to lead readers to understand the harm of World War II and the negative impact of human-made weapons on the environment and human society.

4. *The Meaning of the Metamorphosis of Return*

Jung mentioned that there are similar primitive forms in the process of forming the collective subconscious of human communities. Self-nature is the prototype of inner integrity, constantly promoting the life rhythm of inner psychology or external life, and self-nature summons the inner voice at any time³⁰. The *Hero’s Journey* finally goes through a long period of psychological training, letting go of all attachments to personal limitations, traits, hopes and fears, no longer resisting the self-destruction required for the rebirth of under-

²⁸ L. Xinyi, *Introduction: Taiwan’s fisheries and aquaculture under environmental changes*, «Chinese Food Culture», vol. 15, n. 2, 2019, p. 1.

²⁹ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, pp. 46-59.

³⁰ M. Stein, translated by Zhu Kanru, *Jung’s Map of the Soul*, New Taipei, Lixu, 1999, pp. 193-220.

standing the truth, and finally matures and becomes united with all things, and thus can live freely³¹. The story shows a character's death in a certain perspective and rebirth into a new life, where changes are constant. Such a journey is a microcosm of life, a model that reveals how to face the transitional changes of life and continue to move forward after failure.

The *Hero's Journey* originates from the depths of the human heart and is the deeper collective unconsciousness of mankind; because it is universal, it easily moves people's hearts. The *Hero's Journey* is not only about an "outward" journey such as adventure in a maze, forest, or cave, but it can also be an introspective journey that allows the protagonist of the story to deeply explore his soul and grow and transform in the process. The contents are from despair to hope, from vulnerability to strength. These "journeys" of psychological changes and emotional transitions are also the "hero's journey". Although the diverse cultures and abilities displayed by various heroes are different, they complete the hero's journey in the same way. Under the prototype, adjust it with your own culture and creative intentions to resonate with readers. He faced up to the aspects that held him back and discovered his changes. He grew into a more capable person, recovered from the pain, and then fought on his own. This is the stage in the hero's journey when he reaches a higher perspective. It is often represented by the death of the hero's "former self" and is the climax of the narrative. This stage is usually what drives the hero to final victory, the key thing that drives the hero's motivation, and leads all characters on this journey³². The hero in the narrative plot does not just escape from the place where he was born. Heroes are those who can understand, accept, and overcome challenges. They left their stable daily lives and set out to find what was missing in the original world, and were inspired in the process. Finally, they returned to the original world with a more mature body and mind and started a new life.

Why does the hero need to return to the "original world"? For most people, hometown is the center of the world. It is precisely because of this recognition that hometown has become a special place difficult to be replaced in space and mind. Hometown is the center in the entire space system that is used to confirm and determine direction³³. The hero runs away, undergoes adventure and enlightenment, and finally abandons his past self and returns to his hometown and eventually completes the hero's journey. The process of returning to hometown is "return", which not only contains the travel narrative logic of depar-

³¹ J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 220.

³² J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces 70th-anniversary new commemorative edition of the classic*, Trans. Zhu Kanru, Taipei, Wanderer Culture, 2020, pp. 162-183.

³³ T. Yifu, translated by Pan Chenggui, *Space and Place in Empirical Perspective*, Taipei, National Translation and Translation Center, 1998, p. 113.

ture and return, but also emphasizes the hero's growth between departure and return, establishing hometown as the starting point of the whole narrative.

Campbell extended Jung's "individuation" process. The heroic myth represents the process and story of each person's continuous pursuit of the truth and meaning of life as one grows older³⁴. The hero's journey is not a departure without return, but a process of leaving home and returning home, allowing the characters to experience trials and enlightenment before they can grow and finally return to complete the hero's journey. Zhang Youyu, the author of *A-Guo's Bicycles on the Suhua Highway* mentioned that the writing process was that the fiction was born first and was later adapted into a movie; the movie script came out before the fiction and won the Best Screenplay Award granted by the Information Bureau. In her *Preface*, she mentioned that this book also included her court observation experience. The author attempts to criticize through juvenile fictions: «Privately labeling characters, and extending these previous labels from the past to today, never paying attention to whether this person is no longer what he used to be?» In the *Postscript* of this book, she earnestly mentions that teenagers who are still quite flexible in the face of room for growth should abandon the established old impressions and treat them with the present. This is why some countries will destroy the criminal records of minors based on the protection of juveniles. The characters in the fiction travel together, exchanging stories with each other along the way, but they also hate and look down on each other. Until they encounter another current crime that is repeating their "previous" crime, and this current crime allows them to see their "previous" self.

In *Ah Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road* and *Solo Cycling Trip*, Lin Zhengyi believes: «But things like criminal records can never become the past, so it will accompany you throughout your life. Moreover, everyone must pay for the mistakes made one second ago»³⁵. Hating past mistakes is a test for Lin Zhengyi's heroic path. However, when he nearly died in a landslide, he reflected: «When the sand and gravel poured down, I thought of the word 'cover up'. It means that we can cover up bad things with stronger and better memories»³⁶. The possibility of death forced Lin Zhengyi to face his life situation and also allowed him to overcome the entanglement of past mistakes. And Ah Guo also found a way to continue living during this journey. When Ah Guo's friend Ah Ji laughed at him that riding a bicycle was not as good as riding a motorcycle, Ah Guo told him the reason why he was willing to ride a bicycle.

³⁴ L. Xinhua, *Exploring the symbolic meaning of the Russian folk tale "Beautiful Vasilisa" and the Japanese animation "The Hidden Girl" from a psychoanalytic perspective*, «Cultural Transgression», vol. 2, n. 2, 2016, pp. 21-42.

³⁵ Z. Youyu, *A-Guo's Cycling on the Su-Hua Highway*, Taipei, Xiaolu Culture, 2004, p. 139.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Each climb was difficult, but on the way up, he knew he was about to face a welcome descent. At the end of the fiction, Ah Guo tells Mr. Fu that he will embark on a journey again and face the next cycling trip with his teammates on the cycling team. The death threats faced during the journey, as well as the scenery on the east coast of Taiwan, allowed Ah Guo and Lin Zhengyi to break through the tests during the journey. When the two returned to their hometown from the Suhua Highway, the moment was not only a spatial return for them, but also a spiritual “hero’s return”.

Liao Dayu, the author of *A Bicycle Trip Alone*, mentioned in his preface that in the face of an increasingly complex world, he advocated action: «Instead of protecting our children, it is better to remind them – remind them to believe in themselves, believe that they have the superpower to ‘educate themselves’, and believe that they can refuse to become bad!»³⁷. Psychologist John Welwood believes that “self-image” originates from traumatic experiences in childhood. Under traumatic experiences, in order to defend and affirm themselves, children will use imagination and feelings to shape a stable form of self-existence in order to position their identity³⁸. The author arranged for the group of people to go to Shimen Reservoir. Ah Yi met his childhood friend Dawei during the bicycle trip. If he had not been strongly encouraged to steal, perhaps Ah Yi would not have gone astray and become a kidnapper. Dawei came to Shimen Reservoir and wanted to commit suicide, but gave up this suicide attempt after hearing the story of the high-tech youth. The man told how his good friend fell ill due to overwork. This friend finally failed to survive and passed away. The man said: «I miss my friends. I know that everything has a chance to come back, except life»³⁹. The interpretation of the journey of life made Dawei decide to regain hope in life, and it also made Ah Yi face up to what he had done. Later in the fiction, Lu Jiasheng, Ah Yi and others encounter bandits on the way. Ah Yi snatched away the schoolbag that Lu Jiasheng regarded as her life. When Ah Yi grabs her schoolbag, the author narrates it from Lu Jiasheng’s perspective. In her eyes, it was as if she was forced to see the scene when her father passed away. However, no one died this time, Ah Yi and Lu Jiasheng eventually returned to Taipei escorted by the police. When Ah Yi fought with the robbers to retrieve his schoolbag, he did not die. However, at that moment, Ah Yi’s “old self” died, and the reformed boy became the hero of the story. This plot also became a wedge for Lu Jiasheng to bid farewell to her father’s death. At the end of the fiction, Lu Jiasheng mentioned in her

³⁷ L. Dayu, *The Whispers Between Me and Guaguai, A Bicycle Trip Alone*, Taipei, Xiaobing, 2018, p. 12.

³⁸ J. Welwood, translated by D. Bochen, *Awakening Wind: The Meeting of the Souls of the East and the West*, Taipei, Soul Workshop, 2009, pp. 48-49.

³⁹ L. Dayu, *The Whispers Between Me and Guaguai, A Bicycle Trip Alone*, Taipei, Xiaobing, 2018, p. 181.

speech: «Don't give up!»⁴⁰. She finally fulfilled the agreement with her father, and Ah Yi and Dawei also found their way in life.

Cycling travel can be seen as the process of isolation, transition/conversion, and return of the characters in the fiction, and the growth and changes brought about by travel are also accompanied by it. For the protagonist, this activity allows him to recreate himself and ultimately gain a new self⁴¹. Cycling tours are associated with self-transformation and growth, a sense of accomplishment, building a positive self-image, and self-actualization. At the end of *Solo Cycling Trip*, Lu Jiasheng mentioned in his speech: «I pay thanks to all the people who helped me along the way, boosting me to complete this trip. Just like one of the people who helped me said: 'Things will always turn around, don't give up!'». Lu Jiasheng finally completed the agreement with his father setting off from Changhua to circle the island to Taipei, and Ah Yi and Dawei also found their ways in life. Because it takes a lot of energy to ride a bicycle on ones own, by participating in activities, one can exercise one's physical strength, perseverance and willpower, overcome obstacles, and develop one's tolerance for setbacks.

Fan Mingru mentioned the relationship between home and place in the fiction: home is a social domain that is an extension of the original space⁴². If a family is in crisis or disintegrates, it becomes a microcosm of the literary allusion to the existential crisis of the entire place. Home is where the characters in the fiction establish their sense of place. The protagonists Lu Jiasheng and Ah Yi in *Solo Cycling Trip* face changes in their family. Lu Jiasheng's father passed away, and her mother was busy with work and neglected the responsibility of taking care of her daughter. Ah Yi was raised by her grandmother, but was not properly cared for due to financial problems. A single-parent or multi-generational family brings the two of them onto the path of adventure. Ah Yi leads a misguided and criminal lifestyle; after being kidnapped, Lu Jiasheng decides to ride a bicycle north to fulfill the promise she made with her father during the lifetime. The end of the fiction lays out the meaning of Ah Yi regaining his identity as a grandson, and Lu Jiasheng finally returns to school in time to participate in the speech contest and share her experience with her mother. The fiction begins with a family accident triggering the girl's departure, and ends with her returning home. Through departure and return, we experience the scenery and specialties of western Taiwan, reveal a sense of place, and bring out the characters' process of overcoming life difficulties and

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁴¹ L. Meiru, *Multiple Appearances of Island Traveling in Taiwan – Shifting Fields of Body, Time and Space*, «Leisure and Health Care», vol. 6, 2011, pp. 55-64. Chen Shiru, *Traveler on the Pedal: An Analysis of Cycling Travel Notes in Taiwan*, «Taiwan Academic Journal», vol. 13, 2016, pp. 49-70.

⁴² F. Mingru, *The "Local" in Local Novels of the 1970s*, [Literary Geography: Spatial Reading of Taiwanese Novels], Taipei, Maitian, 2008, pp. 356-357.

finding hope. This is the transformation brought about by departure, adventure, and even return.

Solo Cycling Trip and *A-Guo's Cycling on the Suva Road* use bicycles as the main plot of the narrative, which involves the movement of space, especially between the city and the countryside in Taiwan. As stated by He Changyuan and others, cycling around the island helps riders build a sense of identity with the land of Taiwan⁴³. We also refer to Fan Mingru's discussion of the co-constructive relationship between home and place to explore how juvenile fiction can rely on metaphors. The protagonist of the juvenile fiction travels between different towns and between towns and villages through his efforts and this is a mobile subject. Wu Meiying believes that children have an inter-mediating function in fiction. They are not only the mediator between the past and the present but also shuttle between the "traditional/rural" (the provincial) and "the modern/urban" (the modern). This flow is not only reflected in time and space but also subject identity, highlighting the complexity and uncertainty of teenagers⁴⁴. During the journey, Lu Jiasheng continued to identify the meaning of her existence in the world after her father's death; during the journey, Ah Yi reflected on his "wrong path" in his childhood and determined to change himself. Ah Guo and Lin Zhengyi climbed mountains one after another on the East Coast and experienced life-and-death situations. On the coast of the Pacific Ocean, they thought about where to go in the future. The movement of these spaces brings trials and growth to the characters in the fiction, allowing them to construct his own identity between leaving and returning to home and place.

At the return, they rely on extraordinary faith and sometimes have to use external forces to get out of the valley of the shadow of death. This does not mean that they can easily return to the original world. After finally getting rid of the chaos and disturbance of the outside world, they returned to their hometown. It was different from the past and it was difficult to adapt to the original world. They experienced a period similar to a trauma syndrome. They learned a lot during the journey and thus grew stronger and more determined after returning home. After the sea turtles in *Ocean Youngster* conquer the unusual ocean world after their epic journey, they can swim in the sea where they were born in real life. Adventure gives people deep insights, life becomes richer and more complete, and life becomes more comfortable and leisurely.

⁴³ H. Changyuan, Y. Zhilong, H. Shuqin, L. Yingxiao, *The value of cycling around the platform: a class analysis of value-based motivations*, «Journal of College Physical Education», vol. 17, n. 4, 2015, pp. 388-391; Z. Jiayu, *A preliminary study on the connection between the coming-of-age ritual of cycling around the island and resilience*, «Leisure and Social Research», n. 5, 2012, pp. 85-91.

⁴⁴ W. Meiying, *Subject, Gender, Local Discourse and (Post) Modern Childhood Imagination: A Monograph on Postwar Taiwanese Juvenile Novels*, Tainan, National Cheng Kung University Press, 2017, pp. 158-159.

Turtle Yueman was born on an island and wandered in the ocean trying to find his dream paradise. During the process, he kept asking other marine creatures what is the purpose of survival? It is an inquiry into one's own identity and a search for the meaning of life. At the beginning of the fiction, Yueman hears a voice from the sky, telling her that the fate of sea turtles is to live alone⁴⁵. After he completed his journey to the ocean, Yueman said to Brother Wanglai: «The mother sea turtle lays eggs. Since ancient times, mother sea turtles have climbed the dunes by the sea alone in the middle of the night, dug sand pits, laid eggs, and buried them before returning to the sea. This means no one can violate the eternal laws of nature, and I must abide by them»⁴⁶. Yueman finally went through all kinds of difficulties but decided to say goodbye to his partner Wanglai Ge and live a lonely life. The ending may seem sad, but it implies the protagonist of the juvenile fiction has the power to confirm his life value. It establishes its purpose of existence and understands the path to take in the future. Huang Yuwen pointed out the gender of Turtle Moon in the fiction and gave it a destiny of independent choice. It was not affected by the surrounding environment or others and walked its way. The metaphors of gender consciousness and identity contained in it are self-evident.

From Ah Guo, Lu Jiasheng to Yueman, different juvenile fictions all use different forms of travel and adventure to portray the protagonist's growth narrative. This narrative structure is consistent with Campbell's Hero's Journey theory. Campbell proposed the theory when analyzing myths. He believed that the structural process and interpretation of narratives: the legend of heroes embarking on a journey is a process of finding and proving themselves, reflecting the collective consciousness and thinking prototype of a specific culture. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* integrates and analyzes myths from around the world, derives the psychological universal archetypes of heroic myth motifs behind cross-cultural myths, and deciphers the common mysteries of symbols and metaphors in these stories. There are similarities between different civilizations and cultures in the world. Regardless of their different backgrounds or appearances, the characters all go through a journey of «departure → enlightenment → return», realizing and transcending themselves in the process. The basic pattern of the story is an "archetype" involving the questions: who am I? Where do I come from? Where to go after death? What is good and evil? These concepts deeply rooted in mythology are the fundamental core issues of life and help to understand the problems encountered by human beings. They not only provide personal growth and spiritual development but also become an important model for the authors to attract readers.

⁴⁵ H. Yuwen, *Ocean Youngster*, Tainan, Taiwan Literature Museum, 2018, p. 10.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Conclusion

The travel narrative of the juvenile fiction involves encountering multiple disasters during the journey, meeting like-minded partners and the guidance of a wise old man, and finally returning after the disaster, bidding farewell to the “old self” and completing the heroic journey. This article is based on Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey, which is used as a theoretical framework to interpret the three juvenile fiction *A-Guo’s Cycling on the Suva Road*, *Solo Cycling Trip* and *Ocean Youngster*. Different protagonists in the fiction have different characters due to various reasons. Go on your journey/adventure. Encountering multiple disasters during the journey, they also met like-minded partners and the guidance of a wise old man. Finally, after the disaster, they returned to bid farewell to their “old self” and completed the hero’s journey. However, although the three narrative structures all conform to the narrative structure of the hero’s journey, they also differ due to differences in subject matter and the concerns of the writers. In order to explore the growth theme and narrative structure of Taiwanese fictions, this article analyzes the plot and the initiation ritual symbolized by the adventures and challenges of the protagonist during the journey, and narrates the emotional attachment that the characters in the bicycle-riding juvenile fiction have to the local subjectivity during spatial movement.

A-Guo’s Cycling on the Suva Road not only depicts how Ah Guo and Lin Zhengyi regained their life energy in the natural landscape of the eastern coast; it also highlights the process of Lin Zhengyi’s trial in court and the story of young Ah Guo based on the author’s own observation experience. It refers to the experience of making mistakes. The fiction arranges for Ah Guo and Lin Zhengyi to ride bicycles to travel to the east. On the one hand, it records the beauty of Taiwan’s eastern coast and uses it as a medium to influence them. On the other hand, it also uses the undulating terrain of the eastern coast as a metaphor for the bumps in the road of life. Insurmountable obstacles. Ah Yi in *Solo Cycling Trip* is also an ex-convict, and he finds the meaning of a new life after running away. Both Zhang Youyu and Liao Dayu tried to convey through their fiction the spirit that mistakes can be corrected and that there is much to be done if one corrects oneself. Through Campbell’s theory, we can see how the protagonist of the juvenile fiction abandons his “old self” and returns from the disaster to shape a new life.

Lu Jia sheng in *Solo Cycling Trip* experienced the pain of losing his father. After a journey/adventure, he gradually said goodbye to the haze of death. As she mentioned to her mother at the end of the fiction, everything is turning around. At the beginning of the fiction, Lu Jiasheng’s father proposes a bicycle trip to Changhua. With his father’s death, this agreement became an impossible task. By some mistakes, Lu Jia sheng completed the bicycle trip from Changhua back to Taipei, allowing him to complete the goal that his

father had not achieved. By using the agreement as a basis, the bereaved can complete the emotional connection with the deceased and accept the reality of the death of their loved ones. The fiction therefore has the significance of life education. The authors of the two fictions, Zhang Youyu and Liao Dayu, both tried to convey through the text the spirit that mistakes can be corrected and that there is much to be done if one corrects oneself.

Ocean Youngster is written from the perspective of Turtle Yueman and is written in an anthropomorphic way. Compared with the two fictions that revolve around bicycles, Huang Yuwen touches on the issue of teenagers learning how to get used to “loneliness”. *Ocean Youngster* revolves around the difficulties of survival in the ocean, or themes related to disasters caused by human wars, fishing, and hunting. Starting from the perspective of marine life, encountering different types of marine life enriches readers’ imagination and identification with marine culture, and uses the disasters seen in the ocean to guide readers to reflect on the disasters caused by humans to the ocean.

This paper uses three juvenile fictions as examples to explain how the themes of cycling around Taiwan and sea turtles echo the hero’s journey of mythologists. To analyze the structure of the three stages of departure, enlightenment, and return, let’s start with the discussion of departure: how they chose themes and developed narratives? and then the reasons are pointed out why the protagonists of juvenile fiction ran away. Then use the people, things, and things encountered in the fiction to elicit how the guide and various trials in the Hero’s Journey enlighten the protagonist. Finally, it discusses how the protagonist breaks through the test of the trial and brings spiritual rebirth with the return to space. In addition to analyzing the identity construction of a juvenile fiction, this article also discusses the protagonist’s cultural identity, that is, an individual’s sense of identification with a certain social group. This is a core point of personal identity, involving how one sees oneself and how one understands one’s relationship to the world. Juvenile fiction also has an educational function, not only allowing readers to understand themselves but also to observe the world from a cultural perspective.