

**WU
CHUAN
LUN 吳權倫
NO COUNTRY
FOR CANINE 馴
國**

v/ Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

d/ AUG.17.2019 – NOV.03.2019

I. Introduction (309 words)

Starting in the 19th century, due to the liberation of animal power after the Industrial Revolution, dogs were raised for play and company rather than for labor as the primary function, making the demand for appearance gradually parallel to and even surpass that for performance in breed standardization. Meanwhile, the pursuit of singularity in terms of breed led to an attentiveness toward blood and symbolism of names and eventually came to partly conform with scientific and political thought at that time.

Similarly, the pottery and ceramic industry was deeply affected by the Industrial Revolution. The demand for ceramic for ordinary use was met thanks to the matured molding technique enabling mass pottery and ceramic production in the mid-18th century. Meanwhile, decorative ceramics began to penetrate the life of general populace, being no longer luxury craft objects dedicated to the upper class. In my view, these ceramic decorations mass produced through molding and considered rather kitsch today possess a logic echoing that of pedigree dogs being propagated and certified according to the standard criteria.

Whether in propagation or reproduction, artificial shaping is involved. It can be assumed that our attitude toward dogs, the kind of animal that is closest to man, is extended from our will to civilization. Dog breeds, human races: there have been several historical moments when dog and national identity came to intersect intentionally or unintentionally. Empathy toward dog breeding seemed to alleviate the impertinence of conditioning nations with human races. No Country for Canine (the Chinese title “馴國” literally means “Domestication of nations”) is like a session of ring toss: putting aside the animal that cannot make a voice (dog), artificial object (ceramic) shaped after them and the history of producer (man) in an attempt to land the ring around the tiny peg situated at the intersection of the three.

II. Statement (936 words)

The exhibition “No Country for Canine” is a presentation of the phase of ongoing project began from personal enthusiasm of collecting. Since around 2012, I have started to collect a large number of ceramic money boxes in the shape of German Shepherd Dog made in Taiwan in the early days. The era when their production began remains to be verified, some say 60', some say during the early period of Taiwan's recovery. Yet one can be quite assured of the fact that the production stopped in the 1990s due to relocation of factories. This kind of ceramics used to be prizes for ring-throwing in the night markets is not exquisite in terms of workmanship, but it has been widely popular because of the handsome image of the dog and the practicality of saving money. By the bedside, on the desk, in the cupboard, they smirk and accompany us until the last moment when they have to be broken for taking out the coins in their bellies. Once deeply imbedded in every household, they became, in the golden age of economic take-off, a particular collective memory of Taiwanese as a Taiwanese Shepherd Dog.

In those days, why this sitting GSD is the most popular among all the animal subjects? First, the dog always impress people with virtue and protected to the family. Second, It is speculated from the manufacturing reason that sitting as vertical can most effectively save the space in the kiln, and it is relatively easy to be quilted during the ring game. But, among all the dogs, why German Shepherd Dogs? In Taiwan, GSD might first come to Taiwan with the ruling era of Japan. Military of Japan modernized by learning from German. The GSD then introduces as military dogs. After World War I, the German Empire ceded Qingdao previously under its rule to Japan. Japan thus gained a large number of breeding dogs. The earliest German Shepherd Dog in Taiwan probably came with Japanese rule. Although the Japanese used Taiwanese native dogs as military dogs, it was this kind of fierce "German Shepherd Dog" that the general populace encountered. At the time of the Japanese retreat, many officers transferred the dogs to the gentry at that time because it was inconvenient to carry them. After the KMT Government moved to Taiwan, the German Shepherd Dog continued to serve in military and police units in the following epoch. Always circulated among high ranks, German Shepherd Dog has become a symbol of authority, superiority and expensiveness in the society. Perhaps it has contributed to the popularity of money boxes shaped after it among the public in the era of Taiwan's gradual opening-up.

The German Shepherd dog is a breed constructed to fulfil the identified of German. The "German Shepherd Dog" was originally a native dog popular in the German countryside. Shortly after the establishment of the German Empire (Deutsches Reich), the breeder Max von Stephanitz officially endowed it the corresponding name "Deutscher Schäferhund" in 1899. Later, they quickly left the country and entered the military and police fields. Since then, they have become closely linked to military history. The Nazis regarded it as an ideal model of eugenics and promoted it as a symbol of Germany. During World War II, widely used in military forces in various countries, it reached the peak of breeding. Even today, even if it has gradually faded out from military and police uses due to degradation, it is still generally synonymous with military dogs.

In Europe, the fanaticism of breeding purebred of dogs starting in the 19th century, Victoria era, due to the liberation of animal power after the Industrial Revolution, dogs were raised for play and company rather than for labor as the primary function, making the demand for appearance gradually parallel to and even surpass that for performance in breed standardization. Meanwhile, the pursuit of singularity in terms of breed led to an attentiveness toward blood and symbolism of names and eventually came to partly conform with scientific and political thought at that time.

Similarly, the pottery and ceramic industry was deeply affected by the Industrial Revolution. The demand for ceramic for ordinary use was met thanks to the matured molding technique enabling mass pottery and ceramic production in the mid-18th century. Meanwhile, decorative ceramics began to penetrate the life of general populace, being no longer luxury craft objects dedicated to the upper class. In my view, these ceramic decorations mass produced through molding and considered rather kitsch today possess a logic echoing that of pedigree dogs being propagated and certified according to the standard criteria.

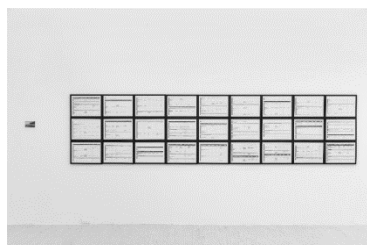
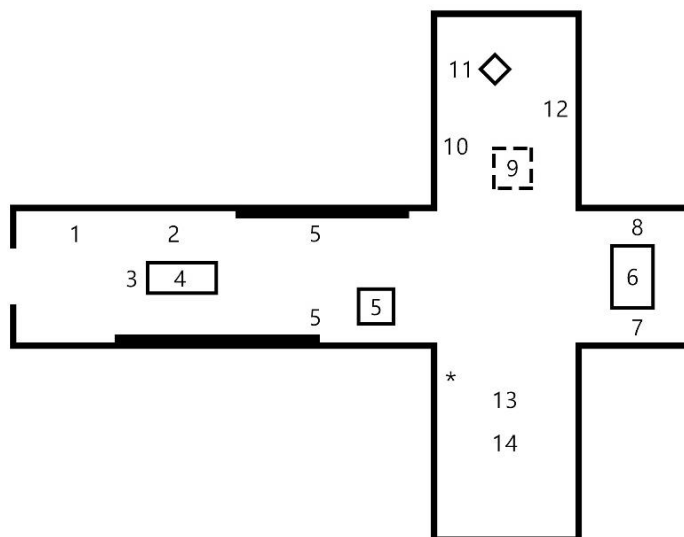
Whether in propagation or reproduction, artificial shaping is involved. It can be assumed that our attitude toward dogs, the kind of animal that is closest to man, is extended from our will to civilization. Dog breeds, human races: there have been several historical moments when dog and national identity came to intersect intentionally or unintentionally. Such examples range from the newly unified Deutsches Reich, Caucasian countries after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Balkan countries after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Spain composed of heterogenous races to Israel established as a country. Empathy toward dog breeding seemed to alleviate the impertinence of conditioning nations with human races.

No Country for Canine (the Chinese title “馴國” literally means “Domestication of nations”) is like a session of ring toss: putting aside the animal that cannot make a voice (dog), artificial object (ceramic) shaped after them and the history of producer (man) in an attempt to land the ring around the tiny peg situated at the intersection of the three.

III. About the artist (210 words)

Wu Chuan-Lun born in Tainan, Taiwan. The ever-going changes, compromises and contradictions informing the relations between nature and civilization, ecology and politics as well as materials and the digital have formed the general background of Wu Chuan-Lun’s art practice. He employs a diverse range of media, such as computer-generated imagery, photography, drawing, found objects and porcelain, to create conceptual and research-based installations. His recent work often uses the process of collecting/gathering as a point of departure to explore the identity and meaning of the collected/gathered objects, from which he gradually unravels the underlying, entangled historical and social context. Wu has won the selected Prize of “Taipei Arts Award” (2007), selected prize of “Kaohsiung Arts Award” (2011) and nominated for the Finalist for Taishin Arts Award (2020). His works have been shown at Taipei Fine Arts Museum, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Gwangju Museum of Art, Rockbund Art Museum, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, and have been featured in the 2014 Taipei Biennial—The Great Acceleration. His work collected by the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taipei Fine Art Museum. In recent years, he has conducted artist residencies with final presentations of the creative results in Seoul, Berlin and Peru. Wu currently lives and works in Berlin, Germany and Tainan, Taiwan. wuchuanlun.com

IV. About the works



1. **Those Officially Called As, Commonly Known As (Or Not Being Called As), Used For (Or Not Used For) Guarding, Herding Or Driving Livestock—Sheep, Goat, Cattle, Reindeer, Alpaca; Registered (Or Not Registered) With The FCI, Only Recognized (Or Not Recognized) By Local Kennel Clubs; Ever-Exist, Rare, Extinct Or Modern-Mixed Pasture Dog Breeds, Their Nationality And Appellation Written In The Language Of The Country, And Their Geographic Origin, Possible Consanguinity And Naming History** | Print | 29.7×42 cm, a set of 27 pieces | 2019

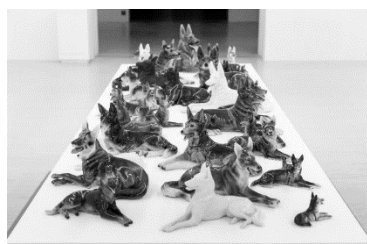


2. **Hair/Glaze** | Pencil on paper | 61.8×48.5 cm, 28.5×21 cm, 31.5×24 cm | 2019



3. **Domestication 001** | Pencil on paper | 29.7×21 cm | 2009

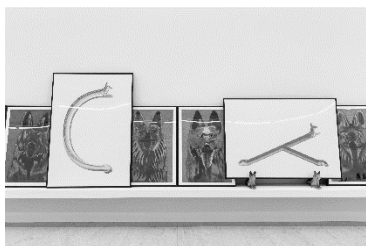
The piece from drawing a series of “Domestication” (2011), the works were originally intended to discuss the interdependence between the internet and the practical world through a series of images of people and animals kissing. “Wolf” happens to be the very first pictures of the series. Like a hidden gem that was buried before I even knew it, from the subject, symbolic, species, and technic, all are foreshadows the development of this exhibition.



4. **When Collecting Becomes Breeding – Europe** | Found European porcelain, document | Installation size | 2018-2019

I have collected German Shepherd porcelain dogs from various European countries. These kitsch decors are usually deemed unfit for more elegant places, but rather represent common people’s imitation of the upper-class culture. During the process of

forming my collection, I found out that most of the European German Shepherd dog statues were in the position of laying down. It is a position that has never been used in Taiwan. The preference perhaps implies certain traditional custom, such as the notion of presenting dogs as relaxed and submissive. On view in this exhibition are German Shepherd porcelain dogs from Germany (West and East Germany), Austria, Poland, Russia, Czech, Hungary, Greece, France and Italy. Though depicting the same motif, they reveal subtle differences in aesthetic view and preference.

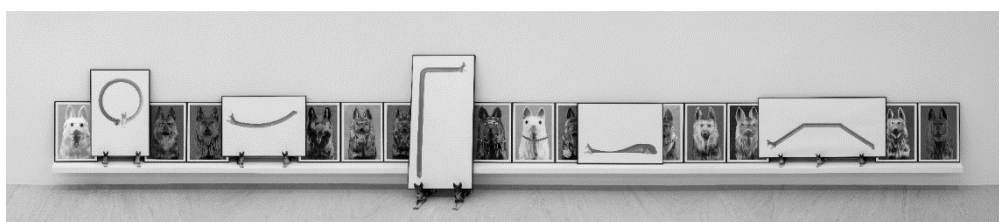


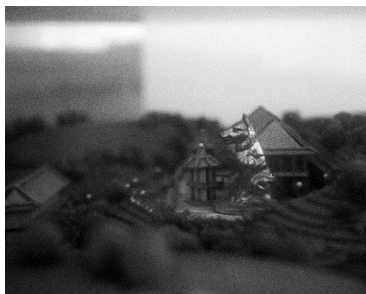
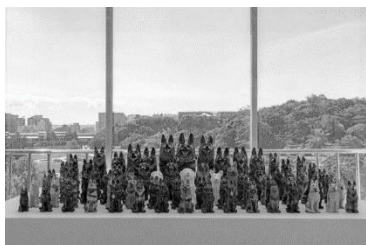
5. Formation Deformation Dogformation | Pencil on paper, inkjet print, found DDR Katzhütte (Hertwig & Co) porcelain, white porcelain | Total length 1980 cm (Pencil on paper 84×59.4 cm, 126×59.4 cm; portraits 59.4×42 cm) | 2018-2019

The work comprises of four media. The first features “portraits” of GSD coin banks from Taiwan. The second is a collection of ceramic ready-mades produced between 1958 to 1990 during the period of East Germany, which somewhat overlaps with the GSD coin banks made in Taiwan. The ceramic company Katzhütte (Hertwig & Co) is located in Thuringia. Katzhütte (Hertwig & Co) underwent two stages in its development. From 1864 to 1958, it used the brand name Porzellanfabrik Hertwig & Co. After the split of East Germany and West Germany in 1958, the ceramic factory in East Germany became nationalized and adopted the name V.E.B. Zierkeramik Katzhütte. After the reunification of East Germany and West Germany in 1990, the company closed all its production lines.

For the third part, the ceramic statues produced by Katzhütte (Hertwig & Co) are used as models for drawings of geometric shaped dogs engaged in obstacle training base on the dogs’ physical forms in overcoming the obstacles. Ten of the obstacles are often seen in common, leisurely “agility competitions,” including Table, Hoop, Bar Jump, Weave Poles, Tunnel, Flat Tunnel, A-Frame, Seesaw, Long Jump and Dog Walk. Two subjects that usually appear in heavier military and police dog training, Wall Climbing and Ladder Climbing, are also added.

In the fourth part, the ceramic dog statues of Katzhütte (Hertwig & Co) are used as models to create porcelain statues of the drawings in the third part. In the first phase, four statues featuring Hoop, A-Frame, Wall Climbing and Weave Poles are produced.

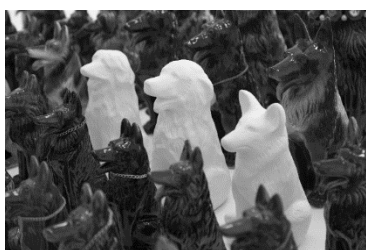




6. When Collecting Becomes Breeding - Taiwan | Found Taiwanese ceramic, inkjet print | Installation size | 2012-2019

From 2012 onward, I have been collecting GSD coin banks made in Yingge, Taiwan, which were frequently used as prizes in the ring toss game. For a period of time, these money boxes could be found in common households during a time when many families became capable of saving more money—these dogs were put by the bedsides, on desks, in cupboards, accompanying their owners with tongues sticking out and a goofy smile; that was until they were inevitably broken to take out the money inside. Once entered countless Taiwanese households, the GSD coin banks has become part of Taiwanese collective memory, making it “a Taiwanese shepherd dog” if you will. Based on their design and production procedure, one can infer that their vertical posture allows maximum efficiency for using kiln space and makes the dogs suitable for ring toss. Nevertheless, why German Shepherds among all dog breeds? In Taiwan, German Shepherds appeared after the beginning of the Japanese rule. Military dogs were brought in when Japan started following Germany’s footsteps of modernizing its military forces. After the Imperial Germany ceded Qingdao to Japan, Japan gained innumerable German Shepherds; and when Japan withdrew from China, many military officers gave their German Shepherds to the local gentry. Throughout the Nationalist Government’s retreat to Taiwan and the period of martial law, German Shepherds were used as police and military dogs and became a symbol of authority, power and class. This is a possible explanation of GSD coin banks’ popularity among people during a time when society gradually became open. Sitting across the German Shepherd porcelain statues from Europe, the diversified looks of the GSD coin-banks from Taiwan exude a peculiar sense of vitality matching that of the dogs from around Europe.

Photos of the stray dog I have taken in – endearingly named Jabu – are shown at the bottom of the plinth. Though a mutt, people have often said that Jabu looks part Shepherd dog. After a while, I simply begin telling people that Jabu is a “Taiwanese Shepherd”. At the other side of the plinth is the photo of model of Temple of 18 kings at Shimen, a temple famous for its worship to dog spirit, allegedly said it indirectly caused the spread of GSD coin banks.



7. Domestication of Nations - Canaan Dog (Bedouin Sheepdog), Georgian Shepherd, Catalan Sheepdog | Pencil on paper, air-dry clay | Drawing 42×59.4 cm; sculpture 24×12×14 cm, 24×13.5×14 cm, 25×15×14.5 cm | 2019

Three dog breeds are respectively associated with the founding history of three countries. The Canaan Dog from Israel is named after the name of the ancient region in the Bible. During the biblical time, the dog breed was common in the region covering today’s Israel, and gradually disappeared after the Jewish people were sent into exile. After 1934, the breed was brought back and used for military purposes in the Israeli guerrilla

organization, Haganah; and when Israel was founded, Canaan Dog became the national dog as well.

The Republic of Georgia, commonly known as Georgia, used to compete with the central authority during the Soviet Union era for the naming rights of “Caucasus.” In the end, the Soviet Union chose large dog breeds from the region of Caucasus to create the Caucasian Shepherd Dog. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Georgian Shepherd Dog was separated from Caucasian Shepherd Dog and slowly gained international recognition.

The Catalan Sheepdog was born from the mountainous region between Spain and France and is considered related to the Pyrenean Mountain Dog. During the Spanish Civil War, Catalan Sheepdogs were largely used in the military, causing a drastic decrease of the breed. Afterwards, it was gradually restored, and became an ethnic symbol in the regions of Catalonia. The breed even inspired the creation of Cobi, the mascot of the Barcelona Olympic Games, which showed a Cubist style.

The postures and style used for the GSD coin banks from Taiwan are used to create the sculptures of these three breeds in this series. Reflecting Taiwan’s situation with the individual history of the dog breeds, the series serves as an encouraging connection between porcelains, dog breeds and nations.



8. **Little Crack** | Pencil on paper | 30.5×26.8 cm | 2019



9. **B_EEDS, N_TION, ETHNI_, R_GION** | Brass | Installation size, a set of 20 pieces | 2019

This is an unfinished scrabble game. The missing letters, scattered in different gallery rooms, are cast into bronze sculptures based on letters made with sheepskin dog treats. Parts of their surface are polished to look exquisite and smooth while the rest retains a coarse texture from the moment of removing the cast. Like sintered organs, their structure awaits further exploration.



10-11. Whitest White | Pencil on paper, found Allach porcelain Nr.76, vintage Japanese magazine, writing, gold light | Installation size | 2019

A magazine cover the story of a parade celebrating the anniversary of the Anti-Comintern Pact between Axis power in Japan. Four drawings of four dog breeds derived from the German Shepherd have been categorized as different breeds due to political and military reasons (10.) And one white porcelain dog made in concentration camp (11.) These three objects/files can be seen as a subtopic of the color “White”, the symbolism of it, and the attitude different from advocate, exclude and misgiving.



10. Purebreds - GSD, (DDR)GSD, VEO, WSSD | Pencil on paper | 84.1×59.4 cm, a set of 4 pieces | 2017

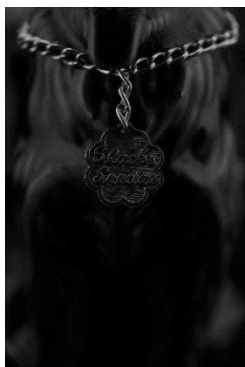
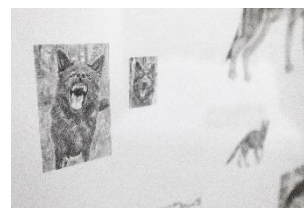
Four dog breeds derived from the German Shepherd have been categorized as different breeds due to political and military reasons. From left to right are German Shepherd, DDR German Shepherd, East European Shepherd and White Swiss Shepherd.

During the Cold War, because of the disparities between the development in West Germany and East Germany as well as the different purposes for breeding the dogs, differences in the physicality and temperament of German Shepherd dogs from the two halves of the country gradually became visible. Years after the reunification, the term “DDR German Shepherd” has disappeared in official references; however, some people still uphold the idea that DDR German Shepherds have a purer and better lineage due to the historical isolation of East Germany and its standard for breeding working dogs, which resulted in less physical problems than those bred in West Germany. East European Shepherd is a breed created in the region of Belarus during the Cold War. The breed is based on German Shepherd dogs and mixed with other dog breeds (even wolves) from Russia to enhance its adaptability to the Eastern European environment. In terms of its appearance, East European Shepherd looks very close to German Shepherd. During the Cold War, they were used for border protection. Except for their fur colors, White Swiss Shepherd and German Shepherd basically look very much alike. The genes of white fur have always existed in the German Shepherd family. It is said that the father of the first German Shepherd dog was white. However, after 1933 (when the Nazis officially assumed power), white German Shepherds were ruled out due to the concern that they might carry albino genes. In truth, they were excluded because the country was expanding its military powers and the breed’s white fur rendered it highly noticeable in battlefield. The exclusion of White German Shepherd from the German Shepherd family coincided with Germany’s history of eugenic ideology and its emergence as a military state at the time. It was only after several years that the breeding of White German Shepherds was re-standardized due to the efforts of American and Swiss breeders, and hence the country name in the name of the breed.



11. Allach Nr.76 | Found Allach porcelain, writing, gold light | Installation size | 2019

A porcelain factory “Porzellan Manufaktur Allach (1936 - 1945)” once inside Dachau Concentration Camp, near Munich, back to Nazi’s time. Skilled Jewish potters make porcelain exclusively for Nazi’ authorities. Allach represent the aesthetic level and national pride of the Reich. They proudly emphasized that they used clay from the Germany land to make crystal clear porcelain that matched the Aryan elite. The Nazi's obsession with white porcelain link to their pride in race white, which now a taboo. However, at the same time, they disqualified white GSD for war reasons and fear of albinism. Writing part see “VI. Allach Nr.76”



12. Slacks Special, NO IRONING CHINA, NO IRONING ROC | inkjet print | 148×104 cm, a set of 3 pieces | 2019

Some of the coin banks from Taiwan came with gold medals on the dogs’ necks. However, the words on the medals were textile terms irrelevant to dogs or ceramics. Therefore, it is possible that the gold medals with English words, such as “Slacks Special” “No Ironing,” etc., were added to make the coin banks look like imported goods. This baffling mistake also reminds one of Taiwan’s history as a major textile exporter nicknamed “a textile kingdom” with textile factories found all over the island. The backs of these gold medals were written with the origin was either “China” or “R.O.C.”. According to some senior vendors, the difference resulted from Taiwan’s withdrawal from the United Nations in 1971—before the withdrawal, people used China, and afterwards, the use of R.O.C. became inevitable.



13. Grafrath: A Schäferhund Story | Single channel HD | 8 mins | 2018

I visited Grafrath, the breeding ground of the first German shepherd dog several times. During the promenades, I found geological traces of a kettle hole left from the Quaternary Ice Age. Coincidentally, the geological traces were named "Toteisloch Wolfsgrube" (Wolf pit of dead ice hole) for they were once used as natural traps for wolves. The Quaternary Ice Age coincided with the time when some scientists speculated that domestic dogs were domesticated from wolves. I was lucky to encounter the ex-president of local Society for the German Shepherd Dog of the past. However, the ex-president finally told me that in fact, it had been a while that no one in Grafrath raised shepherd dogs...

https://youtu.be/PtKg3AX-6_Y



14. A Craftwork Canine | Single channel HD | 9 mins | 2019

Germany as well as Taiwan's German Shepherd money boxes, through which the lurking ideologies are exposed. The film begins with an agility competition taken place in Dortmund, Germany to indicate, the formation of a sport that features a man - dog partnership. Then, a visit to Dachau Concentration Camp ensues to reveal the historical past of the Allach porcelain. Finally, it shifts to "porcelain dog hunts" in flea markets in Berlin and Taiwan (Tainan, Kaohsiung, Taipei), introducing the aesthetic pleasure incurred by appreciating porcelains as well as the evolving history of the German Shepherds. <https://youtu.be/eVq5LqFMT7M>

V. Blondi

Blondi, Hitler's female German Shepherd Dog. Blondi was mostly showed accompanying Hitler in propaganda. To highlight the ordinary side of Hitler. Walter Frentz, the cameraman for Leni Riefenstahl took this only solo portrait of her. Courtesy of Hanns-Peter Frentz.



VI. ALLACH NR.76

I visited Munich several times last year. Near the Viktualienmarkt, there was an alley with antique shops and full of European nostalgic atmosphere. I incidentally glanced at a closed antique shop in whose depth there was a gigantic and tall porcelain German shepherd. Although hidden behind a window, the porcelain German shepherd still appeared particularly refined and animated, obviously nobler than the ones I had seen. It was after two more times of visiting the shop in vain that I finally got to meet the shop owner.

The small antique shop was run by an old couple in their seventies or eighties. I asked the grandfather about the big white German shepherd. Somewhat to my surprise, the grandfather answered me in English fluently. The porcelain dog turned out to be a very particular work produced in a porcelain factory named Allach. Since it used to be a porcelain factory run by the Nazis, it no longer exists today. Back in 1936, it was taken over by Heinrich Himmler, one of the Nazi leaders, who demanded that Allach products exemplify Aryan aesthetics and even insisted on producing Germany porcelain with soil from the country. Allach possessed a classical and elegant taste while its techniques were ahead of the times. The most representative motif of Allach porcelain was allegedly horse for its slender limbs. Differing from average porcelain factories which often had to thicken horse legs or else relied on some decorations as support, Allach was among the few factories capable of expressing fine horses galloping with their legs alone. Such Allach porcelain was manufactured primarily for senior Nazi officials or as gifts to honorable guests in addition to a limited quantity for external sale. What stroke me speechless was the fact that Allach porcelain factory manufacturing these perfectly crafted works of elegant taste turned out to be a locus for concentration camp labor with its factory located in Nazi's first concentration camp in Dachau near Munich. Therefore, artists who made Allach porcelain were also victims under the tyranny.

Porcelain German shepherds produced by Allach were divided into four categories determined by large or small sizes and being pure white or colored. The big white German shepherd I came upon was among the largest porcelain pieces by Allach. According to documentation, 143 such dogs were produced at that time. Yet how many were left after the turmoil of war was hard to validate for all the unsold products and archetypes were destroyed after the Nazis were defeated in order to obliterate evidence. In the period of transitional justice afterwards, sold Allach porcelain pieces became objects that many hurried to discard due to their involvement in this dark history. At present, most Allach porcelain collectables are probably to be found outside of Germany. The grandfather said his prominent customers came from Russia. In addition, many collectors of Allach were in the U.S. Yet it was Russian collectors who were the most fascinated with Allach porcelain; they even published the most complete Allach catalogues currently available on the market.

Out of curiosity, I asked the grandfather why this big white German shepherd was called Blondi and whether if it was related to Hitler's German shepherd. His answer was "yes". Such frankness and dark marketing approach made me smile ironically. I asked him how much the dog cost and the price was as astonishing as its history. After I left the small shop, I tried to look on the internet for less expensive big white German shepherds made by Allach. With friends' help, we found some items on sale online which were finally given up because of their prices. The online sellers were definite about the rarity of their items and incidentally all agreed that many Russian buyers were interested.

I returned to the small shop in Munich a year later. The grandfather said he remembered me; I think this was probably because there were rarely Taiwanese people talking about the porcelain dog with him for such a long time. After two more visits, he finally offered a price acceptable for me. At last, I asked the grandfather how long this dog had stayed in this shop before it met me, its new master.

35 years.

