

College of Foreign Languages and Literatures, FJCU

## Transition and Transformation: Explorations in Language, Literature, Culture, and Translation

輔仁大學外語學院 2024 跨文化口究國際學術口討會：

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Paper Abstract (English)

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Title of the paper : Transforming Ocean Island: Rethinking Pacific Connections			
Fields of specialization : If this query refers to my personal fields of research specialization, I would list them as: Asian American studies, Asian Canadian studies, postcolonial studies, and transpacific studies. I hope I have understood this correctly! If you need more details, or if I have misunderstood this request, please let me know.			
摘要：英文 250 或中文 500 字以內 Abstract : fewer than 250 words in English or 500 words in Chinese			
<p>This paper engages with the conference theme of “transition and transformation” by scrutinizing the configuration of English studies, with a focus on recent developments such as Taiwan’s “Bilingual 2030” policy. Amidst these ongoing developments, what would a “decolonial option” (Chang 2023) look like? In this paper, I contend that rethinking Pacific connections can offer valuable insights. I will accordingly review key scholarship on decolonization and the Pacific (Banivanua Mar 2016), a potent space of alternative imaginations where, as Sasha Davis observes, “countercurrents are gathering.” The rest of my paper will turn to the topic of transforming Ocean Island, also known as Banaba in what is now the Republic of Kiribati in the central Pacific, a postcolonial site rarely considered in English studies. My focus will be on the extraordinary work of the Teaiwa sisters, Teresia Teaiwa and Katerina Teaiwa, and their multifaceted depictions of Ocean Island / Banaba after the British Phosphate Commission severely damaged the island through mining which displaced Banabans from their homes. The work of the Teaiwa sisters—including poetry, critical prose, and an evolving museum exhibit called Project Banaba, with its latest iteration exhibited in Honolulu in 2023-2024—can help illuminate how tracking Ocean Island’s “fragmented and dispersed stories, peoples, and landscapes . . . throws up challenges to conventional history and literacy” (Katerina Teaiwa 2015). An attentive reading of Ocean Island and its radical transformation, I suggest, can enable us to better understand imperial collisions, environmental devastation, and possibilities of repair. (246 words)</p>			