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Terra Nullius or: How to be a Nationalist

James T. Hong

2016, single-channel video installation, color, 79 min., English, Japanese, Mandarin, Hokkien, Cantonese. **Producer** James T. Hong, Wang Paizhang. **Production companies** Zukunftsmusik (Taipei, Taiwan), Public Television Service (Taipei, Taiwan). **Director of photography, sound** James T. Hong, Herman Wang, Yin-Ju Chen, Freya Chou. **Editor** James T. Hong. **European sales** Zukunfts-musik. **World sales** Taiwan Public Television. **With** Satoru Mizushima, Ukeru Magosaki, Naka Zensho, Yoshitaka Nakayama, Bull Kin Shing Tsang, Captain Luo, Yunan Chen, Yiqiang Li, Xiyao Wu, Dingwei Huang.

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"I'm an American by birth, and a Taiwanese and a Chinese by blood. This blood is ideological. For me, and for the long dead philosopher Bishop Berkeley, to be is to be perceived." James T. Hong

Following three groups of nationalists from China, Taiwan, and Japan, *Terra Nullius or: How to be a Nationalist* focuses on the geopolitical issues surrounding the disputed islands known in Japanese as "Senkaku," in Chinese as "Diaoyutai" or "Diaoyudao," and in English as the "Pinnacle Islands," and the filmmaker's attempts to set foot upon them. Claimed by Japan, China, and Taiwan, these minor, remote, and uninhabited islands, only approximately 7 square kilometers in size, are located roughly 170 kilometers northeast of Taiwan, 330 kilometers east of China, and 170 kilometers northwest of the westernmost tip of the Japanese Ryukyu Islands.

After WWII, the islands were administered by the US government as part of its occupation of Okinawa. Currently the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are controlled by Japan, which received administration rights in 1971 from the United States.

James T. Hong, born in 1970 in Minnesota, USA, is a filmmaker and artist based in Taiwan. He studied philosophy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and film & television production at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. In 1997 he founded the production company Zukunftsmusik, “a nomadic production entity.” Hong has been producing films and videos for nearly twenty years. He has produced works about Heidegger, Spinoza, Japanese biological warfare, and racism. His current research focuses on nationalism and disputed territories in East Asia.

Films

1998: *Condor: A Film from California* (7 min.). 1999: *Decade Null* (1 min.), *Behold the Asian: How One Becomes What One Is* (15 min.). 2003: *The Spear of Destiny: A Film for Everyone and No One*. 2004: *Taipei 101: A Travelogue of Symptoms* (23 min.). 2005: *The Form of the Good* (4 min.), *Total Mobilization* (co-directed by Yin-Ju Chen, 8 min.). 2006: *Suprematist Kapital* (co-directed by Yin-Ju Chen, 5 min.), *The Coldest War – Part 1* (7 min.), *Die Entnazifizierung des MH* (18 min.). 2007: *731: Two Versions of Hell* (27 min.), *A Portrait of Sino-American Friendship* (4 min.), *This Shall Be A Sign* (32 min.). 2009: *Dogs of Straw* (co-directed by Yin-Ju Chen, 11 min.). 2010: *Surveillance of a Camp in Spring* (7 min.), *Submission to a Small World* (19 min.), *Lessons of the Blood* (106 min.). 2011: *End Transmission* (co-directed by Yin-Ju Chen, 16 min.), *The Duck of Nature/ The Duck of God*. 2012: *The Turner Film Diaries* (26 min.), *Cutaways of Jiang Chun Gen – Forward and Back Again* (Forum Expanded, 10 min.), *Apologies* (Forum Expanded, video installation, 56 min.). 2015: *Terra Nullius or: How to be a Nationalist*.