“The Sway Mo’ Blues”

by Kirinputra

By now we know. The secret is out. The “Chinese character” is not as different as 人 thought it was. We know sinographs don’t transcend the plane of sound — not quite like math symbols, anyway, or the man-woman bathroom icons, or stoplights.

How deep is the entanglement, though, between sinographs and sound? In contemplation of this, I present a fun-sized platter of puns and related matter from a seaborne sliver of the Sinosphere thought by some to be a living showcase of peak sinography: Formosa.

In particular, I want to spotlight a subconscious reading mechanism that guts the good of sinography and bends it to shady ends.

Let’s start with Sioumazang Yakiniku, Japanese barbeque chain. Sinographically, the name is 燒肉衆. The Mandarin reading, or name, is straightforward: *Shāoròuzhòng*. The Taioanese name is more or less undefined, despite the possibilities — for reasons that should be clear by the time we get to the other side of this.

In a straight cosmopolitan reading — if you will — we know 燒肉 is YAKINIKU, so 燒肉衆 means something like YAKINIKU CROWD, THE.

There's more, of course. YAKINIKU CROWD makes literal sense, but it's not much to hang a brand on. What drives 燒肉衆 is pun power. The pun unlocks if you take this mental path:

First, decode 燒肉衆 into the sound-sequence *shāoròuzhòng*. This is just the respective Mandarin readings of the three graphs. YAKINIKU CROWD, THE may cross your mind too at this point. Don't get caught up in it.

Next, *shāoròuzhòng* triggers *shāoròuzòng*; if not, you won't get the pun. What is *shāoròuzòng*? We'll get back to this in a moment.

NOTE. Whether *shāoròuzhòng* sounds just like *shāoròuzòng* or not is irrelevant. Close enough is enough anyway.

Third, *shāoròuzòng* triggers Taioanese `sio bah-chàng` (燒肉粽), a phrase meaning HOT MACHANG (to a Pinoy), or HOT BAK CHANG (via Lion City).

Alright. What's hot carnal sticky rice wraps got to do with barbeque?

Almost nothing. Bear with me. The key is *shāoròuzhòng* triggering *shāoròuzòng*, a non-word. This happens if you have a working knowledge of Taioanese — you don't need to be fluent — and an almost carnal knowledge of Mandarin.

You can't just *know* Mandarin. You have to be intimate with it in a specific way: Any time you see a sinograph, you hear the Mandarin reading for it in your head right away, as an involuntary reflex.

`Sio bah-chàng` in sinographs is 燒肉粽, as any kanji-savvy Taioanese speaker would know. As a Mandarin-reflexive bilingual, though, due to your neural training, any time you see (the graphs) 燒肉粽, "*Shāoròuzòng!*" went the voice in your head — even, say, in the context of reading a mixed-script kanji-romaji Taioanese text aloud.

And any time you write `sio bah-chàng` sinographically — that's 燒肉粽 — "*Shāoròuzòng!*" went the voice in your head, before you could even get the 火 down.

At a young age, your mind will have saved this arguable non-phrase *shāoròuzòng* as an index for the graphs 燒肉粽, and possibly for `sio bah-chàng` as well. So the first time you ride past a barbeque joint named 燒肉衆 and "*Shāoròuzhòng!*" went the voice in your head, "A-ha! *Shāoròuzòng!*" replied the voice from the archive in your head.

Realise, I couldn't have made this stuff up if I wanted. It ain't in *my* head. It's in many heads. Hence "Sioumazang", English name of the barbeque chain — a freehand transcription of `sio bah-chàng`.

Allow me to step back and stress something that may or may not be obvious to every reader: Taioanese *can* be — and always has been — decoded and encoded versus sinographs without the mental presence or involvement of Mandarin readings.

With straightforward sinographic reading and writing, each graph is assigned to a word-element, or multiple (often related) word-elements. Readers and writers map back and forth, guided by context. Evidently, though, that is not how a critical mass of Taioanese speakers — probably a stiff majority under 65, or even 75 — encode and decode Taioanese versus sinographs, even though they read *Mandarin* that way.

Rather, they subconsciously harness the Mandarin shadow reflex by converting between Taioanese *and the Mandarin shadow readings* rather than directly between Taioanese and sinographs. The Mandarin reading reflex itself closes the gap between the shadow readings and the sinographs, at the speed of electric current. But read on.

Pretty Wife Travel Service is a more spectacular instance of the theme. What could explain this inscrutable high-on-life East Asian weirdness?

The seed is the lighthearted Taioanese phrase `súi bó͘`, meaning PRETTY WIFE. This suggests an affectionate married boss guy with a healthy sense of humor — or maybe a devastating married boss lady. Pretty Wife Travel Service is not alone. A shop named `Súi Bó͘` in Taipei sells, of all things, squid `bí-hún` (米粉; Philippine *bihon*).

`Súi bó͘` is 水某 in the sinographic tradition, without fail; both graphs are sound-borrowings. Neither word has a confirmed Sinitic root, although men of letters — some taking no other interest in the matter — have been trying to nail them to Sinitic roots for about a dozen decades.

So what's with the jellyfish?

Once again, there's a lightning pun at play between a Mandarin shadow reading and a sound-alike Mandarin word. For a certain demographic, 水某 kicks up the reflexive Mandarin non-word *shǔimǒu*, which triggers *shǔimǔ*: 水母 (JELLYFISH).

This pun is advanced. The graphs 水某 don't show anywhere. Also, JELLYFISH and the artwork come across as a (quirky) destination in themselves, so the viewer might not suspect there's more to it. Only "Pretty Wife" — in English, no less — is there to evoke `súi bó͘` and complete the circuit.

As a shorthand, then, I'll name this entire phenomenon Sway Mo' in honor of *shǔimǒu*, the intrepid unsung pivot of this low-key maneuver.

There is another path from (the graphs) 水母 to PRETTY WIFE. The logic of it is more involved for us, but it may be more accessible for non-native speakers of Taioanese (including non-native heritage speakers), and native speakers with a strong Mandarin orientation. The way it works is that 水母 triggers the reflexive Mandarin reading *shǔimǔ* while "Pretty Wife" evokes `súi bó͘`; the mind then recognises the two as a match *in a subconscious system of sound-to-sound conversion between Taioanese etyma and Mandarin shadow readings*. (More on that later.)

NOTE. The graphs 水母 read `chúi-bú` or `chúi-bó` in Taioanese under a straight and intuitive reading, meaning JELLYFISH. This seems to be a word less common; `thē` 蛇 and `hái-thē` 海蛇 are common words for JELLYFISH.

NOTE. Confused observers who might be well-versed in more prestigious matters may contend that since sinographic representation for Taioanese is haphazard anyway, 水母 maps directly to `súi bó͘`; but this point (if seriously made) simply reaffirms the subconscious nature of Sway Mo': A straight Taioanese reading of 水母 yields `chúi-bú` (`chúi-bó`) — nothing doing — while a Sway Mo' reading must start, subconsciously, with the reflexive *shǔimǔ*. Note that while 水 has a `súi` reading, it would never be paired with a `bó` or `bú` reading for 母; meanwhile, 母 does have a `súi`-compatible `bió` reading, and an equivalent (to `bió`) `bó͘` reading that seems to be lost among middle-aged and younger 人. In the real world, 水母 does not decode as `súi bó͘`, and `súi bó͘` does not encode as 水母. If nothing else, 人 don't go there

because 母 is MOTHER (both in Taioanese and in a straight cosmopolitan reading) while bó͘ is WIFE. This is not at all to question whether the Pretty Wife pun is in good taste. The point is that the pun is not based on 水母 mapping to súi bó͘ in one shot. It doesn't.

I don't feel good about giving the Mandarin romanisation for 鹽青相談所 (Mand. *Yánqīng Xiāngtánsuǒ*) — even if only for the benefit of sinographically-challenged readers — but 鹽青相談所 definitely looks like it's meant to be processed in Mandarin, not Taioanese.

This place looks like a social, entrepreneurial, and employment matchmaking service. The sign indicates a Taioanese-minded Formosan consciousness as well as a reflexive, involuntary dependence on Mandarin....

鹽青 (*Yánqīng*) means YOUTH OF Iâm-tiâⁿ. Iâm-tiâⁿ 塭埕 is a neighborhood, one of the earliest urban neighborhoods of Takao (Takow, 打狗). The name means SALTYARDS. That is what the place shows up as on premodern maps. As a small

settlement, Iâm-tiâⁿ goes back centuries; as an urban district, it took form under Japanese rule, serving as city center for most of the 20th century. Today, along with other early-urban neighborhoods in South Formosa, Iâm-tiâⁿ is more or less at the fore of what could broadly and vaguely be called the Formosa Movement. But no neighborhood is Sway Mo'-immune.

On the left we see the line Bāng lí khan-sêng (望汝牽成, no typo): PLEASE TAKE US UNDER YOUR WING. We also see the sinographs 望你牽埕, which would read *Bāng lí khan tiâⁿ: PLEASE TAKE THE YARD BY THE HAND. Huh?

Alternatively, with Mandarin readings, 望你牽埕 yields *Wàng nǐ qiān chéng*, which — for a critical mass of Taioanese speakers under 65 — neatly evokes Bāng lí khan-sêng (望汝牽成, 望你牽成) as well as district name Iâm-tiâⁿ, at the same time.

The seed, then, is khan-sêng, glossed by Douglas as TO ASSIST, AS IN BUSINESS, TILL HE CAN GET ON WELL HIMSELF. In sinographs, khan-sêng is 牽成. *"Qiānchéng!"* chimed the reflex, if you're part of that critical mass.

Note that 牽成 (* *qiānchéng*) is not a word in Mandarin. It's not even a word in regional Mandarin, the way 燒肉粽 (*shāoròuzòng*) arguably is.

Note, too, that 埕 is a vernacular Hoklo "Nôm" graph, not a cosmopolitan sinograph. It had no Mandarin reading traditionally, but *chéng* has been assigned to it for administrative convenience and so on.

The pun, on the other hand, is between the Mandarin reading of 成 (*chéng*) and the Mandarin reading of 埕 (*chéng*). The critical mass gets hit with that same *chéng* sound any time they encode or decode either khan-sêng 牽成 or Iâm-tiâⁿ 塩埕 versus sinographs.

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The heart of Sway Mo' is sound-to-sound conversion, but straight translation is still the workhorse, probably. Straight *reading* is in the mix too for all Taioanese speakers. None of the above are needed with "Mars graphs", called 火星字

(*Huǒxīngzì*) in Mandarin, where a Taioanese syllable is written using a sinograph *sound-borrowed via its Mandarin reading*.

Mars graphs get a lot of attention. We'll see one pretty soon. For an example of how straight reading, straight translation, and sound-to-sound conversion seamlessly work together, though, take this sentence. (Asterisk because it might be in a grey area grammatically; fixing it would clutter the example.)

*評山甘有在厝？

(*Phêng-san kám ū tī chhù? = Phêng-san [QUESTION MARKER] HAS AT HOME? = IS Phêng-san HOME?)

For the Mandarin-reflexive, the involuntary readings kick in instantly for at least the first five graphs: *Píngshān gān yǒu zài*. The last graph, 厝, is super-common in Taioanese but relatively uncommon in Mandarin; the reader is likely to decode it straight to chhù, drowning out or blocking the shadow reading.

Partly thanks to 厝, the reader instantly recognises the sentence as Taioanese. Right away, *Píngshān gān yǒu zài* is run through the internal Mandarin-Taioanese dictionary; *yǒu* translates to ū, and *zài* to tī.

Last, *Píngshān* and *gān* go through sound-to-sound conversion *with the syllable as the basic unit, based on the reader's impressions of correspondences between Mandarin and Taioanese*. Since 平 reads *píng* in Mandarin and pêng in Taioanese, the Mandarin-reflexive will tend to convert *Píngshān* to *Pêng-san. Mandarin *s(h)ān* routinely maps to both san and sam; if the reader is fluent in Taioanese, 山 is a "low-hanging graph" and straight reading seems to kick in assistively, yielding san. Likewise, *gān* maps to both kan and kam. Straight reading may kick in for some older readers; a younger reader might solve by context.

We get *Pêng-san kám ū tī chhù? Some may arrive at *Pêng-san kán ū tī chhù (and get made fun of by their friends), reflecting not (exactly) the reading process but rather their knowledge of Taioanese. Either way, despite the moving

parts, these steps take next to no time for a fluent Taioanese speaker used to speaking the language in their weekly life.

There is both *depth* and *collectivity* to the sound-to-sound conversion: 評 is decoded as unaspirated *pêng based on frequency-based impressions, ignoring the aspiration on the Mandarin reading (*píng*) itself. And while the word phoe-phêng 批評, not often mispronounced, is a low-hanging source of the correct, aspirated phêng reading, Mandarin-reflexive readers will tend to pass it up because others do; after all, there is no default assumption that each graph only has one reading in Taioanese.

And make no mistake, straight reading still takes place, at least sporadically, for all (sinograph-savvy) 人 with a working knowledge of Taioanese. It's just atrophied, partly because of the Sway Mo' shortcut — or short *circuit*. Sixty years ago, the first users of the short circuit would've had impressive straight-reading skills — by today's standards.

A critical mass of Taioanese speakers today can only read Taioanese via Sway Mo', but much of the language does not lend itself to Sway Mo' reading. Take even just this sentence:

*評山甘有治厝？

(*Phêng-san kám ū tī chhù? = Phêng-san [QUESTION MARKER] HAS AT HOME? = IS Phêng-san HOME?)

This is the same sentence, but sound-borrowed 治 instead of meaning-borrowed 在 is used for tī. For modern straight-readers who speak a mainstream dialect, 治 for tī is more reader-friendly than 在. A Sway Mo' reader will be thrown off for at least a few seconds, though, because they decoded 治 to *zhì* and may dead-end there. Many (esp. older) readers will be able to backtrack and straight-read 治, or latch on to chèng-tī 政治 or tī-liâu 治療 as a low-hanging source, but the effort is taxing.

Also, the name of the guy was Phêng-san, not *Pêng-san. There's pretty much no way to get this across where Sway Mo' is involved. Even if somebody else corrects

them, it's awfully hard for Sway Mo' readers to remember that 評 is *phêng*, not **pêng*. There's no place in their setup for this bit of information.

Sway Mo' is a grim ninja — the Stealthy Reaper.

An overlapping matter is the so-called standardisation of sinographic Taioanese in Confucian circles. A state-approved set of graphs for Hokkien-Taioanese (officially undifferentiated) was among the early fruits of a democratised Nationalist China. Despite the language of STANDARDISATION — implying a streamlining of customary usage — the Republic of China state graphs tend to disregard customary usages (no matter how uniform) that don't mesh with *Mandarin* sinography, including meaning-borrowings that happen to not mesh with Sway Mo' reading. Consistency *with Mandarin* — not internal consistency — was evidently the secular objective. (The non-secular objective, often in conflict with the secular, involved "discovering" and displaying the canonical Middle China pedigree of as many Taioanese words as possible — or, failing that, to at least fabricate the appearance of a Middle China pedigree.)

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At this point the reader should have some sympathy for the claim that sinographs don't and won't work for Taioanese. Most readers under 65 are Sway Mo' readers, while much of the language as naturally spoken defies Sway Mo' reading in that it can't be written in a form that's Sway Mo'-readable.

And while some 人 learning Mandarin as adults might give months of their life in exchange for the reflexive, involuntary shadow readings that power the Sway Mo', if we contemplate the perspective of the colonised Formosan, it becomes clear why excess bitterness is channeled towards "sinographs" and Classical Chinese instead of towards Mandarin, Chinese nationalism, or the many facets of Chinese-nationalist (Neo-Chinese) modernity … for the *involuntary* Mandarin reading reflex, embedded in childhood, is the most intimate, most violating, most pervading aspect of Nationalist Chinese rule.

NOTE. I believe you can dial back the reflexive Mandarin shadow readings over time, by training your reading reflexes in another language. The experience of Formosans who get good at Japanese suggests this is a matter of time. Then again, there may be more of a psycho-feudal mind-block with Taioanese or Hakka than with Japanese.

All this said, the idea of trying to *replace* sinographic Taioanese with romagraphic Taioanese seems ill-considered. Sinographs are part of the Taioanese-speaking (and Hakka-speaking) cultural inheritance, just as they're part of the Japanese-speaking cultural inheritance; and, politically, it's clear that romagraphs have no traction in cultural spheres where the sinograph has traditionally been prominent. Wherever sinographic Taioanese — or sinography in Taioanese — lapses, (sinographic) Mandarin rushes into the vacuum.

By all means, though, romagraphic Taioanese should be learned, taught, *used*, and eventually subsidised as needed. A Formosan nation-state should enable Taioanese speakers to go from cradle to grave without needing to learn sinographs, at least as far as public-sector activities are concerned. But Taioanese- and Hakka-based sinography are natural components of Formosan nation-building too. And it would be suicidal to discard or disregard them in a time like ours.

What are we waiting for, then? For one thing, Taioanese- and Hakka-based sinography can in theory get by without any state support, as seen in Qing times — but not if the state makes 人 learn sinographs in some other language.

There should be no need to ban Mandarin-based education. It just has to be turned over to the private sector, *à la* Japanese or Korean schooling. Public schools would teach in Taioanese and Hakka, and local Austronesian languages where viable.

To be sure, this won't happen under Chinese Taipei. And whether Taioanese- and Hakka-based sinography — and Taioanese and Hakka — will outlive Neo-Chinese rule is going to depend on private endeavor for the time being, from the institutional right down to the most individual and most private: Grown minds training themselves to react Taioanese-first or Hakka-first to sinographs.

I point this out without judgment: Obligatory Mandarin-based schooling, regardless of ideology, is at odds with the survival of Taioanese and Hakka, as well as with the vision of perennial Formosan democracy. Tax-funded “revitalisation” initiatives don’t change this. A (selectively) liberal social environment doesn’t change this.

Let’s close with more scenes from the gallery, just to keep things real.

This sign marks the border of an administrative subdistrict (里 *lǐ*), in the Republic of China overlay. The name would be `Soāiⁿ-á lí` in romanised Taioanese.

Soāiⁿ-á is MANGO, 檨仔 in sinographs; 子 is a bureaucratic alternate form of 仔, vintage circa 1920. 檨 is another vernacular "Hoklo Nôm" graph. (Vietnamese *xoài* 𣏌 for MANGO — note the Nôm — appears to be cognate to soāiⁿ-.)

NOTE. To understand the construction of 檨, note the soān- form of MANGO heard in some dialects of Hokkien, and the soān reading of 羨 (羨).

Unlike 埕, though, 檨 doesn't have a de facto Mandarin reading. Rather, 檨仔 *forces straight reading* (sinographs → Taioanese); if someone is reading aloud in Mandarin, (the graphs) 檨仔 – not uncommon in commerce, such as on the menu at tea counters — *force a switch to Taioanese*....

檨 is an emphatically No Mandarin graph! The Mandarin reading annotated on the sign is strange and practically spurious. Anybody ever try stepping off the train at Tiô-chiu 潮州 ("Teochew") and asking a *taxista* for *Shēzilǐ* (ㄕㄜ = *shē*)?

Let us know how it went.

However bizarre, there are many other signs like this one, mostly commercial, rarely bureaucratic. They tell us a lot about the local sinographic psychology. This one is among the less interesting that I've found, but — along with the next — it's one of the few I've been able to dig up on the hard drive.

Chiah Kám-sim 蔗甘心 is a tea chain. Taioanese chiah kám-sim — HOW SWEET, HOW CONSIDERATE! — is the seed. 蔗 (SUGARCANE) in Taioanese trim (chià) is perfectly homophonic in this spot. Meanwhile, the graphs 甘心 (Mand. *gānxīn*) are often used as 可愛い (*kawaii*) Mars graphs for Taioanese kám-sim (感心). Martian pedigree aside, 甘 (SWEET) in its Taioanese reading (kam) is also homophonic-but-for-tone for kám-, so 蔗甘心 is arguably pure Taioanese wordplay. You certainly don't need Mandarin to get this one.

But the front office (Instagram @zheganxin_official) feels compelled to annotate the sinographs with *Mandarin* readings in their graphic designs.

The (subconscious) idea appears to be that the sinographs are central, and, while sinographs may have Taioanese readings, these are flimsy, flaky, shaky, fake.... The true reading of a graph — even right in the act of powering a pun in Taioanese — is its Mandarin reading.

Chiàⁿ Bī Tin 正味珍 is a mullet roe (o͘-hî chí 烏魚子) shop in Iâm-tiâⁿ. They went to the *rare* trouble of putting their romanised Taioanese name on their sign, yet their *English* name — mostly blocked in this view — is “Cheng Wei Chen Mullet Roe Shop”, via Mandarin (*Zhèngwèizhēn*).

Why not “Chiàⁿ Bī Tin Mullet Roe Shop” or similar? Again, the (subconscious) idea appears to be that the Taioanese name is peripheral or ephemeral, not robust enough to support something as substantial as translation to English. The sinographs — not the Mandarin name per se — are central, but the genuine readings of the graphs — their real avatars in the realm of sound — are their Mandarin readings.

This is an Indonesian *martabak* shop near the train station in Takao.

There's nothing remarkable about this sign, except that a Taioanese-speaking A-Liông 阿龍 would've romanised the name as "Ah-Lung" or similar (via Mand. *Ālóng*), along the lines of "Cheng Wei Chen".

Why not "A Liong"? We've heard excuses, none sound. There's nothing to it. Indonesian Liong shows us how.

ASEAN and Hongkonger names and signs show us — disciples of the comparative method — that there is nothing timeless or ancestral or inevitable about the idea that only the Mandarin reading is substantial or true.

There are Taioanese and Hakka announcements in the Taipei metro. Local hardcore Chinese nationalists resent that! But Taioanese and Hakka are left off the signage.

It's ... not what it looks like. Again, the idea — unspoken, subconscious, and collective — is that the Mandarin signage is not *Mandarin* signage. It's *sinographic* signage, so it *is* in Taioanese, and it *is* in Hakka. "The characters" constructively subsume the spoken sinobabble, which is just so many corrupted forms of "the characters" anyway.

To illustrate, at the National Taiwan University Hospital station, the large graphs say 台大醫院 (台大医院, *Táidà Yīyuàn*), in Mandarin. Taioanese Tâi-tāi Pēⁿ-īⁿ 台大病院 is missing from the signage. Or is it?

The Idea is that the graphs 台大醫院 – conceptually not-Mandarin — somehow represent Tâi-tāi Pēⁿ-īⁿ 台大病院. It's assumed — although not so vocally these days — that a fluent Taioanese speaker should be able to translate on the fly.

Confusingly, 台大病院 is no less "sinographic" than 台大醫院 . So if the sinographs — not Mandarin per se — are central, why not just write 台大病院?

This is a perceptive but perhaps unwelcome question. It pings the illogical, unspeakable core of The Idea.

NOTE. Before the fateful spring of 1947, several Formosan literati prescribed coining new spoken forms (e.g. *Tâi-tāi I-īⁿ) to match the written Mandarin (e.g. 台大醫院); the old, non-matching spoken forms (e.g. Tâi-tāi Pēⁿ-īⁿ) would phase out by and by. Such arguments were made time and again in the early 1930s during the Tâi-oân Ōe-bûn Lūn-chiàn 台灣話文論戰, an editorial civil war over whether vernacular Formosan literature should be written in Mandarin or (to greatly simplify) in Taioanese.

NOTE. Hakka seems to have adopted that strategy for 台大醫院 (Thòi-thai Yî-yen), although the general word for HOSPITAL is still phiang-yen 病院.

Ironically, the University Hospital station signage doesn't leave Taioanese in the cold entirely. The Japanese 台湾大学病院 (*Taiwan Daigaku Byōin*) reads Tâi-oân Tāi-haˈk Pēⁿ-īⁿ in unidiomatic but well-formed Taioanese.

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So it is. In practice, sinographs are still reserved for Mandarin by the powers-that-be. Yet Taioanese is ever more insistently bound to Mandarin's sinographs, by the same powers.

Behind the liberal, post-nationalistic façade, the senior Republic of China is suavely out to finish what it started. For the clear-eyed linguist, there is much that can be done, and much to be done.

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BONUS. A three-way sinographic gem, likely sans intention. Mandarin reading *shàngyǐn* evokes (Mandarin) 上瘾 (上癮, *shàngyǐn*, TO GET ADDICTED), while a straight cosmopolitan reading yields something like BIG ON PRIVACY. Great name for a nightspot of this kind.

Meanwhile, Taioanese reading siōng ún evokes (Taioanese) siōng ún 上穩 (STEADY TO THE MAX). There are *a lot* of businesses named Siōng-ún (Siāng-ún), written 上允 or 尚允 and so on. Not nightclubs, though.

In a different context, 尚隱 would've impressed the polyglot gentlemen born in the Taishō and Shōwa eras. Today, the Taioanese side of the pun is lost on the great number of 人 under 65 or 75 that can't straight-read 隱 (mainstream reading ún — not in line with Mandarin *yǐn*). Who knows? Maybe this is just a dip, not the end.