

## **Studying Taiwan's Democracy: The State of the Field**

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Social scientists have produced a substantial literature in English on Taiwan's domestic politics. This review traces the development of that literature and identifies its main themes and topics, including political economy, social change, ethnicity and identity, democratization and democratic consolidation, constitutional issues, institutional development, election studies, political parties and coalitions, policymaking, cross-Strait political relations, and cross-Strait economic engagement. The article finds the field of Taiwan politics divided into area studies, theoretically-driven work, and policy-oriented research. It also notes the field's changing emphasis over time, with two changes being especially evident: the shift from a transitology approach to the study of Taiwan as a maturing democracy, and the shift from treating cross-Strait relations as a political and diplomatic topic to a more comprehensive view of cross-Strait relations that takes into account economic and social forces. The author advocates more integration of these approaches as well as more cross-fertilization between qualitative and quantitative work, and between U.S.-based and Taiwan-based researchers. The author also identifies topics in need of additional research, including party realignment, institutional reform, legislative politics, bureaucratic politics, and social movements.