

**Island of Histories:
Memory, Identity and Heritage in Contemporary Taiwanese Historiography**

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Abstract

The re-discovery of Taiwan history, the official and local initiatives of cultural heritage and public commemorations constitute important post-colonial cultural phenomenon in post-martial law Taiwan. This paper discusses the “memory boom”, identity politics and heritage making in contemporary Taiwanese historiography. The major arguments of this paper can be summarized in three parts. The first section introduces the formation of new academic and public discourses. The second section outlines major examples of contemporary Taiwanese historiography and public discourse ranging from national commemoration, ethnic revival, heritage movement, wartime experience to the rethinking of modernity. The final section further explores the significance of public history, civic organization and new media in shaping people’s collective memories and historical consciousness of the island nation. The conclusion comments on the dual intellectual and political challenges facing the Taiwanese historiography in the global age.

Key words:

Taiwanese historiography, public history, memory, heritage, identity