

EATS News

The Newsletter of the European Association of Taiwan Studies

<http://eats-taiwan.eu/>

31 July 2015, issue 6

Publication Place: London

ISSN 2054-2038 (Print)

EATS News appreciates the generous support of the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation

The 2015 EATS Annual Conference: (In)Visible Taiwan

EATS Board



institution. The 12th EATS Annual Conference was co-organised between EATS Board and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, 8-10 April 2015. The local organiser was Professor Bogdan Zemanek.

Proposed by Professor Zemanek, the main theme of the conference was '(In)Visible Taiwan', addressing issues about Taiwan and Taiwan Studies that may appear paradoxical from multiple

The annual conference of the European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS) is a major academic event for the expanding field of Taiwan Studies. It offers an ideal forum for researchers from within and outside Europe to discuss relevant research and further the development of international and transdisciplinary collaboration. The tradition of holding the conference in a different European city each year is a testimony to the Association's vision to facilitate the development of Taiwan Studies throughout Europe. Each annual conference has been co-organised by EATS and another European academic

EATS News Issue 6	31/7/2015
Content	
The 12 th EATS Conference Report	p.1
Editorial	p.5
Who's Invisible Now?	p.7
The 2015 YSA Winners	p.9
2014 YSA and LRG Reports	p.11
Reflection on the 2nd World Congress of Taiwan Studies	p.14
Institutional Profile: LSE	p.18
Taiwan, Taiwan Studies and Taiwanese Identity	p.21
Notice Board	p.23



(Professor Bogdan Zemanek, Jagiellonian University in Krakow)

perspectives. For example, while democratisation is arguably the most significant development in modern Taiwan, what are the hidden challenges that need to be identified and resolved? While some may praise Taiwan's economic power, others may be disappointed by the lack of global recognition of Taiwanese brands. Is the perceived 'problem' a real problem? If so, why? And are there any solutions? Given the difficult international situation that Taiwan faces, how should we put Taiwan's effort in claiming an international presence – politically and culturally, officially and unofficially – into context? How may we evaluate Taiwan's (in)visibility? Moreover, how have the contributions of artists, writers, filmmakers and various cultural and creative workers sustained, enriched and articulated Taiwan's vibrant and multi-faceted cultures? How may the scholarly communities of Taiwan Studies further engage with different sectors and stakeholders to advance our understanding of Taiwan?

The thematic approach triggered an enthusiastic response from a wide range of disciplines and the organisers received 105 submissions this year. After a blind review process,

56 papers were accepted and divided into 16 panels during the two and a half-day convention. Panel sub-themes were: (1) Great divergence between economic interdependence and political conflict in East Asia, a special panel organised by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) with invited guests from different continents; (2) Expression of identity and nationalism; (3) International relations and informal diplomacy; (4) Approaches to Taiwan Studies; (5) Domestic development and party politics; (6) Intersectionality in Taiwan: Han dominance and marginalised groups; (7) Cross-strait interactions and the impact; (8) Literature; (9) Governance and challenges; (10) Tangible and intangible of cultural heritages; (11) Migration, cosmopolitanism and social change; (12) Popular culture and creativity; (13) Revisiting China-Taiwan-Hong Kong relationship; and (14) Mapping the unseen: Taiwan's invisibility and marginality. In addition, two MA panels were organised by the conference to offer students from various institutions and subject backgrounds open consultation on their dissertation topics.

Three characteristics of the 2015 EATS Conference in Krakow are worth noting: First, the ways the participants endeavoured to engage with the issue of (in)visibility made it one of the most thematically driven EATS conferences to date. In the opening keynote presentation, Professor Gary Rawnsley of Aberystwyth University discussed Taiwan's visibility and invisibility from the understanding of public diplomacy and the concept of soft power. Rawnsley said that Taiwan is locked into what Professor Joseph Nye has called a 'disabling environment', a set of structures and



(The 2015 TFD Panel invitees)

relationships that limit Taiwan's international activity. However limit does not mean impossible. Agency is also responsible for making a nation-state visible or invisible. As Taiwan's mechanisms for international communications and public diplomacy are ill-equipped to do the job, Rawnsley argued that Taiwan has indeed soft power; what it needs is more effective public diplomacy.

In the closing keynote session, Professor Chris Berry of King's College London explored some of the cinematic symptoms of Taiwanese anxiety about the island's global (in)visibility and the conditions engendering it. Berry argued that the recent Taiwan commercial cinema manifests this anxiety in two contradictory ways: On the one hand, Taiwan filmmakers are migrating to mainland China and immersing themselves in an emergent Chinese-language cinema industry. This industry is a transborder assemblage centred on Beijing, in which Taiwan becomes invisible. When Taiwan film companies and filmmakers participate in this assemblage, they collaborate in the process of making Taiwan invisible, for example turning Kaohsiung into a generic 'Harbor City' in *Black and White: Dawn of Assault* (2013). Alternatively, when making films entirely for the Taiwan audience, they are more likely to produce films that make mainland China entirely invisible in Taiwanese culture and history as seen in Wei Te-sheng's *Cape No.7* (2008), *Seediq Bale* (2011) and *Kano* (2014).

The thematic framework allowed both social scientists and scholars of arts and humanities to interact with each other, encouraging a cross-fertilisation of ideas that enriched the debate. In this way, the EATS Conference in Krakow appealed simultaneously to different disciplines, which was one of the goals that the organisers strived to achieve.

Second, EATS has devoted to nurturing younger generations of students and scholars in the field. Since 2011, EATS has designed initiatives to cultivate emerging researchers and to encourage their work by establishing the Young Scholar Award (YSA). In 2014, EATS set up the Library Research Grant (LRG) to assist Europe-based postgraduate students to visit European libraries where they can find resources for dissertation research. The MA panel is

also a mechanism EATS created to enhance the participation of MA students. This year EATS received the highest number of MA submissions. The organisers increased the number of MA panels to two in order to accommodate the maximum number of MA presentations, and thus made the Krakow convention one of the most student friendly conferences.

The 2015 YSA winners were Wei-lun Lu of Masaryk University and Joycelin Yi-hsuan Lai of the London School of Economics. Lu's paper, 'What's in a Name? The Interplay of Metaphor and Synonymy in Lee Teng-hui's Presidential Rhetoric', takes different names of Taiwan as synonyms (including 'Taiwan', 'ROC', 'country') and analyses how they are individually associated with different conceptualisations of the same political entity by examining a representative collection of Taiwanese presidential speeches. Lu's research does not only shed light on the influence of social context on language via use of linguistic data from Taiwan, but also demonstrates the exciting potential offered by bringing to Taiwan Studies the expertise of political linguistics and corpus cognitive linguistics.

Lai's paper, 'Imaging "Taiwanese" in East Asia: The Taiwanese intra-Asian idol dramas in the twenty-first century', examines how 'Taiwanese' has been represented in the Taiwanese idol dramas that accepted funds and filming support from East Asia. The essay argues that the depictions of the Taiwanese in relation to non-Taiwanese characters are mainly determined by one factor: the self-other relationships in hard and soft power, which determine how the Taiwanese view the East Asians and how the latter view the former in return. Lai discovers that on the one hand, no particular hierarchical relation is depicted in the programmes. The positive representations of East Asian characters indicate that the Taiwanese idol drama industry needs the East Asian market. On the other

hand, the national and cultural identity of the represented Taiwanese characters remains ambiguous. As the characters can be seen as 'Taiwanese Chinese' whose home is Taiwan, it minimises any potential political and cultural conflict for the audiences. In other words, the images of the 'Taiwanese' in these programmes have fulfilled the



economic imperative of the idol drama industry.

The 2015 EATS Conference awarded Library Research Grants to three fascinating projects: Martin Boyle of Kent University for his research trip to the East Asian Library at the University of Leiden to research cross-strait policies; Sue Nguyen of Charles University in Prague for her study on 'Sunflowers and Umbrellas: "Confucian Protest" in Taiwan and Hong Kong in 2014' by consulting the SOAS Library; and Tzu-yu Lin of Edinburgh University, also for a trip to SOAS Library, to conduct research on 'The Invisible Agents of Japanophone Taiwanese Literature'.

Finally, the strong performance of scholars based in East European institutions marked the third characteristic of the 2015 EATS Conference. Records of submission have demonstrated that West Europe remains dominant in the field of Taiwan Studies; researchers based in the UK, France, Germany and Austria collectively produced 31 papers at the Krakow convention. However, in recent years the number of accepted papers from East Europe has increased steadily. The number of papers from East Europe doubled since 2014. It is becoming apparent that East Europe is showing an increasingly strong interest in Taiwan Studies. As the 2016 EATS Conference will take place in Prague, 30 March-1 April, this is a trend we may well observe.

After the conference, Professor Bogdan Zemanek and his team helped interested participants organise several optional tours, including a city walk, a visit to Auschwitz Concentration Camp and a trip to the Wieliczka Salt Mine. The Krakow convention has been one of the most memorable EATS conferences in more ways than one.

For individual paper abstracts, a link to conference photos and further information about the 2015 EATS Conference, please see the webpage (<http://eats-taiwan.eu/conference/eats-2015/programme/>). A version of this conference report has been published in Chinet: Field Notes on 27 April 2015: <http://chinet.cz/forum/field-notes/the-12th-annual-conference-of-the-european-association-of-taiwan-studies-eats/>.

EATS Board members (2014-16) are (in alphabetical order of surnames) **Dr Niki Alsford** (SOAS), **Dr Isabelle Cheng** (Portsmouth), **Dr Ann Heylen** (National Taiwan Normal University), **Dr Saša Istenič** (Ljubljana), **Dr Astrid Lipinsky** (Vienna), **Dr Lara Momesso** (Portsmouth) and **Dr Ming-Yeh T. Rawnsley** (SOAS and Nottingham). The EATS auditor (2014-16) is **Professor Carsten Storm** (Erlangen).

**Call for Paper: Powerful and Powerless
The 13th EATS Annual Conference
Prague, Czech Republic, 2016
Deadline for submission of abstract:
15 September 2015**

The 13th EATS Conference will take place in Prague, Czech Republic, 30 March–1 April 2016. The main theme of the conference is 'Powerful and Powerless'.

Power relationships, broadly understood, pervade society on many levels and in many guises. They may be explicit or implicit, acknowledged or hidden, based on outright coercion or, instead, on more subtle forms of coaxing, manipulation, and indoctrination. They can involve individuals as well as collectives. In different contexts such as faith, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation, they can render people susceptible to the effects of power in different ways.

We invite participants to engage with the phenomenon of power in their respective area of research, be it social sciences or in the humanities, and to focus on the relationship between those who wield power on the one hand and those who are affected by the decisions of the powerful on the other. By investigating the strategies, conventions, and tensions underlying the interactions between the two sides, we hope the papers of this conference will offer novel insights into such issues as persistence and change in power relationships over time; the shifting positions and multiple roles individuals as well as groups can assume in different contexts and vis-à-vis different counterparts; the significance of symbolic representations of power; historical, moral, religious, and political justifications of inequality; strategies employed in contesting existing power relationships; formal and informal structures established with the purpose to create, enforce or perpetuate hierarchical relationships; the scope of individual and collective agency in the face of the limiting effects of power. In this way, we hope to expand our knowledge of powerful and powerless in Taiwan and to enrich the discipline of Taiwan Studies.

For submission, please send an abstract of **500 words**, including **3–5 keywords in Word Document**, to the EATS website (<http://www.eats-taiwan.eu/>) and send a copy to info@eats-taiwan.eu. Submission will be open from **1 August to 15 September 2015**. After a double blind review process, we will announce the successful submissions by **31 December 2015**. For further details, please see EATS website at <http://www.eats-taiwan.eu/>

Editorial:

A Growing Field

Ming-Yeh T. Rawnsley



2015 has been an extremely exciting year for Taiwan Studies. Several major international conferences occurred in different countries and even on different continents, including 'Taiwan: The View from the South', hosted by the Australian National University in Canberra, 6-8 January; followed by '(In)Visible Taiwan', the 12th annual conference of the European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS), Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, 8-10 April; 'Motions and the Motionless: (Dis/Re-)Connecting Taiwan to the World', the 21st annual conference of the North American Taiwan Studies Association (NATSA), Harvard University, 12-13 June; and then the 2nd World Congress of Taiwan Studies, co-organised by Academia Sinica and the School of Oriental and African Studies

(SOAS), University of London, which took place at SOAS, 18-20 June. This busy calendar may partly explain why this issue of *EATS News* becomes one of the fullest to date. It is gratifying to witness the rapid growth of Taiwan Studies as a vibrant academic discipline around the globe.

As the headline article points out, the Krakow convention was one of the most thematically driven EATS conferences so far. The approach allowed both social scientists and scholars of arts and humanities to intellectually engage with each other and to facilitate a cross-fertilisation of ideas. We are proud that the 2015 EATS Conference appealed simultaneously to different disciplines, an important goal of the EATS Board.

Both keynote speakers at the Krakow conference, Professors Gary Rawnsley and Chris Berry, made a deep impression on the participants. Their speeches stimulated lively discussion and enriched the debate throughout the gathering. We are grateful that Professor Berry of King's College London agreed to summarise his talk for publication. He argued that many popular commercial local cinemas today manifest Taiwanese anxiety about the island's global (in)visibility and the conditions engendering it.

After their papers were reviewed and their conference presentations were assessed, EATS awarded two Young Scholar Awards to Wei-lun Lu of Masaryk University and Joycelin Yi-hsuan Lai of the London School of Economics. It is our pleasure to introduce here the two outstanding scholars and their fascinating research projects. Lu's paper is 'What's in a Name? The Interplay of Metaphor and Synonymy in Lee Teng-hui's Presidential Rhetoric', while Lai's article is on 'Imaging "Taiwanese" in East Asia: The Taiwanese intra-Asian idol dramas in the twenty-first century'.

Lisa Bauer-Zhao was one of the 2014 EATS Young Scholar Award winners. Lisa was pregnant when she attended the 11th EATS Conference in Portsmouth. Shortly after she received the honour of the YSA, Lisa embraced the many rewards and challenges of being a new mother. We congratulate Lisa and are so glad that she is now able to return to work and to share with us her study on 'Minimal Art or Chinese Traditional Painting? Taiwan's art historical self-narration mirrored in the reading of Richard Lin's oeuvre'.

In 2014 EATS established the Library Research Grant (LRG) to assist Europe-based postgraduate students to visit European libraries where they can find specific resources for dissertation research. The 2014 LRG helped 5 students complete their library research trips. Ti-Han Chang of the Lyon III Jean

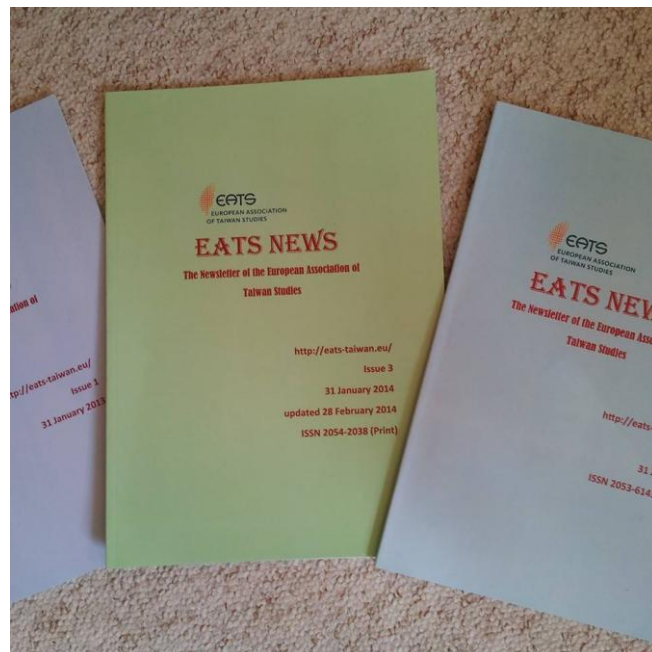
Moulin University was one of 2014 LRG winners. Her thesis compares the literary works of J.M. Coetzee and Taiwanese ecological writer Wu Ming-yi. The LRG enabled her to stay in London where she visited SOAS and UCL libraries and participated in a related conference.

After EATS matters, our attention turns to the 2nd World Congress of Taiwan Studies in London. It took three years of preparation to realise the largest Taiwan Studies conference in Europe. The two organisers, Dr Dafydd Fell of SOAS and Professor H. H. Michael Hsiao of Academia Sinica, jointly reflected on their collaboration. They believe that a key ingredient for the success of the conference was careful long-term planning. The World Congress in London did not only bring over 80 of the world's leading Taiwan Studies scholars from Europe, North America and Asia to share their research, but also attracted an audience of over 500 people over three days. Two publications - one on the theme 'State of the Field' and the other on 'Taiwan Studies Revisited' - are now in the pipeline, which promise to be a significant legacy of the conference.

In the Institutional Profile section, we feature LSE's 'Taiwan in Comparative Perspective'. Dr Fang-long Shih reveals the challenges of running a Taiwan Research Programme in an institution that does not include Area Studies in its programmes. The unique characteristic of the LSE Taiwan Research Programme is that it aims to locate and contextualise Taiwan within a broader global agenda. Hence, Taiwan Studies at the LSE explores the changes that are leading to Taiwan's greater incorporation into global affairs, and the impact and influence that Taiwan is having on the world.

Last but not the least is the article by Dr Yih-Jye Hwang of Leiden University. Yih-Jye attended the 21st NATSA annual conference in Harvard and pondered on the connections between Taiwan, Taiwan Studies and Taiwanese identity. He argues that Taiwan Studies as a field of study is a normative project and should be a more open, tolerant and inclusive study of Taiwan.

As usual, the final page of *EATS News* is our Notice Board whereby we publicise news, the movement and recent publications of EATS members and colleagues. If you have anything that you wish to announce to the Taiwan Studies communities, please do write to the editor of *EATS News* at mytrawnsley@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.



Dr Ming-Yeh T. Rawnsley is Editor of *EATS News*. She is also Research Associate, Centre of Taiwan Studies, SOAS, University of London and Associate Fellow, China Policy Institute, University of Nottingham.

**Research Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences
Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan
Overseas Visiting Scholars Program
Open for Application**

Taiwan's Research Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Ministry of Science and Technology has launched the 'Overseas Visiting Scholars Program' to offer opportunities to conduct humanities and social science research in Taiwan. Successful applicants will be provided with research space and equipment, as well as access to academic resource of National Taiwan University. Applications are open all year round.

If you are interested, further information can be found on the website (<http://www.hss.ntu.edu.tw/en/model.aspx?no=292>). For any enquiries, please contact: Ms. Liu, Yang-Tzu (ytliu6151@ntu.edu.tw).

Who's Invisible Now? Taiwanese Cinema and the Anxiety of Global (In)Visibility

Chris Berry

I was honoured and delighted to be invited to give a keynote at the 2015 EATS conference in Krakow this year. But, at first, I was a bit challenged by the theme of '(In)Visible Taiwan'. I work in Film Studies. Silent cinema is possible, but invisible cinema – not really.

However, anxiety about Taiwan's global visibility or lack of it is certainly prevalent. When I was preparing my keynote I went to a symposium linked to an exhibition of Taiwanese contemporary art in London. The first speaker showed a map with arrows pointing to the island, and big crosses through Thailand, just in case we did not know where he was talking about. And, in mid-June 2015 at the 2nd World Congress of Taiwan Studies at SOAS, Professor Chiu Kuei-fen gave an excellent overview of activist documentary in Taiwan, in which she—understandably—complained how little attention the very accomplished documentarians of Taiwan get in comparison with their mainland Chinese counterparts.

In the case of cinema, three surprising points became clear to me as I thought through my topic. First, we can understand the whole history of Taiwan cinema through this issue of visibility and invisibility. Second, sometimes Taiwanese filmmakers are the ones making Taiwan invisible. And, third, sometimes it is not Taiwan that is invisible.

Frankly, it came as a surprise to me to discover that I could think the history of Taiwan cinema through visibility/invisibility. In the early years of cinema, Taiwan was a Japanese colony with no cinema industry of its own. Its cinematic visibility was not only limited but also largely the result of Japanese documentary and newsreel producers' work. They emphasised both the island's exotic and 'primitive' state, symbolised by aboriginal Taiwanese, and Japan's role in the modernisation of the island.

One of the most notorious examples from this period is *サヨンの鐘* (*Sayon no kane*, or *Sayon's Bell*, 清水宏 [Hiroshi Shimizu], 1943), which starred the supposedly ethnically Chinese star Li Xianglan from Manchuria. She was in fact ethnically Japanese, and named Yamaguchi Yoshiko, but that's another story. *Sayon's Bell* is also complicated game of ethnic cross-dressing, with Li playing an aboriginal Taiwanese who sacrifices her life helping Taiwanese aboriginal men find their way down the mountains to join the imperial Japanese army.

Once the KMT took over, their aim was to make Taiwan visible as a Chinese province, and they encouraged the disappearance of Taiwanese language from films set in Taiwan as well as the production of many films set in China. In the 1980s, Taiwan New Cinema changed all that, with its strong local focus and insistence on realism, which included spoken languages other than Mandarin.





Throughout this history, different filmmakers have made Taiwan visible in different ways and for different reasons. But now, perhaps for the first time, Taiwan filmmakers are sometimes participating in making the island invisible. Take, for example, *痞子英雄* 首部曲：全面開戰 (*Black and White: Dawn of Assault*, 蔡岳勳 [Tsai Yueh-hsun], 2013). This comedy-action film is shot in Kaohsiung. But, in the film, it is 'Harbor City', a sort of generic Chinese city. Why? This phenomenon results from the transformation of the Chinese-language film industry.

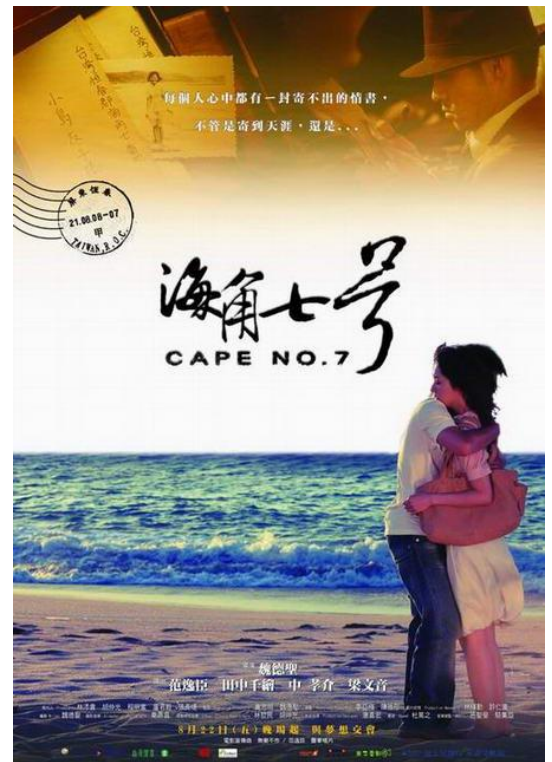
Despite the government stand-off between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on political recognition issues ever since the UN seat went to Beijing in 1971, trade between the two territories has been rapidly increasing. This is part of a process that also involves Hong Kong. The result has been a transformation of Chinese-language film production. Until this century, Taiwan, Hong Kong and mainland China operated as three different production industries. Now, they are very much enmeshed, creating what I would call one 'transborder assemblage'. Therefore, access to and success in the mainland is far more important to most Taiwan and Hong Kong film producers. The disappearing act with *Black and White* is one example of just how far people will go in their efforts to access the mainland

market and try to be competitive in it.

The third and perhaps most surprising instance of invisibility concerns Taiwan's most successful recent filmmaker, Wei Te-Sheng, director of *Cape No. 7* (海角七號, 2008) and *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (賽德克•巴萊, 2011) and co-writer and producer of *Kano* (2014). All over the world, at the same time as globalisation has led to transborder filmmaking like *Black and White*, it has also encouraged very local filmmaking. Why? Because combining commercialism with local interest is one way of competing with big budget and generic global films. The result are very popular local films that have very limited export potential.

What sort of very local Taiwan does Wei Te-Sheng make visible to Taiwan audiences? Mostly, it is also a grassroots Taiwan rooted in the aboriginal and *benshengren* local community that was there before the KMT came from the mainland in the 1940s. But what interests me even more is what Wei's films make invisible – mainland China, whether KMT-dominated pre-1949 China, or the People's Republic.

Of course there is something outrageous and audacious about daring to imagine a world without China. The ability to pull this off and sustain this imagination may be part of the appeal of Wei's films. But some of the implications of this are sobering. Why? Does the success of Wei's films indicate that many Taiwanese today are only able to imagine Taiwan if they can also make China invisible? And given the difficulty of sustaining that invisibility outside the cinematic realm of Wei's feature films, what does that say about Taiwan's difficulties in making itself visible to its own citizens today?



Chris Berry is Professor of Film Studies, King's College London.

2015 EATS Young Scholar Award Winners

Lu Wei-lun



It was an absolute pleasure to receive the Young Scholar Award at the 2015 EATS Conference for my paper entitled 'What's in a Name? A Corpus-Cognitive Analysis of Synonymy and Metaphor in Lee Teng-hui's Rhetoric'. It was my first time to attend an EATS conference and I was pleasantly surprised to see so many scholars from various fields and from all over the world. I truly appreciate the opportunity to interact with like-minded peers that the board members and the local organizers managed to create.

The paper that I read at EATS was on how metaphor is systematically used in the Taiwanese presidential rhetoric and how that reflects the socio-cultural context of language use. The research is methodologically based on Corpus Linguistics, collecting a representative language sample from Mr. Lee Teng-hui's speeches. I use the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor as my analytical framework. I find that the president's different ways of referring to the same country (*zhonghuaminguo* 'the Republic of China', *taiwan* 'Taiwan', *guojia* '(the) country') are associated with very different metaphors (BUILDING, PLANT, etc.) and with different syntactic constructions, each having its ideological function. The result is meaningful both to Corpus-Cognitive linguistics and to Taiwan Studies. It first of all shows how Taiwan can provide a fertile testing ground to linguistic theorizing given the intricate socio-cultural factors behind the language use in Taiwanese politics. In

addition, the result shows how Corpus-Cognitive Linguistics is capable of providing empirical evidence for ideological analyses and that it should be integrated as a useful approach to Taiwan Studies.

After the conference I have been tied up with teaching (currently in the English Department) and course preparation (from September on teaching in the Chinese Program), and my post-doc project is finishing 30 September so there has been a lot of paperwork. But I do expect to get back to finishing the paper and submit it to a journal by the end of 2015.

I would like to express again my sincere appreciation towards the EATS, the board members, the local organizers and the enthusiastic participants. It was my great pleasure to be part of the conference.

Wei-lun Lu received his Ph.D. in linguistics from National Taiwan University. He will become a member of the Chinese Program at Masaryk University starting September 2015.



Joycelin Yi-hsuan Lai



I started my PhD at King's College London, UK in September 2011 and I am nearing its completion. I have a BA degree in Economics from National Taiwan University and a Master's degree in Mass Communication from National Taiwan Normal University. I have worked for a TV production company, a publicity company, and for the National Science and Technology Museum in Taiwan before commencing my PhD.

The relationship between media, gender, and nation (culture) interests me because I have witnessed the post-KMT political democratisation and TV deregulation and pluralisation over the 1990s and 2000s. The Taiwanese TV liberalisation policy, administered since the early 1990s, has generated a highly *laissez-faire* TV market, which allows free imports of foreign media, thus creating a high level of competition among domestic TV channels. The domestic TV industry has consequently relied heavily on regional-scale operation by export-orientation, co-production and talent exchange.

I have noticed that female-oriented TV productions tend to operate at a regional scale. This knowledge has led me to learn about their production and consumption and their interaction with several nationalist discourses competing for dominance in Taiwan with a critical media and cultural studies approach. My master's thesis analyses the cross-strait TV co-production of female TV dramas during the 1990s, a part of which was rewritten into an essay published in the Taiwan-based journal *Mass Communication Research* (in Chinese). The essay analyses how the commercial free-to-view TV and TV producers during 1989 and 1992 'contested' the KMT's initial regulation on

their interaction with the PRC TV and formulated favouring policies and regulations to their own benefit.

In my PhD, I examine the young-female-oriented idol dramas' crossovers and multi-faceted representations of globalised Taiwanese people in East Asia in the twenty-first century. The essay that I presented in the 2015 EATS Conference is based on my PhD. I am very happy that it won the Young Scholar Award as it really helps my academic career. The essay currently entitled 'Imaging Taiwanese in East Asia: The Taiwanese Inter-Asian Idol Dramas in the Twenty-First Century' investigates the inter-Asia imaginations in the female-oriented idol dramas, in particular the dialogues with the PRC, Japanese and South Korean markets. The dialogues form a multi-faceted system of images that together refract the Taiwanese inter-Asian economic and cultural relationships. They articulate Taiwanese perspectives of inter-Asian cultural and social differences and provide templates concerning values, individualities and identities to their target audiences in Taiwan and beyond. Serving the economic interests of the media businesses, they compromise the dominant value systems in the PRC, Japan and South Korea as they address the economic and cultural imperatives of cross-cultural interactions.

I participated in the EATS conference for the first time in 2015. I am very honoured to meet many European researchers who have devoted their research to the study of Taiwan. The discussions are very helpful and insightful to me. Several points have benefitted my thinking, particularly the differences of 'Taiwan' as a country and as an identity between the official and non-official public spaces, between the male and female public spaces, and between the mainstream and the marginal public spaces. More official, mainstream or male-centred public spaces tend to suppress various powerless voices from social groups in Taiwan, which instead are more likely to present themselves in unofficial, marginal, minor or female-centred public spaces. The distinctions are important frames when analysts examine the duality of Taiwanese representations in the political, economic and cultural fields of the global world. I am interested in the discrepancies and intersections between them.

Joycelin Yi-hsuan Lai is a PhD candidate in Culture media and creative industries, King's College London, University of London

2014 EATS YSA Winner

Lisa Bauer-Zhao and Her Remarks

Receiving the Young Scholar Award for my paper “Minimal Art or Chinese Traditional Painting? Taiwan's art historical self-narration mirrored in the reading of Richard Lin's (林壽宇) oeuvre” has been an honour and encouragement for my ongoing research. The 11th EATS conference provided a great possibility to present my research to an audience that is familiar with the historical development, political situation and contemporary society of Taiwan; that – of course – forms the background of my paper. Such an audience in Europe is rare, especially in the field of the arts.

In my Ph.D. thesis, I work on the understanding of 'modern art' as 'xiandai yishu 現代藝術' in Taiwan's modern and contemporary art critique against the background of the globalisation of art discourse. Embedded in this research is the paper that I presented in Portsmouth. It deals with the discursive reading of the work of Taiwanese-British artist Richard Lin in the 1980s compared to that after 2000. The paper investigates how and why Richard Lin's work is being placed between the poles of a reading as modernist on the one hand and representing a traditional, Chinese perspective on the other. I argue, that what becomes visible when locating these two main narrative threads in the reading of Lin's works on the map of the writing of Taiwan's art history, is a reflection of Taiwan's inner struggle of finding itself being placed in the dichotomies of modernity and tradition as well as East and West.

Through the analysis of Lin's solo-exhibition *One is everything* (一即一切) in Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts in 2010, my paper questioned the implications of the domination of the reading as traditional Chinese in today's context as a representation of a 'self' over the reading as Minimal Art as an 'other': In today's art discourse, which necessarily operates against a global background, it appears that what is being perceived as 'European (or Western) art history' still plays an important role in Taiwanese art historical self-perception as point of reference and demarcation at the same time. Through pointing out the interweavements and contradictions of the seemingly conflicting readings of Lin's work, my research opens the possibility to question Taiwan's artistic self-perception and placing it in a larger context of globalised art discourse and the postcolonial question of self-ethnisation as demarcation.



Lisa Bauer-Zhao is a PhD candidate at the Institute for Philosophy, University of Hildesheim.

Open Call: The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy: International Visiting Fellowship

This fellowship enables candidates to carry out in-depth research related to, or to engage in projects designed to, aid Taiwan's democratic and human rights development. The foundation encourages applicants to establish a network with Taiwan's relevant non-profit organisations to promote the development of co-operative international projects, and to support research and writing of those working in the field of democracy assistance. Experienced practitioners and scholars devoted to the promotion and building of democracy and human rights, and who are not Taiwan citizens, may apply. The fellowship comprises a monthly stipend designed to assist with living expenses for up to one year. Fellows may also receive reimbursement for one round-trip plane ticket as well as shared office space. There is no closing dates. For further information, go to: <http://www.tfd.org.tw/opencms/english/fellowships/international/>

2014 EATS LRG Recipient: Ti-han Chang

Research: The Role of the Ecological Other in Contesting Postcolonial Identity Politics: An Interdisciplinary Study of the Postcolonial Eco-literature of J.M. Coetzee and Wu Ming-yi

Library Visited: SOAS and UCL Libraries, University of London



In the early spring of 2014, I received several emails informing me that EATS will start providing library research grants for young researchers who work on Taiwan Studies that year. Like most PhD candidates who live on limited financial resources, I know that opportunities to obtain research grants which focus uniquely on Taiwan Studies are very rare. This is why I felt very honoured and privileged when I learned that I had been awarded a 600 Euro library research fund after I submitted my research project to EATS.

My doctoral research studies the concept of ecological 'otherness' through examining contemporary continental philosophy and postcolonial eco-literatures produced in South Africa and in Taiwan. My thesis compares the literary works of J.M. Coetzee, a South African Nobel Prize winner, and Wu Ming-yi, a contemporary Taiwanese ecological writer.¹ By comparing their literary writings, I intend to show that there is a growing consciousness of ecological subjectivity, which is significantly present in the recent publication of postcolonial literatures. It is therefore important to acquire different aspects of knowledge in relation to the postcolonial and ecological conditions of the two countries. I was aware that SOAS is widely known for its research in Asian and African studies and its extensive collection of publications about Taiwan and South Africa, and the SOAS library thus stood out among all my other choices of libraries in the European zone. Another reason I chose SOAS library for my research visit is its location. Since the library is located in central London, I could visit other libraries (such as UCL's library or Senate House library) and participate in a related conference also held in London.

After some calculations in respect of my finances, the research duration was limited to a week. I chose to spend my week in London during mid-September, the week that coincided with an interdisciplinary conference held in UCL where I had a chance to present a research paper. For most of the week, I spent 7 to 8 hours a day at the SOAS library researching and studying relevant resources to my subject. Since my stay was limited to only a week, I had to use my time very wisely. Therefore, I chose to focus on researching publications that are mainly related to Taiwan Studies and theories of postcolonialism and environmentalism. For the first time, I've come to understand how important it is, as a professional researcher, within a given limited time frame, to read highly selectively, filtering and processing data and information that at first seems to be too vast for one to digest.

Relevant resources that I have found in the library can be roughly divided into the following four categories: (1) postcolonial Taiwanese identity, culture and politics; (2) political policies between Taiwan and China; (3) colonial history and theory of colonialism and postcolonialism; (4) Taiwanese ecological and environment studies. Regarding the resources related to Taiwan Studies, the library has an extensive collection of references in the field of social science. Some of them are useful for the development of my background knowledge, especially in understanding cultural or social identity construction in Taiwan. However, the majority of them are oriented quite narrowly towards quantitative analyses of political and social phenomena, which could be useful for students who study sociology, political science or anthropology. Unfortunately, they are not

quite as important to my domain of research. On the other hand, though the library has only a small selection of references related to ecology and environmental studies in Taiwan, their content offers certain specific research data and results, which I wouldn't have been able to find in any other European institution that also possesses a database for Taiwan Studies. The overall result is that I have made some good progress in developing new ideas for my analysis of ecology and the environment in Taiwan. I have also developed my bibliography in a useful way thanks to the books that I have consulted there.

Apart from my library research, I was very lucky to have the chance to present my paper—"The Ecological "Voices" of the Animal Other"—at UCL. The conference was organised with a view to articulating the contemporary understanding of humanity and animality through changing philosophical, cultural, and theoretical thinking. The paper I had presented there was significantly tied in with my thesis research and I thus evoked the literary works of Wu and Coetzee. In the Q&A session, other participants and interlocutors who shared the same panel with me showed much interest in the literary analysis I gave during my talk, and particularly my analysis of the science-fictional text of the Taiwanese writer, Wu Ming-yi. I then had interesting debates and fruitful exchanges with several scholars and young researchers who work in the same field. The exchanges and thoughts that came afterwards have really helped me to outline the backbone of my thesis.

Thinking about the week that I spent in London, I now realise that I couldn't be more grateful to the grant that EATS had offered. If I hadn't obtained this grant, my environmental research on Taiwan would have remained problematically restricted and I would probably not have been able to attend the UCL conference for financial reasons. I would thus like to express my gratitude once more to the board members of EATS and to the organization as a whole. I hope that, in the future, other students can continue to benefit from this generous and rewarding grant.

Note:

1. J.M. Coetzee is a South African novelist and essayist, as well a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature. His early works concern subjects that are related to the colonial history in South Africa and South Africa's post-colonial state. However, the subjects he discussed in his later works vary quite differently. From philosophy to ethics, he has discussed the rights and the "Being" of animals, the land, and nature. Ming-yi Wu is a contemporary Taiwanese ecological writer. Currently teaching at the University of Tong-hua in Taiwan, Wu is mostly regarded as an ecological novelist. Nevertheless, Wu also explores different mediums and forms of writings and representation in relation to ecological themes (including creative poetry, long essays, science-fiction, photography, painting, journal publication, etc.) More recently, his novel writing has a tendency to tie in memories of the colonial and postcolonial periods in Taiwan as a major theme.

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**4th International Conference on Business, International Relations and Diplomacy (ICOBIRD):
'Migration and Mobility in Asia and beyond'
Department of International Relations, Bina Nusantara University, Indonesia
3-4 November 2015**

ICOBIRD is an annual conference organised by the Department of International Relations, Bina Nusantara University, a leading private university in Indonesia, in collaboration with the Indonesian Association of International Relations Studies (Asosiasi Ilmu Hubungan Internasional Indonesia (AIHII)). ICOBIRD has been successful to accommodate discourse on Business, International Relations, and Diplomacy in Indonesia since 2012.

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Reflections on the Second World Congress of Taiwan Studies

Dafydd Fell and H.H. Michael Hsiao

Between June 18 and June 20, 2015 the Second World Congress of Taiwan Studies conference was held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London. The event was co-organised by the SOAS Centre of Taiwan Studies and Academia Sinica in Taiwan. This was the largest Taiwan Studies ever held in Europe. It featured three keynote speeches, 16 academic panels, four roundtables, a concert and film screening. The conference welcomed over 80 of the world's leading Taiwan Studies scholars from Europe, North America and Asia to share their research findings and reflections on the state of the



field. The three day event attracted an audience of over 500 people, with audience members coming from as far as Taiwan and California. One of the highlights was the concert on June 20 featuring the multi-award winning Taiwanese musician Lin Sheng-hsiang and the British Taiwanese band Transition.

A key ingredient in the conference's success was thoughtful long-term planning. In fact the initial funding proposals for the Second Congress were drawn up in late 2011, well before the First Congress had actually been held. The first practical planning discussions were begun in September 2013 and the first planning meeting was held in December 2013 between the organizing parties.

The First World Congress of Taiwan Studies was held at Academia Sinica in April 2012. This was a historic moment for the Taiwan Studies field as it brought together many of the world's leading Taiwan Studies scholars from a range of disciplines. With 26 panels and 102 papers, this was indeed an extremely large conference. However, the scale of the first Congress was rather daunting for any overseas Taiwan programmes. When they were asked of their interest in hosting a second Congress, the reaction was often not enthusiastic. How could the relatively small and under-resourced Taiwan centres abroad match the administrative capacity of Academia Sinica? While Academia Sinica can hold multiple large-scale international conferences on a monthly basis, the last time the SOAS Taiwan programme held a medium sized conference had been the first EATS conference back in 2004. The challenge for the organisers of the Second World Congress was to attempt to build on the experience of the First Congress.



We hoped that if the Second Congress could be successfully held using a more low-key and low budget approach, then it would encourage other overseas Taiwan Centres to take up the challenge of hosting future World Congresses. Overseas Taiwan programmes tend to be small and have limited financial as well as administrative resources. For instance the SOAS Taiwan Centre does not have its own office or even a part time administrator. Therefore a key factor in the success of the Second World Congress was thus the division of labour and financial responsibilities. While planning was carried out jointly by Academia Sinica and the SOAS Taiwan Centre, the administration base was at Academia Sinica. For instance the conference website and handling of travel grants was solely managed by the Secretariat in the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica. For that, our thanks go to Miss Ginger Chiang for her excellent job done in taking care of many businesses at the preparatory stage. This left SOAS to concentrate on the local organising tasks.

At the early stage of the planning process there was some concern that organising such a large conference in London would have a negative effect on the European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS) conference to be held in April in Poland. The concern was that if scholars could only make one European conference trip they would opt for the World Congress and thus undermine the number of EATS submissions. However, as it turned out the EATS conference had a high level of submissions and was one of the best organised and largest EATS conferences to date. The holding of two such large Taiwan Studies conferences within a gap of just a few months is a reflection on the strength and confidence of European Taiwan Studies. Although EATS did not play a formal role in sponsoring the World Congress, it did play a critical supporting role. The EATS Secretary General Ming-yeh Rawnsley joined the first planning meeting that set the conference planning framework, the EATS board offered an important list of recommended scholars for the conference and also EATS played a key role in publicising news of the Call for Papers and Congress.

Since the two key themes of the Congress were Taiwan Studies State of the Field and Taiwan Studies Revisited, it was important that a large proportion of speakers would be veterans in the field. Thus in the initial round of invitations we focused on scholars that met two key criteria: (1) They had published an influential book or body of work in the field and (2) They had been active in the international Taiwan Studies networks. By international Taiwan Studies we were thinking in terms of the key Taiwan Studies conferences such as Conference Group on Taiwan Studies, EATS, North American Taiwan Studies Association (NATSA), Japanese Association of Taiwan Studies (JATS), as well as the various Taiwan Studies Centres/programmes at universities in Europe, North America and Australia.

During the Congress itself a



number of people queried the disciplinary selection of the panels. To a large extent the academic panels were designed to reflect the key areas that are addressed in international Taiwan Studies research and teaching. This meant that there were some thematic differences with the First Congress. For the First World Congress, the ten Academia Sinica humanities and social science Institutes had separately planned and organised their own thematic panels and invited their respective scholars to attend. For the Second World Congress, the initial round of invitations was based on recommended lists jointly produced by SOAS, Academia Sinica and the EATS Board. The first round of invitations was sent out in the spring of 2014. We also tried to fill some of the remaining gaps on the panels by conducting an open call for papers in the autumn of 2014, with a specific list of paper themes we were looking for.

One of the key objectives of this Congress was to leave a publications legacy that would become important resources for scholars and students in the field of Taiwan Studies. Therefore during the invitations we had already two future books in mind. A first was a collection of essays that assess the state of the field in a range of academic disciplines and themes and the second challenges authors of important books on Taiwan to revisit and reassess their earlier works. Once published we hope these will be milestone reference works for Taiwan Studies teaching and researchers.

Another way we hoped to leave a legacy was by using the conference as a platform for sharing experiences in the field. With this in mind we included a number of practical roundtables on the third day of the conference that focused on Taiwan Studies in comparative perspectives, Taiwan Studies teaching, Taiwan Studies publishing and new publications in Taiwan Studies. In the roundtable on Taiwan Studies in comparative perspective a number of scholars discussed the state of comparative Taiwan Studies and the challenges facing overseas Taiwan Studies programmes. On the panel on publishing in Taiwan Studies a range of scholars shared their experiences and advise for young scholars on how to publish in the field. In the teaching panel scholars discussed how they established teaching programmes and how they faced the challenges of developing such niche teaching programmes. This panel revealed the quite distinct challenges being faced by Taiwan Studies teaching programmes abroad with those in Taiwan itself.

Although the main organising was done by SOAS and Academia Sinica, the conference also worked with a number of other partners to broaden the conference programme. For instance there was a book display and

poster exhibition sponsored by the Shung Ye Museum. Since many of the audience members are interested in language or related academic research in Taiwan, we invited the Ministry of Education to host an information desk in the display area on scholarships and study opportunities in Taiwan. Another related partner was the Centre of Chinese Studies, National Central Library. They hosted a book display on new books that will be part of the SOAS Library's Taiwan Resource Centre for Chinese Studies and also their representative Jane Liao gave a talk on Taiwan Studies electronic databases and scholarships. Another important partner was the Routledge Research on Taiwan book series. They provided a book display on their recent book publications on Taiwan at the conference, with a particular focus on publications by authors attending the



conference. However, the most important reason for their participation was to give the opportunity for new and established writers to discuss their book proposal ideas with book editors.

One area we tried to give greater attention to in the Second World Congress was Taiwan's popular culture, particularly film and music. These are two areas that have particularly attracted international Taiwan Studies scholars and students. At SOAS our Taiwan film course is often our most popular Taiwan course and when I ask students what first made them interested in Taiwan, one of the most frequently heard answers has been Taiwanese music and film. With this in mind we included a panel on film and documentaries and ended the conference with a screening of Chienn Hsiang's film *Exit*. One of the most popular elements though was the coverage of Taiwanese music. The conference's special guest was the multi-award winning musician Lin Sheng-hsiang. On the evening of the second day of the conference he did a Q&A session chaired by Dr. Shrz Ee Tan discussing his music and music career. Then after the final panels in the afternoon of the third day we held a concert. First, the British Taiwanese band Transition returned for their second SOAS show, as they warmed up for a multi-city tour of China. Then this was followed by a set by Lin Sheng-hsiang from his award winning album I-Village.

We also hoped that hosting the conference would also benefit other Asian studies programmes with an interest in Taiwan in Europe. Thus we were delighted to help support Lin Sheng-hsiang's concert at the University of Leeds on June 21. In addition, other World Congress speakers used the chance of being in Europe to present their research at University of Oxford, London School of Economics, and Leipzig.

There are many people who deserve thanks for making the conference a success, however, one group we would particularly like to highlight are the student volunteers that gave up their time in the build up to the conference and during the event itself. The majority of these students are from our Taiwan Studies courses and this created a challenge as they did not want to miss any of the panels.

For many the conference was just a three day event. But for us organisers it was the culmination of years of planning and preparation. We hope that it will leave a positive imprint on the field and of course this means that for organisers the conference is not over. Our task is now to make sure that the lessons of the conference are learnt and to make sure the key conference publications hit the book stores.

Finally, we look forward to seeing many more Taiwan Studies scholars and students at the Third World Congress in 2018 back in Academia Sinica.



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Professor Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao was Director of the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica (July 2009-July 2015). He is also Distinguished Research Fellow, Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica.

London School of Economics (LSE) is a social science school and does not encourage Area Studies. The question of how to run a Taiwan Research Programme (TRP) which can be adjusted to the LSE tradition of scholarship has always been a challenge. However, social scientific approaches to culture and society have always privileged context, and studies of Taiwan need to be understood contextually – although this raises the issue of if and when ‘context’ is to be treated as ‘natural’ or as ‘given’.



Area Studies approaches between the 1950s and 1980s took as a starting assumption that the Chinese context was natural for Taiwan. For example, Ahern and Gates in *The Anthropology of Taiwanese Society* (1981) claimed:

Taiwan is the only province of China that has not undergone the sweeping changes of a socialist revolution: Chinese life has greater continuity with the past there... Anthropologists have therefore gone to Taiwan to study what they could no longer study in other provinces. It was Taiwan’s representativeness, not its special qualities, that first attracted their interest (Ahern and Gates 1981: 8).

Taiwan was studied as an exemplary instance of Chinese culture and society, and thus as a window through which a pan-Chineseness could be brought into view. The idea that Taiwan might exceed its conventional description as ‘Chinese’ played a significant part in the growth of the TRP at LSE.

LSE TRP committee members contributed chapters to an edited volume entitled *Re-Writing Culture in Taiwan* (2009). In its ‘Introduction’, Tremlett (2009: 7) pointed out that the problem was not that anthropologists had not acknowledged the importance of contextualising their fieldwork data, but rather that they did not develop a theory of context. China, as a whole society, was uncritically assumed to be a ‘natural’ or ‘given’ context for the study of Taiwan. Indeed, without a developed theory of context, contextualisation appears to depend not so much on facts and evidence, but rather on the politically charged choices of the scholar and her or his historical location, and the tradition of scholarship to which she or he belongs. The context for Taiwan Studies is never natural, but is always rather a ‘construction’, and this facilitates points of departure for critical thought and the opening of new perspectives and understandings.

Institutional Profile

The LSE Taiwan
in Comparative
Perspective:

*Global Processes,
Local Contexts*

Fang-long Shih



The London Taiwan Seminar was founded in 2000 by Stephan Feuchtwang and myself, and it has since 2003 been affiliated with the LSE and renamed as 'Taiwan Research Programme'. Since the LSE's founding in 1895, its core approach has been to understand globalisation in the settings of social science questions from the perspectives of various localities. As such, our studies of Taiwan at the LSE are not to be constrained to Taiwan's geographic or political borders, but instead to be defined more by the frontiers of its role in global economy, global governance and regulations, and global civil society. We are seeking to provide new and innovative ways in Taiwan Studies and flows of people, issues, ideas and data which connect Taiwan with the rest of the global world.

The LSE TRP has since its establishment aimed to place on a broader global agenda those policy and research questions of enduring interest in the social sciences in a setting specific to Taiwan. As such, Taiwan Studies at the LSE champions an interest on a particular area of Taiwan for its intrinsic value, to explore the changes that are leading to Taiwan's greater incorporation into global affairs, and the impact and influence that Taiwan is having onto the world.

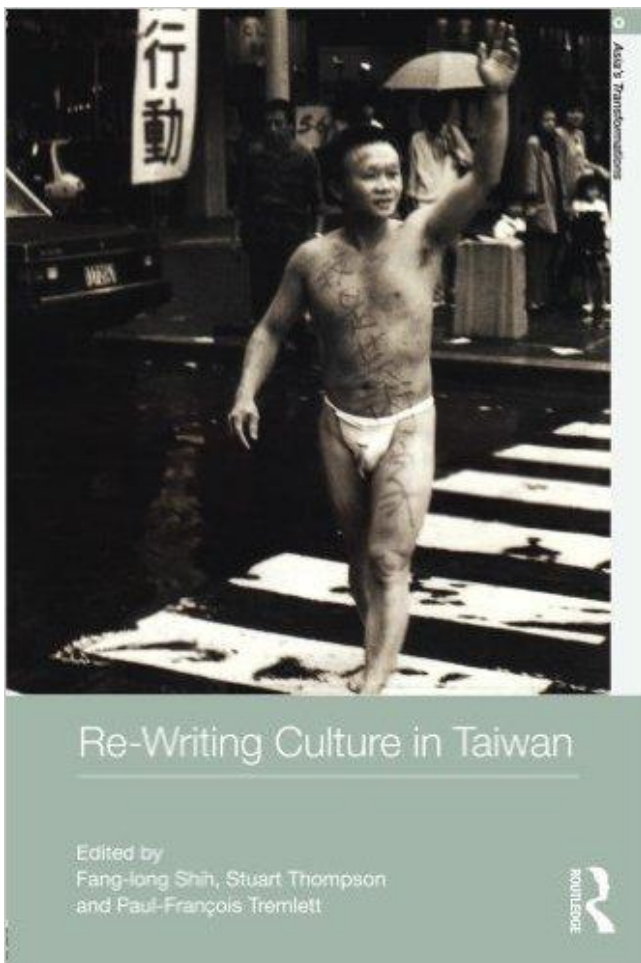
In 2005, Stephan Feuchtwang and I further developed themes of Taiwan in comparative perspective. We reflected on how old comparative research based on typologies of particular 'units' had been shown to be unfruitful, and we therefore tried to release a plurality of perspectives, unbounded by any kind of 'legitimising' claim (e.g. that China and Taiwan are the same society and share a common culture) and also going beyond any standard and out-dated Area Studies paradigm straight-jacketed within set geographical boundaries.

Since 2006 we have therefore been running a Taiwan in Comparative Perspective (TICP) project. It

contextualises processes of modernisation and globalisation through interdisciplinary, cross-societal and/or inter-cultural studies of significant social science questions that use Taiwan as a point of comparison. Actually, the TICP well engages with the LSE core approach on globalisation: globalising processes provide a framework for exploring a double contextualisation both in terms of local context to a specific place and the global context, and thus for studying comparatively and building dialogues.

The Taiwan in Comparative Perspective project has brought together individuals and expertise on Taiwan and its connected fields across the world to undertake cutting-edge research, to deliver seminars, and to participate in workshops and conferences at the LSE. It has offered a better understanding of the globalising processes in the local context of Taiwan from different disciplines as well as from various cultural and societal points of view, taking a hard look at a common theme or issue with a view from afar. It has thereby further fostered an intercultural and/or cross-societal dialogue and an exploration of globalisation with, as point of departure, local Taiwanese points of view on global themes or issues of enduring interest in the social sciences.

In addition, Taiwan in Comparative Perspective performs a movement from part to whole: analysis of or through Taiwan can serve as a suggestive catalyst for the



consideration of issues of (more) global significance, often issues of particular concern and enduring interest in an increasingly inter-connected world. The LSE TICP seeks to use the study of Taiwan as a fulcrum for discussing theoretical and methodological questions, pertinent not only to study in/of Taiwan, but also to generate more general understandings or theories with potentially universal scope and applicability. One example of this type of research is my own research on the civic protests against the fourth Nuclear-power Station at Gong-liao in Taiwan, which links a local temple dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea, Mazu, to both Taiwanese party politics (i.e., the Chinese Nationalist Party versus the Democratic Progressive Party) and to global anti-nuclear power issues (Shih 2012).

In 2011, the LSE TICP and University College Dublin co-organised the first ever conference on Taiwan and Ireland in Comparative Perspective, entitled: 'Small Islands, Big Issues'. Comparing Taiwan and Ireland may seem counter-intuitive, but the case for comparison rests not on any similarity or familiarities between Ireland and Taiwan but rather on the different ways in which comparable processes have unfolded in these different historical, political, economic and cultural contexts. A focus on human situations in both islands invites the application of discursive categories such as the dichotomies between the coloniser self and the colonised other; colonialism and decolonisation; empire and nationalism.

In the case of Ireland, it has been said that 'If Ireland had never existed, the English would have invented it' (Kiberd1995: 9). This is also the case in Taiwan; if Taiwan had never existed, the Chinese would have invented it. British colonial rule in Ireland created self-consciousness in the population of being 'Other' and of being subordinate. British rule prompted resentment and resistance, leading to Irish Independence in 1922. However, the situation has continued to be complicated; Ireland experienced partition, with the north of the island remaining a part of Britain. Having learned the lesson from Ireland, is it possible that one day the south of Taiwan might declare itself an independent country while the north becomes a part of China?

To recap, this comparative perspective enables us through different contexts to see Taiwan in global processes – by drawing forth new, unique and possibly odd implications that bear on what is being compared, and by directing our attention to other contexts which on their surface might appear to have no connection. This bi-focal comparative approach has its challenges, but at the same time it demands methodological and theoretical innovation as we seek to develop our knowledge not only of Taiwan by itself or as part of some essentialised cultural or societal area, but as an important site for the study of global processes of connection, disconnection, and reconnection, and the complexity of these transmissions. In short, the LSE Taiwan Research Programme has developed and dedicated its institutional profile to theorising Taiwan in comparative perspective.

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Dr Fang-long Shih is the founder of the LSE Research Programme on Taiwan in Comparative Perspective and also the editor of Journal *Taiwan in Comparative Perspective*.

Taiwan, Taiwan Studies, and Taiwanese Identity

Yih-Jye Hwang

Since the early 1990s, people in Taiwan have increasingly claimed themselves to be nationally Taiwanese and some have sought international recognition of Taiwan's status as an independent sovereign state. This political development has not been welcomed by the People's Republic of China (PRC), which upholds a 'One China Policy'. Consequently, the rise of Taiwanese nationalism could potentially trigger conflict among the great powers in the region, including the United States and China. Therefore, not surprisingly, this small island has become 'attractive' among diplomatic practitioners as well as academics. Many scholars, both on the island and abroad and covering multiple disciplines, have devoted themselves to this subject – the rise of Taiwanese nationalism. Moreover, this rapidly growing body of literature on Taiwanese nationalism has been part of a broader trend, namely the formation of Taiwan Studies, a relatively newly established subject compared to other divisions of Area Studies or East Asian Studies such as Sinology or Japanology.

Indeed, in the past three decades a body of Taiwan-centred research has emerged that focuses exclusively on the island's political, social, and economic transformations. In the West, most notably in the United States and Europe, the number of studies on Taiwan has increased dramatically, while their substance has shifted from being a component of Sinology/China Studies, a remnant of the Cold War, to being Taiwan-centred. Now, examine the island itself: its distinctive history, culture, politics, geography and society. Likewise, in Taiwan, a vast amount of research has been produced and a great number of scholars and graduate students devote their energy to the study of 'Taiwan. The number of publications on Taiwan Studies in Taiwan's academy increased from fewer than 50 volumes in 1985 to over 450 volumes in 1995 (Wang 2003: 154). The number of masters and doctoral theses on Taiwan, either in Chinese or any other languages, also grew from 73 in 2004 to over 200 in 2013 (Hsu 2014: 5-6). In Taiwan there were over 2,000 masters and doctoral theses on Taiwan completed between 2004 and 2013. In 2015, there are now at least sixteen academic journals concerned exclusively with Taiwan publishing research by the island's academics.

This mushrooming of Taiwan Studies in academic circles enjoys institutional support. Each year, universities and academic associations in Taiwan hold a number of conferences on the subject. In the West, through the efforts of Taiwanese scholars, the North American Taiwan Studies Association (NATSA) was inaugurated at Yale University in 1994, marking a new epoch of Taiwan Studies. It holds an annual conference in different institutes throughout the United States and Canada, with about one hundred participants each year. In 2015, NATSA held its 21st annual conference in Harvard. NATSA encourages submissions on any subject within the field of Taiwan Studies, including politics, economics, and social development, as well as issues related to Taiwan's cultures, languages, history, environment and education. Likewise, in Europe, a similar association initiated by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London – the European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS) – was established in 2004.

Moreover, it is not only academic associations that have been established – several research and teaching institutes have also been created. For example, following the first Department of Taiwanese Literature set up at Aletheia University in Taiwan in 1997, and the first Graduate Institute of Taiwanese Literature at National Cheng-Kung University in 2000, there are now at least twenty-five academic institutes or research centres



established under the title of 'Taiwan' or 'Taiwanese' throughout Taiwan (the Institute of Taiwanese Literature, Institute of Taiwanese History, etc.). These conduct research on, and provide teaching about, Taiwan. The creation of these institutions fostered and increased local multi-disciplinary research on Taiwan.

In this way academe plays a role in shaping and re-shaping national identity in Taiwan. The significant role that the intellectual plays in the rise of nationalism (or the construction of national identity) has been widely discussed. Various terms such as language, history, geography, culture and literature are often affixed to the word 'national' across assorted academic disciplines. In the case of Taiwan, 'Taiwanese-ness' is also subject to multiple intellectual discourses and processes of knowledge production. Each discourse helps to draw lines between the Self and the 'Other' and addresses 'Taiwanese-ness' in different ways. The discourse of Taiwanese identity represents what 'Taiwanese-ness' is, gives meaning to the identity of 'being Taiwanese', and fixes 'Taiwanese' as a focus of identification on the island. Hence Taiwanese identity has been made, refined or reified by the actions of, among others, intellectuals who have explicitly or implicitly furnished the materials for a particular logic of 'us' and 'them'. As such, knowledge systematically forms the objects and subjects of which it speaks.

Moreover, this process of construction is not unidirectional. A particular discourse of 'Taiwanese-ness' also makes certain forms of knowledge possible, conditioning the content of knowledge produced. What counts as valid knowledge in relation to Taiwanese identity both constrains and enables the ways in which further knowledge is produced and reproduced. Subsequently, knowledge production involves a complex set of practices that keep in circulation certain statements, utterances and conducts, while silencing other statements, utterances and conducts. One cannot just 'say' and 'do' what one wishes to 'say' and 'do'. These complex sets of practices involve power, thereby implying the production of exclusion and inclusion. Indeed, only certain discourses are disseminated in society, thereby certain forms of subject are formed. Thus, identity is a question of which and whose statements, utterances and forms of conduct emerge and which do not. It is a site at which different discourses interact, intersect and compete; and it is about the *politics* of the appearance and disappearance of certain statements, utterances and modes of conduct.

This short article finally suggests that on the one hand there is a need to create a sincere genealogy of the different modes to which the people on Taiwan are made subject, and to expose the beginnings and developments of the current subjectifying discourse. As a field of research, Taiwan Studies needs to be involved in exposing power relations that exist within society at any given moment in order to consider how marginal and subordinate groups are oppressed by the dominant group. On the other hand, if intellectual discourses contribute to the idea that there is such a thing as 'Taiwanese-ness', and help attribute the qualities, features and characteristics attached to it, we ought to ask what types of Taiwan Studies (and thereafter Taiwanese identity) are required. When a specific discourse limits or excludes alternative ways in which Taiwanese-ness can be constituted, and many other alternative political possibilities – subjectivities – are omitted, repressed and made to disappear in the discursive formation of 'Taiwanese-ness', the field itself needs to be critically interrogated. A more open, tolerant and inclusive study of Taiwan is at stake. Taiwan Studies as a field of study is a normative project. To echo the statement made by the new president of the NATSA at its annual conference at Harvard University (June 2015), 'Taiwan Studies is not only rigorous scholarship, it is, in a way, knowledge of the people, by the people, for the people'.

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*** The articles published in this newsletter represent the opinions of their authors and not necessarily of the European Association of Taiwan Studies.**

Notice Board

Latest Taiwan-Related Academic Publications by EATS Members and Associates

- Alexander, Colin (2014), [*China and Taiwan in Central America: Engaging Foreign Publics in Diplomacy*](#), New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
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Recent Movement and Achievement of EATS Members and Associates

- **Dr Niki Alsford** passed his PhD viva with no corrections at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, in June 2015.
- **Dr Lara Momesso** has been successful in obtaining funding from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for a two-year post-doctoral research project to be based in the University of Portsmouth, effective from 1 September 2015.
- **Dr Charles I-hsin Chen** became the spokesperson of Taiwan's Presidential Office in early March 2015.

St Antony's College, Asian Studies Centre, Taiwan Studies Programme Annual Conference In Search of New Perspectives, Methods and Finer Factors of Identity Formation: From East Asia to the World 4-5 September 2015

Day 1 (Friday) 1pm to 6pm
Day 2 (Saturday) 9.30am to 6pm
Pavilion Seminar Room
Gateway Building, St Antony's College

Multiple, mercurial, flowing, strategic, transcultural and transnational, context-dependent and socially constructed—these are characteristics of contemporary identity observed by postmodernist theorists. Yet, a chronic debate is that these attributes can neither entirely fit into individuals' perception of self-identity, nor thoroughly correspond with their sense of subjectivity when individuals take political actions or fulfil their particular roles in identity politics. More precisely, when the significant influence of social contexts—i.e., perceived history, social structure, the operation of state apparatus, etc., which mainly contribute the postmodernist characteristics of identity—has been widely recognised, how should we explain the heterogeneity of identity emerging in similar contexts? How should we account for the diversity of political action taken by individuals who are supposed to share the same identity?

This conference proposes to regard East Asia as a starting point to deal with this analytic dilemma (yet, the scope of this conference is not limited to this region). Whilst conventional factors—for instance, the recognition of one's nation and ethnicity and the state's effort of nation building—are assumedly either insufficient or too broad to explicitly depict the mechanism of how these identities are constructed or formed, the conference aims to explore the influence exercised by elements of other dimensions, such as culture, political ideology, social psychology, etc.

All are welcome. To view a Programme and register for this event please visit:
<http://goo.gl/forms/jk4rahZjyj>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/785890181504077/>

Convenor: Feng-yi Chu

Enquiries: asian@sant.ox.ac.uk

**International Conference: ‘Gender and Intersectionality in Taiwan and Austria’
University of Vienna
22-24 October 2015**

Panels include (1) Gender & Intersectionality in Taiwan and Austria – An Overview; (2) Historical Developments, (3) Gender, Labor and Nationality Issues, (4) Intersectionality in Migration & Marriage, (5) Culture, Ethnicity and Class, (6) Modernity: From Sexuality and Intersectionality Perspectives, and (7) Intersectionality in the Social Sciences.

For further information, please see the website: <http://tsc-conference.univie.ac.at/home/>

**The 2015 International Conference on Asia-Pacific Studies
12-14 November 2015
“Identity and Integration: Competing Dynamics in Asia-Pacific”
Keynote Speaker: Lowell Dittmer (Professor, Department of Political Science, University of
California, Berkeley)**

Beginning in the 1990s, states, societies, and peoples in the Asia-Pacific have been brought under the influence of two competing strands of forces: the pushing force of integration, and the pulling force of identity. The competition of the two ideational forces has manifested in the region’s political evolution, economic development, and strategic configuration. On the one hand, the significant growth of cross-border movement of capital, individuals, merchandises, and ideas within the region has called for closer policy coordination and institutional cooperation among state governments, leading to the increasingly vocal demand for the establishment and effective operation of regional integration mechanisms in key issue-areas, such as trade and finance. In the meanwhile, however, the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed the popularization of countervailing demands for demarcation and distinction based upon national, racial, ethnic, and class identities. Two contrasting and competing courses of regional dynamics have juxtaposed each other, reflecting the inherent complexity of Asia-Pacific in almost every major dimension.

The 2015 International Conference on Asia-Pacific Studies decides to discuss the consequential dynamics of identity and integration in the region. Interested scholars are encouraged to submit research papers to the preparatory committee of the 2015 Conference. Comparative studies, such as those focusing on one issue in multiple countries, or one country with a number of issues, are especially encouraged.

Build upon solid foundations and positive feedbacks from the 2012, 2013, and 2014 Conferences, the Institute of China and Asia-Pacific Studies at National Sun Yat-sen University, together with the Department of Political Science at the University of the Philippines, sincerely welcome scholars and specialists to share relevant work with us in this intellectually exciting event.

Important Dates

Deadline of full paper submission: October 16, 2015 (If your paper is not received by the deadline, your name will be removed from the conference agenda.)

Conference Location: National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Organizers: Institute of China and Asia-Pacific Studies, NSYSU; Department of Political Science, the University of the Philippines.

Co-organizers: NSYSU College of Social Science, NSYSU Center for Japanese Studies, NSYSU Sun Yat-sen Research Center for Social Sciences

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