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Editorial

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In this issue of the *IJTS* we feature a topical section, 'Taiwan as Epistemic Challenger', guest edited by Professors Chih-Jou Jay Chen and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao. The fundamental questions addressed include:

Apart from its unique geopolitical status, is there something that makes Taiwan an especially valuable subject of study for the international scholarly community? How can Taiwanese scholars and foreign observers of Taiwanese society transcend the competitive disadvantage of studying a single mid-sized country to make Taiwan visible in international publications?¹

As discussed in the guest editors' introduction, the four research articles derive from different backgrounds—global history (Jenco and Tremml-Werner), civil organisation (Madsen), values and identities (Chu), and academic production in sociology (Lee)—to consider how Taiwan may challenge epistemic assumptions of established disciplines. Such an intellectual effort represents a long-term ambition embraced by this journal to 'broaden the horizons of Taiwan studies, to maximise geographical outreach, and to facilitate discussion, not only between the different disciplines that form the field but beyond, to inform and be informed by other relevant fields' (Rawnsley, 2019).

In the same spirit of organising this topical section, *IJTS* has since 2018 published articles that may be considered innovative or provocative while their authors tackle such questions as *why* and *how* to study Taiwan. For example, in the forum discussion 'Linking Taiwan Studies with the World', scholars called for a relational understanding of Taiwan as a site and co-producer of global

1 'Call for Papers: Taiwan as Epistemic Challenger', <https://www.eats-taiwan.eu/international-journal-of-taiwan-studies/cfp-taiwan-as-epistemic-challenger>.

processes (Shih et al., 2018). In another forum discussion, 'Delimiting "Cross-Strait Studies": *Kua'an* (跨岸) vs. *Liang'an* (兩岸)', contributors debated the analytical value of a new 'cross-strait studies' research field and the differentiation between *kua'an* and *liang'an* as 'two different, though complementary, approaches to the cross-strait relationship' (Schubert et al., 2021). In issue 3.2, *IJTS* also published a survey that examines how Taiwan has been studied in the research of US-based speech communication and journalism. The article deliberated how Taiwan studies may break the existing knowledge production blind spot and be more engaged with and integrated into these two disciplines (Yueh, 2020).

In addition to the topical section, this issue also includes two independent research articles. Flair Donglai Shi's 'Reconsidering Sinophone Studies: The Chinese Cold War, Multiple Sinocentrism, and Theoretical Generalisation' challenges some of the ideological mechanisms of the concept of the Sinophone. The paper highlights the role that Taiwan has been playing in what Shi deems 'the institutional formation of the "Sinophone" both as a cultural field and as an academic discourse'. Regardless of your position in relation to Shi's argument, *IJTS* welcomes further consideration of the Sinophone as it relates to Taiwan studies. Moreover, we firmly believe that rational debate is healthy. The second research paper in this issue is 'Taiwan-Myanmar Relations within the Framework of the New Southbound Policy' by Kristina Kironka. The recent military coup in Myanmar makes this article particularly timely even though the author wrote it before the passage of Taiwan's parliamentary motion to urge Myanmar's junta to restore democracy and to stop violence against demonstrators opposing the coup (Wallace, 2021). However, Kironka provides readers with an important context in which to understand Taiwan's engagement with Myanmar and the development of the Taiwan-Myanmar relationship following Myanmar's political transformation and economic liberalisation in 2010.

Chris Berry's special report, 'Introducing Taiwanese-Language Cinema in Europe', reflects on his experiences of leading the 'Taiwan's Lost Commercial Cinema: Recovered and Restored' project to screen old Taiwanese-language films (*taiyupian*), mostly from the 1960s, in Europe between 2017 and 2021. Berry answers two questions: first, what is so interesting about these films? Second, why was it so difficult to make the initial breakthrough and what made it possible in the end? Among the many factors that Berry summarises, the most insightful is the potential for universities to be cultural incubators. In an era when the changing dynamics between universities and societies and between professors and students may have forced some to question the values of higher education, Berry's observation revalidates the important roles played by universities.

The book review section in this issue contains five articles. Mary J. Ainslie introduces *Taiwan Cinema, Memory, and Modernity* (Ivy I-Chu Chang, 2019); Adrian Chiu and Ming-Lun Chung write about *The Struggle for Democracy in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong: Sharp Power and Its Discontents* (Andreas Fulda, 2020); Hsin-i Sydney Yueh reviews 跨界跨代的台灣研究：北美台灣研究學會二十年 (*Crossing Disciplines and Generations: 20 Years of NATSA*) (edited by Mei-Ling Pan et al., 2016); Jens Damm presents *Taiwan Studies Revisited* (edited by Dafydd Fell and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, 2019); and Chun-yi Lee evaluates 全球生產壓力鏈：越南台商、工人與國家 (*Under Global Production Pressure: Taiwan Capital, Vietnamese Workers and the State*) (Hong Zen Wang, 2019). We are excited that there is an increasingly rich list of publications relevant to Taiwan available for review. We are equally pleased that more and more scholars would like to write book reviews for us. Both are vital signs of the growth of both our journal and the field of Taiwan studies.

Finally, just as this issue was going into press, we received great news that the *International Journal of Taiwan Studies* has been selected for inclusion in the Web of Science. Articles published after 1 January 2018 in the *IJTS* will be included in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). This means in the future the *IJTS* may be evaluated and added to further Clarivate Analytics products to meet the needs of the scientific and scholarly research community. I am sure you will agree this is important news for our journal and positions *IJTS* to make a more significant impact.

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