

College of Asia & the Pacific

PROGRAM

2024 ANU TAIWAN UPDATE

10-11 September 2024



Australian
National
University



Contents

01 2024 ANU Taiwan Update

Introduction	3
--------------	---

02 Tuesday 10 September 2024

Day 1 Overview	4
----------------	---

Keynote Address	5
-----------------	---

03 Wednesday 11 September 2024

Day 2 Overview	6
----------------	---

Session 1	7
-----------	---

Session 2	8
-----------	---

Session 3	9
-----------	---

Film Screening	10
----------------	----

Introduction

In January 2024, Taiwan voted for a new president. For the first time in its democratic history, the candidate who was elected was from a party that had already held the presidency for the maximum two terms. In May, therefore, Lai Ching-te (William Lai) of the Democratic Progressive Party was inaugurated. However, unlike his predecessor Tsai Ing-wen, he will have to govern without a majority in the parliament, the Legislative Yuan. The Chinese government immediately expressed their displeasure at Lai's election, so how will Taiwan's new political alignments alter the cross-strait status quo? Will the new president be able to carry out his program with a hostile parliament? Will Lai's administration follow the course set by President Tsai, or will he strike out on a new path?

These are some of the questions the 2024 ANU Taiwan Update will address. However, this year, we are also examining three issues at the forefront of modern, changing Taiwanese society. The keynote speaker, Tayal scholar Dr Wasiq Silan, will focus on social programs run by and for Taiwan's indigenous peoples, Professor Chen Mei-Hua will explain how a #metoo movement arose in 2023, and we will be screening the multiple prize-winning documentary *And Miles to Go Before I Sleep*, which concerns the police shooting of a Vietnamese migrant worker. The director of the documentary, Tsai Tsung-lung, will also be taking part in a post-screening interview. Finally, one of Australia's foremost Taiwan experts, Dr Craig Smith will discuss how the various images of Taiwan in the west — exotic island, oppressed colony, capitalist factory, progressive society — have been shaped and propagated.



Professor Benjamin Penny
Convenor
ANU Taiwan Studies Program

The ANU Taiwan Update is an initiative under the ANU Taiwan Studies Program 2022–25, which is a partnership between the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University and the Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan).

Day 1 Overview

Tuesday 10 September

Auditorium, Research School of Social Science, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

Drinks Reception

RSSS Auditorium, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

5:00pm

Welcome & Introduction

Delivered by

Professor Benjamin Penny, School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

5:30pm

Paul Girrawah House, Ngambri-Ngunnawal custodian of the Canberra region / Senior Community Engagement Officer, First Nations Portfolio, The Australian National University

Professor Helen Sullivan, Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

Deputy Representative Regine Huey-jen Chen, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Australia

Keynote Address

Unseen Challenges: Indigenous Elders and Hidden Colonization in Taiwan's Aged Care

5:55pm-7:15pm

Wasiq Silan, Assistant Professor, National Dong Hwa University

Keynote Address

Unseen Challenges: Indigenous Elders and Hidden Colonization in Taiwan's Aged Care

Over the past two decades, aged care in Taiwan has seen rapid reform, focusing on improving service capacity. While the government highlights coverage rates as a measure of success, this narrow perspective ignores broader issues in aged care and fails to tackle relational and democratic issues that need to be addressed for support to be sustainable. This policy direction has posed particular challenges for Indigenous elders.

In this talk, Dr Wasiq Silan will discuss the experiences of Indigenous elders receiving care within their communities, drawing from her ongoing research. Although the social welfare program aims to address health inequalities and provides services tailored to community needs, it inadvertently acts as a form of colonization for Indigenous peoples. By framing the mass social problems, these programs perpetuate colonial power dynamics in everyday welfare provision.

Dr Silan will provide an overview of current social welfare programs, focusing on Day Clubs, to highlight often-overlooked colonial ideologies that lie behind a mask of benevolence. Finally, she will share insights into the type of care Indigenous elders desire and propose an ethos for policy-making that truly works for their communities.



Wasiq Silan

Assistant Professor, National Dong Hwa University

Wasiq Silan is an Indigenous Tayal woman from the Mstaranan region, known as the Nanshi river valley in the northern region of Taiwan. Her research interests and experience are in developing sustainable quality-of-life care systems, decolonizing state-Indigenous relationships and exploring collaborative and community-based approaches. She is an Assistant Professor at the National Dong Hwa University and is currently affiliated with the Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism (CEREN) at the University of Helsinki.

Day 2 Overview

Wednesday 11 September

Seminar Room, China in the World Building, Fellows Lane, ANU

Lunch

Tea House, China in the World Building

12:00pm–1:00pm

Session 1

Dynamics of Taiwan's Party Politics and Linkages to the Indo-Pacific

1:00pm–2:00pm

Assistant Professor Fang-Yu Chen, Soochow University, Taiwan

Break

2:00pm

Session 2

'I'm not surprised': The sexual subjects and emotional communities in Taiwan's #MeToo movement

2:15pm–3:15pm

Professor Mei-Hua Chen, National Sun Yat-Sen University

Afternoon Tea

3:15pm

Session 3

Telling Taiwan's Story Well: Shaping Perspectives on the Beautiful Island

3:45pm–4:45pm

Dr Craig A. Smith, The University of Melbourne

Film Screening

And Miles To Go Before I Sleep 九槍

6:30pm–8:30pm

RSSS Auditorium, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

In-person Q&A with Film Director Tsung-lung Tsai will be facilitated by Dr Hayeon Lee with Mandarin-English translation.

Session 1

Dynamics of Taiwan's Party Politics and Linkages to the Indo-Pacific

Taiwan in recent years has become one of the “most important places” but also one of the “most dangerous places” in the world. Under the Tsai Ing-wen administration in the past eight years, Taiwan's role in the world apparently rose to a record-high because of the development of its high-tech industry, its geopolitical position, and it being in the front-line of authoritarian diffusion. In this talk, Dr Fang-Yu Chen will introduce President Lai Ching-te, Vice-President Hsiao Bi-khim, and the dynamics of Taiwan's party politics. Why did the ruling DPP lose its majority in the legislature? Why were there mass-protests against the opposition parties and the legislature in May? What will be the major policies, especially foreign policies of the new team? How will the government deal with China's pressure as well as Taiwan's socioeconomic challenges?



Fang-Yu Chen

Assistant Professor, Soochow University, Taiwan

Fang-Yu Chen is an assistant professor of Political Science at Soochow University, Taiwan. His research interests include authoritarian politics, party politics, political behaviour in new democracies, and US-China-Taiwan relations. In 2014, he became the co-founder and co-editor of the website “Who Governs TW,” which aims to become a Mandarin version of the Monkey Cage, promoting public awareness and participation in politics. He is also the Chief Editor of “US Taiwan Watch,” an NPO registered in the US which reports on the politics of US-China-Taiwan relations.

Session 2

‘I’m not surprised’: The sexual subjects and emotional communities in Taiwan’s #MeToo movement

Taiwan is one of the few countries that equips legislation to regulate sexual harassment both in schools and in the workplace. However, women and men who reported sexual harassment are still considered as ‘troublemakers’, and victim blaming is also prevalent. Sexual harassment cases therefore are underreported and even dismissed without proper procedure. Nonetheless, the unique writing style of Taiwan’s #MeToo posts, always detailed the sexual misconducts of the perpetrators, and how victims were shocked and failed to move their bodies, also let women who read the posts could revisit the memories and emotions (e.g. anger, anxiety, fear, pain, and shame) surrounding sexual harassments, and thus strongly felt that they ‘have to do something’ for themselves and for helping other women. Therefore, they shared these posts, attended #MeToo forums, created the name-and-shame lists of perpetrators and organized #MeToo march. In this sense, the #MeToo movement serves to build up an emotional community in which women not only speak for themselves but also take collective actions to make the perpetrators accountable.



Mei-Hua Chen

Professor, National Sun Yat-Sen University

Mei-Hua Chen is Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Professor of the Department of Sociology at National Sun Yat-Sen University. She has published articles on issues such as sex work, sexual migration across the Taiwan Strait in well-known journals both in Chinese and English. Her research interests including women’s work in body work, and non-conforming intimacies in Taiwan. Recently her research has concentrated on migration and sexuality. She is particularly interested in sexual migration for commercial purposes across Taiwan Strait, and queer migration which involves transnational same-sex marriages.

Session 3

Telling Taiwan's Story Well: Shaping Perspectives on the Beautiful Island

The Portuguese decision to name Taiwan Ilha Formosa was only the first in a series of decisions made by cultural intermediaries that shaped Western perspectives on what would become one of the most important geopolitical locales of the twentieth century. This talk will examine the construction of an imagined Taiwan in the West through four modes, largely focusing on events in the past few decades.

How much agency do the people of Taiwan have in constructing these images? Which elites from inside and outside of Taiwan have achieved hegemony as cultural intermediaries in presenting Taiwan as an exotic island, oppressed colony, capitalist factories or progressive society? With these questions in mind, Dr Smith will examine pivotal individuals and organisations who have engaged in various means of representation, translation and commercialisation to tell Taiwan's story well (or not so well).



Craig A. Smith

Senior Lecturer, The University of Melbourne

Craig A. Smith is Senior Lecturer of Translation Studies at the University of Melbourne's Asia Institute and president of the Australasian Taiwan Studies Association (ATSA). His publications include *Chinese Asianism* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2021). He graduated from Taiwan's National Chung Cheng University with an MA in Taiwan Literature in 2010 and regularly writes about or translates Taiwan's literature and history.

Film Screening

And Miles To Go Before I Sleep 九槍

Tsung-lung Tsai | 2022 | 1h30m



Like many of the 700,000 migrant workers in Taiwan, Vietnamese man Nguyen Quoc Phi was condemned as a “runaway foreign worker” in an ugly and complex migrant labour system. With expertise in construction work, he was one of the leaders of a group of migrants who worked in Hsinchu. He dreamed of saving up enough money to start a business back in his home country.

On 31 August 2017, though, Nguyen was reported for stealing a vehicle and ended up being shot nine times by police officer Chen Chung-wen. Nguyen bled to death on the way to hospital. Why did Chen use his firearm against a migrant worker? Did Nguyen have a record of drug use? Were the nine shots the only cause of Nguyen’s death? Where does justice lie when the perpetrator isn’t necessarily the true perpetrator, and an imperfect victim gets the blame?

And Miles to Go Before I Sleep won Best Documentary Feature at the 59th Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival, 2022. Beyond Taiwan, it has been screened at film festivals in Macao, Paris, Busan, Hong Kong, and Yogyakarta.



Tsung-lung Tsai

Film Director, *And Miles To Go Before I Sleep*

Tsung-lung Tsai is a journalist and independent documentary filmmaker. He has produced more than 10 projects since 2000, focusing on human rights, environmentalism, the development of multiculturalism, and other social issues. Director Tsai is also currently an Associate Professor in Communications at National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan.



Hayeon Lee

Postdoctoral Fellow, ANU Korea Institute

Hayeon Lee is an anthropologist of Korea and Vietnam interested in feminist ethnography, gender, transnational migration, care, and selfhood. She is currently working on a book manuscript, which examines marriage migrant women’s stories and migration trajectories between Vietnam and South Korea.



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The ANU Taiwan Studies Program 2022–25 is a partnership between the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University and the Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan).