



# CCKF-ERCCT Newsletter

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## GREETINGS

*Dear colleagues and friends of the ERCCT,*

This newsletter will again update you on our recent activities and academic "traffic", both of which have increased significantly since the end of the pandemic. What makes us happy and proud is the observation that ERCCT-related networks continue to grow as the number of Taiwan scholars who have visited the Centre collaborate in academic research, exchange information and very often become good friends. The mission of the ERCCT is therefore successful, as we believe this newsletter shows. However, it is not complete and should be seen as a work in progress. Global attention to Taiwan's politics, economics and society, its history and culture, requires constant academic input and the involvement of young scholars over time. Our centre must therefore continue, and we are highly motivated to do so.

Prof. Gunter Schubert, ERCCT-Director and Chair of Greater China Studies, University of Tübingen

## ACTIVITIES AT THE CENTER

### *Taiwan Colloquium Summer Term 2024*

During both the summer and winter terms, the Taiwan-Colloquium serves as a **frequent gathering for ERCCT Research Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and interested students**. The colloquium provides a platform for sharing project ideas, discussing intended field studies, scrutinizing applied theory and methodology, and critically assessing empirical findings gathered in the field. The participation of our Visiting Scholars is particularly valuable as they not only evaluate the projects of the Fellows but also present their own research, opening it up for academic debate.

#### **May 13 – Dr. Lorenzo Andolfatto**

Dr. Lorenzo Andolfatto, Senior Researcher at the Human Geography Research Unit, Department of Geosciences, University of Fribourg, visited Tübingen to present his latest research and kick off the Taiwan Colloquium for the summer term 2024. His talk, titled "**In between Nature and the Nation: Defining National Parks in Taiwan, 1933–1972**", was based on extensive archival research. It delved into the history of using national parks for nation-building in Taiwan since the Japanese colonial era. Dr. Lee Kyonghee from the MPIWG in Berlin served as the discussant, providing valuable feedback and facilitating an engaging Q&A session with the audience.



Dr. Andolfatto and Dr. Lee discuss the former's presentation on Taiwanese national parks.

### June 03 - Dr. Liang Chia-Yu 梁家瑜

Next up, Dr. Liang Chia-Yu 梁家瑜 from the Department of International Relations at the University of Sussex introduced his project on building a Taiwanese International Relations theory. His talk, titled "**Status Sacer: Proposing an International Relations Theory from Taiwan's Structural Marginality**", sparked a lively discussion among attendees about the validity and potential merit of new types of International Relations theory. Particularly, how these might be approached was a point of contention and fruitful discussion.

### June 03 - Dr. Alexandre Gandil

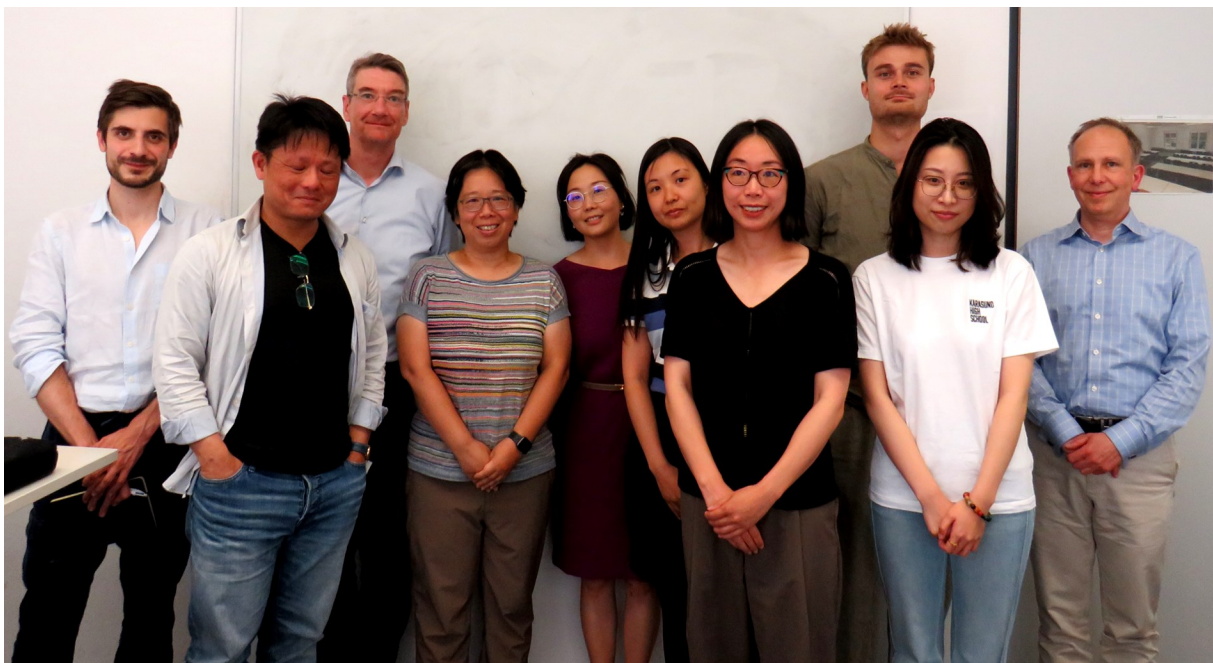
Also on June 3, Dr. Alexandre Gandil from the Joint Research Unit D2iA (Dynamiques, Interactions, Interculturalités Asiatiques) at Bordeaux Montaigne University, and an associated researcher and teacher at the Center for International Studies (CERI) at SciencesPo (Paris), presented his current research project at the Taiwan Colloquium. His talk, titled "**Taiwan Beyond Its Own Strait: Assessing Taipei's Sovereignty Claims over the South China Sea from Below**", provided deep insights into Taiwan's sovereignty claims.



Photos of Dr. Alexandre Gandil (left) and Dr. Liang Chia-Yu (right) during their respective presentations. Both were affiliated with the ERCCT at the same time and made significant contributions to our various activities. Their input to the colloquium were particularly extensive and sparked great interest among our students. It was a privilege to host such esteemed scholars.

### June 10 - Prof. Huang Yu-Ling 黃于玲

Prof. Huang Yu-Ling 黃于玲 from the Department of Humanities and Social Medicine at National Cheng Kung University presented her research on the regulation of reproductive medicine in Taiwan to ERCCT Fellows. Her talk, titled "**Gender, Culture, and Reproductive Medicine: Comparative Research of Regulatory Logics, Clinical Care, and (Non)Anonymity Donation of Assisted Reproductive Technologies**", analyzed the regulatory logic behind reproductive cell donation in Taiwan.



Group photo of the participants in our colloquium, including lecturers and students from the Department of Chinese Studies in Tübingen, along with our distinguished guests at the ERCCT. On the left, you can see Dr. Alexandre Gandil, with Dr. Liang Chia-Yu to his right. In the middle, wearing a rainbow-colored T-shirt, is Prof. Huang Yu-Ling, who was the presenter that day.

### June 20 - Prof. Tseng Yen-Fen 曾熾芬

As part of the Visiting Scholars Program for the summer term of 2024, ERCCT Advisory Board Member Prof. Tseng Yen-Fen 曾熾芬 from the Department of Sociology at National Taiwan University presented her research project "**Settlement Intentions among White-Collar Migrants in Taiwan**" to ERCCT Fellows in the Taiwan Colloquium on June 20.

### July 01 - Lin Ya-Yin 林昺愷

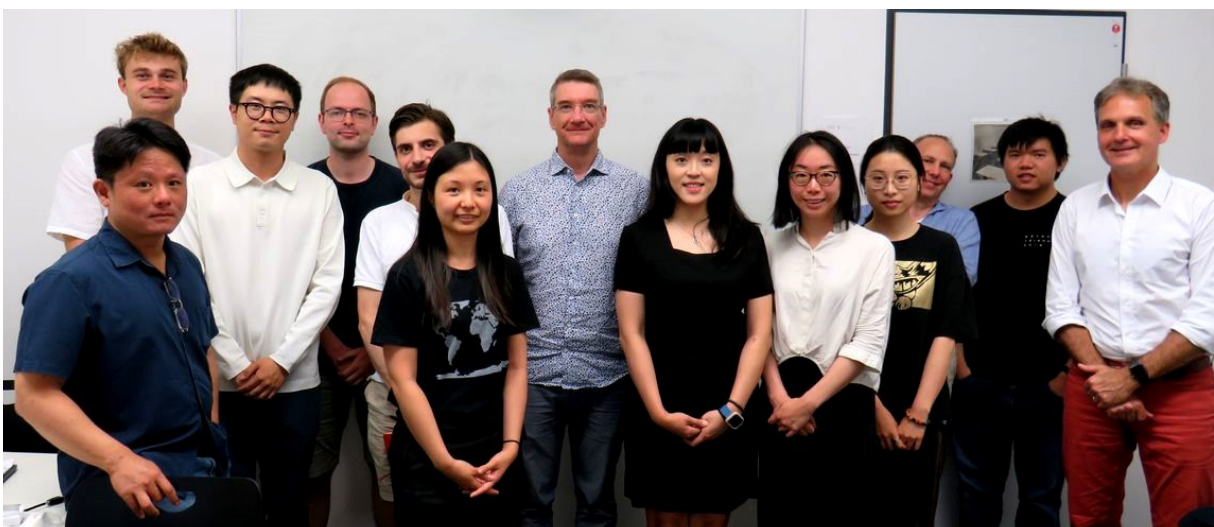
Visiting Fellow Lin Ya-Yin 林昺愷 from the Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies at National Chengchi University presented her research project **"The Typologies of China's Cognitive Warfare: Data Analysis of Three Taiwan Strait Military Drills, 2022–2023"** to ERCCT Fellows and Ph.D. students from the Department of Chinese Studies on Monday, July 1. Her presentation was followed by a vibrant discussion on methodology and relevant concepts.

### July 15 - Dr. Lai Yu-Hsuan 賴郁璇

In the Taiwan Colloquium on Monday, July 15, Visiting Fellow Dr. Lai Yu-Hsuan 賴郁璇, who earned her Ph.D. from the Graduate Institute of International Politics at National Chung Hsing University, presented her research on President Lai Ching-Te's foreign and security policy strategy. Her talk was titled **"Hard Balancing Strategies and President Lai Ching-Te"**.

### July 15 - Guo Jianfeng 郭劍峰

Also on Monday July 15, ERCCT Resident Fellow Guo Jianfeng 郭劍峰 presented his research project **"European Think Tanks in the Process of China-Europe Relations: Research Design"** at the Taiwan Colloquium. His study examines the role think tanks have played in the reevaluation of China-Europe relations by most European countries in recent years.



One of the final sessions this semester featured Guo Jianfeng as the presenter (third from the left). Prof. Schubert, who led this semester's colloquium, is pictured first on the right.

### July 17 - Prof. Gunter Schubert

Prof. Gunter Schubert concluded this term's colloquium with a presentation and discussion on the key domestic and external challenges facing the new DPP minority government under President Lai Ching-te, who took office in January 2024. His presentation, titled **"Taiwan after the January 2024 National Elections - Challenges Ahead"**, highlighted Taiwan's position in the ongoing restructuring of global supply chains in high-tech industries. Additionally, he emphasized Taiwan's geopolitical environment, which is increasingly influenced by the strategic competition between China and the United States.

This concludes our series for this summer term. **We extend a warm welcome to all readers to participate in the colloquium during the upcoming winter term.**

### *Taiwanese Film Director Wei Te-Sheng with BIG in Tübingen*

Wei Te-Sheng 魏德聖, one of Taiwan's most renowned and celebrated filmmakers, visited Tübingen on Wednesday, June 26, to present his new feature film **BIG** at the local movie theater Kino Museum.

BIG tells the poignant story of six families whose children are battling cancer, coming together in a hospital ward. The film was warmly received by the local audience, who participated enthusiastically in the Q&A session afterward, with elegant translation provided by Mr. Achim Kehlenbach.



On the left, Wei Te-Sheng (white shirt) and Achim Kehlenbach engage in the Q&A session. On the right, a group photo with some particularly enthusiastic fans of director Wei.

## Taiwan Europe Connectivity Workshop 2024

As a real highlight in a busy semester, the ERCCT team was pleased to welcome thirteen young scholars from Taiwan and Europe to the third ERCCT **Taiwan Europe Connectivity Workshop**. The workshop was held from 8 to 13 July.

From July 8 to 12, the ERCCT continued its Taiwan Europe Connectivity Workshop series, hosting 13 aspiring scholars from various institutions in Taiwan and Europe at the picturesque university guesthouse. This event provided a platform for participants to present and discuss their research projects with each other and ERCCT Fellows.

The workshop began with warm welcoming remarks from ERCCT Co-Director Prof. Tseng Yu-chin. Koh Hyemin from the Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies at National Chengchi University delivered the first presentation, discussing "China's Cognitive Warfare and Taiwan's Elections in 2024". Continuing the panel on Cross-Strait

Relations, Ku Ming-I from the International Doctoral Program in Asia-Pacific Studies at National Chengchi University presented "Impacts of China's Cognitive Warfare in the 2024 Taiwan Presidential Election and Taiwan's Response Strategies". Sze Woon Miller from the Lau China Institute at King's College London then shifted the focus from cognitive warfare to Taiwan's mental readiness for actual warfare with her Ph.D. project, "Taiwan's Civil Society and Military Transformation: How Taiwanese Identity and Culture Shape Understanding of the Security Threat". Liu Chang from the Heidelberg Center of Transcultural Studies added another perspective on Cross-Strait Relations



On the left, you can catch a glimpse of this year's conference room. On the right, the participants of the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Workshop pose for a group photo, including our invited guests, ERCCT fellows, and staff.

through Mando Pop studies with his presentation, "Kris Phillips, A Twofold Narrative of Return", analyzing the case of Fei Hsiang, a pop singer who became a hit in the PRC in the late eighties.

On Tuesday, July 9, Lee Shih-Min from the Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies at National Chengchi University opened the panel on Geopolitics and International Relations with his presentation, "Analysis of Whether the CCP's Foreign Policy Represents Geopolitical Hegemony from 2010 to 2023: A Case Study of the South China Sea". Klára Schwarzová from the Department of Asian Studies at Palacky University in Olomouc followed with "An Assessment of Taiwan's Soft Power in the Czech Republic: A Case Study". After a sunlit coffee break and group photo, Fiodar Piacherski from the Graduate Institute of Taiwan History at National Chengchi University introduced the historical dimension with his presentation, "Legal Implications of the Tuapse 'Seizure': Understanding the Taiwan-Soviet Conflict within International Legal Frameworks". Wednesday, July 10, featured two panels: one on IR Theory and another on Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples. Contributors to the IR Theory panel included Dr. Liu Hui-Chun 劉惠純 from the Centre of Taiwan Studies at SOAS, who pondered "How Has Chinese

Scholarship Constructed Chinese-Characteristic International Relations Theory and Its Implications for International Order?" and Lin Yi-Hui from the Institute of Political Science at the University of Copenhagen, who spoke on "Everyday Reproduction of State Sovereignty in Taiwan".



Director Prof. Schubert and Co-Director Prof. Tseng introduce and discuss the concept and programmes of the ERCCT.

Dr. Agathe Lemaitre from the LISE (CNAM, CNRS) in Paris opened the panel on Indigenous Peoples with her topic, "When Categories Dictate Reality: Re-scaling Wildlife through the Example of the Paiwan Relationship with the Extinct Clouded Leopard". Lin Wan-Jou from the Department of Taiwan Culture, Languages, and Literature at National



Taiwan Normal University rounded off the panel with her presentation, "Decades of Relocation: Indigenous Women and Their Fight for Land Rights". Sociological themes were explored on the morning of Thursday, July 11 Chang Ting-She from the Department of Sociology at National Taiwan University presented "Channeling Prison Healthcare with Punishment and Rehabilitation: Care Practice and 'Just' Care Infrastructures in Taiwanese Penal Institutions", followed by Dr. Lu Meng-Tsung from the Institute of Sociology at Academia Sinica, who discussed "How to Make an Elephant Dance? An Analysis of Taiwan's Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming from the Institutional Logics Perspective". In addition to project presentations, the workshop featured contributions from ERCCT itself. ERCCT

Director Prof. Gunter Schubert introduced the center's objectives and programs on the first afternoon. On Tuesday afternoon, Ms. Paula Silvetti, an experienced city guide, led a city tour highlighting the history and picturesque historical buildings of the University and the city. A relaxing punting boat tour on the Neckar River concluded the day. ERCCT team members briefly presented their respective research projects on Wednesday afternoon. A group discussion on "Political Polarization in Taiwan" illustrated the challenges of polarization in Taiwan's democracy. The social program included visits to Hohenzollern Castle and the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart before the workshop concluded with a cheerful dinner at the Castle of Hohenentrigen.



The Taiwan Europe Connectivity Workshop in high spirits at the Castle Hohenzollern.



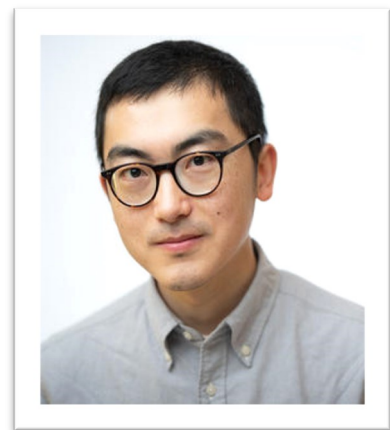
## The TECW 2024 Through the Eyes of Participant Liu Chang

This year, we decided to give one of our **participants the opportunity to share his personal experience with the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Workshop**. We believe that authentic reporting from those directly involved adds significant value to our activities. Liu Chang, a PhD candidate at Heidelberg University, recently submitted his dissertation, which explores the construction and deconstruction of American pop icon Madonna's star image within the cultural and media landscape of post-Mao China. **A heartfelt thank you to Liu Chang for sharing his thoughts with us!**

I felt truly spoiled at the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Workshop, thanks to the exceptional hospitality of the ERCCT. The event, held at the charming Guesthouse, offered a unique, almost reclusive experience that balanced perfectly with rigorous academic engagement and a vibrant social atmosphere.

As a newcomer to the field of Taiwan Studies, I brought a niche project examining the geopolitics of Taiwanese American Mandopop stars. Initially, I worried that my topic might not be "Taiwanese" enough for Taiwan Studies, but I quickly realized that I was overthinking. The workshop brought together a highly diverse and dynamic group of participants from Taiwan, China, South Korea, France, Denmark, Belarus, the Czech Republic, the UK, and the US. These participants represented a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, from humanities subjects like literary and cultural studies and history to social and political sciences, anthropology, geography, and international relations. Inside the seminar room, located on the

ground floor of the Guesthouse, each of us presented brief summaries of our circulated papers,



Liu Chang, Heidelberg University

followed by comments from a discussant and then an open floor for general discussion. In addition to the workshop participants, other visiting fellows and the two professors at the ERCCT, Prof. Gunter Schubert and Prof. Tseng, were also present with their team, offering their insights and feedback on our work. The academic discussions were intense, with heated debates pushing the boundaries of our understanding.

I believe we all gained valuable input for our projects. Moreover, Prof. Schubert and Prof. Tseng introduced us to their ongoing research projects and provided an overview of the structure and programs at the ERCCT, which helped us

envision potential future collaborations. The workshop also coincided with the UEFA European Football Championship. On July 10, after a full day of academic activities, we gathered in the seminar room to watch the match between England and the Netherlands. As we watched, we exchanged snacks from our respective countries and savored Taiwanese tea, thoughtfully prepared by Fiodar and Lydia. Outside the seminar room, the atmosphere was equally lively, with participants fully embracing the

also organized a variety of cultural activities including a city tour, a boat ride and dinner at a restaurant with stunning views of the river, a visit the 19th-century Hohenzollern Castle, and the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, offering us a unique experience of Germany, from its historical landmarks to the marvels of modern technology. My experience at the ERCCT workshop has been truly memorable. I had great fun and made significant progress with my research. The only part I felt



Liu Chang presents at the TECW 2024.

“work hard, party hard” spirit. Judy, Lukas, and Jianfeng from the ERCCT and Shunzi, a recent graduate, went above and beyond, even sacrificing their personal time to keep us company. They introduced us to the best local pastries, restaurants, and spots to unwind after a day of scholarly discussions—whether it was for a fancy cocktail, a glass of wine, or a vibrant club for the younger and more energetic among us. The ERCCT

underprepared for was not bringing presents for the other participants and our local hosts at ERCCT. I arrived with just a small backpack, carrying few changes of clothes and my laptop, but when I returned, it was filled with snacks, teas, souvenirs from Taiwan, and something intangible yet invaluable: friendship and hospitality. I wholeheartedly recommend the workshop to all early career Taiwan researchers.

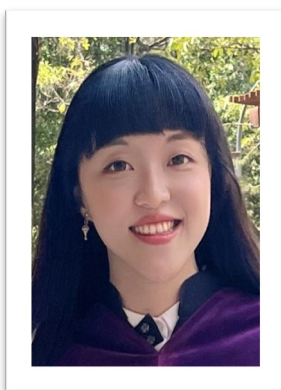


## Visiting Fellow Programme

The ERCCT proudly presents **our Visiting Research Fellow Programme**, providing scholars with a focused research experience here with us in beautiful Tübingen. As a Visiting Fellow, you receive a stipend, office space, and full integration into the ERCCT's academic activities, such as conferences and our weekly colloquium. **We are thus thrilled to introduce this semester's exceptional fellows:**

### Lin Ya-Yin 林昺愷:

Lin Ya-Yin is a PhD Candidate at the Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies at National Chengchi University and a faculty member at the College of International & National Defense Affairs at National Defense University. **Her research interests include Chinese united front work, cross-strait relations, and state–society relations in China.** Her doctoral dissertation focuses on the typological analysis of China's governance strategies in popular culture. Additionally, Ya-Yin is engaged in a research project on China's grey zone strategy, aiming to clarify the operational patterns of China's cognitive warfare against Taiwan through case studies of three military drills, and to propose countermeasures.



### Dr. Lai Yu-Hsuan 賴郁璇

Dr. Lai Yu-Hsuan holds a PhD in International Politics from National Chung Hsing University. Her academic focus is on International Relations, particularly examining the strategic decisions and security policies of small and medium states, as well as nationalism and European Union studies. **Yu-Hsuan's research contributes to understanding the complexities of state behavior in the international system**, supported by her participation in academic conferences and publications that explore geopolitical challenges and national identity dynamics.

Explore [our website](#) for comprehensive details regarding the application process for the **2025 program**. We look forward to welcoming you to Tübingen. We extend a heartfelt appreciation to the **Taiwan Foundation for Democracy** for their invaluable financial support, without which this program would not be possible.



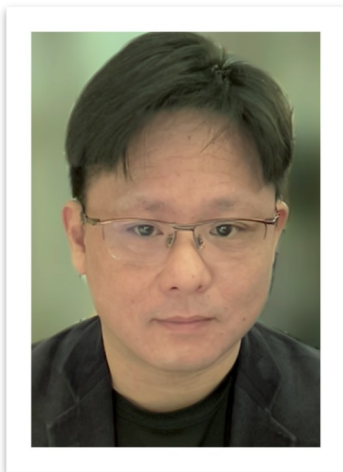
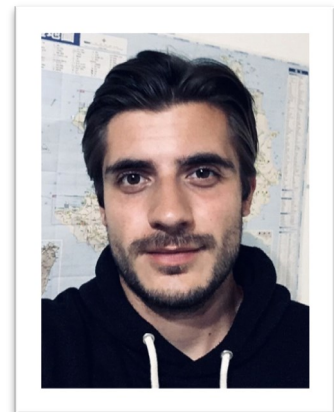
## Short Term Resident Fellows Programme

The ERCCT also runs a **Short Term Resident Fellows Programme**, providing young scholars from Europe and Taiwan with another research opportunity here with us in beautiful Tübingen. As a Resident Fellow, you receive a small stipend, a travel cost support grant, work space, and integration into the ERCCT's activities. Even better, in this programme, fellows are welcome to stay up to three months.

**We are thus thrilled to introduce this semester's short-term fellows:**

### Dr. Alexandre Gandil:

Alexandre Gandil is a teaching and research fellow (ATER) at D2iA – Bordeaux Montaigne University in France, and an associate researcher at CERI (Center for International Studies) at Sciences Po (Paris Institute of Political Studies). Specializing in the historical sociology of the nation–state, his research focuses on the mismatch between state borders and the limits of imagined communities in the Sinophone world. His Ph.D. research centered on the territorialization of the Taiwanese nation–state beyond Taiwan proper, specifically examining the case of the Kinmen archipelago. Currently, he is extending his research to investigate Taipei's sovereignty claims over the South China Sea.



### Dr. Liang Chia-Yu 梁家瑜:

Chia-Yu Liang is a doctoral candidate in International Relations at the University of Sussex. His doctoral project, titled "The Politics of Return of Tianxia (All-under-Heaven) in Modern China", examines the transition from imperial China to the PRC, focusing on the conceptualization of the Chinese Nation for legitimate state succession, which facilitated the identification with past tianxia empires. Liang holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from National Taiwan University and a Master's degree in Film and Literature from the University of Essex. He is a research fellow at the Centre for Contextual Theology in Taiwan. His research interests include comparative political theories, political theologies, international philosophy, global conceptual history, empire studies, and Sinophone studies.



## Dr. Liang Chia-Yu on His Stay at the ERCCT

Below, our short-term fellow Dr. Liang Chia-Yu from University of Sussex, shares his experience here at the ERCCT and in the charming city of Tübingen.



Dr. Liang at the TECW 2024.

Dr. Lee Po-Han who encouraged me to apply for this fellowship when I was about to submit my thesis draft for my viva voce at the University of Sussex (UK). As a student of International Relations (IR) who had spent five years analyzing the Chinese discourse of *tianxia* (All-under-Heaven) through the lens of political theology, I seemed to have only an indirect academic connection to Taiwan studies. In fact, before the fellowship, my only knowledge of Tübingen was that it is where Jürgen Moltmann, the acclaimed Protestant theologian, was based.

Although I was not very familiar with the centre and the city, I felt that, after five years dedicated to the study of China, I wanted to turn my focus to Taiwan and bring it from the margins of IR

My participation at the ERCCT as a short-term fellow (May to July 2024) was unexpected on the one hand, yet a true blessing on the other. It was Dr. Lee Po-Han who encouraged me to apply for this fellowship when I was about to submit my thesis draft for my viva voce at the University of Sussex (UK). As a student of International Relations (IR) who had spent five years analyzing the Chinese discourse of *tianxia* (All-under-Heaven) through the lens of political theology, I seemed to have only an indirect academic connection to Taiwan studies. In fact, before the fellowship, my only knowledge of Tübingen was that it is where Jürgen Moltmann, the acclaimed Protestant theologian, was based. Although I was not very familiar with the centre and the city, I felt that, after five years dedicated to the study of China, I wanted to turn my focus to Taiwan and bring it from the margins of IR scholarship to the centre. Therefore, I composed an outline proposing to theorize Taiwan's positionality in the international community as one of structural marginality, caught in the competition for legitimate order between the Westphalian and East Asian interstate systems in the making of modern international order. As it was an attempt on the theoretical front, I was truly excited when I was informed of the ERCCT's acceptance of my proposal. Thus, my time in Tübingen began, which proved to be a rare stroke of luck for me. Apart from the charm of the city, I benefited greatly from discussions with colleagues at the centre, both during wonderful events, such as the weekly colloquium and the week-long Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Workshop, as well as in private ad hoc conversations. The centre, with its resident post-doctoral researchers and short-term fellows who study Taiwan on multiple issues from diverse perspectives and approaches, is a hub of knowledge exchange, network formation, and intellectual debate. I particularly benefited from the questions and challenges posed by Professor Gunter Schubert and other researchers at the centre regarding my presentation,

which greatly helped me better situate my research project within IR scholarship. Additionally, the insights shared by other researchers—ranging from the historical analysis of Kinmen’s development to the European think tanks’ shifting focus on addressing the Cross-Strait issue, from legislation on assisted reproductive technology to the experiences of white-collar migrant workers—significantly expanded my appreciation of Taiwan studies. Beyond the academic interactions, the social events, whether organized by the centre or informally among colleagues, were also noteworthy. The highlight was undoubtedly the dinner following the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Workshop, held at a restaurant in a historically significant mansion where traditional dishes were served—a rare opportunity to savor. Apart from that, the casual coffee or beer gatherings under the German summer sun have become an important part of my fond memories of my time in Tübingen. As I now begin my post-doctoral work at the National Sun Yat-sen University in Kaohsiung, I look forward to reuniting with some of the colleagues I met in Tübingen, and I hope to return to the ERCCT for different programs — and for Mettbrötchen!



Mett is a popular German delicacy made from minced raw pork, seasoned with salt and black pepper. It is often spread on halves of a bread roll, sometimes topped with raw onions, creating a dish known as Mettbrötchen. **Dr. Liang enjoyed it immensely - why not be the next to try it here in Tübingen?**

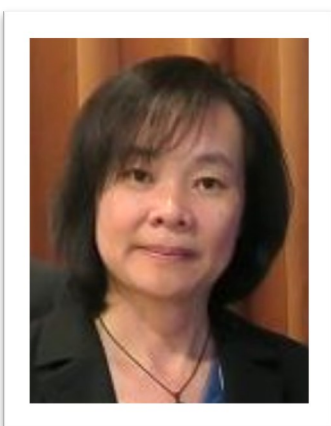
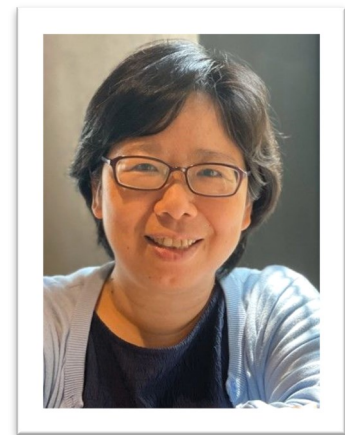
**For more information on our Visiting Scholars Programme, follow this [link](#).**

## Visiting Scholars Programme

**The ERCCT also welcomes Taiwanese and European Visiting Scholars who join us in Tübingen during the academic term.** These scholars contribute by delivering lectures or hosting brief seminars. Crucially, they actively participate in the Taiwan Colloquium, where they present their research, encompassing content, theory, and methodology. Moreover, they engage in discussions and evaluations of the ERCCT Research Fellows' projects, assisting them in preparing for fieldwork or assessing data collected from the field.

### **Prof. Huang Yu-Ling 黃于玲:**

Huang Yu-Ling is an Associate Professor at the School of Medicine of National Cheng Kung University, where she is also affiliated with the Gender and Women Studies Center. Her research interests include the sociology of health and medicine, sociology of knowledge and policy making, medical humanities and social medicine, gender studies, and COVID governance. As a sociologist teaching and researching at the medical school, she participates in several interdisciplinary research projects, including reproductive healthcare and policies, health communication of the HPV vaccine, elderly healthcare in Taiwan, and human rights and COVID governance.



### **Prof. Tseng Yen-Fen 曾嬾芬:**

Yen-Fen Tseng is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at National Taiwan University. She received her PhD in sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research interests focus on migration within Asia and migration policy, particularly skilled migration to and from Taiwan. Her publications on skilled migration include "Settlement Intentions among Taiwanese Skilled Migrants in Tokyo and Hong Kong" and "Shanghai Rush: Skilled Migrants in a Fantasy City". She is currently studying skilled migrants from Southeast Asia to Taiwan, focusing on those taking the study–migration pathway, examining the gap between skilled immigration policy and lived migratory experiences among these skilled migrants in Taiwan.





## TÜBINGEN RESEARCH NOTES

### **Dr. Alexandre Gandil: Implications and Contributions of Delving into the Republic of China Beyond Taiwan**

What is left to say about the Taiwanization (Taiwan bentuhua 台灣本土化) of the Republic of China? Nearly twenty years after the publication of John Makeham and A-Chin Hsiao's seminal edited volume (2005), the unfinished business of indigenizing politics and culture in Taiwan has been extensively documented by social science scholars, through various case studies—including memory spaces, history textbooks, and passport stickers. However, one specific category of remnants from a Republic of China that once claimed to be the sole legitimate representative of the Chinese nation has remained largely untouched by academia: island territories controlled by Taipei, but located beyond Taiwan proper (i.e., beyond its borders as a former Japanese colony).

These island territories are situated in two distinct areas: first, the three inhabited archipelagos of Kinmen (Jinmen 金門), Wuqiu 烏坵, and Matsu (Mazu 馬祖), which lie off the coast of the Fujian province (People's Republic of China); and second, the two uninhabited atoll of Pratas (Dongsha Qundao 東沙群

島) and island of Itu Aba (Taiping Dao 太平島), located in the South China Sea.



A map showcasing the claimed territory of the Republic of China at the now-abandoned Documentation Center for Political Warfare (xinzhhan ziliao guan 心戰資料館), Kinmen, January 2018.

Despite intrinsic differences between and within these islands, all of them contribute to a non-congruence between national and political units across the Taiwan Strait and beyond – that is, between the limits of the Taiwanese imagined community and the state borders of the Republic of China.

From my 2015 master's dissertation to my current postdoc project, this issue



has been at the core of my research agenda in political science.

My doctoral research (2016–2022), which focused on the specific case of Kinmen, led me to investigate and question two purportedly intrinsic links: between the Republic of China and Taiwan, as well as between the democratization and Taiwanization of the regime. Actually, from 1949 to 1992, the transformations of the Republic of China as a state occurred within a strictly Taiwanese framework, i.e., excluding other island territories under Taipei’s effective jurisdiction. On the one hand, Kinmen, Wuqiu, and Matsu were subjected to a military-type exceptional administrative regime (“war zone administration,” *zhāndì zhèngwù* 戰地政務); on the other hand, the islands in the South China Sea were—

and still are—home to no permanent civilian population. As a consequence, academics studying the Taiwanization of the Republic of China overlook these island territories in their analyses, since the processes they study overlooked them in the first place.

This issue takes on even greater significance within the field of Taiwan Studies, which is both a product of and a vehicle for Taiwanization. Within this realm, the territories composing the “Republic of China (beyond Taiwan)” might not even be considered legitimate objects of study.

The fact that the logos of research institutions and programs focusing on Taiwan showcase a map which rarely extends beyond the immediate surroundings of Taiwan Island—i.e., to include Penghu, Green Island, and



An illustration of the unexpected and overlooked Taiwanization of Kinmen: Taiwan Island’s map on a Kinmen Shuttle Bus. Kinmen, October 2017.



Orchid Island at most—is quite telling in this regard, with the ERCCT being an exception.

I challenge these underlying assumptions by positing that the three Fujian coastal archipelagos and the two islands in the South China Sea controlled by Taipei, as fragments of a state territory that extends beyond the limits of the imagined community it is supposed to convey, can serve as heuristic cases in the study of nation–state building processes. How do state actors and political societies address this territorial mismatch? To what extent do they accept it, challenge it, or ignore it?

#### References

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MAKEHAM, J. and CHIAU, A. (eds) (2005) *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

By asking these research questions, I, like some of my interviewees, have decided to confront the “discomfort” of political borders “not sinking into” the imagined cartography of the Taiwan issue (Ahmed, 2004, p. 148), which positions a Mainland China to a Taiwan Island facing one another across the median line of the Strait.

As my resident fellowship at the ERCCT comes to an end, and thanks to the invaluable discussions and debates that I had with its members over the past three months, I am now able to name one of my main epistemological drivers — queering Taiwan studies.

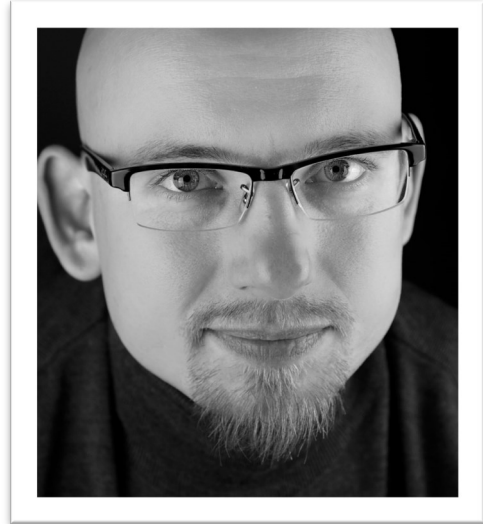
**The author, Dr. Alexandre Gandil, was a short-term resident fellow at the ERCCT. If you're interested in learning more about him as a researcher or about the program, please flip back to the Short-term Resident Fellows Programme section.**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ***ERCCT New Staff Announcement***

We are pleased to announce that Dr. André Beckershoff has rejoined the University of Tübingen as a postdoctoral researcher at the European Research Center on Contemporary Taiwan. Beckershoff, who has an academic background in Political Science with studies in Münster and Toulouse, previously completed his PhD at the University of Tübingen. His doctoral research, conducted as an ERCCT Research Fellow, focused on social movements



in Taiwan, explored through the lens of critical political economy. His book *Social Forces in the Re-Making of Cross-Strait Relations: Hegemony and Social Movements in Taiwan* was published by Routledge in 2023. **In August 2024, Beckershoff returned to Tübingen to participate in the research project *Intimacy-Mobility-State Nexus in the Context of Democratic and Authoritarian States: A Case Study of China and Taiwan* led by Jun.-Prof Tseng Yu-chin.** His research aims to explore intimacy practices of migrant workers, with a particular emphasis on how various living arrangements, often shaped by the intervention of competing state bureaucracies, facilitate different types of intimacy.





## CCKF - ERCCT Partner Institutions

The European Research Center on Contemporary Taiwan (ERCCT) is dedicated to advancing postgraduate social science research with a specific focus on contemporary Taiwan. The ERCCT prioritizes research in the fields of politics and law, economics, society, and cross-strait relations. By providing a crucial platform for doctoral and postdoctoral students, the ERCCT fosters academic dialogue covering theory, methodology, and content related to ongoing research projects.

A primary goal of the ERCCT is to prepare students from Europe and Taiwan for fieldwork, assess empirical findings gathered during their research, and offer support for publishing their work through globally recognized publishing houses. Through the [Visiting Fellow Programme](#), Ph.D. and Postdoc students from our Taiwanese partner institutions are encouraged to spend approximately one month at the ERCCT. Concurrently, ERCCT Resident Fellows have the opportunity to participate in the [Tutorial System](#) organized by the center's partner institutions during their periods of fieldwork in Taiwan.

Below you can find a list of our noteworthy partners in Taiwan, with whom Memorandums of Understanding have been formally established and are renewed every five years. These partnerships can also be the foundation for further cooperation with other interested bodies at the University of Tübingen.



### **Academia Sinica**

- Institute of Political Science
- Institute of Sociology
- Institutum Iurisprudentiae

### **National Taiwan University**

- College of Social Sciences
- Department of Political Science
- Department of Sociology
- College of Law
- Global Asia Research Center
- Graduate Institute of National Development



- Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies
- Graduate Institute of Development Studies

### **National Chung-Hsing University**

- Graduate Institute of International Politics



### **National Cheng-Kung University**

- College of Social Sciences
- Department of Law
- Department of Political Science



### **National Chengchi University**

- College of Social Sciences
- Department Political Science
- Taiwan Studies Center

### **National Sun Yat-Sen University**

- College of Social Sciences
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- Department of Sociology



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