Keywording Taiwan

26th annual conference of the

North American Taiwan Studies Association (NATSA)

May 22-24, 2020

University of California-Irvine

Important dates

Submission deadline: December 15, 2019

Notification of first-round acceptance: February 21, 2020

Notification of final-round acceptance: March 8, 2020

Travel grant application deadline: March 24, 2020

Notification of travel grant results: March 29, 2020

Early-bird registration deadline: March 31, 2020

Full paper (4000-6000 words, excluding references) deadline: April 7, 2020

Regular registration deadline: April 10, 2020

Conference: May 22-24, 2020

Conference Theme: Keywording Taiwan

The 26th NATSA annual conference – Keywording Taiwan – aims to identify core issues, historical turning points, critical populations, and fundamental theoretical arguments on Taiwan amongst transregional and interdisciplinary scholarship. As both a geopolitical margin of imperial orders and an economic hub between competing powers, Taiwan has witnessed diverse dynamism and key transitions on various levels. During the past quarter-century, Taiwan studies

has contested heterogeneous historical experiences and generate productive dialogues across various disciplines and issues.

The act of "keywording Taiwan" challenges scholars to synthesize decades of literature and, from there, offer cutting-edge research to answer fundamental questions in studying Taiwan: how do keywords inform one's positionality within a certain discipline? How does a keyword serve as a conceptual paradigm that articulates certain spatiality and temporality? How do keywords privilege some and leave others behind? For instance, the posthumanism has offered a different approach to studying Taiwan. Yet, it does not promote binarism, but focuses on its relationship with Taiwan's unique environment and human ecology. Keywording is therefore not a fixed concept, but a restless confrontation from within. Recognizing the limited applicability of existing dominant theoretical, epistemological, and methodological frameworks, keywording is an attempt to deconstruct, recontextualize and create frameworks to examine recurring issues for Taiwan studies.

We also hope to identify the under-studied keywords in Taiwan studies and interrogate both the contingency and the limitation of such exclusion. We encourage discussions to approach keywords not only based on its literality but also emphasizing the practicality of "keys": how can the keys enable or dis-enable one's access to a certain route, space or regime?

This year's theme is an attempt to facilitate interdisciplinary scholarship and invite new dialogues to the current framework of Taiwan studies. By structuring the discussion around keywords across disciplinary boundaries, we welcome panel submissions that examine a key issue from different and yet interconnected theoretical lenses or methodological approaches. The uniqueness of each field shall not be erased, but rather be critically reflected upon. Furthermore, we aim to center discussions on concepts of lingering historical importance and heated debates of our contemporary time. We also aim to cross boundaries by examining the occurrence of both local significance and transnational relevance.

Lastly, it should be noted that a "keyword" can be defined inclusively and expansively, including words, phrases, symbols, and events not typically found in standard dictionaries. We encourage participants to define your world(s) using keywords. We welcome critical reflections on the conceptual presuppositions, historical contingencies, and theoretical grounds of Taiwan studies--perspective shifts that enable the field to meet with other marginal epistemologies.

Sub-themes include (but are not limited to):

Artistic Intervention: Art, as a form of expression and communication, has channeled the past, present, and future in various ways, e.g., literature, music, film, performance, animation, from within and beyond the boundaries of Taiwan. How do artistic interventions construct narratives and articulate resistance in socio-political spheres?

- (Re)presentation; interpretation; embodiment; construction/deconstruction; reality, actuality , and virtuality; meaning-making; medium; multimedia; curation; visual culture; architecture; musicology

Civil Society: Facing the political and socio-economic turmoil, how does Taiwan (studies) contribute to producing parameters for analyzing contemporary social activism? How does the novel use of digital technologies serve as a double-edged sword, (de)territorializing the landscapes of social transformation?

- Civil disobedience; transnational alliance; grassroots solidarity; social media; community building and empowerment; democratic imagination; participatory democracy; resistance; engaged scholarship

Crisis: Crises signify danger, conflicts, and chaos, but they also create opportunities. How do crises emerge from, and result in, socio-economic, political and technological changes? In the meantime, who gets to define the moments, impacts and aftermath of crises?

- Rule of law crisis; refugees and humanitarian crisis; constitutional crisis; global economic crisis; global protectionism; democracy in crisis; the rise of populism; legitimacy crisis; anti-intellectualism

Empire: Taiwan has been on the frontier and at the contact zone of competing empires and super powers. How does Taiwan (studies) position itself in relation to multiple imperial forces? How is it related to some of the dominant hegemonic cultures, ideologies, and material practices?

- Imperialism, (de)colonization, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, ghosts of empire, territorial disputes; global order; imperial difference; colonial legacy, colonial modernity; (de)coloniality; settler colonialism

Gender and Sexuality: How does Taiwan (studies) contribute to or challenge our understandings of gender and sexual normativity, on both the domestic and international levels? How are normative gender and sexuality formed, understood and performed, and how are they maintained or subverted?

- Gender and sexual minorities; contesting kinship; domestic inequalities; sexual violence, body-politics; self-identification; homonationalism; trans-modernity; sexual dissidents; pink-washing; campy

Legality: From international competition to local governance, from legal institutions to policy arrangements, the law has been the decisive factor in sovereignty, jurisdiction, and legitimacy. How has Taiwan (studies) encountered and addressed the issue of law? How has law shaped the legal status of Taiwan and its international relations?

- Law and policy; international law; legitimacy; constitutionalism; legal history; beyond legality; economic partnership agreements; jurisdiction; sovereignty

Posthuman: The posthumanist turn has challenged the fundamental definition of humanities and human relationships with the environment and other beings. How does Taiwan (studies) speak for and to the environment, and further challenge the human-centered discourse through a posthumanist lens?

- Anthropocene; non-human; beyond human; ecology; object-oriented ontology; automatism; cyborg; ghost; monster; dehumanization; nature-culture division, animality; primitivity; consciousness

Power: The complex relationships between power and knowledge have been much explored, but how do dominant knowledges marginalize certain voices and produce ignorance and violence? In this light, what has Taiwan (studies) pursued and what has it excluded and thus ignored?

- (In)visibility, (il)legibility; indigeneity; agency; rights; marginalization, empowerment; silenced voices; forbidden history; governmentality; decolonization of knowledge; epistemic violence; disfranchisement

Religion: Religion evinces different world-sense and mediates relationalities of life and death. How do religions shape everyday life for/in Taiwan locally and translocally? How do religions intersect with neoliberal, capitalist, and nationalist discourses?

- Spirituality; theology; ritual; shamanism; comparative religion; religion as weapon; secularization; folklore; religious violence; supernaturalism; new religion movement; religion and politics

Sustainability: Development and sustainability, when politicized, are perceived as two incompatible goals, such as the controversies around the Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals, and nuclear energy. How does Taiwan (studies) contribute to studying the dialectics of development and sustainability and its political nature?

- Alternative energy, ecological economy; common heritage of humankind; historic preservation dilemma; revival of the local economy; (anti)developmentalism; degrowth; environmentalism; environmental crisis; indigenous sovereignty and land grab

Transoceanic: With its history of (im)migration and (settler) colonization, Taiwan is not only a geographical location but a conceptual space connected to multiple worlds on various levels. How does Taiwan (studies) serve as a bridge or a disruption in various fields of study? What is in-between or beyond?

- (Im)mobility; connectivity; transpacific; migrant movement; diaspora; brain-drain; ethnicity and identity politics; inter-subjectivity; high-tech labor; leader-latecomer dichotomy; indigeneity; frontier

War: In an era of restless conflicts and great-power competition, wars in different forms are taking place in ways that are familiar yet morphing. How does Taiwan (studies) have a meaningful dialogue with the rest of the world to make sense of the wars that are haunting and troubling us?

- Information warfare; (new) Cold War; trade war; middle power state; security cooperation; WWI and national self-determination, WWII and war responsibilities; inter-war and postwar; war memories; post-trauma; transitional justice

Review criteria

Your proposal will be reviewed by two external reviewers based on the four criteria below:

Theoretical clarity (1-5 points)

Proposal structure & flow (1-5 points)

Feasibility and contribution to the literature (1-5 points)

Relevance to our conference theme "Keywording Taiwan" and subthemes (1-5 points)

Submission
- Submission link for individual papers: https://tinyurl.com/natsa20indiv
  Submit a 300- to 400-word abstract with up to six keywords, and include one potential discussant for your study (optional).
- Submission link for panels: https://tinyurl.com/natsa20panel
  A panel consists of 3-4 papers. You need to combine the individual abstracts (each abstract should be 300-400 words) and provide an overarching abstract (500-600 words) into one single PDF document. You need to provide up to six keywords and up to three potential discussants for your panel.
- This year, NATSA provides an online forum for individuals to seek co-panelists; see here for more details.

Any questions about this call should be directed to NATSA 2019-20 Program Directors (natsa.pd@na-tsa.org).

Call for Artists

The 26th NATSA annual conference, in addition to the conference paper call, is also seeking proposals for art pieces that showcase one's experiences as a Taiwanese American, as a Taiwanese in North America, or experiences with Taiwan. Selected artist(s) will be offered honoraria of $600 and invited to do a 15-minute performance/showcase of the art piece during the conference. The project aims at exploring "Taiwan" and "Taiwanese experiences in North America" through the lens of arts. By bringing this project into the conference, NATSA looks forward to providing a platform for non-scholarly approaches to studying Taiwan creatively. For more information, please see the call here: https://tinyurl.com/natsa20cfa or contact NATSA 2019-20 Program Directors (natsa.pd@na-tsa.org).