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Introduction

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Exactly hundred years ago, in the aftermath of the October 1911 Revolution (*Xīnhài Gémìng* 辛亥革命), the Republic of China (ROC), founded by the Nationalist Party (*Guómíndǎng* 國民黨, KMT), succeeded the Qing 清 dynasty and made a landmark end to China's protracted imperial era. After losing the civil war to the Chinese Communist Party (*Zhōngguó Gòngchǎndǎng* 中國共產黨, CCP) in 1949, the KMT transferred the ROC government to Taiwan. Since then, the ROC has undergone momentous social and political transformations and managed to survive on the island of Taiwan in the face of formidable international and domestic challenges. Despite the lack of full international recognition, Taiwan has come to play an indispensable role in world affairs. Ranking among the 20 largest economies in the world, engineering a world-leading high-tech industry and posturing high on the rankings of a variety of international indexes monitoring core human values, Taiwan undeniably serves as a proof that peaceful democratization and remarkable development within a short period of time is possible. What is more, Taiwan became the first full-fledged multiparty democracy in Chinese history. Taiwanese should therefore be tremendously proud of their country's accomplishments in the past decades. Nevertheless, Taiwanese continue to stand at a critical crossroads due to unsolved questions of national sovereignty and political status which remain the most difficult issues in the cross-strait relationship. Whereas the government in Taipei has been firm in claiming that Taiwan is a sovereign and independent country, the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) insists that Taiwan is an inalienable part of

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China whose legitimacy belongs to the PRC. Yet, although the PRC succeeded the ROC on the mainland in 1949, it has never been able to enforce its claim to rule Taiwan. The co-existence of the two governments since 1949; the PRC government ruling the Mainland and the ROC government ruling Taiwan, has created a unique state of affairs, which have regularly drawn worldwide attention. The cross-strait tensions notwithstanding, Taiwanese have continued to democratize and consolidate its distinct Taiwanese society and nation hand in hand with preserving its Chinese traditions and values.

On the occasion of centennial of the ROC and the unique opportunity to host the 2011 European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS) Conference at the University of Ljubljana, the present volume is dedicated to Taiwan. The selected papers published in this special edition were originally presented at EATS Conference, which for the first time brought to Ljubljana over 70 participants from different countries to debate over issues that specifically concern Taiwan. Staging such prestigious international conference in Ljubljana certainly gave a vote of confidence in Slovenia and the future development of Taiwan studies at the University of Ljubljana, which will hopefully mature in line with the recent establishment of the Taiwan Research Center. Such developments would have been certainly impossible without the support extended by the Taiwan Foundation of Democracy, the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Vienna, to whom the Taiwan Research Center remains most grateful.

This interdisciplinary edition of excellent contributions will appeal to anyone interested in Taiwan. With articles from history and anthropology, identity issues and political science, to philosophy, the breadth of ground is truly comprehensive. Taken together, the articles provide a good reflection of how Taiwan's political, economic, and socio-cultural development was to a large degree shaped by multifaceted influences of its historical experience. Before 1624, Taiwan had been defined by the Austronesian tribes, the ancestors of today's Taiwanese aborigines. From 1624 until the late 1980s, Taiwan was transformed by the waves of invasion by the Dutch, the Spanish, the Zheng 鄭 family (patriots of the Ming 明 dynasty), the Manchus 滿族 (founders of the Qing 清 dynasty), the Japanese, and the Chinese Nationalists or KMT. The opening article by Chao-ying Lee well portrays Taiwan in the 18th century by providing an interesting critic of historical European travelogue literature about China and Taiwan based on specific

geographic records taken from a renowned 15-volume compilation *Histoire générale des voyages* written by Antoine François Prévost in 18th century. The author reveals how Taiwan was seen in the eyes of Europeans, predominantly Protestant and Catholic missionaries who recorded the island's geography, races, animals, plant, customs, and history of that time and accordingly assesses Prévost's personal observations. Yoann Goudin, Oliver Streiter, Jimmy Chun Huang and Ann Meifang Lin in their original anthropological research offer a very interesting approach to the studies of Taiwanese *Waishengren* 外省人, that is the Han Chinese migrants who arrived to Taiwan after 1945. Using the digital archive *ThakBong* of gravesites in Taiwan, the authors apply various analytic styles to illuminate how *Waishengren* varied in their practices and their social structure from North to South and through time.

The following four articles to a certain extent all touch upon the sensitive nature of identity politics in Taiwan. Under the hegemony of six colonial rulers, and internationally, Taiwan was formally represented as a county, a province, colony or country and its identity formation was legitimized accordingly. The rise of Taiwanese consciousness was greatly stimulated by Taiwan's economic development in 1970s, when it became referred to as one of "four tigers" and thus worldwide designated as a separate economic entity. The manufacture of a new Taiwanese identity has then been further enhanced by Taiwanese leaders, politics and scholarship, bringing about significant implications upon Taiwan's self image. With the watershed abolition of the martial law in October 1986, the national identity of Taiwan has encountered dramatic events and transitions. President Lee Teng-hui's 李登輝 implementation of the constitutional reform in the 1990s which withdrew the claim by the ROC to represent all of China and unilaterally withdrew Taiwan from the Chinese Civil War, delineated Taiwan and China as two separate entities in political meaning. Since then, the name *Taiwan* has been further consolidated as the only legitimate name for the island and its people. Fuelled up by the PRC's claims over Taiwan, the percentage of people claiming Taiwanese identity sharply increased. Moreover, the PRC's antagonistic language of missiles has stimulated the growth of Taiwan Studies and debates over the notions of Taiwanese identity. The phrase "New Taiwanese" (*Xin Taiwanren* 新臺灣人) was designed to articulate an inclusive Taiwanese identity in which all the people of Taiwan, regardless of their identity as *Waishengren*, Taiwanese, Hakkas, or Aborigines, could legitimately claim to be people of Taiwan. (Lee 1999, 9) Wenchuan Huang looks into how Taiwan's different ruling elites have expressed

their power through geographical naming by examining the renaming of streets and urban districts in Taiwan's capital city, Taipei, from Qing dynasty to present. Renaming streets, public buildings and spaces is one way that officials attempt to canonize a version of the past in the urban landscape to support a particular political order. The author further discusses the relationship between the construction of Taiwanese subjectivity and place names, which are seen as creators of symbolic and routine landscapes. Identity politics can also be observed in Taiwanese sports. Baseball for instance, became a useful foundation of self-recognition for the political leaders in Taiwan. Since baseball is not as popular in China as it is in Taiwan, it became to be viewed by Taiwanese politicians as a perfect symbol to enhance national consciousness. Jérôme Soldani elucidates some very interesting points about the political interpretation of baseball as a national symbol in Taiwan in a historical account starting from the time when baseball was introduced in Taiwan by the Japanese. On the other hand, Cal Clark and Alexander C. Tan provide an excellent account on Taiwan's institutional complexities and enduring policy-making problems. Authors argue that polarization and gridlock in Taiwan's politics, coupled with the highly divisive national identity issue, have to a large extent arisen from Taiwan's institutional imbroglio brought about by the authoritarian tradition and institutional legacies from the past. The final article by Jana S. Rošker shifts from the issues of identity to the field of philosophy. The author explores the rise and growth of Modern Confucianism and introduces some crucial philosophical elaborations in the field of the new moral philosophy by the most prominent exponent Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909–1995).

Directly or indirectly, these articles all bring some new insights into matters with a bearing on highly important themes relating to Taiwan's past and present. It is my hope that this first special edition on Taiwan will serve as a starting point for future research and provide new students with a more intimate, in-depth acquaintance with Taiwan's old and new faces.

References

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