

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Doctoral School of Social Sciences

April 1 -May 20, 2025

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Topic:

This lecture tackles one of the most consequential and, at times, also one of the most dangerous conflicts in the 20th and 21st centuries, namely between China (or the People's Republic of China) and Taiwan (or the Republic of China). In March, *The Economist* (2021) called Taiwan "the most dangerous place in the world" and the question of how to best deal with China has divided Taiwan's society more than ever before, leading to a political stalemate in parliament.

But what lies behind this conflict? Is it about territory or sovereignty? Why is Taiwan so important for China, and has this always been the case? Why has a small island in the western Pacific been risking to plunge China and the USA into war since the 1950s? What keeps Taiwan from becoming a recognized state according to international law and has this always been the case? What have both sides undertaken to make their voice heard and prevail globally? How does this relationship affect domestic politics in Taiwan? How do the people in Taiwan and China think and feel about this relationship? And how does it affect people from other countries if they accidentally get into the middle of the conflict?

To answer these and more questions, this lecture approaches China-Taiwan Relations from multidisciplinary perspectives, including political science, international relations, sociology, as well as literature and cultural studies. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the historical origin and evolution of this relationship and its impact on politics and policies, laws and conventions, as well as on people across the Taiwan Straits and globally. Although Taiwan is a small island in the Western Pacific, its future, however, has an impact on our societies at large. A formally declared independent Taiwan, either recognized by other states or not; a Taiwan forcefully brought under the control of the People's Republic of China; a peaceful resolution of the conflict or the continued status quo; the ramifications of all options would also be tangible in our countries.

Approach & Method

This lecture will be run in a blended format using a multidisciplinary approach. It adopts active pedagogical methods supported by modern technologies, including gamification, project-based working in small groups, and inverted classroom peer teaching. The students are provided with a mandatory reading and watching list containing a selection of academic articles, analyses and other audio-visual materials that provide all students with a general and common understanding of China-Taiwan relations.

Requirements

As a preparation for the kickoff event in April, students will be provided with a recorded lecture on the historical relationship between Taiwan, Hongkong, and China to watch and

prepare the following three questions and send them by April 5 to j.marinaccio@fh-kaernten.at

- List three things you learned in this unit that intrigued you and explain why.
- List two things in the unit that you think are very important and what makes them important.
- List one question you have about the unit and would like to discuss in class.

After the virtual kickoff, students will form work teams of 2-3 persons (depending on the class size) to jointly develop a research question related to one specific aspect of China-Taiwan relations and conduct an analysis as a team. For the onsite intensive workshop from May 19-20, students must prepare the following tasks:

- Create a bibliography with secondary sources (academic literature, expert analyses, and other materials of reliable sources) that help answer the group's research question. If applicable, students are encouraged to include some primary sources, such as newspaper articles, cultural productions, historical documents or photos etc.
- Prepare an oral presentation of their group's project that lasts a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 7 minutes, together with an executive summary (3 pages) of their research findings.
- Create five questions with multiple answers for a final Kahoot quiz to be sent to the course instructor before May 10.

Grading

Students will be graded based on the quality of interaction in class, the presentation in class, and the written assignment according to the national grading system 2-5, with 2 being the lowest and 5 the highest accomplishment.

Meeting Schedule

April 1: Provision of a recorded lecture on the history of Taiwan-Hongkong-China relations to course participants

April 11 (10-12 am CET): virtual kickoff meeting on [TEAMS](#)

May 19-20 (9.00-16.00): Onsite intensive workshop (program details will be shared two weeks before the workshop)

Course instructor and contact

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Mandatory Reading List

Brady, Anne-Marie. 2015. "Unifying the Ancestral Land: The CCP's 'Taiwan' Frames." *The China Quarterly* 223, 787-806.

- DeLisle Jacques and Bonnie Glaser. 2024. "Why UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 Does Not Establish Beijing's "One China" Principle: A Legal Perspective." German Marshall Fund, https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/GMF_UNGA%20Res.%202758_April%202024%20Report.pdf
- Hoeffler Anke and Oliver Sterck. 2022. Is Chinese aid different? *World Development* 156: 105908.
- Huang, Chin-Hao and Patrick James. 2014. Blue, Green or Aquamarine? Taiwan and the Status Quo Preference in Cross-Strait Relations. *The China Quarterly* 219, 670-692.
- Kironska, Kristina and Thiombiano Dramane. "How Taiwan Lost Africa, and What the Future Holds for Its Last Remaining Alliance with Eswatini," edited by Sabella Ogbobode Abbide, *Africa-China-Taiwan Relations, 1949–2020*, (171-192), Lexington: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Lin, Dalton. 2022. "'One China' and the Cross-Taiwan Strait Commitment Problem. *The China Quarterly* 252. 1094-1116.
- Lo, William Lat Wai. 2020. "China suspends study in Taiwan over cross-strait relations." *World University News*, April 25. <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200421113224198>
- Marinaccio, Julia, Dominika Remzova, and Yi-ju Chen. 2023. "Taiwan's 2024 presidential election and its candidates: What to expect in foreign policy and cross-Strait relations?" *CEIAS Papers*, Central European Institute of Asian Studies, October 9, <https://ceias.eu/taiwans-2024-presidential-election-and-its-candidates>
- Roy, Denny. 2003. „Taiwan in the Cold War." In *Taiwan: a political history*, edited by Roy Denny (p. 105-152), Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Yang, Linda. 2023. "Breaking Ties: The Fate of Scholarship Recipients." *Taiwan Business Topics*, August 23, <https://topics.amcham.com.tw/2023/08/breaking-ties-the-fate-of-scholarship-recipients/>