

‘Enlightening’ Taiwan: Communicating Knowledge as//in Social Activism in Post-Sunflower Era

One-day workshop on Taiwan studies

University of Sussex, UK

15, November, 2019

Submission Deadline: [extended to 13 September, 2019](#)

Funding:

European Association for Taiwan Studies (EATS) Workshop Grant

Keynote speaker:

Dr Yeh Hao, Department of Political Science, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

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Social activism in Taiwan has attracted scholarly efforts from various disciplines, and the Sunflower Movement in 2014 has broadened the scope of studies on this subject, due to its geopolitical significance. However, one specific area of practices is under exploration that requires a better understanding – namely, the new form of intellectual engagement arising around the time of the Sunflower Movement, till this day. This new form of intellectual engagement – undertaken by scholars, graduate students and professionals – constitutes the phenomenon that this workshop frames as ‘knowledge communication’ and manifests a unique Taiwanese characteristic. On the one hand, it performs the functioning of public media in Western societies, such as the BBC in the UK or Arte in Germany and France. On the other hand, it forges social solidarity in a way like pubs in England and cafés in France in the Enlightenment era. Moreover, it has applied diverse forms of media including blogposts and YouTube videos, and therefore engaged spontaneously in contemporary social and political struggles at a global level. As a whole the phenomenon of ‘knowledge communication as/in social activism’ in post-Sunflower Taiwan forms a multi-level interaction between academia and the public.

Through this workshop we intend to initiate a scholarly effort in reflexively assessing and theoretically examining different aspect of this novel social phenomenon. We aim at deepening the understanding of such a phenomenon, through theoretical engagements, contextual analyses from sociological, political and/or interdisciplinary perspectives, the historicising of relevant practices, and the critical reflections

thereof. The core questions we want to address in the workshop are:

1. What are the rationales for launching respective platforms for knowledge communications?
2. What are the achievements and hurdles of each of these practices in the last decade?
3. What is the significance of these practice as a whole for Taiwan, particularly in relation to global politics, global intellectual history, and other relevant domains of knowledge production?
4. How do these challenge existing discourses with regard to Taiwan and Taiwanese-ness?

The workshop welcomes proposals from researchers, activists, stakeholders, participants and ‘witnesses’ of this intellectual engagement in/as social activism – enlightening Taiwan. We expect proposals drawing on the practices of the following platforms of intellectual engagement with the public as/in social activism (the list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive): open forums such as Formosa Salon, Philosophy Friday, and Theology Sunday; online platforms such as Guava Anthropology, Public Medicine Times, StreetCorner Sociology, Kám-Á-Tiàm Forum of History, Plain Law Movement, WhoGoverns TW, Gushi [Story], New Bloomer, TalkEcon, Kuroshio Focus, etc.

Submission:

Abstract (350 words maximum) should be submitted in English, to Mr Chia-Yu Liang (khoffman0331@gmail.com)

- Deadline for abstract submission: 13 September, 2019
- Announcement of accepted proposals: 20 September, 2019
- Deadline for confirmation of acceptance: 11 October, 2019

Drawing on the academic outcomes of the Workshop, we are aiming to publish the papers as a special issue of the *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*. **Please specify in your abstract submission one of the followings:**

- **Both Presentation and Publication:** The abstract is for presentation at the Workshop (including online presentation), and would like to be considered for paper selection/publication;
- **Presentation Only:** The abstract is for presentation only, and would not like to be considered for paper selection/publication;

- **Publication Only:** The abstract is not for presentation at the Workshop, and yet would like to be considered for paper selection/publication, at the request of full paper submission.

Organisers:

- Chia-Yu Liang, PhD Candidate in International Relations, University of Sussex
- Po-Han Lee, PhD in Sociology, University of Sussex