State of the Field

Is Taiwan Studies in Decline?

Jonathan Sullivan*

ABSTRACT Taiwan studies is confronting several challenges from within and outside the academy to its vitality if not viability. The growing attraction of mainland China to researchers, the encroachment of disciplines and marginalization of area studies, and the closing life cycles of several of the most salient research themes on Taiwan, have all contributed to the sense of a field in decline. This article seeks to provide a more concrete empirical basis for assessing the state of the Taiwan studies field. Drawing on content analysis of journal publications, combined with citation data and a survey of Taiwan specialists, the article addresses a number of key questions about the field.

The immediate stimulus for this state of the field article is the keynote with which Murray Rubinstein opened the Sixth Annual Conference of the European Association of Taiwan Studies.[1] "Is Taiwan studies dead?" portrayed a field increasingly marginalized by the growing attraction of China and a concomitant brain drain of Taiwan specialists, with the viability of studying "Taiwan in and of itself" further eroded by the inexorable encroachment of hegemonic disciplines. Drawing on the opinion of several Taiwan specialists, Rubinstein concluded that "we cannot but be aware that there are troublesome signs of our sub-field's viability, if not its impending demise."[2] For the assembled audience of Taiwan scholars, these sentiments were "sobering and disturbing" indeed. Judging by some of the responses that I collected for this article, concerns about the status, sustainability and future of the field are not uncommon among Taiwan specialists. These concerns highlight the need for more work on the state of the Taiwan studies field, an endeavour that has not previously received much attention.[3] The objective of this article is to contribute some empirical observations and to stimulate further reflections on the field and the direction it is headed.

* University of Nottingham. Email: jonathan.sullivan@nottingham.ac.uk

1 Murray Rubinstein, "Is Taiwan studies dead? The death and transfiguration of a sub-field," European Association of Taiwan Studies, Madrid, 16–18 April 2009.

2 *Ibid*. p. 1.

3 Two notable exceptions are T. J. Cheng and Andrew Marble, "Taiwan studies and the social sciences," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 40, Nos. 3/4 (2004), pp. 9–57 and Shelley Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics: the state of the field," *Issues and Studies*, Vols. 38/39, Nos. 1/4 (2002/3), pp. 49–92.

© The China Quarterly, 2011 doi:10.1017/S0305741011000725

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Some Preliminaries

In this article I treat Taiwan studies as a field of research within area studies and focus on research output.[4] Other factors affect the viability of a research field – such as the sustainability of supporting institutions, provision of training for the next generation of scholars and so on – but research output is the major product and currency of academia. For space reasons, this article focuses solely on English-language research. Narrowing down further, it focuses on research published in peer reviewed journals. While monographs, edited volumes and book chapters represent a significant component of published work on Taiwan, using journal articles as a means to survey the field is useful for several reasons. First, journal publications constitute a larger and arguably more representative sample of research output. Books are published in comparatively small numbers and demand resources that – with the exception of converted doctoral theses – slant the sample towards more established scholars. Second, journal publications are more amenable to measurement. For this reason, citation data and journal rankings increasingly serve as measures of individual and institutional performance.[5] For instance in Taiwan, the "SSCI/TSSCI craze" is a key element in career progression and determining the allocation of public research funding.[6] Third, journals often have a broader reach than the more narrowly targeted readership of monographs. Research communities can coalesce around particular journals, which can serve as a meeting ground and communal space for scholars in the field.[7] To be clear, I do not claim that Taiwan studies can be reduced to articles published in peer reviewed journals. My argument is merely that journal articles are a useful indicator of research output in the field. The following sections use empirical data to address a series of concerns about the field.

Is Taiwan Studies Marginalized within China Studies?

In her state of the field article on political research on Taiwan, Shelley Rigger reasonably argues that "Taiwan studies occupies a marginal position in the China studies field."[8] To exemplify the point, she observes that, for both students

4 The question of what constitutes Taiwan studies is naturally more complex and contested than this. For instance, the question of whether it is a field in its own right or a sub-field within broader China studies has implications that extend beyond the academy; See Cheng and Marble, "Taiwan studies and the social sciences." I should also note that the concept of Taiwan studies is largely a Western construction (see *ibid*.). For instance, in Taiwan social scientists engage in social science research about Taiwan, but this does not necessarily constitute "Taiwan studies."

5 See for example, Simon Hix, "A global ranking of political science departments," *Political Studies Review*, No. 2 (2004), pp. 293–313.

6 Cheng and Marble, "Taiwan studies and the social sciences," p. 30.

7 Anita Chan and Jonathan Unger, "*The China Journal* and the changing state of China studies," *Issues and Studies*, Vols. 38/39, Nos. 1/4 (2002/3), pp. 327–31; Andrew Marble, "*The China Quarterly*'s creation of communal identity – lessons for defining the China studies field," *Issues and Studies*, Vols. 38/39, Nos. 1/4 (2002/3), pp. 289–317.

8 Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics," p. 51.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and faculty, Taiwan is invariably an adjunct to China studies programmes and departments. What about in terms of research output? One expectation is that if Taiwan studies is marginalized it should be manifest in a low level of publications in China studies and East Asia journals. To explore this issue I recorded the number of articles (excluding notes and reviews) published on Taiwan in ten mainstream China studies and seven East Asian studies journals between January 2004 and December 2008 (Table 1). Overall, 225 articles focusing on Taiwan were published in the five-year period. This constitutes an average of 12.3 per cent of the total number of articles published in these journals. There is substantial variation in the number of articles on Taiwan across journals and in absolute terms: *Issues and Studies*, for example, published double that of the next placed journal.[9] These data do not indicate whether that is due to some journals being more or less amenable to publishing work on Taiwan, or reflective of authorial decisions on where to submit manuscripts.[10]

Does research on Taiwan appear to be marginalized? If we look at the proportion of all articles published in the last five years, it is evident that in some outlets research on Taiwan occupies a prominent place. This is particularly so in the case of the *American Journal of Chinese Studies* (46 per cent) and *Issues and Studies* (38 per cent). In the two leading China journals based on impact factor – *The China Journal* and *The China Quarterly* – 6.5 per cent of all articles published were on Taiwan.[11] In the case of the former, I will show that this probably reflects author decisions on where to submit manuscripts. In the case of *The China Quarterly*, which, as discussed below, is the most desirable publication venue for Taiwan scholars, it is likely to be a reflection of the strong competition from both China specialists and other Taiwan scholars.

Overall, around 10 per cent of all articles in China journals in the last five years were about Taiwan. If *China Review* and *Modern China*, which seldom publish Taiwan research, are excluded, this rises to 12 per cent. With a similar proportion of articles on Taiwan published in East Asian area studies journals and given the relative size of the Taiwan and China research communities, I suggest that these figures do not reflect a marginal position. Moreover, concerns that research focusing on Taiwan is being sacrificed for comparative research appear exaggerated.[12] Of the 225 articles, only 59 (24 per cent) compared Taiwan to China or other cases.[13]

9 With an institutional base in Taiwan, *Issues and Studies* aspires to become a focal point for Taiwan research; in which, as discussed below, it has been relatively successful. See Andrew Marble's editorial, "The 40th anniversary of *Issues and Studies*," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2004), pp. 1–10.

10 See Table 3 for survey responses on the latter.

11 In the ISI Journal Citation Report as of 17 June 2011, *The China Quarterly* had a five-year impact factor of 1.84, placing it 2/44 in area studies. *The China Journal's* was 1.36, placing it fifth in area studies. In terms of impact factor, these two titles are the major journals in China studies by a considerable margin.

12 Rubinstein, "Is Taiwan studies dead?"

13 Comparativists will in any case, rightly in my opinion, reject the argument that comparing Taiwan to other cases is damaging for Taiwan studies.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 1: **Articles on Taiwan in 17 Area Studies Journals, January 2004–December 2008**

Journal	Number of articles	Percentage of total
Issues and Studies	51	38
American Journal of Chinese Studies	25	46
Journal of Contemporary China	24	12
Asian Survey	22	11
China Perspectives	22	13
Journal of East Asian Studies	17	21
Taiwan Journal of Democracy	12	21
China Quarterly	12	6
East Asia	12	14
Journal of Asian and African Studies	8	7
Journal of Asian Studies	6	7
China information	4	6
The China Journal	4	7
China: An International Journal	3	4
China Review	1	2
Modern China	1	1
Pacific Review	1	0.8
All	225	12.3

Source:
Author.

Is there a Plurality of Research Areas Represented in Taiwan Studies?

Rick Edmonds observed several years ago that political science research has long "dominate[d] in China studies."[14] It is easy to understand why this may also be the case in Taiwan studies. Cross-Strait relations, national identity issues, democratization and democratic consolidation are major areas of interest that are within the purview of political science and international relations (IR), while economic development and economic links between the two sides fall into political economy (PE). However, research on Taiwan is certainly not limited to political science and its sub-disciplines. For instance, searching the ISI Web of Science database demonstrates a huge number of publications on Taiwan in other disciplines. Indeed, in the past 20 years political science and IR ranks 11th among different disciplines for volume of research on Taiwan, with the most populous discipline being management. Research on Taiwan is being carried out by specialists in economics, sociology, history, women's studies, urban studies, environmental studies, development studies, anthropology and law. To what extent are these research areas represented in the 17 journals in my sample?

To explore this question I coded the content of all 225 articles on Taiwan published over the five-year period. Aggregate findings for five main categories are reported in Table 2. The results are clear: research on Taiwan published in

14 Richard Louis Edmonds, "The growth of contemporary China studies and *The China Quarterly*," *Issues and Studies*, Vols. 38/39, Nos. 1/4 (2002/3), p. 321.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 2: **Number of Articles by Subject Area, 17 Area Studies Journals, 2004–2008**

Journal	Politics	IR/ security	PE	Social sciences	Humanities	All
Issues and Studies	25	17	6	3	0	51
American Journal of Chinese Studies	14	5	3	3	0	25
Journal of Contemporary China	5	13	5	0	1	24
Asian Survey	6	8	7	1	0	22
China Perspectives	15	2	1	1	3	22
Journal of East Asian Studies	11	3	2	1	0	17
Taiwan Journal of Democracy	12	0	0	0	0	12
China Quarterly	6	2	3	1	0	12
East Asia	6	3	1	2	0	12
Journal of Asian and African Studies	8	0	0	0	0	8
Journal of Asian Studies	0	0	0	0	6	6
China information	2	1	0	1	0	4
The China Journal	1	1	1	0	1	4
China: An International Journal	2	1	0	0	0	3
China Review	1	0	0	0	0	1
Modern China	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pacific Review	0	1	0	0	0	1
All	114	57	29	13	12	225

Source:
Author.

these journals is dominated by political science and its sub-disciplines (PE and IR). More than half (51 per cent) of the articles focused on subjects within political science, with national identity, public opinion, elections and institutions (including political parties) among the most salient. Just over one-quarter of the articles focused on aspects of international relations or security. Not surprisingly, relations with China and the security implications of those relations were the most prominent. Non-political social science research topics and humanities (such as culture, religion and history) combined for just 25 articles, around ten per cent. These categories combined had fewer articles than those focusing on political economy.

Political science research topics also constituted the majority of articles in most outlets. Among the few exceptions, *Journal of Contemporary China* had a stronger focus on IR and security studies. Humanities research was represented in just a handful of outlets. However, this appears to be an indication of the marginalization of non-political subjects in these journals rather than a lack of scholarly interest. Consider for instance that the majority of panels at two major international gatherings of Taiwan specialists, EATS and NATSA, are in the arts

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and humanities.[15] Consider also that ten disciplines (including those in the humanities and social sciences) produced more research articles on Taiwan in the last 20 years than political science and IR.[16] These data suggest that it is non-political science research on Taiwan, rather than research on Taiwan per se, that is marginalized in the major China and East Asian studies journals analysed here. This observation is consonant with the view that broader interest in Taiwan is driven by its politics, status and relations with China.

Is Research on Taiwan Becoming More Discipline-oriented?

Nearly two decades ago Lucien Pye observed that "the sovereignty of the disciplines has been authoritatively reasserted [over area studies]. It is not enough to hold the respect of other area specialists. Tenure depends upon the judgement of those who guard the standards of each discipline."[17] The changing balance between area studies and disciplinary research has been noted somewhat ambivalently in the case of Taiwan studies. For instance, Cheng and Marble lament the marginalization of area studies in the United States and observe that, in consequence, "the younger generation of scholars is now locked in to what are clearly disciplinary career paths."[18] However, the authors subsequently claim that a Taiwan studies "increasingly embedded in social sciences" is an indication of the "growth and maturing" of the field.[19] The latter argument is reasonable: theory-driven disciplinary research on Taiwan, or employing Taiwan as a comparative case study, contributes to knowledge about the island and opens up a new sphere for Taiwan scholars to share their work. Furthermore, Taiwan is an interesting case study with the potential to contribute to the theoretical and empirical corpora of the social sciences and humanities.[20] It may be increasingly difficult to study "Taiwan in and of itself" as Rubinstein observes, but that does not mean that Taiwan studies must suffer because of it. Thus instead of asking whether disciplines are "encroaching" on Taiwan studies, it is more useful to ask whether Taiwan studies is integrating into disciplines. To explore this question I use two sources of data. I first report Taiwan scholars' attitudes to publishing their work,[21] before providing a case study of Taiwan research published in political science and IR journals.

15 Data available at the EATS (http://bit.ly/cTsKp2) and NATSA (http://bit.ly/bMuzjn) websites.
16 Based on ISI Web of Science data.
17 Pye, "Social science theories in search of Chinese realities," p. 1161.
18 Cheng and Marble, "Taiwan studies and the social sciences," p. 22.
19 *Ibid*. p.34.
20 The appropriate use of theories and methods imported from disciplines is also, in my view, beneficial to Taiwan studies. For a similar argument, see Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics."
21 A ten-item web-based survey was sent to Taiwan scholars, primarily via the email lists of two major Taiwan studies organizations, CGOTS and EATS. A total of 65 responses were collected. My thanks again to colleagues who took time to complete the survey and to Yuan-kang Wang, Ann Heylen and Jens Damm for facilitating its delivery. The profile of survey respondents is as follows. 24 were mid-career (assistant/associate professor), 24 senior academics (professor), 17 junior colleagues; 36 were political scientists by training, 11 trained in area studies, 18 had a mix of social science and humanities

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

I asked Taiwan scholars "to which three journals would you first consider submitting a very strong manuscript on Taiwan?" This question has been used in other contexts as an indicator of the relative regard that respondents hold publication outlets, although I do not explicitly use it for this purpose.[22] The results are given in Table 3. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that they would first submit a strong manuscript on Taiwan to *The China Quarterly* (63 per cent), followed at some distance by *Asian Survey* (40 per cent) and *Issues and Studies* (34 per cent). These three choices were also the journals that most survey respondents regularly read. There is an effect of institutional location on responses, so that scholars based in the United States were more likely to choose *Asian Survey* and *Journal of Contemporary China*, journals with institutional homes in the US.

It is notable that some of the journals with relatively large numbers of articles published on Taiwan appeared low on the list of targeted outlets. This is particularly extreme in the case of the *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, where 46 per cent of all articles between 2004 and 2008 were on Taiwan, but where not one respondent said they would submit a strong manuscript. Some 28 per cent of respondents said they would submit a strong manuscript to a disciplinary journal, the fourth most popular response. This was almost entirely driven by scholars based in Taiwan. While cautious about over-interpretation in a sample of 65 respondents, Taiwan-based scholars (particularly those with political science backgrounds) appear keener to target disciplinary outlets with their best work than colleagues in the United States, Europe or elsewhere.

A further manifestation of integration with the disciplines is the quantity (and quality) of research published in disciplinary journals. To measure this in the case of political research on Taiwan, I searched the top 50 journals in political science and top 30 journals in IR.[23] Specialist methodological, theory and journals with an area focus (such as *Political Analysis* or *European Union Politics*) were excluded, giving a sample size of 52 journals. I then recorded the number of articles on Taiwan over a 20-year period. The results are shown in Figure 1.[24]

In the 20-year period 129 articles on Taiwan appeared in the top 52 political science and IR journals. Three outlets, *Studies in Comparative International Development* (15), *Washington Quarterly* (13) and *Foreign Affairs* (12), accounted for almost one-third of the total. Articles on Taiwan also featured relatively often

footnote continued

backgrounds; 28 are currently based in Taiwan, 18 in the US and 19 in a mix of European and Asian locations; 38 received their doctoral training in the US.

22 For example, James Garand, Michael Giles, Andre Blais and Iain McClean, "Political science journals in comparative perspective: evaluating scholarly journals in the US, Canada and the UK," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, No. 42 (2009), pp. 695–717.

23 As determined by five-year impact factor in the ISI Journal Citation Report as of 29 December 2009.

24 Certain data included herein are derived from the Web of Science (r) prepared by Thomson Reuters (r), Inc. (Thomson(r)), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA: (c) Copyright Thomson Reuters (r) 2009. All rights reserved. Published with permission.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 3: **Target Journals for Strong Submissions**

Journal	Percentage of responses
China Quarterly	62
Asian Survey	40
Issues and Studies	34
Disciplinary journal(s)	*28*
Taiwan Journal of Democracy	24
The China Journal	16
Journal of Contemporary China	14
Journal of East Asian Studies	14
Chinese language journal(s)	*8*
China Perspectives	8
Journal of Asian Studies	8
Asian Journal of Political Science	6
China Review	3
Journal of Asian and African Studies	3
Modern China	3
Pacific Review	3
China: An International Journal	2
China Information	2
East Asia	2
American Journal of Chinese Studies	0
Journal of Chinese Political Science	0

Source:
Author. N = 64. Multiple choices allowed, thus total percentage exceeds 100.

in *Electoral Studies* (9), *Journal of Democracy* (8) and *Survival* (7). The profile of these journals clearly demonstrates broader interests in Taiwan: security studies (particularly relating to US foreign policy), development and democratization. Eighteen journals in the sample did not publish any articles on Taiwan. The trend indicates an upward trajectory, but there are substantial fluctuations over time. This no doubt reflects events on the island, notably presidential elections and the broader attention that Taiwan commands at these times, particularly in terms of policy-oriented journals such as *Foreign Affairs* and *Washington Quarterly*.[25]

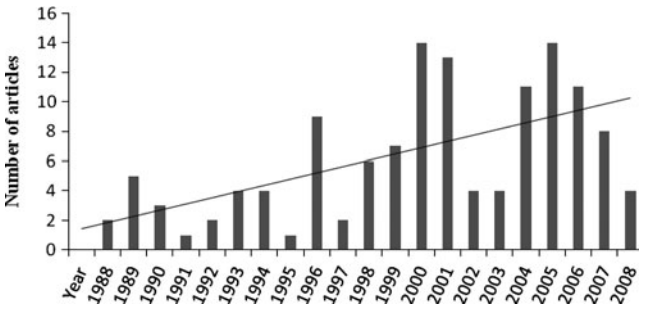
A final indication of the degree of interaction with disciplines is provided by analysing citation data. Table 4 shows the number of articles citing Taiwan research published in eight area studies journals and 52 political science and IR journals over a 20-year period, broken down by discipline.[26] Unsurprisingly, articles published in disciplinary journals were more heavily cited (by a factor of 2:1). Equally unsurprising, but important nevertheless, is the finding that research on Taiwan published in political science and IR journals reached a much greater

25 For comparison, there were 617 articles on China in the same journals during this period. Again, if anything, Taiwan scholars appear to be "punching above their weight."

26 The eight area journals are *Asian Survey*, *The China Journal*, *The China Quarterly*, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, *Modern China* and *The Pacific Review*. This selection was dictated by availability in ISI Web of Science.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Figure 1: **Taiwan Articles in 52 Political Science/IR Journals, 1988–2008**



Source:
ISI Web of Science.

number of political scientists: 387 articles (77 per cent) that cited Taiwan research published in political science/IR journals were other articles in political science and IR. Research published in area studies journals (the majority, but not exclusively, on political and IR topics) reached fewer political scientists in absolute (179) and proportional terms (40 per cent). The effect of publication outlet (that is, area studies or disciplinary) on reaching area specialists was minimal. Publishing in political science and IR journals thus does not appear to reduce links to area specialists while opening up greater access to the discipline.

Globalization and Collaboration in Taiwan Studies

David Shambaugh recently lamented the slow progress in both the globalization of China studies and the lack of collaboration between scholars.[27] Although in China studies the national composition of the field is increasingly diverse and scholarly exchanges have burgeoned, Shambaugh argues that healthy growth requires greater diversity and more substantive scholarly collaboration. To address these questions of globalization and collaboration in the case of Taiwan studies, I recoded the 225 articles in 17 area journals for the institutional location of authors and the type of authorship, that is, single, co or multiple authors. Table 5 shows the institutional location of 253 authors, including co and multi-authored pieces. Of these, 97 authors (38 per cent) were located in Taiwan compared with 91 in the US (36 per cent), marking these two locations as the major centres of Taiwan research, far ahead of the UK (9 per cent). Scholars based in continental Europe and Asian locations other than Taiwan (including Australia and New Zealand) constituted a combined 17 per cent of all authors. Overall, institutions in 15 different national locations were recorded.[28]

27 David Shambaugh, "*The China Quarterly* and contemporary China studies," *The China Quarterly*, No. 200 (2009), pp. 914–15.

28 To date, authors based in Taiwan are more represented in articles published in area studies journals than in political science/IR journals, where 66% of article authors between 1998 and 2008 were based in the US and just 14% in Taiwan.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 4: **Citing Articles by Subject Area, 1988–2008**

200 articles in 8 area journals		129 articles in 52 political science/IR journals	
Discipline	**Citations**	**Discipline**	**Citations**
IR	94	Political science	202
Political science	85	IR	185
Area studies	78	Area studies	79
Economics	21	Economics	32
Development	17	Development	27
Anthropology	16	Public administration	23
Law	12	Sociology	21
Sociology	10	Law	17
Demography	9	Interdisciplinary	17
History	9	Environment	13
Others	62		
All	356	All	505

Source:
ISI Web of Science.

Collaborative research is often personally and professionally rewarding, in some cases allowing multiple authors to address research questions requiring expertise and resources that would not be feasible individually. However, focusing specifically on political research, Rigger noted the lack of collaboration within the Taiwan studies research community. In particular, she highlighted the non-optimal division of labour between Western and Taiwanese scholars.[29] Of the 225 articles I recorded, 199 (88 per cent) were single authored and 26 (12 per cent) featured co or multiple authors. The level of international collaboration (based on institutional location) was extremely low, with the majority of collaborators based in the same national location. Moreover, the number of collaborations between those based in Taiwan and those based elsewhere accounted for just eight articles (3.6 per cent). While collaboration is not synonymous with co-authoring journal articles (other indicators include edited volumes, journal special editions and research grants) it seems that, eight years on from Rigger's article, there may still be room for greater exploitation of potential synergies.[30]

Fractionalization of Taiwan Studies

As I interpret them, the data presented in this article suggest that Taiwan studies is fractionalized rather than marginalized. The quantity of research is not visibly declining and the venues for publishing research on Taiwan are "sprawling and diverse."[31] Yet, while it is encouraging that Taiwan scholars enjoy ample outlets

29 Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics." Similarly in China studies, Shambaugh, "*The China Quarterly* and contemporary China studies."
30 I thank an anonymous reviewer for reminding me of this.
31 Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics," p. 81.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 5: **Authorship by Institutional Location, 17 area journals, 2004–2008**

Journal	Taiwan	US	EU-other	UK	Asia-other	All
Issues and Studies	38	13	2	1	2	56
American Journal of Chinese Studies	10	14	0	3	0	27
Journal of Contemporary China	6	19	0	2	1	28
Asian Survey	13	11	2	1	0	27
China Perspectives	4	1	13	5	1	24
Journal of East Asian Studies	4	12	0	1	3	20
Taiwan Journal of Democracy	7	4	1	3	0	15
China Quarterly	1	3	2	4	3	13
East Asia	4	1	1	2	3	11
Journal of Asian and African Studies	4	6	0	0	0	10
Journal of Asian Studies	0	6	0	0	0	6
China information	1	0	2	0	2	5
The China Journal	3	1	0	0	0	4
China: An International Journal	2	0	0	1	0	3
China Review	0	0	2	0	0	2
Modern China	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pacific Review	0	0	0	0	1	1
All	97	91	25	23	17	253

Source:
Author.

to disseminate their work, the field lacks a flagship journal dedicated solely to research on Taiwan around which the Taiwan studies research community could perhaps coalesce. The experience of the China studies field shows how a major journal can have an important influence on unifying and growing the research community.[32] Practically, such a journal is useful in keeping scholars in touch with research in the field, and developments on the ground and in the profession.[33] In the case of Taiwan studies, where there are concerns about sustainability and questions about the field's identity, the psychological effect of a flagship journal could be even greater.

In order to gauge the opinion of Taiwan scholars on this issue, I asked two questions. First, I asked survey respondents to indicate "which journal(s) represents a meeting point and communal space for Taiwan studies in the way that, e.g., *The China Quarterly* or *The China Journal* do for China studies?" The results are given in Table 6. The most popular choice, by a considerable margin, was *Issues and Studies*. More than half of respondents (57 per cent) said the journal fulfils this role, with support particularly strong among those based in Taiwan. This choice appears reasonable: the journal publishes the most articles on Taiwan, is one of the most regularly read and is a popular choice for strong submissions. The second most common response was "no journal fulfils this role" (27 per cent) marginally ahead of *The China Quarterly* (25 per cent).

32 Marble, "*The China Quarterly*'s creation of communal identity."
33 Shambaugh, "*The China Quarterly* and contemporary China studies."

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 6: **Which Journal is a Focal Point for Taiwan Studies?**

Journal	Percentage of respondents
Issues and Studies	58
None	28
China Quarterly	25
China Journal	14
American Journal of Chinese Studies	13
Chinese language journal	10
Journal of Contemporary China	8
China Perspectives	6

Source:
Author. N = 64. Multiple choices allowed.

I followed up by asking survey respondents if they believed that a dedicated English-language "Taiwan studies journal" would benefit the Taiwan studies research community and the field.[34] A substantial majority of respondents (72 per cent) said they thought it would, or definitely would, be beneficial, while 22 per cent were undecided and 4 per cent did not think it would have a beneficial effect. Solicited comments ranged from "yet another journal would fragment the field still further," to "[such a journal] would help to crystallize the study of Taiwan, bringing together work in a more productive, focused dialogue." Many respondents who were supportive of the idea still voiced concerns that the field is too small and narrow to support a dedicated journal, or said that the way for Taiwan studies to flourish is instead to seek greater visibility via penetration of disciplinary literature. Others supported the idea as a way of promoting non-political science research.[35] The level of abstract support – albeit combined with reservations about a range of practical issues – suggests that such a venture is worthy of further discussion.

Conclusion

The objective of this article is to stimulate further reflections and analyses of the state of Taiwan studies. On the basis of the data presented in the article, Taiwan studies is neither in decline nor marginalized – with the important qualification that I reached this conclusion based solely on analysing English-language journal publications. There are ample outlets for disseminating research on Taiwan and in some journals, albeit ones with lower impact, work on Taiwan occupies a prominent place. In terms of gaining representation in disciplinary journals, Taiwan scholars appear to be highly successful. Although two major centres account for the majority of research on Taiwan (Taiwan and the US), the Taiwan studies community is spread over a diverse range of nations. Research on Taiwan in

34 Borrowing from Rigger, "Political science and Taiwan's domestic politics."
35 For an online initiative that aims to provide such a platform, see *Taiwan in Comparative Perspective* at http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/taiwanProgramme/ejournalTaiwanInComparativePerspective.htm.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the journals I analysed is dominated by political science and cognate research areas with other disciplines under-represented. The level of collaboration between Taiwan scholars, using co-authorship as a proxy, is low, particularly between colleagues based in Taiwan and those in other locations. There is a core group of journals that are the most read and most desirable to publish in. There is general sympathy for the idea of a hypothetical "Taiwan Journal," but also questions about its feasibility, and a majority of survey respondents feel that *Issues and Studies* fills the role of a de facto "Taiwan Journal."

In terms of further research on the field, there are many avenues to pursue, in terms of the research questions we ask and the methods and data we use to address them. This article focuses on one facet of the field; further work is required on other aspects. It does not analyse monographs, edited volumes, academic conferences or research funding. It does not look at trends within the profession, training for future generations of Taiwan specialists or the institutions that support Taiwan studies. Neither does it address more fundamental epistemological questions about what constitutes the field and the discursive and political implications of "doing Taiwan studies." Survey responses along the lines of "Taiwan studies is marginalized in the academy, just as Taiwan is in the world," suggest that developments in the field cannot be divorced from developments in the world at large. Yet, rather than lamenting the vigorous growth of China and China studies we need to consider how Taiwan studies can adapt to these conditions and thrive.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741011000725 Published online by Cambridge University Press