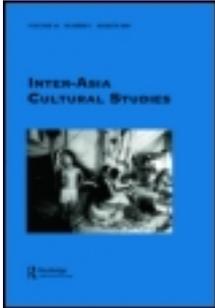


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## Knowledge production in the era of neo-liberal globalization: reflections on the changing academic conditions in Taiwan<sup>1</sup>

Kuan-Hsing CHEN and Sechin Y.S. CHIEN (Translated by Tao-lin HWANG)

**ABSTRACT** *This essay is an intervention to interrupt the blind adoption of the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) by Taiwan's academic regime to evaluate scholarly work. Situating the changing local conditions of knowledge production in the larger context of neo-liberal globalization, we trace the trajectory of implementing the new evaluation system and then pinpoint the critical impacts on intellectual work in this wave of 'internationalizing' research and publication promoted by the state bureaucracy. We argue for an alternative vision of globalization that is locally grounded, multiculturally nurturing and democratically driven.*

**KEYWORDS:** knowledge, neo-liberal, globalization, professionalism, academic, SSCI

We now encounter the second fallacy – *ranking*, or our propensity for ordering complex variation as a gradual ascending scale... But ranking requires a criterion for assigning all individuals to their proper status in the single series. And what better criterion than an objective number?

Numbers suggest, constrain, and refute; they do not, by themselves, specify the content of scientific theories. Theories are built upon the interpretation of numbers, and interpreters are often trapped by their own rhetorics. They believe in their own objectivity, and fail to discern the prejudice that leads them to one interpretation among many consistent with their numbers. (Gould 1984: 26, 74)

### Introductory remarks

For several years now, Taiwan's government and academic leadership have taken a keen interest in erecting various regulations for the whole range of academia, with the aim of strengthening scholarly evaluation systems (including promotion and appointment extension processes for academic employments, review processes of scholarly publications, performance evaluations of universities, etc). As intended, the results of these evaluations, combined with the degrees of internationalization and English use of the evaluatees, are to be used in deciding budget appropriation, individual rewards, and 'phase-out procedures' of university departments. Notwithstanding the good intentions, these stipulations have encountered extensive opposition from all quarters of the academia, as they have been misguided by prejudices, stereotypes, and ignorance, and failed to take into account the undeniable differences among disciplines, the specific conditions of academic ecology in Taiwan, and the intrinsic requirements and external environments of academic development. Not unexpectedly, the most vociferous objections have come from the junior, newly appointed members of the profession. While needing to constantly prove their qualifications, they must accept being evaluated by rules they have no say in the making; worse, if they happen to work in institutions or universities that are predominantly in the

fields of natural sciences and engineering, their evaluations are made according to the criteria commonly used in those fields (e.g., journal articles, as opposed to monographs, are given more weight, and then for articles, those published in foreign journals count more in the scale of scholarly contribution). When subjected to such unfair procedures, these young scholars, being so low on the echelon, have no resort but to abide. But this is not to say that all is well, for among junior teachers and researchers has arisen an unhealthy attitude of despair and resentment.<sup>2</sup> In view of all this, it is our conviction that, for the sake of the orderly development of Taiwan's academia and providing fair and healthy working conditions for academic workers, the issues of scholarly evaluation must be thoroughly examined through public discourse,<sup>3</sup> with academic workers putting in their opinions and participating in the decision making. With this purpose in mind, we have convened this conference,<sup>4</sup> intending it to serve as a starting point for more discussions and debates, and hoping that a well-considered consensus will be reached gradually during the process. As Taiwan has come to congratulate itself for having entered the democratic age, it is all the more obligatory for us in the academic world to see to the further realization of the promises of democracy. Surely, at this age and time, the processes and rules of scholarly evaluation can no longer be matters to be dictated by those few in the leadership position; surely, these matters ought to be decided openly by the whole academic community.

And yet, as academic workers, our concerns are not to be confined to the administrative level; we have to go beyond rules and stipulations. As we see it, scholarly evaluation is not merely a matter of academic administration and scholarly quality control; rather, it is linked with the political economy of knowledge production. Only with an understanding of this political economy, by analyzing and elucidating the dynamics of current mode of scholarly production, can we make sense of the rationales of the evaluation measures instituted by the academic administrative system, and the visions supposedly embodied in these policy changes. To address the whole picture in this way is the only meaningful action in the face of endless and petty measures put forth by the system while we do not have recourse to an effective public forum.

Perhaps our troubled thought can be phrased roughly as follows: with the growing trend of globalization, exactly what new challenges and predicaments await the humanities and social sciences? From our stance as academic workers, we cannot fail to realize that, in order to begin to address this question, we have to raise the level of discussion, broaden the scope of concern, and historicize the issue. We would maintain that, to make any meaningful examination of scholarly evaluation system, we must deal with the central issue of 'knowledge production in the era of neo-liberal globalization.' And it is toward this that we would like to present in this paper some preliminary thoughts for our colleagues' deliberation.

The subsequent discussion is divided into several parts. In the second section, we will first locate the driving force behind the current wave of reform in scholarly evaluation system; we will then point out the present and potential directions of change swaying the humanities and social sciences. The third section will focus on scholarly evaluation itself, with an emphasis upon the controversies surrounding the issue of T/SSCI. We decide to dwell at length on this subject not merely because it has raised pervasive concern among our academic colleagues; we do so for the further reason that, only by bringing the T/SSCI issue to the fore, can we be able to discern the guiding ideas implicit in the institutionalization of the new system and its likely long-term effects on scholarship and culture. In the fourth section, we will delineate the momentum of neo-liberal globalization. With this as a framework for discussion, we will offer our thinking about the right way of globalization and internationalization for Taiwan's scholarship, and we will maintain that, in light of the specific historical and cultural contexts, the process of scholarship internationalization

should be multifaceted, without unduly regarding the use of English or the ranking by SSCI as the most important criterion of globalization.

Finally, informed by all this, our perspective in the fifth section will take a broader range. In our concluding remarks we will go beyond Taiwan, cross political and cultural boundaries, and try to make linkage and dialogue with international academic communities operating on various levels. We hope this will serve some purpose in bringing us all together in searching for the possibility of knowledge production under globalizing, post-colonial, multicultural conditions.

We should point out once again that we do not presume to cover all aspects of the issue; in this paper we are more concerned with opening up discussion.

### **Knowledge production: dynamics and driving forces of changes**

The global cold-war structure came quickly into existence after the end of the Second World War. In East Asia, in order to contain the expansion of the socialist camp (North Korea, China, and North Vietnam), the United States decided to extend the capitalist world's anti-communist defense line and cooperate with the area's authoritarian military regimes, thereby incorporating Japan, South Korea, Okinawa, and Taiwan into its regional arena of military deployment. The long-lasting Cold-War order, it should be pointed out, reigned not merely in the military and international-political realms; it also shackled the mind by an anti-communist, pro-American ideology, with enduring impacts on our politics, society, and culture, and indelible imprints on our thoughts, bodies, and desires. With regard to the cultural sphere, Taiwan was a unique case among East Asian nations, having had little pre-war cultural contact with the US. Subsequently, however, the relationship with the US would soon become the predominant, if not the only, factor in Taiwan's dealings with foreign countries – and this came as a result of several causes: the establishment of the post-second World War Cold-War order; the continuation of the Chinese civil war; the anti-Japanese, pro-American mind-set of the Nationalist regime; and the foregone conclusion of the separation of the two Koreas. According to the data published by Taiwan's Ministry of Education, before 1990 80–90% of all persons pursuing advanced education in foreign countries had gone to the US, making up the largest foreign student body in that country for a period of time. The situation has certainly changed lately, but the number of students going to the US for further studies still account for a half of the total. Thus, the majority of Taiwan's post-war elite had the experience of studying and studying in the US. As a consequence, the American model of democracy with which the elite were inculcated has had a near monopoly on the political imagination in Taiwan: witness the no-holds-barred incursion by Hollywood into the mass-culture market; or take the supposed stronghold of counter-culture, even here all things American have become the order of the day. To put it briefly, in post-war Taiwan, Americanization – or dependency on America – has been pervasive and deep-rooted. By the same token and to the same degree, Taiwan's academic production has been an imitation of the American system. But academic production in American universities has been thoroughly dictated by the Cold-War order and subservient to the national ideology (Chomsky et al. 1997). Once the American way of doing things was put upon the pedestal, then every aspect of the scholarly profession would be just a slavish copying of the American version (or, to be more precise, the paradigm predominant in American universities within the Cold-War regimentation), as in academic standards and institutions, the division of the disciplines, and even the adoption or translation of textbooks. Since the American-educated elite were intellectually imbued with Cold-War ideology, it is no surprise that the anti-communist, pro-American outlook has been so dominant in the knowledge production of Taiwan's academia.

By the late 1980s, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the ensuing collapse of East European socialist regimes, the death knell was sounded for the global Cold-War system which had been in place for almost half a century – that is, as far as its European and American arenas were concerned. Subsequently, a neo-liberal globalizing dynamic, spear-headed by the US, quickly gathered momentum and became the ascendant force, pushing its way relentlessly into those territories that had been off-limits while the Cold War was in full swing, with capital as its driving front and free market its maneuvering field. In short, without the obstacles previously put up by the socialist camp, capitalist globalization was now finally given the go-ahead. Looked at from this perspective, globalization represents a lulling of the Cold War,<sup>5</sup> as formerly segregated regions began to link up with one another. It is also within the context of this shifting greater environment that the mode of academic production began to undergo tremendous change. If American universities and academic production had been controlled by state ideology during the Cold-War period, beginning after the 1990s, the hegemonic force was instead exerted by the dictate of the global competitive market. As Masao Miyoshi, the eminent professor at University of California at San Diego, pointed out in a 2000 article,

Aside from such vicissitudes in specific disciplines, the impact of global corporatization is clearest in the radical change in the general outlook and policy on academic productivity. The University is reexamined in terms of cost and output. Course enrollment, degree production, and Ph.D. placement are closely watched and policed, as if all such figures were industrial statistics. Scholarship is measured by quantified publication and citation record. More importantly, the development office dealing with grants and endowments is one of the most active parts of university. (Miyoshi 2000: 19)

In other words, specialization of an unprecedented degree started to occur within American universities, and the logic behind this development was none other than the unrelenting drive toward privatization and marketization. This being the state of affairs, it could only come to pass that some seemingly objective quantified scales would be proposed for the evaluation of academic performance. The image of the university and its social role also underwent a rapid transformation. For instance, the election of a university president, which has been determined by such factors as academic achievement, vision, and public esteem, is now no different from choosing the CEO of a big corporation. Nowadays, the forte of a university president is the skill to raise funds from the corporate sector; more than that, he or she must have the entrepreneurship to run the university as a moneymaking machine. Once the force of privatization and marketization is at full tilt, with an unfettered global system in place, there will come a day when only those famous brand-name universities can survive the onslaught.<sup>6</sup> We can envision a scenario whereby Harvard University, in the manner of McDonald's, is able to establish so many branches across the world by dint of its well-known brand name. Or, we can just look around and see what has already happened: in a gambit for survival some universities from around the world have entered into so-called strategic alliances and engaged in logrolling with their better-known counterparts – the long-distance cooperation program established between National Singapore University and the MIT being a case in point.

The lately developed countries are not simply being tugged along by the US-steered drive toward neo-liberal marketization; in fact, they have been knowingly imitating and adopting the American model. Under pressure to out-compete one another, countries such as Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea, and even China have incorporated academic production into the calculation of their national competitiveness – which, it goes without saying, means that a system for quantifying and rewarding academic production has already been set up. Thus, for each school and institution, budget allocation and even its likelihood to remain 'in the market' are determined according to this system. In order to make the grade

for global competition, some universities in Taiwan have signed up for various excellence-in-achievement projects to be awarded by the government, hoping to use these projects to boost their international standings.<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, some universities have opted to combine their operations, attempting thereby to gain more weight in the international rating scale.<sup>8</sup> With regard to individual researchers and teachers in the humanities and social sciences, evaluation systems pegged to such simplified and quantifiable databases as SSCI, A&HCI, TSSCI, etc, are used for the sake of uniformity and, as it were, safety in numbers. As these fields have been recently unsettled by a general post-colonial paradigm shift, and more specifically by a nativist assertion predicated on the uniqueness of Taiwanese history and society, we would have expected Taiwan's academia to have carried out extensive debates on these issues and, more importantly, to have gone on to re-examine the relationship between knowledge production in Taiwan and American post-colonialism. But this has not been the case. As things stand, the frenzy for academic internationalization would only lead to the facile equating of 'Americanization' and 'internationalization.'<sup>9</sup>

Our discussion so far serves to trace the vector of the dynamic driving the latest wave of change in academic production; it should be clear by now that it has been propelled by forces coming from outside Taiwan, especially the ripple effects of the change in American academic system. This said, there is no denying that post-1990s cross-strait competition has also been an accelerating factor, as pressure was put upon Taiwan while China was investing enormous resources in key research universities.<sup>10</sup> A further question, then, needs to be addressed: how is the logic of neo-liberal globalization redefining academic production, particularly in relation to the humanities and social sciences? If everything is to be arbitrated by market, productivity, and profit, the inevitable outcome will be as follows. While previously national universities have been financed by taxpayers' money and thus able to maintain a relative degree of independence in research and teaching without kowtowing to the command of market, now, subject to the sway of privatization, these same universities will need to rearrange their priorities – as, when deciding what to put on the front burner of academic development, they will have to ponder such questions as which courses are drawing the largest numbers of students, which fields and faculty members can bring in the largest amounts of funds, etc.<sup>11</sup> In a quid pro quo, universities are becoming in effect the R&D arms of the industrial sector, which in return provides monetary contributions, and this is one of the ways in which academic production is being redefined.<sup>12</sup> Under such circumstances, the faculties in the humanities and social sciences are called upon to deliver any manner of goods to the corporate sector: to serve as public or private think tanks or research departments for industry; to do packaging jobs for industry through socio-cultural analysis of market potential; even to subject themselves to the paradigm hegemony of business administration schools. In connection with all this, the long-assumed responsibility of the humanities and social sciences in conducting reflexive/progressive social discourse has been sidestepped. Whether such and similar trends will continue to hold in the future, we have no ready answer;<sup>13</sup> nor do we feel at ease to offer any forecast as to how the academic world would account for itself if the university is to forfeit its autonomy in humanistic pursuits and become a mere research adjunct to government and industry. In any event, we cannot neglect to call attention to what is happening before our eyes: those academic disciplines (or sub-fields within disciplines) which are able to rise to the new tasks have readily joined the game; as for those incapable of immediately catching up with the flow, they are doing everything to find a way in. The voicing of critically reflexive thinking – especially with regard to the nationalization and industrialization of knowledge – is deprived of almost every channel and legitimacy. Therefore, without the benefit of in-depth analysis of the matter and with the power of allocating budgets, the government and a small clique of academic leaders are now dictating the way of doing research and teaching, and usurping the right to decide the character and future of the whole academic community.

This brings us to a series of interrelated questions of similar magnitude: with regard to academic production in the era of neo-liberal globalization, is there any change in the role of the state as the appropriator/distributor of societal resources? Under the circumstances described above, how does the state go through the process of arriving at comprehensive policy decisions? How is the state redefining knowledge production? What are the contents of the state's policies? What proclamations is it making to the academic workers? Are these policies predicated upon the consensus of the academic community at large? Again, we do not have ready answers to any of these questions; worse, we have yet to encounter any foresighted analysis of them. We have been inundated, instead, by a deluge of promulgation and stipulation, with no one being able to clarify the general direction. This same situation has beleaguered Taiwan's recent education reform, the undertaking of which was enacted without extensive discussion among qualified scholars, with the result that grass-roots teachers are at a loss as to their charge while still having to bear all the onus. More importantly, once these foregone policy decisions are implemented through all sorts of administrative orders, what will be the effects at various levels? One of the more immediate outcomes is unmistakable. In the name of national economic development, the administration will devote huge resources to areas where the three-way cooperation among industry, government, and academia is most effective, and attempt to steer the direction of research by means of various reward mechanisms. Within the framework of the nation-state, it will strive to integrate and dictate knowledge production in universities and research institutions; alternately, it will marginalize those spheres of knowledge deemed to be lacking in 'productivity' by the industry-government-academia triumvirate.

Oddly enough, though, the subjugation of knowledge production to the logic of the nation-state – or, to put it another way, the commandeering by the state of academic production for the cause of 'industrial competitiveness' – is for various reasons at loggerheads with the marketization/internationalization actively promoted by the administration. On second thoughts, this may not be odd at all, for the conflict of purpose is the expected result of a policy-making process without accounting for long-term effects and auxiliary measures. In any event, we are already seeing the impact of the new trend in both research and teaching. With regard to teaching, universities are compelled by the imperative to compete internationally, and for this mandate they are seeking ways to attract and enroll foreign students, to raise English proficiency of the student body, and so forth. The curricula of the humanities and social sciences are redesigned to tailor to the needs of foreign students, and, most emphatically, English is to be the medium of teaching. This objective, however, goes against the grain with the nation-state's apotheosis of its own language. Consider, for instance, the teaching of Taiwanese literature and Taiwanese history, two academic subjects which are all the rage in contemporary Taiwan. We are not in the least certain about the prospect of these subjects being taught in English – at a Taiwanese university, that is. And we have to wonder: how much curricular material is available in English translation? How many instructors are proficient enough to teach in English? (more to come on the language issue). As for research, the problem is even more complicated. On the one hand, academic research, in the state's ruling, must be directly addressed to Taiwan's *specific* immediate necessities as entailed by the industry-government-academia complex; on the other, researchers in the humanities and social sciences are required by the need for internationalization to engage with the existing and primarily Euro-American-defined paradigms, whose parameters are *non-specific* to Taiwan. In order to publish in the international forum, many scholars have to adopt the analytic frameworks and attend to the 'problematics' prevalent in the Euro-American-dominated international academic arena – a situation at odds with the intention of the industry-government-academia complex. Meanwhile, another mode of internationalization is the setting up of cross-national research teams, which presupposes the formation of common concerns. Furthermore, within social sciences,

such common concerns are usually pursued in the manner of comparative studies. As is to be expected, for any cross-national research team to be harnessed by Taiwan's own interests, a large amount of resource has to be expended to attract foreign scholars to join the team. This, once again, goes beyond the legitimate undertaking of the nation-state; in any case, academic research should not be subsumed under the rubric of the industry-government-academia complex to begin with.

With the rapid ascendancy of this complex, the long-lasting effect for the humanities and social science is abundantly clear: 'research and development' and 'policy relevance' are upheld as the primary objectives for academic production. At present we do not know for sure whether this trend will become more entrenched so as to deprive the humanities and social sciences their autonomy, or even to strangle the free spirit of academic production itself. But worry we do, as any sensible person should. And no one can fail to ask: are the criticalness and reflexiveness of the humanities and social sciences, two of their most valuable aspects, to be so easily sacrificed in the name of globalized academic production?

### **The effects of current evaluation systems**

In our framework of analysis, we see the system of academic evaluation as a mechanism for raising and managing the competitiveness of academic production under the regime of neo-liberal globalization. As practiced in Taiwan, academic evaluation has been executed on several levels:

- (1) comprehensive evaluations of the universities and separate evaluations of their component units;
- (2) evaluations of the various disciplines and academic fields;
- (3) evaluations of the performances of individual scholars, which are in turn hinged upon –
- (4) evaluations of scholarly journals.

Our discussion here will focus on the last two, particularly with reference to recent controversies in the aftermath of the implementation of SSCI- and TSSCI-based criteria.

As far as we can determine from documents available to us, the consensus to institute an SSCI-based evaluation system was probably reached at the 1999 National Conference on the Humanities and Social Sciences. In his paper 'The Nation-wide Evaluations of Research and Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences,' Professor Cheng-Sheng Tu,<sup>14</sup> who had played a pivotal role throughout the conference, incorporated the opinions from various fields and arrived at the following general points:

In light of all sorts of assessments, commentaries, and scholars' public or private statements, we are led to conclude that within the humanities and social sciences there is a prevalent call for periodical evaluations of research and teaching performance – with the proviso that objective criteria must be used for the sake of credibility. This is just for a starter. Secondly, personnel training for academic research and higher education, especially at the graduate school level, should attain a high degree of compatibility; accordingly, research institutions and graduate schools should be brought under a highly coordinated and mutually enhancing partnership. Thirdly, most of the above-mentioned assessments and commentaries are of the opinion that the familiar division of academic fields has out-lasted its purpose, and new exigencies require an urgent academic reorganization toward interdisciplinary integration and the promotion of foreseeing and innovative research fields. With respect to the ecology of the humanities and social sciences, I would like to point out a pervasive phenomenon: We have been all too eager to follow western theories while neglecting to delve into the intellectual basis of the making of those theories; over a long period, the intellectual scope of our humanities and social sciences has been too restricted, too localized, lacking an ecumenical or 'imperial' outlook. (Tu 1999: 102)<sup>15</sup>

On the basis of these observations, Tu proceeded to suggest some concrete measures of evaluation. In his view, some scales should be established for rating periodicals and monographs, with the aim of assuring some of these publications to be included in SSCI and A&HCI. Currently, scholarly writings are divided into three major categories: journal articles, books and monographs, and conference papers. Each academic field may have its own way of assigning different weights to these types of publication, but in light of the prevalent tendency, journal articles should be given primary consideration in academic assessment. The rationale, according to Tu, is as follows: most of the well-regarded journals have already put in place some sort of refereeing system, though there may be varying degrees in adhering to the rules; in Taiwan's present publishing practice, there is still no commonly agreed procedure for determining the worthiness of books and monographs; as for conference papers, they should be given the least weight in evaluation, since conferences, either in Taiwan or abroad, are so routine and unexceptional. Thus, with this three-tier rating gradation, we will have a less equivocal way for ordering the academic world (Tu 1999: 103).

Because there is no refereeing system for the publication of books and monographs, it is consequently decided that journal articles are more worthy of consideration. With reference to academic periodicals, Tu continued to point out:

In hope of attaining some degrees of internationalization, many periodicals in the humanities and social sciences have recently shown eagerness to be included in the compilation of SSCI. This is commendable. Nevertheless, [SSCI] is mainly concerned with publications in English. Given this, our crucial task is to follow its example and set up a Chinese-based Humanities and Social Sciences Citation Index, or one Index each for the humanities and for the social sciences. (Tu 1999: 104)

And so, crucial steps toward establishing TSSCI were initiated. Since Tu's suggestions mostly touch upon: (1) the exclusion of books and monographs from evaluation consideration; and (2) the rating of periodicals, we will accordingly discuss these two issues in detail.

- (1) It is undeniable that, under the prevailing trend of neo-liberal globalization, publication of scholarly books and monographs has been on a downslide as a result of rapid marketization. Furthermore, we are obliged to point out that the so-called consensus regarding the superiority of periodical articles over books and monographs is a mere reflection or even a direct consequence of this circumstance; as such, it has nothing to do with the supposed effectiveness of refereeing mechanism. Looking at the matter in a worldwide perspective, we can see that the essential criteria for publishing scholarly books and monographs have been their theoretical merit and research quality. Among the significant works in the humanities and social sciences which have made long-lasting worldwide impact, an overwhelming proportion were published in the format of book or monograph. Within the new order of neo-liberal globalization, however, the main consideration for book and monograph publication is not strictly their scholarly value, but rather their marketability. In contrast, the impetus for journal publishing has resulted from the favorable condition that these publications are mostly purchased by libraries through pre-paid subscriptions, thereby reducing investment risks and raising profit margins for the publishers. The idea that in the humanities and social sciences journal articles should carry more weight than books and monographs, then, is basically an entailment of the logic of market. But the fact is that, even in today's much-expanded global arena for scholarly enterprise, books and monographs still retain their significance as the media of academic discourse. A few cases in point: scholars still prefer to use these formats for systematically presenting their research results; these formats are deemed necessary for more comprehensive treatments of scholarly issues; and rarely have members of the academia themselves dared to denigrate the value of these types of

publication. Or, to give a more concrete example: at many top-notch universities across the world, the publication of a book or monograph is still considered the threshold requirement for the associate professorship. All these more fundamental considerations are not included in Tu's calculation; instead, the worthiness of books and monographs is depreciated simply for the absence of an objective refereeing mechanism – a reasoning that is hardly convincing. As a matter of fact, an effective, if informal, system of evaluation has always been in existence, whereby the scholarly quality of a book or monograph is inevitably subjected to the assessment by relevant academic circle. For instance, since the establishment of the Chinese Republic there must have been a staggering number of books and monographs published in the field of history, and regarding this we are led to ask: even if all these works have not gone through any refereeing processes, could historians have failed to separate the wheat from the chaff among them? Given that Taiwan has yet to set up a better-designed, more objective evaluation system with quantitative measurement, it is all the more urgent to take steps in this direction. Regrettably, as we try to show here, the conclusion reached by Tu is a non-sequitur: namely, to resign oneself to existing circumstances, to belittle the importance of books and monographs.<sup>16</sup>

- (2) As to the assessment of the setting up of periodical citation index, we will leave it to our colleagues for a more detailed account. Here, our discussion will concentrate on analyzing the external effects, without going into the internal intricacies of its working. For a starter, the service provided by the American company Thomson ISI only covers publications in English, excluding other important international languages such as Spanish, Chinese, Malayan, Arabic, and French – let alone national languages like German, Japanese, Korean, etc. Resorting to an expedient while unable to institute better quantitative criteria, the academic administrations in lately developed countries have adopted SSCI and A&HCI as ready references. Understandable though this may be, we have nevertheless to urge the academic community to seriously consider the ill effects of such a lopsided approach in dealing with the matter. Specifically, the purpose of Thomson ISI's indexing system is to provide service; as such, its inclusion or exclusion of any periodical does not hinge upon its scholarly merits. As a matter of fact, even within the United States itself, where the ISI is compiled and marketed, the academic community has not chosen to use publishing in the periodicals covered by SSCI and A&HCI as the sole criterion for evaluating scholarly achievement – at most, the frequency of citation may be considered an indirect indication of the perceived significance of a piece of research. Obviously enough, the international reach of these indices and therefore their general applicability are all too limited, since they cover only a relatively small number of English periodicals, unable to even begin to show the cross-references among publications in non-English languages. Suffice it to give a case in point here. Suppose a paper has been written in Chinese, translated into Japanese and Korean, published in notable Japanese and Korean periodicals, and widely cited: now, surely this paper won't be covered by the above indexing systems, whose international significance is thus severely restricted. Meanwhile, as we cannot fail to notice, researchers in many disciplines of the humanities and social sciences are encouraged to publish their papers in non-English periodicals. If, say, an American, Japanese, or Korean scholar specializing in Chinese thoughts can write in Chinese and have his or her research results published in related periodicals in China or Taiwan, surely this will be praised as an exemplary endeavor in internationalization. But this worthy trend will not obtain within the context of Taiwan's current academic administrative guidelines. Even though there are a significant number of Taiwanese scholars who have done advanced studies in Japan and are capable of writing in Japanese, they are not sufficiently motivated to do so; rather, they are effectively forced to depreciate their language speciality and to publish

in English periodicals covered by SSCI, which are regarded as the only legitimate media for internationalized scholarship.

Broadly speaking, an SSCI-determined evaluation system will bring about the following unintended adverse consequences.

- (1) It will lead to the wholesale assertion that publishing in English counts more than in Chinese or other languages. In thrall to the dictates of career security and advancement, (junior) scholars are driven to publish as much as possible in English, instead of presenting their research results in local Chinese publications<sup>17</sup> or other influential non-English periodicals. Now, to be realistic, we must beg to differ from the idea that publishing in ISI-referenced periodicals amounts to an indication of national strength in scholarly performance. It is a simplistic equation; further, it gravely encroaches upon the autonomy of academic development, and it nips in the bud the incipient trend toward multifaceted internationalization. As it happens, not a negligible portion of Taiwan's (government-financed) overseas-educated scholars have been trained in non-English-speaking countries; if nothing else, this diversity in academic training should be treasured as an important asset in any nation's attempt at cultural pluralization. Regrettably, these scholars are treated unfairly under the present system with its undue emphasis on English publications. In the long run, if this situation does not get redressed, it may discourage young scholars from seeking advanced trainings in non-English-speaking countries, which can only be a serious setback in the development toward academic pluralism in Taiwan.
- (2) Given the inducement to publish in English journals, it can be expected that research projects addressing locally significant issues will be put on the back burner. It is requisite for most research 'problematiques' in the humanities and social sciences to be framed with clear and direct reference to a history-specific context; it is also inevitable that, while local scholars are driven to present their publications in the so-called global arena, this concern for local context is either dismissed outright or given inadequate consideration. In the mean time, if the likelihood of getting published comes to hinge upon the necessity of doing research within a theoretical framework and presenting findings in a language familiar to the English world, then the concern for social, political, cultural, and historical contexts in the humanities and social sciences will gradually wear thin, and research in these fields will eventually become as monolithic as that in natural sciences. This, ironically, goes against the current global trend of academic plurality and diversity.
- (3) The evaluation mechanism based on SSCI and A&HCI has the further effect of creating within the academic community a new hierarchy determined by non-academic criteria.<sup>18</sup> Those able to write in English and get published in ISI-covered periodicals are deemed an echelon higher than those using their own local language – and yet, nobody has managed to explain why these English publications, by dint of being presented in English and not necessarily as a result of their scholarly quality and actual merit, should confer upon their authors a 'higher' status. This is a snub to locally trained scholars, particularly those in the humanities. Even if we are to accept English as the primary language of scholarly communication, there should be all sorts of accompanying measures. In the case of departments of Chinese literature, for example, the faculties must include enough members who can use English in teaching and supervising, and the state has to provide massive funds for all textbooks used by these departments to be translated into high-quality English. In another scenario, we may as well dismantle all master's and doctorate programs in the humanities and social sciences, sending our future scholars to English-speaking countries to be trained for higher degrees. And why not, if we really want to follow the logic of English

supremacy? What is the point of having our own graduate programs, if they are just a waste of time? But all this is absurd. Sadly, we have to resort to this ludicrousness just to remind those in charge of academic administration the silliness of the whole scheme they are setting up. Their priority is utterly misplaced; its grave consequence will be the ruination of what has been achieved by Taiwan's academic community over a long time. Their idea of the supremacy of English is untenable; any policy based on this misconception will lead to the erosion of what Taiwan has accomplished in higher education and research since the end of the Second World War. It is not for nothing that we have endeavored to use Chinese to train our higher-level researchers; now that we have done this, why are we going to require these same people to write in English, to compete with Taiwanese scholars trained in English-speaking countries and scholars from those countries? We can only see any such action as self-belittling, as a slap in the face to locally trained higher-level researchers.

- (4) To deal with the problems caused by this ill-conceived design to give English language the top place under the sun, TSSCI (Taiwan Social Science Citation Index) was established as a specific remedy. In practice, however, TSSCI has become something quite different from what was originally proposed by Cheng-Sheng Tu. While Tu has called for an indexing system based on publications *in Chinese*, the scope of TSSCI has been restricted to the single locality of Taiwan, thus excluding those covered by Mainland China's CSSCI (Chinese Social Science Citation Index). Most incredibly, TSSCI has been used in such a questionable manner as to defeat its original purpose as a citation index; to all intents, it has become just a grading system for Taiwan's scholarly journals. As there is a grading system for journals, so there inevitably follows a corresponding grading system for journal articles: once a journal is given the TSSCI treatment, then all articles published in it are mysteriously 'midasized,' as it were. These articles are given higher 'scholarly value,' a value assigned with a grade point. But is there a way to grade journals? Technically feasible, perhaps. Still, if we want to get into the business of grading journals, we ought to give the last say to those most directly involved, that is, the scholars in various fields and specialties, who already have a consensus regarding the quality of the journals in their domains. But this is not what has come to pass; instead, the privilege to make scholarly judgment has been usurped by an administrative regime, whose purpose is to rate and discipline academic work, doing this by resorting to a formalistic quantitative scale that has largely to do with certain aspects of the editorial procedures of the journals involved. As a matter of fact, the flaw of the current grading system for journals goes beyond this formalistic rationality; it has the further pernicious effect of leading to ruthless infighting within the academic community. The scholars entrusted with the authority to do the rating usually belong to the top brass of the academic apparatus. Enconced in the citadel of power and prestige, they have vested interests to tend to. They are in favor of the prevalent viewpoints of their respective fields; with self-serving prejudice, they denigrate non-mainstream academic pursuits, make little of journals committed to interdisciplinary integration, and exercise their influence to stifle the growth of innovative, new-fledged critical journals. Yet these publications, it should be kept in mind, are often the spearheads of scholarly paradigm shifts; they provide the incentive for interdisciplinary dialog and bring about mutual fertilization across academic boundaries.
- (5) Finally, the present TSSCI-based evaluation system has a seriously detrimental effect on the advancement of interdisciplinary research. It was at the same previously mentioned 1999 National Conference on the Humanities and Social Sciences convened by the National Science Council that Cheng-Sheng Tu assured us of the confirmed commitment to promote interdisciplinary integration and innovative subfields – a decision, Tu also assured us, congruent with the conclusions of pre-conference meetings and in

agreement with the general attitude of the academic community. To quote Tu's statement on that occasion: 'On the whole the above assessments and reviews maintain that the customary division of academic fields has lost its usefulness in relation to new demands. Therefore, they emphatically call for interdisciplinary integration and the establishment of trailblazing, innovative fields' (Tu 1999: 102). In an attempt to encourage cross-disciplinary research, the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of the National Science Council set up such academic subfields as gender studies, religion studies, and culture studies; subsequently, the Research Center for Social Sciences and the Research Center for Humanities were established, all seemingly intended to keep in step with the general international trend toward multidisciplinary integration. But good intention does not automatically translate into sound practice. In practice, as evident in the evaluation of research projects and journals, what happens is the overly self-protective entrenchment of the traditional academic fields, making it impossible for any multi-disciplinary field to come into its own; furthermore, the self-absorbed, self-aggrandizing propensity of each and every long-standing field has effectively suppressed interdisciplinary knowledge production. To reiterate our misgivings about TSSCI, as long as the various academic fields are dictated by partisan politics, which will see to it that only the more conventional journals are included in the TSSCI database, then those adventurous, non-conformist journals without an 'academic rampart' will rarely be recognized as publications worthy of indexing.

All the problems described above have long been widely known in the academic community, but we have yet to hear any clarification or refutation from the agencies responsible for the administration of TSSCI (the National Science Council's Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and Research Center for Social Sciences). In frustration, we are reduced to asking these rhetorical questions: is it a democratic way to serve the academic community when the same community's skepticism and questioning are disregarded? Has the so-called academic autonomy come to mean that the arbitrary measures prescribed by the administrative leadership must be complied with, whereas the voice of the rank and file can be ignored? While we are reading in newspapers and journals a lot of dissenting opinions regarding SSCI-related issues, is it too much to expect the involved policy makers and administrators to come forward and give an account of their reasoning and action? But what have we actually got from them, if not just a show of disdain and ineptitude? We are virtually in thrall to an academic leadership that is arrogant and imperious in exercising its self-claimed authority but will not deign to engage in open discussion with the general community when its policies are questioned. A leadership so nonchalant about democratic procedure, so lacking in academic vision, and so incapable of public discourse – does it deserve any laurel from the grove of Academe?

These questions regarding the indexing system may appear to pertain only to issues of technicality, but in fact all of them can be subsumed under a fundamental inquiry: are we living in a monolithic, English-dominated neocolonial world, or are we living in a culturally pluralistic, diversity-affirmative postcolonial one? Is globalization nothing but Americanization, a ruthless process to eradicate and consign to oblivion all non-English-speaking cultures? This is not just an urgent question of the normative sort; in many real-life situations it is also a cultural-political question concerning one's self-definition. Chinese is indeed an international language: it is not only used in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macao, it is also used in Singapore, Malaysia, and in the populous Chinese communities in the Americas, Europe, and Africa. Just because the indexing operation of an American company (ISI) fails to include publications in Chinese, must we then take it that Chinese does not qualify as an international language, and that the interactions among Chinese-speaking communities does not count as internationalization? Many Chinese scholars

staying on in the English-speaking world, especially those in the fields of history and the humanities, have chosen to continue writing in Chinese, because they have come to the realization that only in the Chinese-speaking world can their views and ideas acquire an immediate relevance and attract a wide readership, while writing in English will not broadcast their words beyond a tiny group of professionals.<sup>19</sup> Here we must stress that granting supremacy to the English language, as intended by Taiwan's current academic regulations, is untenable; worse, it is inexcusable, for it is a denial of Chinese as an international language, a false and self-belittling confession of inferiority. As far as we can tell from global trends, Chinese is in no danger of disappearing from the earth; on the contrary, all indications augur for its increasing importance as a world language. We do not in any way object to scholars writing in whatever foreign language of their choice, but we must take exception to the manner in which Chinese is denigrated by Taiwan's academic regime.

We bring the above discussion to a conclusion with three major observations.

- (1) ISI is first and foremost a commercial operation without academic authority, but its indexing system has been adopted by Taiwan's academic bureaucracy and used as the litmus test for scholarly performance. However weird this may be, there is a simple reason for it: namely, the academic bureaucracy is mostly controlled by scholars in the natural and engineering sciences. Given their trainings in these fields, they tend to see all academic issues and research strategies as having to conform to a universal framework; they believe that all scholarly discussion can be presented in simple English, and consequently all researchers should be able to publish papers in that medium; finally, they are led blindly to accept the authority of ISI's indexing system, using it as the yardstick for scholarly evaluation. What disturbs us most is that all this will deliver an unprecedented threat to non-English academic enterprise, thereby obliterating the cultural diversity so emphatically called for by the new global order.
- (2) We absolutely agree that, for the sake of academic advancement, there should be a mechanism for evaluating scholarly performance. But we also maintain that, with regard to the matter of evaluation criteria, the consensus formed over time within each separate field must be respected. In some fields, for instance, monographs are given more weight than journal articles. Periodicals of different stripes are variously appraised by different fields and specialists, a situation much more complicated than that resulting from the heavy-handed standardization by means of SSCI or TSSCI. In other words, we should not attempt to apply a single yardstick to all fields, for this will not only deal a deathblow to academic development, but more generally destroy the necessary diversity of any knowledge system. In our view, the purpose of TSSCI resides in the service it provides as a database to the academic community. To the extent that this goal is to be achieved, as many academically worthy journals as possible should be included in the TSSCI database; nevertheless, it should not be linked to any mechanism for grading journals. In addition, the grading of journals should offer incentives to the independent publication of non-institutional, trailblazing journals, so as to invigorate Taiwan's academia.
- (3) In this age of neo-liberal globalization, the academic apparatus and practice of the United States are not transferable to all places; more specifically, its sheer size and enormous resource are far beyond what we in Taiwan can manage to attain and obtain. Taiwan's academic community, just like those of all other areas and countries, must have a clear sense of its asset and potential, and accordingly embark on its own journey and develop its distinctiveness – only by doing so can we earn respect from the international community. Even if we want to adopt the American system, the proper way of doing it is to first cultivate in Taiwan an environment conducive to the development of that system, instead of making a direct transplant. And then we have to recognize that

there are many languages and knowledge traditions outside of the English-speaking world that deserve our great attention. A world left with one single language of English and one single academic tradition is one devoid of vitality, one deprived of creativity. More importantly, we need not and must not denigrate ourselves – Chinese has come down to us as a heritage through a long line and by all means it is an important international language.

### **An alternative vision of Taiwan's academic internationalization in the context of globalization**

If it can be said that the objective force of neo-liberal globalization has been the impetus to Taiwan's recent push for a new kind of knowledge production, and that the subjective eagerness for academic globalization and internationalization has led to the subsequently instituted system of academic evaluation, then we must point out that so far these tasks have been done in such a manner as to ridicule the true intents of globalization and internationalization. Here is our general position: in no way do we object to the internationalization of Taiwan's academic enterprise; we would wholeheartedly pitch for it as a way to open up our hitherto relatively restricted academic vista. Having said this, we want to emphasize that any program for internationalization should be based on a clear-headed assessment of Taiwan's internal reality.

We do think that the overall trend of 'de-linking with Asia/joining up with America' in post-Second World War Taiwan has left long-term historical impacts. In the spheres of politics and culture, the force of these impacts has been tremendous for a long time; in knowledge production, it has not been much different. Total Americanization has endangered the continuing existence of a locally fostered historical consciousness; in the mean time, because of the dearth of reflective examination of the goings-on, Taiwan has muddled through its 'de-linking with Asia/joining up with America' in a manner that is absent of critical assessment, injurious to subjective integrity, and contrary to the striving for the enhancement of local tradition. But all this is not what should have been; rather, it has come about as a consequence of the incompleteness of de-colonization, de-Cold War, and de-imperialization. It can be a different picture if these processes continue to move forward.

In this sense, to rebuild a subjectivity with critical consciousness in Taiwan does not mean a simple de-Americanization and 'returning to Asia.' Fifty years' Americanization is not necessarily a wrongly imposed burden; it can be transformed into an asset, with the precondition that we need to develop a subjectivity with critical consciousness to offset the obsessive dependence on the US as the single reference model. We have to return to the fold of Asia in order to reappraise the place in objective history where Taiwan's subjectivity is located, and clarify all the issues neglected in the historical process. Only by doing so can we deal with our historical legacy with a highly critical self-consciousness.<sup>20</sup>

We maintain that Taiwan's academic production must be examined within the broader context of Taiwan's geography and history; hence, before imagining any vision of globalization and internationalization of Taiwan's academic production, it is necessary to make clear the basic historical context within which Taiwan is located. In comparison with the Taiwan-centric discourse, wherein Taiwan is considered as the center of the world,<sup>21</sup> a more realistic – historically, geographically, and global-structurally – approach is to see Taiwan's subjective location as a nodal point: essentially at the juncture of several overlapping, mutually influencing networks of life; that is to say, as an imaginative entity in geographical-historical space, Taiwan is situated at the meeting point of several different networks. We now proceed to give a brief account of these networks. The order in which they are listed below is not meant to reflect their priority, as these are interlocking networks.

- (1) *Taiwan itself as a spatial entity.* Taiwan, as a geographical space with historical depth, has been from the beginning a complex entity closely linked to and impacted by all the networks we are examining here; throughout the whole period of modern history, it has never existed in shut-in isolation. During a certain historical period, one of the networks may have had more impact than the others, but none of them have completely lost its influence on Taiwan. Indeed, the diversity accumulated as a result of the interplaying of networks has come to constitute the modernity of Taiwan's subjectivity. Taiwan's heterogeneous subjectivity is a complex historical legacy, and just because we are currently captivated by some contradictions in the political arena, does not mean that in any way can it be comprehended within the simplistic framework of ethnic binarism/five major ethnic groups, or considered in the restricted context of China-Taiwan antagonism. To recognize the multifarious diversity, to refuse to regard Taiwan as a shut-in entity: this is the sine qua non of rebuilding subjectivity.
- (2) *Cross-strait relationship.* When it was ceded to Japan after the 1895 Sino-Japanese war, Taiwan became China's first and only territory to be ruled by a foreign colonial power.<sup>22</sup> Taiwan was returned to China in 1945 after the defeat of Japan, but before long it was separated from China again as a result of the civil war on the mainland and the subsequent retreat to Taiwan of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) government. Thus, Taiwan and China have been separated in effect for over 100 years. Since the end of the Second World War, the Kuomintang regime's total anti-communist, pro-American stance has nurtured among the people of Taiwan an ingrained animosity towards China/communists. Because of this, cross-strait relations will be normalized if the anti-communist, pro-American ideology left over from the Cold-War period continues to have any sway. Cross-strait relationship is doubtless the primary contradiction in the present political situation of Taiwan, and the non-governmental and academic interactions between the two sides are to a great degree contingent upon changes in political situation. On the other hand, we may unfetter ourselves and take a broader view of the matter. As it happens, post-reformation China has become a strong magnetic field, attracting attention from all over the world. There seems no justification for Taiwan's academic community to absent itself from this newly significant partnership with China; more positively, the Chinese-speaking academic world should strive for independence from the politico-economic forces, break through the shackles of the existing politico-economic circumstances, and develop a more autonomous, broader academic space.
- (3) *The international Chinese-speaking communities.* The subjectivity of Taiwan, as popularly conceived, has a self-restricting tendency, often obliterating the consciousness that Chinese is an international language. In emphasizing here the existence of the international Chinese-speaking community, one of our aims is to call attention to and even challenge this ideology, which in our view has led to a narrow conceptualization of the networks within which Taiwan's self-defined position should have been situated.

The network of the international Chinese-speaking communities has a scope far larger than the politically envisioned entity consisting of China and Taiwan, or one consisting of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. While these two are historically valid entities, both China and Taiwan have to make an effort to acknowledge Chinese as an international language, and cease to take the egocentric position that those in the Chinese communities of Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia are seen as 'our people abroad' (overseas Chinese).<sup>23</sup> The people of Chinese descent in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc, have acquired their own nationalities and undergone quite different historical experiences, they could have served as important reference points in the construction of identity in China and Taiwan – but this has not happened. Some of these ethnic Chinese communities have had deep-rooted relations with Taiwan, as in

the case of the Malaysian Chinese: throughout the whole Cold-War period they were not permitted to establish their own universities and not allowed to go to Communist China for advanced studies; therefore, most of the Malaysian Chinese with higher degrees were trained in Taiwan, and Taiwan was an important reference point for their thinking and culture. There has been, however, no reversed influence; regrettably, the historical experience of the Malaysian Chinese has not become a significant part of Taiwan's reference framework and cultural resource. But certainly an understanding of the Malaysian Chinese experience will enhance our awareness of our own situation and problems.

Furthermore, the international Chinese communities go beyond the boundaries of the nation-state and ethnic identity; or, to put it another way, Chinese is not the exclusive possession of the Chinese. In South Korea, for instance, departments of Chinese are of great importance in the universities; most of the scholars now occupying influential positions in these departments have received their higher academic degrees in Taiwan, and some of them now still write their papers in Chinese.<sup>24</sup> Since the 1990s, with the relaxation of the Cold War and the rising influence of China, Korean scholars in departments of Chinese have gone to China for further studies, and Koreans learning Chinese have increased apace, making Chinese the second most popular foreign language after English.

Besides these examples, there are Chinese-using populations and communities all over the world. The existence of this axis of common language is an objective fact; a lot of connections are brought into being along this axis, and it far exceeds the geographical imagining of the economic sphere of 'Greater China.'

- (4) *The Asian regions.* In terms of historical and geographical relationships, Taiwan has never been external to Asia; indeed, it has occupied a very important nodal point, linking up Northeast and Southeast Asia. Especially since the 1990s, the Asian connection has been an inescapable feature of life in Taiwan. The so-called foreign (nationalized) brides, alien workers, and healthcare givers have all become important fixtures in daily life. It is not happenstance that these predominantly Southeast Asian women and laborers have come to Taiwan. If, in this supposedly globalized age, Taiwan's foreign labor is still supplied by its neighboring areas, then it goes to demonstrate that there are simultaneously strong regional forces within the overall globalization. As a matter of fact, in the irreversible general trend toward globalization,<sup>25</sup> regional integration has served as a very significant linkage. The European Union, the ASEAN Plus Three, the Latin-American Integration Association, the African Union, etc, can all be regarded as the products of globalization. In other words, regional integration is an inevitable movement; Taiwan has not only to realize this inevitability, but also to participate actively in the process of Asian integration. To this extent, we must rethink the cross-strait relationship, and do so by ridding the old unification-versus-independence imagining and adopting the vision of Asian integration. In particular, as a measure to thwart American over-aggressiveness and maintain world peace within the new post-9/11 global order, regional integration has been a concerted effort in all parts of the world. Of course, our region cannot be an exception.
- (5) *The global arena.* By 'global' we certainly do not mean just the United State. Although North America has been the major force behind the current wave of neo-liberal globalization, there is no denying that all the above-mentioned international Chinese-speaking communities and Asian regions have also been significant fields of globalizing operations. Surely Taiwan developed relations with Europe, Latin America, and Africa after World War Two, but these have been less significant, and they have less often entered into our vista. In the strict sense of academic production, the 'de-linking with Asia/joining up with America' of post-Second World War Taiwan may appear to have provided

us a shortcut to the process of globalization. But since this globalization has been defined in the context of a unilateral relationship with the US, without acknowledging the multilateral nature of true globalization, we have in effect become the academic vassals of America. In short, we have lost our autonomy and forfeited the opportunities of making new quests. It will be more advisable for Taiwan to go along with the regional forces of globalization, and insert itself in the international Chinese-speaking communities and Asian regions in its pursuit of academic internationalization.

We must stress once more that the various networks described above are inter-referring, dynamic and mutually influencing, multi-level and multi-dimensional spatial networks. In actual historical process, none of them has operated in isolation. So far as the subjectivity of Taiwan resides in these objectively existing networks, the direction of Taiwan's academic internationalization and globalization – even the development of institutional structures for academic evaluation and knowledge production – should be determined with serious attention to these networks. In fact, the networks of cross-strait interactions, international Chinese-speaking communities, and Asian regions all provide routes and channels for globalization.

Once it is realized that Taiwan's subjectivity is indeed located at the intersection of the globalizing forces coming from these objectively existing networks, what insight do we gain from this realization about the direction of Taiwan's academic internationalization and globalization?

- (1) Taiwan's academia must position itself within the Chinese-speaking world, recognize the existence and importance of the various Chinese communities, and actively get involved with them. It is our blessing that we are familiar with a language that is international, that with Chinese we can participate in the process of internationalization and globalization. Therefore, those of us in academia who can write in Chinese should treasure this capability, and use Chinese as both an obligatory and a convenient medium in all sorts of contexts related to the Chinese-speaking communities. If scholars in social sciences insist that TSSCI is helpful to academic advancement, then it is all the more important for us to be broad-minded and to incorporate CSSCI into our indexing system without fear of losing our status, so as to encourage our colleagues to reach beyond the boundaries of Taiwan. At the same time, the academic journals of Taiwan must strive to become significant international Chinese-language journals by offering their space to Chinese-writing scholars from around the world.
- (2) Taiwan must consciously position/re-position itself within Asia to become one of its members. In Korea, Japan, Singapore, etc, there is no hesitation about this assertion of geographical allegiance,<sup>26</sup> and Taiwan should be even more assertive, if anything. These places, Taiwan included, can only enter the global arena by simultaneously returning to the fold of Asia. The vigorousness of Taiwan's subjectivity and the guarantee for Taiwan's future hinge exactly on this. Therefore, we are in much agreement with Professor Yun-Han Chu's proposal, made at the 1999 National Conference on the Humanities and Social Sciences, that 'Taiwan cannot exclude itself from the configuration of East Asia's historical development,' because 'for all East Asian countries the greatest challenge in social development of the 21st century is to find and maintain the subjectivities of the development of their societies under the impact of globalization' (Chu 1999: 56). Taiwan must strengthen its exchange and cooperation with East Asian academic communities; new channels for academic interaction across the strait are worth exploring, with the aim of inserting both Taiwan and China into the East Asian world.
- (3) Globalization is not to be simplistically equated with the use of English or Americanization; even more emphatically, it cannot be reduced to the institutionalization of SSCI or A&HCI. The academic community of Taiwan ought to encourage its members to make

themselves at home in non-Chinese milieus, to write in any foreign language, and to publish papers in all important journals of the world or to publish monographs. In terms of institutional measures, there should be incentives for scholars trained in different languages to be actively engaged in Taiwan's academic advancement, making them willing to keep their moorings in Chinese, but also to stretch out to other languages of the world. We have to encourage our colleagues who have expertise in Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Japanese, Korean, and various European languages – who are imbued with the visions afforded by these languages – to present their research results in all places of the world.

### **In pursuit of an engagement in dialogue and rethinking with the international/critical academic community**

From the three basic standpoints of cultural equality and plurality, academic autonomy, and democracy of academic administration, this paper presents a preliminary analysis and an alternative imagining of the sundry problems in the practice of academic production in Taiwan under the pressure of neo-liberal globalization. There has been an attempt to use institutional authority and administrative measures to debase the status of Chinese, to grant supremacy to English, and to force academic workers to disregard the cultural and historical contexts of their research issues: all this, in our view, not only belittles the life world of Chinese language, but also completely negates the fundamental tenet of academic freedom. Our alternative approach certainly recognizes the overwhelming force of globalization, but more importantly it emphasizes the necessity of maintaining and realizing a pluralistic imagining of internationalization. Accordingly, we proceed to propose some sensible and workable programs of internationalization, which can be carried out without the distorting effects of an evaluation system dictated by the academic bureaucracy, and which are predicated upon the principles of democracy and freedom, intending to allow members of the academic community to sufficiently realize their potential and particularity. We stress that this alternative way of thinking will encourage our colleagues to operate without restraint on various levels: Taiwan, the cross-strait community, the international Chinese-speaking communities, Asia, and the global arena. This is in full accord with the principles of internationalization and globalization; yet it does not derive from the wishful thinking of some 'Taiwan-centrism,' and it will not result in Taiwan's subjugation to foreign big powers. All in all, we maintain that this is the only proposal that is informed by critical consciousness and enhanced subjectivity.

In this time and age, however, the force of neo-liberal globalization not only has an overwhelming impact in Taiwan; it is also sweeping across the world. Its magnitude is phenomenal: propelled and backed up by capital, it has also hooked up with the state machines of various parts of the world, thereby rapidly transforming the originally pluralistic space of cultural production. The idea of American supremacy is pervasive not only in Asia; in Europe, especially in North European countries, it has also become the guiding precept. The global effect of US-centered SSCI and A&HCI are not only surging over such lately developed countries as Taiwan, China, South Korea, and Singapore, it is also swiftly extending its reach in Europe, particularly in the predominantly English-speaking United Kingdom. In the face of this engulfing wave, the intellectual community committed to critical practice cannot afford to sit on its hands; instead, it has the duty to stand up to the pressure and predicament, and to investigate the possibility of a realistic, alternative way of practice. Consequently, our critical practice in Taiwan calls for an opened-up perspective and the necessity to link up with the multi-level networks of the world, to operate at various local linking points, and to join efforts with international critical communities within the various networks to create a space of discussion.

It goes without saying that the impact of neo-liberal globalization on the academic production of Taiwan has been shaped by specific historical conditions. Something similar to what happened in Taiwan may also have occurred in the Chinese-speaking world, Asia, and especially East Asia, but in each case the particularities and details were dissimilar, and naturally the critical academic communities of these different places have reacted in distinct ways.

First, let us consider the level of cross-strait and international Chinese-speaking communities. Although internationalization in Singapore has been more pervasive because of its relatively small territorial size and population, its academic community does not depreciate the status of Chinese. In Malaysia, Chinese-language universities are in the incipient stage of development and Chinese-language academic publishing has just gained a toehold, so we in the various Chinese-speaking academic communities have the obligation to help our colleagues there in furthering these pursuits. By comparison, in Hong Kong there has been a structural reorganization in relation to the massive redistribution of academic resources as it went through an awkward period of re-defining itself after 1997. As a result, in some academic fields over-zealous for change, publications in Chinese do not even qualify as scholarly works for evaluation. This presents a challenge; it is an urgent task, then, for us to search for a way to establish the legitimacy of academic production of the international Chinese-speaking communities, and to institute a fair and strict evaluation mechanism for periodicals and other publications. In Mainland China, attention is currently focused on the reformation of universities. What worries us is that, as the area with the largest Chinese-writing population and least Americanized, China has chosen to use the United States as the single model for its university reformation. CSSCI has been brought into existence by the instigation of the state and used by the academic bureaucracy as a means to affirm its authority, as has been the case with Taiwan's TSSCI, the only difference being that it covers a larger number of publications and thus offers at least the essential features of a useful database. In light of this, we have to call upon the Chinese-speaking academic communities to shake off the self-belittling attitude; we want to make the point that, for the richness of the cultural pluralism of our world, we have to speed up our pursuit for interaction and linkage, transcending the specific exclusivity and limitation of our several localities and expanding academic production in the global Chinese-speaking world. In this regard, we are particularly eager to see the academic community of Mainland China learning a lesson from Taiwan, hoping that it will not imitate in a wholesale manner the American style of academic production, but instead more positively confront the objective reality of Chinese being an important international language, and take on the historical responsibilities as required of an intellectual community of a great nation. Respect from Asian countries and the third world will be earned by China only when it makes contributions to the pluralization of knowledge production.

Secondly, on the level of Asian regions (especially East Asia), the distinctiveness of each place must also be taken into consideration. We notice that the major concern of the Japanese academic community and the target of its strivings have been focused the privatization of universities. Nonetheless, the direction of change is consistent with the logic of neo-liberal globalization, and this seems out of keeping with the achieved status of the Japanese academic community as Asia's largest and foremost progressive force in academia. In any case, if the trend continues to hold, we may expect to see a regional domino effect. We therefore hope that the Japanese academic community will pay adequate attention to the long-term implication of the matter and seriously deal with the relevant issues. The situation is quite different in South Korea, where the movement in response to neo-liberal globalization has attained such a level that the National Alliance of Progressive Professors is engaged in organizing a labor union of university teachers.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, despite the relatively massive progressive force within the South Korean academic community, we also

observe that here, as in the Chinese-speaking world, SSCI has been blindly used as a mechanism for scholarly evaluation, without heeding the danger of obliterating local history and culture. We fully concede that these phenomena are symptoms of the insufficiently constructed subjectivity of the lately developed society, and hence we will refrain from criticizing our East Asian academic colleagues for not being able to pause and rethink in this rapidly changing world. Having said this, we still hope that the South Korean academic community can make use of its relatively strong momentum of academic movement to block in an exemplary manner the infiltration of SSCI in South Korea. It must be recognized that to seriously re-examine the appropriateness of the SSCI apparatus is also to gain a significant purchase for the task of constructing the subjectivities of Asian academic communities. The singular rationale for this action/movement is exactly that we have to rethink about the 'American-ness' inherent in Asian societies, and by means of this to rid ourselves of the sub-colonial mentality with which we have willingly become the academic vassals of the United States, and to rebuild international academic linkages based on Asia's subjectivity. Up to now, discussions on these issues in various parts of Asia have stayed basically within the framework of the nation-state and have been concerned mostly with the initial problem of self-protection; as a result, they are not mutually referential or mutually supportive enough to cohere into a common program for alternative academic practice. Therefore, we hope to carry on the task of constructing critical linkages within Asian regions, doing so with the spirit of internationalism and through concrete analyses and comparisons to re-ascertain the objective situations and potentials of the various places, so that we may gradually form a common vision of alternative practice in Asia and use Asia as method to re-intervene in global academic production.

It is our belief that only through this movement can it be shown that the imagining of globalization should not be restricted within the coordinates of simple Americanization; rather, it should be a democratic practice rooted in local experiences, defined with multiple references, and characterized by diversity and openness.

### Authors' acknowledgement

With grief and sorrow, this English version of our article is dedicated to the memory of the translator, Tao-lin Hwang, who passed away suddenly on August 4, 2007. We appreciate his effort in undertaking the arduous job of translating this piece, and more generally his considerable contribution to scholarship and literature in Taiwan.

### Notes

1. This paper was written in the context of the Conference on the Critical Reflections on the Practices of Academic Evaluation of Higher Education in Taiwan, held from 25–26 September, 2004. The Conference was an intellectual movement, organized by 14 academic associations or organizations, to challenge the academic regime. Papers presented in the conference were later published in *Globalization and Knowledge Production: Critical Reflections of Academic Evaluation* (Reflections Conference organizing committee 2005).
2. The protest at the National Chung Cheng University, which has been going on since April 2004, should serve as a warning sign to the academic community. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.ccunix.ccu.edu.tw/~telshl/action.htm>. As a matter of fact, many of the performance requirements demanded of assistant professors or assistant research fellows are often more stringent than what can be met by those vested with the authority to evaluate them. In consequence, junior scholars who are able to fulfill these requirements are not infrequently in scorn of their seniors who are manipulative of academic power. It should put one ill at ease that the academic community has come to be pervaded by an ambience of domination and subordination, resulting in the corresponding nihilistic attitude of cynicism and resentment.
3. As far as we can see, there have been discussions on related issues within separate academic fields, but still lacking is a common forum for cross-disciplinary engagement.

4. 'Conference on Rethinking Academic Evaluation in Taiwan's Higher Education (the Humanities and Social Sciences)', held at the National Library, Taipei, 25–26 September, 2004. Papers presented at the conference are being revised for publication. The goals of the conference are to uphold academic autonomy vis-à-vis administrative bureaucracy and to re-examine the scholarly predicaments entailed by the prevailing stance. In this regard, therefore, the endeavor should be understood and judged in the context of intellectual history.
5. Here we use 'lulling' instead of 'ending' advisedly, since the termination of the Cold War, properly speaking, is only realized in Europe and America; it is not an apt description of what is still going on in East Asia. Military tensions still linger from the Cold-War era in South and North Korea, not to mention the two sides of the Taiwan Strait; and conflicts in these areas are even more likely now than before. All this makes this region distinct from others, and hence it should not be conveniently looked at from external perspectives.
6. In a private conversation, a former dean of the College of Humanities, University of California, Santa Cruz, estimated that if the trend of marketization continues to hold there will be only 200 universities left in the whole world in the future, and those universities themselves will be composed of various networks – for instance, UC Santa Cruz will be directly connected with Silicon Valley.
7. A good example is the National Tsing Hua University's proposal of the '20/20' project, i.e., a plan to rise to the rank of worldwide top 20 universities within 20 years.
8. The University System of Taiwan (consisting of Yang Ming, Central, Tsing Hua, and Chiao Tung University) is an embodiment of this idea.
9. At the greatly significant 'Nation-wide Conference on the Humanities and Social Sciences' held in January 1999, Cheng-Sheng Tu (speaking for history), Chi-Cheng Yeh (sociology), and Yun-han Chu (political science) all touched on this issue in their written presentations, but there seems to have been no subsequent discussion (National Science Council 1999). For related information, visit website: <http://www3.nccu.edu.tw/~hermes/file.htm>. A detailed examination of the mechanism actually practiced in the United States will show that it is far from what has been imagined in Taiwan to be the way of making academic evaluation and promotion. What holds there is that different fields have their own consensus arrived at over a long time. As regards the citation indices, they are not meant to be the criteria for scholarly evaluation, and in any case they do not attempt to cover publications in all languages of the world. There is no use for the crude evaluation system as implemented in Taiwan, unless it is the consensus of Taiwan's academic community that it wants to be a mere vassal of the American academia.
10. There has been enthusiastic discussion on related topics in China, mostly with reference to the reformation of universities. See the series of discussions in *Reading (Dushu)* magazine in 2003, especially the September issue on 'University Reform.' What surprises us is that, while there are great controversies regarding plans for university reform, the Chinese academic community has nevertheless opted to use the American system as the sole model. Is this an indication that China is following Taiwan's steps of getting away from Asia and joining up with the US? In light of the rather different historical backgrounds of Sino-American and Taiwan-American relationships, what are we to make of this similarity?
11. In some of Taiwan's humanities and social sciences colleges, it is a blatant fact that money, in the form of funds raised, brings power and influence. The assignment of office space, for instance, is determined by the amounts of funds secured by faculty members.
12. The research and development sectors of many universities are undergoing expansion and up-scaling, and these are becoming the dominating powers within the universities.
13. Of all the papers presented at the 1999 'National Conference on the Humanities and Social Sciences', only Yun-Han Chu's 'How to Enhance the Contribution of Basic Social Sciences to Domestic Society' deals with the impact of globalization on Taiwan's academic development and calls for a serious encounter with the challenges thereof (National Science Council 1999: 56–59).
14. Cheng-Sheng Tu, Member of Academia Sinica and former Minister of Education, was three-times the moderator of the roundtable discussions in the opening session on 'How to Strengthen the Evaluation of Research and Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences' and the final sum-up session.
15. We take it that by 'imperial' Tu means a broadened perspective.
16. For a discussion on the scholarly merit of books and monographs, see Yi-Hua Chiang (2002a, 2002b).
17. This is not merely a logical inference; it is indeed happening among our junior colleagues. We have heard a young scholar at the public occasion of a conference lamenting that under the pressure of career advancement he had not written any paper in Chinese for a long time.
18. Perhaps this 'hierarchy' has the function of 'ordering the academic world' referred to by Cheng-Sheng Tu (Tu 1999: 102). At present, scholars in some fields have become so indolent as to disregard their duty in

peer-reviewing and evaluating their colleagues' research results (evaluation of peers is a right, but we have to emphasize that *actual* mutual evaluation – as opposed to formal evaluation by the administration – is the duty of academic workers); they do not make the effort to judge a piece of scholarly work in terms of its content and significance, but instead resort to a formalistic scale whereby two papers in publications covered by TSSCI are deemed to equal one paper covered by SSCI, or three SSCI papers will 'automatically' attain an 80-point grade, etc.

19. A renowned scholar in the humanities resident in the US, who is also a Member of Academia Sinica, has this to say: his publications in Chinese have a readership of tens of thousands, while his English papers can only reach a few colleagues in the same speciality.
20. For further discussion, see Kuan-Hsing Chen (2005).
21. Recently, some scholars have proposed from their various standpoints a model wherein Taiwan occupies the center of the world, and from which have been derived various versions of the so-called concentric theory. The gist is that these are no more than the repeat of the old mantra: Standing on Taiwan, Embracing China, Facing the World (usually meaning the US). We have a slightly different view: the 'angle' from which the center is to be located cannot be wishfully decided simply through the manipulation of a world map; rather, it can only be an entailment of historical context.
22. Manchuria was a puppet regime brought into being by imperial power; Hong Kong and Macao were territories on lease (although parts of them were ceded). These were different from totally ceded colonies.
23. Most of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia see themselves as 'people of Chinese descent' or even simply as 'Chinese,' but this often leads to the consequence that people in Taiwan and Chinese will not recognize their self-identities as Singaporeans or Malaysians.
24. In Japan and Korea, Chinese language is usually referred to as Han language. In Southeast Asia it is called Hua language, and people of Chinese descent there are referred to as Hua people or Hua ethnics.
25. In the face of this trend, what is called for is an opposition to the agenda of neo-liberal globalization, not an essentialistic, wholesale opposition.
26. As Chua Beng Huat, a sociologist at the National Singapore University, famously puts it: 'Perhaps Asia may not need Singapore, but Singapore needs Asia' (Chua 1998: 198).
27. Protests against the academic evaluation system in Taiwan are still in an incipient stage, even though the younger generation of scholars has taken the initiative to broach the idea of establishing an association for promoting the interests of university teachers. Protective measures have also been activated in Hong Kong, mainly by teachers based at the Baptist University.

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### Translator's biography

Tao-lin Hwang was a writer, translator and independent scholar, based in Taipei. He passed away on August 4, 2007.