

Slowly Taking Off: Nordic-Taiwan Relations

Edited by
Julie Yu-Wen Chen & Torbjörn Lodén

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Abbreviations

CAI	Comprehensive Agreement on Investment
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
EU	European Union
IDU	International Democratic Union
ISDP	Institute for Security and Development Studies
KMT	Kuomintang
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEA	Ministry of Economic Affairs
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MP	Member of Parliament
NSC	National Science Council
NTU	National Taiwan University
OFIT	Office of Finnish Industry and Trade
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
SAP	Social Democratic Party
SITRO	Swedish International Trade Representative Office
STPA	Swedish-Taiwanese Parliamentary Association
TTTIO	Taiwan Trade, Tourism, and Information Office
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Preface: Throwing a Brick to Attract Jade in Nordic-Taiwan Relations

Julie Yu-Wen Chen and Torbjörn Lodén

Taiwan has in recent years attracted increasing attention all over the world. It has become the focal point of conflict in the U.S.-China rivalry in the Indo-Pacific and has also become a major issue in Sino-European relations. In the Nordic countries, Taiwan has clearly begun to move away from the periphery of people's view of the world and towards a position more in the foreground. One important reason for this is that the threat to Taiwan from Mainland China seems to have become more imminent. Many people in the Nordic countries worry that the present leaders in Beijing might resort to military force to bring Taiwan under their rule. This threat evokes a strong sense of sympathy for the people of Taiwan among people in the Nordic countries. The threat from Mainland China is perceived in terms of a big country bullying and threatening a small country. Being small countries themselves, it is easy to understand that bullying and threats from big countries against small countries easily causes resentment in the Nordic countries. In the post-World War II era, we have also seen many examples of this. In this case, Taiwan's democratization and the perception of Taiwan as one of the few democracies in East Asia while the People's Republic of China is perceived as increasingly authoritarian further adds to the sympathy for Taiwan. While most people in the Nordic countries probably do not have a definite opinion on whether Taiwan should ideally be part of the same Chinese state as Mainland China, there can hardly be any doubt that the overwhelming majority of people here strongly resent the idea that the government in Beijing should try to bring about unification by means of military force.

Seventy-eight years have now passed since the end of World War II, and during most of this time Taiwan has attracted very little attention and interest from the Nordic countries. This is now changing. We can see this in various fields, not only in politics but also in culture, education, trade, and tourism, etc. From a long-term perspective, people-to-people contacts and cooperation are no doubt most important, because this is how true mutual understanding can develop.

The speed at which each Nordic country is establishing relations with Taiwan varies. In our efforts to gather contributions for this Special Paper, we recognize that although exchanges between individuals have increased, political exchanges take off very slowly, and if not for the aforementioned new international political context, that speed would have remained much slower. We have not deliberately neglected Iceland. Our friend, Professor Geir Sigurðsson at the University of Iceland, has confided to us that there is not much to say about Taiwan-Iceland relations, despite piecemeal contacts.

The Institute for Security and Development Studies (ISDP) in Stockholm is running a Taiwan Project, and this Special Paper—a joint undertaking by the ISDP and Julie Yu-Wen Chen, a Taiwan-born Finn—is one of its outcomes. We are proud to have been able to solicit contributions from people who have been participant observers in the evolution of relations between the Nordic countries and Taiwan for many years. Ambassador Ming-yen Wu served for several years as Taiwan's first official representative in the Nordic countries and contributed decisively to opening up relations. Ambassador Bengt Johansson has served as the Swedish representative in Taiwan and also worked to promote relations between Sweden and Taiwan in other capacities. Professor Halvor Eifring is a leading Nordic sinologist with deep knowledge of Taiwan that he has gained both from personal experience of Taiwan's culture and society and from his research. Dr. Jyrki Kallio is a well-respected sinologist in Finland. He has co-authored a chapter with Julie Yu-Wen Chen on the relations between Finland and Taiwan. Professor Andreas Steen is a Denmark-based expert on modern Chinese history and music industry while Professor Koen Wellens is a Norway-based expert on Chinese society and

culture, with a special focus on ethnic minorities. In this Special Paper, they share how Taiwan became part of their academic exploration and intellectual journey. Mr. Teng-Chian Kuo is a scholar and translator from Taiwan, now living in Sweden, who has translated numerous works from Swedish and Norwegian into Chinese and had them published in Taiwan. We are most grateful to all these friends for their fascinating contributions. Taken together, they paint an interesting picture of the evolving relations between Taiwan and the Nordic countries.

The dimensions of Nordic-Taiwan relations are broader than what are covered in this Special Paper. Our aim is to “throw a brick to attract jade” (拋磚引玉), a concept inspired by a famous Chinese idiom, to encourage both Nordic and Taiwanese efforts to collect memories of our shared past. We believe more dimensions of Nordic-Taiwan relations can and should be uncovered, developed, recorded, and cherished in the years to come.

Julie Yu-Wen Chen

Torbjörn Lodén

1. Nine Years in Scandinavia as an Underground Ambassador

Ming-yen Wu

The Republic of China (ROC), currently commonly known as Taiwan, had embassies in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. In January 1950, these countries severed diplomatic ties with the ROC and formally recognized the Communist regime in China. The ROC never had diplomatic ties with Finland.

In the 1980s, the society of the ROC was stable and the economy was growing rapidly. The number of European citizens coming to Taiwan for business negotiations and sightseeing increased day by day. Our country also began to allow people to go abroad for travel and business promotion. Therefore, there were many consular issues, such as applying for passports, visas, and business verification. Overseas offices were set up to assist overseas Chinese and ROC nationals in consular matters. Some European countries set up offices in Taiwan under various names, adopting a pragmatic attitude towards problem-solving to meet actual needs.

In September 1981, the ROC established the “Taipei Commercial Tourism and Information Office” in Stockholm to improve the substantive relationship between the two parties. In 1982 Sweden established the “Swedish Trade



Figure 1.1: **Ming-yen Wu, born on October 3, 1939 is married to Wu Lin Mei-Shiue with three daughters**

Office" in Taipei, and began to issue business visas on February 1, 1989.

In June 1987, I took the post of Director General of the "Taipei Commercial Tourism and Information Office" and was the de facto Taiwanese representative in Sweden. In November 1990, I left Sweden to serve as the ROC representative in Fiji. During the three and a half years that I was in Sweden, I was committed to promoting substantial relationships between the two countries, and I was able to obtain approval from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to issue passports and visas, normalize the consular work, and strive for academic education, cultural exchanges, and the establishment of exchanges and cooperation between universities in Sweden and Taiwan.

In August 1989, the National Science Council of the ROC and the Swedish Research Council signed a cooperation agreement. In the summer of 1990, an agreement on mutual exemption of income tax for maritime transport was signed between the ROC and Sweden.

In terms of exchanges of visits between political leaders, in addition to members of Congress from both sides, Professor Göran Malmqvist was invited to visit Taipei to establish ties with academic circles in Taipei. In addition, Mr. Lien Chan and his wife, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited Sweden in July 1989. In September, the Chairman of the Swedish Moderate Party, Carl Bildt, was invited to visit Taiwan, and afterwards, as party leader, he proposed to the Swedish parliament to ask the Swedish government to strengthen bilateral relations with the ROC.

In the summer of 1990, the ROC representative offices in Europe held a regional meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, which was presided over by Fang Jinyan, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. On March 25, 1991, the representative office was renamed the Taipei Mission in Sweden. These are the results of concrete improvements in substantive relations, and trade between the two countries also increased year on year. In Norway, the Taipei Trade Office was established in October 1980, and it was renamed the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in July 1992. In July 1991, the Danish "Taipei Economic and Cultural Office" replaced the original "Free China Press Office" and "Far East Commercial Office" in Denmark. Norway and Denmark subsequently set up trade offices in

Taipei.

Finland's external trade grew rapidly in the 1980s, and it started to pay attention to emerging markets. Meanwhile, the ROC lifted martial law in 1987, allowing sightseeing and cross-strait family visits, and the democratic movement attracted the attention of the Nordic countries and enhanced their friendly attitude towards my country.

While I was in Sweden, my consular jurisdiction included Finland. I visited Helsinki twice, in 1988 and 1989, met with diplomatic officials, and obtained approval for the government of the ROC to establish an office in Helsinki. In June 1990, the "Taipei Trade and Cultural Office" was established, which was later renamed the "Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office". In 2004, the Office's official name was changed to "Taipei Representative Office in Finland".

I was sent to Finland as the ROC representative in May 1999 until I retired in January 2005. For nearly six years, I spared no effort to enhance the substantive relationship between the two sides, normalized the consular work, and asked the Finnish government to cooperate with the business community to set up a business office in Taipei. In addition to trade, great importance was attached to cultural and academic exchanges, with cooperation among the universities in Finland and ROC growing considerably.

It was my great honor to be able to work in Sweden and Finland for a total of nine years. These two advanced welfare states are politically democratic, the people are kind and law-abiding. I was able to make headway in my work as a diplomat and I greatly enjoyed life in the Nordic states.

2 Sweden and Taiwan: An Active Foreign Policy Leading to Ups and Downs

Bengt Johansson

Writing about relations with Taiwan is complicated as there are a lot of sensitive issues. For many years, I worked mainly with the People's Republic of China (PRC), but in 1988 I became consul in Hong Kong, where one of my tasks was to follow what was happening in Taiwan and travel there a couple of times a year to explore and develop contacts. In 1992, I moved to Taiwan and became the first Swedish diplomat to work there, even if only as a local employee at the Swedish trade office. Three years later, I moved to Beijing to take up a position at the Swedish Embassy there. As a National Expert at the EU Commission during the years 2002–2004, I dealt with both Taiwan and the PRC, and I could observe Taiwan from the perspective of the European Union (EU).

Sweden was, from the beginning, a strong supporter of the PRC's claim to represent China at the United Nations (UN). As Sweden was the first western country, in 1950, to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC, it became a tradition that Sweden would be the first western country to open up to China in most areas. This included the first trade agreement in 1956, the first national industrial exhibition in 1971, the first modern trade agreement in 1979 and the first investment protection agreement in 1982. It is against this background that we must understand why relations with the Republic of China (ROC) were kept at a minimum.

There had from the beginning been numerous Swedish contacts with both the ROC and the Chiang Kai-shek family. Some prominent Swedes, such as the explorer Sven Hedin, had direct relations with Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang himself was honored by the Swedish King, who bestowed on him the Serafim order in 1948, and his family maintained good relations with several Swedish companies even after 1949. The business community

in Sweden saw a need for an office in Taiwan, and in 1983 the Swedish International Trade Representative Office (SITRO) was established.

At the same time, the Federation of Swedish Industries and Euro-Asia Trade Organization agreed to hold a joint conference every year, and these annual conferences are still held to this day. The 38th and latest conference was held last year (2022), with the participation of the Swedish Vice Minister for Trade and the Taiwanese Vice Minister for Economic Affairs.

Strong development of relations 1990–1995

During the period 1990–1995 relations were elevated as the following events took place:

- The first visit by a Vice Minister from the Swedish Foreign Ministry, the state secretary of trade, Mr. Michael Sohlman, who worked for the Social Democratic government.
- SITRO began to accept Taiwanese visa applications to Sweden, to be handled by the Consulate-General in Hong Kong, with applications and passports being sent to Hong Kong by DHL express.
- The semi-official Swedish Trade Council took over as the guardian authority of the trade office in Taiwan.
- In cooperation with the Swedish Foreign Ministry, the Swedish Trade Council established an office in Taiwan.
- Mr. Mats Odell, Minister of Communications, visited Taiwan in June 1992 as the first Swedish minister and met with President Lee Teng-hui.
- In 1993, the Swedish parliament adopted a law enabling the Swedish Trade Council to issue Swedish visas.¹ The law was followed by a governmental decision that it was the Taipei office of the Swedish Trade Council that should issue visas. None of these decisions led, as far as I can remember, to any protest from the Chinese Embassy.
- In 1994, the Minister for Industry, Mr. Per Westerberg, visited Taiwan but did not hold any meetings with his Taiwanese counterpart. After

¹ Government bill 1992/93:203, adopted by parliament on May 19, 1993.

this, no Swedish minister has visited Taiwan.

- In 1994, the Foreign Minister of ROC, Mr. Fredrick Chien, visited Sweden and had a meeting with the Swedish Foreign Minister, Mrs. Margaretha af Ugglas (not in her office but at the head office of the Conservative Party).
- In 1995, the Vice Speaker of the Swedish parliament, Mr. Anders Biörck, visited Taiwan in a private capacity and met with President Lee Teng-hui. I was not present but understood that the Taiwanese interest was not so much in the Swedish parliament as in Mr. Biörck's previous experience as Minister of Defense.

It should be noted that several other European countries also sent political representatives during those years. I recall a visit by the German Vice Chancellor, Jürgen Möllemann, and a visit by the Vice-Chairman of the EU Commission, Mr. Manfred Bangemann. Both had been leaders of the German Liberal Party (FDP).

After the elections in Sweden in September 1995, the Social Democratic Party (the Swedish abbreviation SAP is used in this paper) returned to power and no more Swedish political initiatives were taken regarding Taiwan. However, trade, cultural, and other promotional activities continued. The yearly Joint Business Council meetings continued, and bilateral agreements were discussed. The formula for a bilateral agreement was that it should be signed by the head of the Swedish Trade Council and the head of the Taiwanese office in Stockholm on behalf of the respective state agencies. So far, to my knowledge, only one agreement has been signed, and this was an agreement to avoid double taxation. A later bilateral agreement on investment promotion was signed with the Stockholm office of the "Invest in Sweden" Agency. I do not know why this procedure departed from the established formula. I assume both sides were keen on signing the agreement themselves.

The impressive list of Swedish activities with regard to Taiwan must be seen in relation to the attempts to keep relations with Beijing at some distance after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989. I recall a one-on-one meeting I had with the head of the political department of the

Swedish Foreign Ministry. He looked me in the eyes and said bluntly, "Do not utilize the present weakness of the PRC to advance relations with Taiwan!" My thoughts were that I would rather listen to the Prime Minister than to a civil servant at the Foreign Ministry, and that if we did not utilize the current distancing from Beijing, we would never be able to advance relations with Taiwan. Another reason for Sweden's and other countries' activities was perhaps that they were attracted to Taiwan's six-year plan with its massive investment opportunities.

The Taiwanese office in Stockholm had already been established in 1981 under the name Taiwan Trade, Tourism, and Information Office (TTTIO). In 1994, its status was upgraded and renamed as Taipei Mission in Sweden. This was considered a gigantic step forward, as no other western country had allowed Taiwan to use such a name for what was, after all, an unofficial representation.

Practical relations between Sweden and Taiwan improved step by step. The Taiwanese representative in Sweden was allowed to meet with Swedish state agencies, with the exception of agencies under the Ministry of Defense.

Sweden belongs to a group of countries that established diplomatic relations with the PRC early, without any other conditions than that property belonging to the ROC should be handed over to the PRC. There was no mention of Taiwan, an issue that China demands in agreements on establishing diplomatic relations that have been entered into during recent decades. Therefore, Sweden is not bound by any commitment other than that the PRC should hold China's seat in the UN. The PRC certainly does not want any contact with the representatives of the ROC. Matters that could constitute a grey zone include:

- Visas for Taiwanese government representatives;
- In which premises should Sweden and Taipei contacts with Taiwanese government representatives take place;
- On which level are these contacts handled; and,
- Rules for Swedish agencies when it comes to contact with Taiwanese counterparts (level, designation, use of flags or other national symbols).

Activities of Swedish parties and Swedish parliamentarians

There was an active group of parliamentarians in the Swedish parliament who were in favor of developing our relations with Taiwan. Visits by parliamentarians had already started on a large scale at the beginning of the 1990s, when democracy was introduced in Taiwan. At that time, the fact, strange in Swedish eyes, that debates in the Taiwanese parliament, the Legislative Yuan, developed into fist fighting attracted much attention. I recall a meeting with the speaker of the Legislative Yuan, Mr. Liu Sung-pan, when Swedish parliamentarians wondered why such fighting was accepted. The Speaker replied that he had received strong orders from President Lee Teng-hui not to limit the MPs' activities in the parliament.

In the middle of the 1990s, it was well-known among people who followed Asian affairs that Taiwan was a democracy. Three Swedish political parties were members of the two international organizations that also counted Taiwanese parties as members: the Liberal Party and the Centre Party belonged to the Liberal International, of which the Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is also a member, and the Moderate Party belonged to the International Democratic Union (IDU), where the Kuomintang (KMT) is a member. There is, however, no Taiwanese party in the Socialist International, where the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SAP) is a core member. Other Swedish political parties have focused their international contacts on party groups in the European Parliament.

The fact that the SAP has no sister party in Taiwan may be one reason that they have never engaged in Taiwanese issues. Another reason could be that many leading social democrats have UN experience, and the UN's stance on Taiwan has exerted considerable influence on social democrats who are active in the area of foreign policy. Furthermore, the SAP has often held a belief in engagement with China, in the hope that China will open up more and more and become more transparent. Since this does not seem to be the direction in which China is moving at present, the Social Democrats may come to

reconsider their basic stance on this part of the world.

The parliamentary association for friendship with Taiwan (Swedish-Taiwanese Parliamentary Association, STPA) was established in 2000 and became one of the important associations among Swedish parliamentarians. The parliament lists 37 friendship associations, including Taiwan and some other unrecognized regions like Tibet, as well as some countries such as South Korea and Japan, but not China. Many parliamentarians had visited Taiwan before the STPA was founded, and many MPs have raised questions in parliament, initiated interpellation debates (where other MPs can also take part), or presented motions. Motions as well as government bills are handled by a parliamentary committee, and every committee report is debated in parliament before a decision is taken. If you search the website of the Swedish Parliament (riksdagen.se) for Taiwan, you will find a large number of questions and answers as well as interpellation debates.

Nowadays, initiatives to promote closer relations with Taiwan come mostly from the populist party, the Sweden Democrats. This means that the pioneering role that the liberal and moderate parties once played has receded into the background, and we can see a tendency for the initiatives of the Sweden Democrats to provide an excuse for inactivity from the other seven parties in parliament.

The Taiwanese government – KMT versus DPP

During the 1990s, the KMT was in firm control of the government in Taiwan. The KMT government wanted to negotiate with the PRC government: The establishment of the Straits Exchange Foundation, the National Unification Guidelines, and similar measures to construct a framework for communication with the PRC all contributed to the de-escalation of tension.

In 1996, after the missile attack and President Lee's landslide victory, relations again became tenser. Chinese media started to attack Lee as a "secessionist" and as pro-Japanese. However, Lee kept all the KMT ministers and looked to be in firm control of the country. His full support of democracy became well-known but also opened up

opportunities for a growing DPP.

When the DPP won the elections to the Legislative Yuan in March 2000 and Mr. Chen Shui-bian became president in May 2000, the confrontation between Taiwan and China became sharper. DPP had to take on a responsibility that was difficult for its inexperienced ministers to handle. At that time, Taiwanese business circles were preoccupied with investing in and doing business with China. President Chen pushed the independence agenda but received less and less international support. U.S. President George W. Bush's change of mind was a case in point. He went from "defending Taiwan whatever it takes" to characterizing present Chen Shui-bian as "a troublemaker". By 2008, when the DPP lost the presidency, support for Chen Shui-bian and the DPP in Sweden was limited to certain circles in the Liberal Party. The ideas of KMT chairman Ma Ying-jeou that Taiwan could enhance its security in a dialogue with China were supported by the majority of Swedes. Ma's election victory in 2008 and initiatives to enter into agreements with China were seen as reassuring by many Swedish politicians.

A new hardline from the PRC and the U.S. and European response

When it became clear that China's President Xi Jinping had a more hardline communist and nationalist agenda and the DPP regained the presidency in 2016, support for Taiwan in Sweden started to grow. One important factor behind this change in Swedish public opinion has been the PRC's handling of Hong Kong. With the new National Security Law and the ensuing legislation, the notion of "One country-two systems" (that was originally developed for Taiwan) was declared dead, and at the end of January 2023, Xi Jinping entrusted his ideological czar Wang Huning with working out a new model for the unification of PRC and Taiwan.

Swedish public opinion is also formed by watching the U.S. policy on China-Taiwan. The U.S. has consistently advocated a "One China policy", consisting of the Taiwan Relations Act, the three communiques with the

PRC, and the six assurances to Taiwan.² China has advanced its “One China principle” and many are confused over the two terms “policy” and “principle”. Another problem is understanding the U.S.’ “strategic ambiguity” concept, which means not to tell Taiwan whether the U.S. is prepared to engage itself militarily and not to tell Beijing whether the U.S. will refrain from engaging itself if a military conflict were to occur. A small country in Europe cannot express itself like that. What a small country in Europe can do, however, is:

i) *Support and if possible influence a determined EU policy on Taiwan.* The EU aspect is complicated, as the EU has only “soft power” in this part of the world. The closest thing it has to real influence is the issue of a free trade agreement with Taiwan. It has never been impossible for the EU to sign such an agreement, but right now there are two complications. One is that the talks with China over a comprehensive agreement on investment (CAI) have stalled due to the Xinjiang issue. The other is that Taiwan is already following WTO rules, so a free trade agreement might be seen as superfluous. It should also be noted that the EU took a major step in 2011, when Taiwanese citizens were given visa-free access to Schengen countries. This led to some negative consequences for EU member-states’ offices in Taipei losing income from visas, but from the Taiwanese public’s point of view it was a great step forward. For Sweden, it also meant a clear reduction in consular work with regard to Taiwanese citizens, and now the office only provides Swedish citizens with consular assistance.

ii) *Push the envelope little by little in making bilateral relations with Taiwan more solid.* Regarding bilateral relations, it seems that not much has happened over the past few years. During Tsai Ing-wen’s seven years as President, only one Taiwanese minister (Science and Technology) has visited Sweden, and no Swedish minister has visited Taiwan since 1994.

² The three Joint Communiqués were published February 1972, June 1979, and August 1982. All three mention the Taiwan issue. All three state that the U.S. “acknowledges” rather than “accepts” the PRC position, thereby introducing the “creative ambiguity” in the U.S. position. The Taiwan Relations Act is a decision by the U.S. Congress from 1979, as a reaction to the second communiqué and the diplomatic recognition of China by the U.S. The six assurances is a statement the U.S. presented to Taiwan in August 1982 to enable further U.S. arms exports.

The position of Representative of the Swedish Trade office (in recent years manned by a former Foreign Ministry person) was vacant for a long time, according to Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There has even been some back-sliding, as some agencies that are important for foreigners living in Sweden, like the Tax Authority and the Migration Board, refer to Taiwan as "a province of China". Until recently, the Swedish Foreign Ministry had issued guidelines to all state agencies on how they should refer to countries, but the present policy is that each agency is free to make the decision themselves.

The Swedish set-up in Taiwan

Since 1991, Business Sweden has had an office in Taipei. The head of the office has the title Representative (*daibiao* 代表). Since the Foreign Ministry ended the old tradition of occupying the position as head every other term and has recently kept the Representative title for its own side, the commercial head of Business Sweden now has the title "Market Manager Taipei". The Foreign Ministry is still acting under the umbrella of Business Sweden but in the last 10 years (the visa requirement was abandoned in 2011), consular work for Taiwanese clients has been moved to embassies in neighboring countries (at present, the embassy in Bangkok).

The services that the consular section in Taipei provides for Swedish citizens include arranging services for Swedish elections, providing certificates of life, registrations of newborn babies and marriages, driver's licenses, applications for provisional passports, and collection of normal passports. Citizens in need of support can also turn to the consular section.

Since 2010 there has also been a Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Taipei that is free to issue recommendations deemed necessary by its members.

Economic relations

Economic relations between Sweden and Taiwan are fairly strong. In the years 2016–2022 Sweden has been Taiwan's 36–38th ranked trade partner. Trade has been rather balanced and in recent years changed from a small Taiwanese surplus to a small Swedish surplus (Table 2.1).

There are around 45 Swedish companies in Taiwan and a handful (around half a dozen) of Taiwanese companies in Sweden, some of which also cover other Nordic countries.

Table 2.1: **Taiwan and Sweden Bilateral Trade from 2016 to 2020 (Million US\$)**

Year	Total trade	Taiwan's imports from Sweden	Taiwan's exports to Sweden
2022	1,795	1,006	789
2021	1,594	824	769
2020	1,248	683	565
2019	1,314	680	634
2018	1,290	675	614
2017	1,212	598	613
2016	1,064	485	579

Source: Bureau of Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs

Other relations

In the academic area, there have always been good relations in the field of technology. Recently, Taiwan has also emerged as a favorite spot for Swedish students studying the Chinese language. During the years when students favored universities in China, the main reasons were proximity to large Swedish companies that were recruiting sinologists, lower costs, and the feeling of being in “the real China”. At least the first two arguments have now been weakened, while the high academic standards in Taiwan and the free speech situation are important.

The Swedish press has often changed its representation abroad, and sometimes in a drastic manner. While Swedish Radio and Swedish TV have correspondents in Beijing, there are also Swedish press representatives in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Conclusion

In the 1990s, the Swedish government at first spearheaded European relations with Taiwan. Since then, initiatives for closer relations with

Taiwan have usually come from countries in Eastern Europe: From Latvia in the 1990s, then Lithuania and now the Czech Republic. While the business sector seems to have limited its dependence on the Chinese market and supply chains, Taiwan has emerged as an important link in the supply chain of semiconductors. Logically, larger Western European countries will need to open up for more direct relations with Taiwan. High on the Taiwanese wish list is official support for observer status in the World Health Assembly (the decision-making body of the World Health Organization), International Civil Aviation Organization, International Criminal Police Organization, and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Support for Taiwan's international participation has been voiced by large EU countries. Sweden is not always in a position to be a member of the governing council of such organizations, but it seems a pressing issue to be more active on this front. Likewise, a more solid Swedish representation in Taipei would be needed. Several parliamentarians have criticized the former Social Democratic government for limiting the Swedish presence to the Business Sweden office. For example, the Netherlands has changed its office's name to "the Netherlands Office Taipei". Such an institution would make it easier to support cooperation in the areas of culture and academia. In the spring of 2022, the Swedish Parliament issued an "announcement" ("tillkännagivande") to the government to set up a "House of Sweden" in Taipei, but this idea has not yet materialized under the new government. All political parties in parliament, except the SAP, supported the statement of opinion, but it should be noted that the representative for the moderate party remarked that the project must be in line with Sweden's One China policy. Here the representative of the moderate party touches on an important aspect.

Swedish government representatives have recently referred to the EU's One China policy. The vagueness of this policy was recently criticized by the new Czech president Petr Pavel, who, after a telephone conversation with Taiwan's president Tsai Ing-wen, emphasized in an interview with the German weekly *Die Zeit* on March 2 that "the Czech Republic has its own "One China" policy, and the essential tenet is preserving peace

across the Taiwan Strait". There is also a recent statement by the Chinese ambassador to the EU, Mr. Fu Cong, who in an interview with the Chinese daily *Global Times* on March 2 said, "Now some people in the EU always say 'EU's One China policy,' as if their One China policy is not the same as our One China principle, or they have the unilateral right to interpret their One China principle. But I stressed to them that the commitment of the EU, made during the establishment of diplomatic ties, actually included a very important principle, that is, the One China position of the EU must be acceptable to China". So far Sweden has not advanced its own view of what the "One China policy" means and seems to accept the vague EU statement. While Sweden holds the presidency of the EU in the first half of 2023, this is a natural position, but sooner or later a clearer statement will be necessary.

3 Finland–Taiwan Relations: An Overview and Review of Changes after the COVID-19 Pandemic

Julie Yu-Wen Chen and Jyrki Kallio³

Finland is often regarded as one of the few countries globally that has been able to maintain pragmatic diplomatic relations, without any undue interruptions, with the People's Republic of China (PRC) throughout its history. Like many European countries, relations with the Republic of China (ROC), also commonly known as Taiwan, are purely functional and without diplomatic recognition. The ROC was only able to set up a representative office in Helsinki, Finland, in 1990; this was followed by Finland setting up an Office of Finnish Industry and Trade (OFIT) in Taiwan in 1991. The OFIT was renamed the Finland Trade Center in 2018. It is part of Business Finland, a Finnish governmental organization that promotes trade, tourism, and investment in Finland.

However, it is little known that Finland had already signed a Friendship Treaty with the ROC when the ROC's regime was still established on the Chinese mainland. This Friendship Treaty, signed in 1926, is the oldest treaty between Finland and China. The treaty is still valid, albeit arguably between Finland and the PRC (considered the successor state to the ROC), because neither party has annulled it. Finland was recognized by the ROC in 1919 and established further diplomatic relations with the ROC in 1923.

³ Special thanks to the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation for providing archival access for this research, as well as the Finland Trade Office in Taiwan, the Taipei Representative Office in Finland, the University of Helsinki, and the Academy of Finland for offering valuable information towards the completion of this article. This article is based on a previous paper published by the Institute of Security and Development Policy in 2022 (<https://www.isdp.eu/content/uploads/2022/12/ISDP-Focus-Julie-Chen-Jyrki-Kallo-20221213.pdf>). Statistics on bilateral relations have been updated in this article.

There was even a Finnish consulate in Shanghai until World War II, “largely for the purpose of serving the Finnish business community there”.⁴

In the wake of the PRC’s founding in 1949, Finland became one of the few countries in the world that immediately recognized its regime, and Sino–Finnish diplomatic relations were established in 1950. The connection between Finland and the ROC, which later relocated its government to the island of Taiwan, was broken off after World War II. It was not until 1990 that ties were resumed. Informal representative offices of both sides were then set up in Helsinki and Taipei to facilitate functional relations, such as trade.

As Finland does not have extensive political relations with Taiwan, compared with Finnish–PRC relations, the crux of this article lies in exploring other dimensions of the relationship that have grown in recent years, particularly after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. These dimensions include representations of Taiwan in Finland’s mainstream media and the growth of parliamentary relations between the two sides. Exploring these aspects will help us understand how Taiwan is gradually gaining more visibility in Finland.

In terms of methodology, we use a literature review, data collected from major stakeholders (e.g., the Taipei Representative Office in Finland and the Finland Trade Center), and a content analysis of *Helsingin Sanomat*, Finland’s largest newspaper, to enrich the study. We begin by examining the limited political relations between the two sides. The third section explores trade relations. The fourth section focuses on educational exchanges, and the fifth section on media coverage.

Political relations

Finland and the European Union (EU), of which Finland is a part, adhere to the One China Policy. This means that Finland seeks to create policy solutions to tackle the situation across the Taiwan Strait, acknowledging that there is only One China without maintaining official diplomatic

4 Jyrki Kallio, “Finland and China: Bilateral Relations Characterized by Pragmatic Rationality,” in *Dragon in the North: The Nordic Countries’ Relations with China*, ed. Bjornar Sverdrup-Thygeson (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2016), 23.

relations with Taiwan. However, like many other European countries, Finland tries to maintain a certain level of non-official relations with Taiwan through trade, education, culture, science, and technology. In other words, Finland's relations with Taiwan are practical and functional, and this principle has not fundamentally changed for decades.

The Foreign Ministry in Finland has been vigilant in ensuring that the One China Policy does not become unnecessarily restrictive. The PRC Embassy in Finland has actively exerted pressure on several Finnish authorities to refrain from using the term "Taiwan" as a reference to a political entity or state separate from China. For instance, in 2018, the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri) was approached by the Embassy with the demand to change the designation used for the country of origin of ROC nationals from "Taiwan, Republic of China" to "Taiwan, China". This was not the first time that the Embassy had pressured Migri. However, after consulting both outside experts and the Foreign Ministry, Migri decided to change the designation to "Taiwan", which is still in use.⁵

Furthermore, Finland has been quietly raising the profile of its bilateral relations with Taiwan. In 2011, Permanent Secretary (Vice Minister) Erkki Virtanen from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment led a delegation to Taipei for trade talks, the first time that this had occurred at such a high level. The talks followed the visit of Vice Minister Liang Kuo-hsin to Finland in 2010.⁶ The trade talks, and an associated business forum, have since taken place every other year. The last time a high-level delegation visited Taiwan was in 2022, under the lead of Under-Secretary of State Petri Peltonen.⁷ However, the time has not yet seemed ripe to send

⁵ Antero Leitzinger, *Taiwanin nimi. Maahanmuuttovirasto*, Finnish Immigration Service, unpublished memorandum, September 14, 2021.

⁶ Ministry of Trade, ROC, "Report on trade talk visits to the Czech Republic and Finland in 2010" (經濟部 99 年赴捷克、芬蘭經貿訪問報告), 2010, <https://report.nat.gov.tw/ReportFront/ReportDetail/detail?sysId=C09903456>.

⁷ Email correspondence with Secretary Chen Chun-ling, Taipei Representative Office in Finland, February 18, 2022; Apple Daily, "Taiwan-Finland Economic and Trade Talk begins today, parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding on trade cooperation" (台芬經貿會議今召開 簽署貿易合作備忘錄), August 22, 2018, <https://tw.appledaily.com/property/20180822/ICMNJNJPRTLXYS4PMZSQWY5WI/>.

a career diplomat as Finland's trade representative in Taipei, although several other EU states have done so.

It is noteworthy that Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries jointly updated a Governmental Action Plan on China in June 2021, following the previous version created in 2010. Among the differences between the two versions, there is one small change concerning Taiwan: the 2021 version clearly states Finland's support for "Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations, which benefits the international community as a whole".⁸ This element is new, and shows that Finland is synchronizing its policy with the EU to support Taiwan's participation in international organizations. The COVID-19 pandemic and various ensuing discussions on Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO) in various contexts have helped Taiwan gain such support from Finland and the EU.

Despite the absence of formal relations, Taiwan has strived to carve out its niche in the international space, as has been shown in many empirical cases worldwide.⁹ Among the 11 Taipei representatives sent to Finland since 1990, the work of the most recent representative, Janet Chang, is particularly impressive. Since she started her term in July 2019, she has used the strategy of parliamentary diplomacy to make a breakthrough in Finland. Taiwan's diplomats often focus on such parliamentary diplomacy in many countries worldwide, as an alternative to the shunned formal diplomatic channels. Although parliamentarians are not governmental officials, they play vital roles in democratic countries in Europe; depending on the political system of each EU member-state, parliamentarians may play different roles and influence foreign affairs in various ways. In

⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, "Governmental Action Plan on China," 2021, https://um.fi/publications/-/asset_publisher/TVOLgBmLyZvu/content/valtionhallinnon-kiina-toimintaohjelma.

⁹ Yu-Wen Chen, "Taiwanese American Grassroots Lobbies on the Hill: A Case Study of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs," *Issues and Studies* 43, no. 1 (2007): 41-77; Joel Atkinson, "China-Taiwan Diplomatic Competition and the Pacific Islands," *The Pacific Review* 23, no. 4 (2010): 407-427; Robert A. Portada III, Steve B. Lem, and Uttam Paudel, "The Final Frontier: China, Taiwan, and the United States in Strategic Competition for Central America," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 25 (2020): 551-573.

addition to the EU Parliament, Taiwan's diplomacy efforts in the U.S. Congress have also been notable.

In Finland, members of parliament (MPs) also debate foreign policies. Finnish MPs can make foreign visits and study trips, and maintain international relations with their counterparts worldwide. In the Finnish parliament, various "friendship groups" supplement the parliament's official international relations, and are particularly vital when official contact does not exist with a country for some reason. Therefore Taiwan's diplomats have tried to encourage the formation and operation of a friendship group in the Finnish parliament. As far as we have observed, this friendship group already existed in 1994. One can find a list of Finnish friendship groups on the Finnish parliament's website, but as Taiwan has no official diplomatic relationship with Finland, the pro-Taiwan friendship group is not listed. Further, the names of the Finnish parliamentarians belonging to this group are kept confidential by the Taipei Representative Office in Finland.

Despite the lack of mention in the public list, one can turn to Finnish and Taiwanese media to understand the key actors in the pro-Taiwan friendship group—for example, according to Taiwan's media, Mikko Kärnä (Centre Party)¹⁰ and Inka Hopsu (Green Party). Hopsu has visited Tainan City Council as part of a foreign work visit in 2019.¹¹ In February

¹⁰ Domestically in Finland, Kärnä is a controversial politician. However, these controversies are not related to his work for Finnish-Taiwan relations. For more information, see Joona Laukkanen, "USU: Mikko Kärnä Appealed His Defamation Sentence to the Court of Appeal" (*USU: Mikko Kärnä valitti kunnianloukkaustuomiostaan hovioikeuteen*), *Ilta-Sanomat*, November 28, 2022, <https://www.is.fi/politiikka/art-2000009231456.html>; Marica Paukkeri, "The Center's Parliamentary Group Does Not Intend to Deal with Mikko Kärnä's Old Anti-Sámi and Anti-Immigrant Blog Posts" (*Keskustan eduskuntaryhmä ei aio käsitellä Mikko Kärnä vanhoja saamelais- ja maahanmuuttajavastaisia blogikirjoituksia*), *YLE Uutiset*, November 23, 2022, <https://yle.fi/a/3-12680216>; Pilvi Pitkäranta; Anne Orjala, STT, "MP Mikko Kärnä Sentenced for Defamation" (*Kansanedustaja Mikko Kärnä sai tuomion kunnianloukkauksesta*), *YLE Uutiset*, October 28, 2022, <https://yle.fi/a/74-20002698>.

¹¹ Hanchang Zhuang, "Finnish Green Party Politicians Come to Visit/Tainan City Council Speaker: Taiwan is the Happiest Country in East Asia" (芬蘭綠黨政要來訪/南市議長：台灣是東亞最幸福國家), *Yahoo Taiwan News*, October 16, 2019, <https://tw.news.yahoo.com/%E8%8A%AC%E8%98%AD%E7%B6%A0%E9%BB%A8%E6%94%BF%E8%A6%81%E4%BE%86%E8%A8%AA-%E5%8D%97%E5%B8%82%E8%AD%B0%E9%95%B7-%E5%8F%B0%E7%81%A3%E6%98%AF%E6%9D%B1%E4%B A%9E%E6%9C%80%E5%B9%B8%E7%A6%8F%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%B6-090324849.html>.

2023, Mikko Kärnä was also invited to visit Taiwan.¹² It seems that Taiwan's representative in Finland, Janet Chang, has actively befriended Finnish MPs across different political parties. Kärnä's visibility in supporting Taiwan is notable because he has used social media platforms such as Twitter widely to speak for Taiwan. His Twitter bio even reads: "Northernmost MP of the Finnish Parliament. King in the North. Defender of Lapland, Catalonia, Scotland and Taiwan".¹³

Since the pandemic began in spring 2020, Kärnä has advocated especially strongly for Taiwan's participation in the WHO and its decision-making body, the World Health Assembly.¹⁴ As the chairman of the Finnish Parliamentary Taiwan Friendship Group, Kärnä even helped to organize the delivery of 200,000 masks to Finland, bypassing the support of the Finnish government.¹⁵ In 2019, the so-called Formosa Club, a pan-European Taiwan support group, was founded in the European Parliament. In 2021, Kärnä also joined this club as co-chairman, further supporting transnational European parliamentarians' connections with Taiwan.¹⁶

One primary challenge faced by Taiwan's parliamentary diplomacy is that it ultimately cannot substitute for formal diplomatic channels. Ironically, Taiwan's media often reported on Kärnä's support for Taiwan as if Kärnä represented Finland as a country. Nearly all of Taiwan's news reports about relations with Finland are, in fact, about Finnish MPs'

¹² Finnish Parliament Website, "Gift Registration of Kärnä's Trip to Taiwan" (Lahjailmoitus Kärnä Taiwanin Matka), https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/kansanedustajat/sidonnaisuudet/Documents/Lahjailmoitus_K%C3%A4rn%C3%A4_Taiwanin_matka.pdf.

¹³ Twitter of Mikko Kärnä, <https://twitter.com/KarnaMikko>.

¹⁴ Taipei Representative Office in Finland, https://www.roc-taiwan.org/fi_en/index.html; Apple Daily, "Praising Taiwan's Excellent Fight against Covid and Freedom /Finnish MP: Causes for China's Collapse" (誇台灣防疫出色又自由/芬蘭議員:中國潰敗的原因), March 5, 2020, <https://tw.appledaily.com/international/20200305/76KZYOL6MFMGO4DXDGTQYIAS4I/>.

¹⁵ Mirja Rintala, "MP-Arranged Taiwanese Masks Arrived in Kempele Sufficient for Current Consumption for 2-3 Weeks in the North" (Kansanedustajan järjestämät Taiwan-maskit saapuivat Kempeleeseen-riittävät nykykulutuksella 2-3 viikoksi pohjoisessa), *Ilta Sanomat*, May 26, 2020, <https://www.is.fi/oulu-seutu/art-200006519349.html>.

¹⁶ United News, "Cross-European Taiwan Support Platform Expanded: Finnish, Swedish and Danish Members Joined" (跨歐洲挺台平台再擴大, 芬蘭瑞士丹麥成員加入), April 1, 2021, <https://udn.com/news/story/6656/5360191>.

support for Taiwan, which might mislead newsreaders in Taiwan to equate certain MPs' support for Taiwan as official Finnish support.

Bilateral trade relations

The years of the COVID-19 pandemic did not affect bilateral trade between Taiwan and Finland to any great degree. Despite the ups and downs of the annual figures, overall bilateral trade increased compared with the pre-pandemic years. As of January 2023, the available data shows that bilateral trade amounted to \$756.31 million in 2022. The value of Taiwan's exports to Finland specifically increased from 2021 to 2022—from \$275.13 million to \$351.36 million. Taiwan's imports, in contrast, showed a slight decrease from 2021 to 2022.

These statistics, and the information presented in the table ahead, are from Taiwan's Ministry of Finance. It is important to note that Finland's Customs service also collects its own trade data. According to Finnish Customs,¹⁷ there is an even higher trade flow between Taiwan and Finland than is portrayed in Taiwan's official figures. This discrepancy is a result of both parties using slightly different ways to calculate their imports and exports. In today's global economy, it is also challenging to track the real amount of bilateral trade, since goods are often transmitted via third countries and products are often assembled in various other countries around the world. For example, when the Finnish company KONE sells cranes to Taiwan that are manufactured in Italy, it is not considered to be trade between Finland and Taiwan. Overall, according to Finnish Customs' trade figures for January to October 2022, Taiwan is Finland's 3rd largest import source and 7th largest export destination in Asia. Examples of products exported from Taiwan to Finland include communication equipment, integrated circuits, screws, nuts, automatic data processors and auxiliary units, vinyl ester polymers, motor vehicle equipment, transformer converters, portable tools, oscilloscopes, and spectrum analyzers, as well as instruments for measuring or checking

¹⁷ Finnish Customs' statistics, https://www.karirast.com/ulkomaankauppa/TW_mtb.html.

electricity, monitors and projectors, etc.

Examples of products that Taiwan imports from Finland include passenger vehicles, nickel, chemical wood pulp, magnetic tapes, solid non-volatile storage devices, communication supplies and equipment, pulp and paper products, paper machinery equipment, transformer converters, as well as machines with special functions and mechanical appliances.

Table 3.1: Taiwan and Finland Bilateral Trade from 2016 to 2020 (Million US\$)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Taiwan's Export to Finland	264.56	257.22	258.46	261.70	221.55	275.13	351.36
Taiwan's Import from Finland	260.37	277.03	399.15	364.08	399.04	531.56	404.95
Total	524.93	534.25	657.61	625.78	620.59	806.69	756.31

Source: Import and Export Statistics of the Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance, Republic of China (Taiwan).

For Taiwanese businesspeople, Finland's investment environment has both its advantages and disadvantages. Its advantages are that Finland is the only Nordic country that has joined the Eurozone. Therefore, it is possible to directly conduct commercial transactions in Euros without exchanging currency, making all financial transactions quite convenient. Moreover, the Finnish financial system is sound, bank operations are fast and reliable, and there are no particular restrictions on the flow of foreign capital. Finnish society is also relatively stable, and the geographical coverage of transportation facilities and national network construction is relatively complete. Although newspapers and magazines are in Finnish or Swedish, there is no obstacle to communicating with Finns in English. Thus, these favorable conditions attract Taiwanese businesses, among other foreign investors, to invest in Finland.

One of the disadvantages of foreign investment in Finland is the imbalance between supply and demand in the labor market. Finland's advanced information technology, including the Nokia-

based telecommunications industry, video game design industry, and information security technology, requires many software engineers. However, the lack of production and education in these specialized fields has led to an insufficient labor supply. In addition, due to the industry's rapid expansion, the supply of factories and office premises has become saturated. Although new premises continue to be built, it is still difficult to fully meet the needs of such enterprises.

Another challenge for Taiwanese businesses is that the Finnish market lacks competition, and as a result the prices of products are very high. The EU recommends that the Finnish government increase fair competition among industries and simultaneously strengthen the supervisory powers of market competition regulators. Finnish telecommunications, electricity, gas, and other industries are due to open their markets for competition, so that the relevant prices could decrease and perhaps eventually be lower than the EU average.

Due to the small Finnish market, apart from the well-known large factories of Japanese and South Korean companies, few other Asian countries have invested in local factories in Finland. Most rely on Finnish importers or large local distributors for sales or after-sales services. Thus, Taiwanese firms are usually located in Sweden (for example, both ACER and Asustek in Stockholm), and most of them only have service bases in Finland.

When the aforementioned OFIT was set up in Taipei in 1991, the aim was to foster trade, travel, and cultural exchange. The OFIT was jointly created by eight listed companies in Finland (Valmet, Neste, Kone, Huolintakeskus, Kaukomarkkinat, Partek, Outokumpu, and Raute), since Taiwan's status as one of the four Asian Tigers made it an attractive new market for Finnish companies to explore. In 1995, the name was changed to the Finland Trade Center as the office became part of the Suomen Ulkomaankauppaliitto (Finnish Foreign Trade Association), which later became Finpro in 1999 and then Business Finland in 2018. The name of the office in Taipei changed because the host organization in Finland had changed. The Finland Trade Center used to handle visas and other selected official matters from 1995 to 2000, when Finland became part of

the Schengen agreement, but it no longer does so.

In August 2021, the Finland Trade Center in Taiwan increased its workforce when Jere Tala was appointed senior advisor. As Tala observed: “We see that there are big opportunities to increase trade between Finland and Taiwan. We want to make Taiwan more attractive to Finnish companies, as well as increase Finland’s recognizability to Taiwanese businesses”.¹⁸ During the COVID-19 pandemic, the once growing tourism relationship between Finland and Taiwan stalled. For instance, in 2019 there were 18,000 visitors from Taiwan to Finland. In 2021, there were only 447. Interestingly, however, although trade was disrupted at the beginning of the pandemic, it managed to grow afterwards. According to the Finnish government’s calculation, even during the pandemic, trade in goods between Taiwan and Finland between January and November 2021 was already higher than during the same period in 2020.¹⁹ In sum, the pandemic stalled tourism, but not bilateral trade.

Educational exchanges

According to the Taipei Representative Office in Finland, there were 20-30 student exchanges annually prior to the pandemic, although it has since halted the program. The Taiwanese government has several educational and cultural exchange programs that can be seen as soft power strategies to involve citizens in various parts of the world in learning about Taiwan. Three types of scholarships have been in operation for years.

The first type is the Taiwan Scholarship, which was jointly launched by Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA), and National Science Council (NSC) in 2004. On average, one Taiwan Scholarship is granted to an applicant from Finland every year, offering financial support for Finnish students to complete academic degrees in Taiwan. The second

¹⁸ Email correspondence with Jere Tala, January 13, 2022.

¹⁹ The information in the table comes from the Taiwan government, which was only able to show the situation until 2020. My statement is from the Finnish customs’ figures at http://karirast.com/importexport/TW_mtb.html. It documents the situation in 2021. Overall, there is no major difference between the Taiwanese and Finnish calculations.

is the Huayu Enrichment Scholarship, granted by Taiwan's MOE. 4-7 Huayu Enrichment Scholarships are granted to Finnish students annually to continue their Mandarin education in Taiwan. Finally, the third type is the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Scholarship, launched by Taiwan's MOFA in 2021 to encourage the study of all kinds of disciplines in Taiwan. In addition to attracting international students to Taiwan, this scholarship seeks to use the cooperation to help Taiwanese universities build up their bilingual teaching capacity and create a bilingual environment. This goal is part of the current Taiwan government's plan to turn the country into a bilingual nation by 2030, facilitating the incorporation of English services in the public and private sectors. International students are accordingly encouraged to help with English teaching while studying in Taiwan. In 2021, seven Finnish students from various universities received the Taiwan-Europe Connectivity Scholarship.

In addition to individual scholarships, Finnish universities participate in various cooperative initiatives with Taiwanese universities, although the scale is much smaller than Taiwan's educational cooperation in most EU countries. For instance, the University of Helsinki, Finland's largest higher education institution, has various levels of cooperative relationships with its counterparts in Taiwan. It has a sister partnership with the National Taiwan University (NTU), Taiwan's largest higher education institution. This partnership entails cooperation at the university level. At the faculty level, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Helsinki has a partnership with its counterpart at the National Taiwan Normal University. Table 3.2 provides an overview.

The Department of Cultures, under the Faculty of Arts at the University of Helsinki, has also received grants from Taiwan's Ministry of Culture to organize a series of academic events under the Spotlight Taiwan program since 2021. This program has been supporting professional artists and cultural organizations as well as universities (e.g., Stockholm University, SOAS University of London, the University of British Columbia) by sponsoring a diverse array of activities related to the culture of Taiwan. In 2021, for instance, the University of Helsinki held six academic lectures

and one film screening event. sponsored by the program.²⁰

Table 3.2 University of Helsinki’s Cooperation with Higher Education Institutions in Taiwan

Universities	Level of Cooperation	Starting Year
National Taiwan University	University level	1999
National Taiwan Normal University	Faculty level (Faculty of Arts)	2017
National Tsing Hua University	University level	2018
Kaohsiung Medical University	Faculty level at the Faculty of Pharmacy, including a Team Finland Knowledge Project ²¹	2021

Source: University of Helsinki

Lastly, two agreements between Finland’s main research funding agency, the Academy of Finland, and Taiwan were signed in 1998. The first of these is the “Agreement on scientific cooperation between the Academy of Finland and the National Science Council of the Republic of China”. This agreement was renewed in 2021 as the “Agreement on

²⁰ <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/spotlighttaiwan/>.

²¹ The cooperation between the College of Pharmacy at Kaohsiung Medical University and the Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Helsinki is educational, aiming to establish dual degree structures in both master’s and doctoral education. At the master’s level, this project represents a preparative phase to align the curricula, set up a cross-studying agreement, and build a joint online study module to complement existing course portfolios. The mobility actions included in the project are a nine-month stay of a doctoral student and a five-month stay of a master’s student from the University of Helsinki at Kaohsiung Medical University. Correspondingly, a doctoral student from Taiwan will spend nine months in Finland and a master’s student from the Taiwanese partner institute will have a one-term (5-month) exchange period in Helsinki. Short-term visits by the teaching staff are carried out in both directions to facilitate common teaching activities. For more information, please see the website of the Finnish National Agency for Education, https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/Cultivating%20pharmaceutical%20expertise%20within%20Taiwanese%20%E2%80%93%20Finnish%20cooperation_1.pdf.

scientific cooperation between the Academy of Finland and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Taiwan”. The second agreement is the “Memorandum of understanding between the Academy of Finland and the Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan”. Such cooperation primarily supports Finnish researchers in applying for mobility grants to Taiwan, or inviting Taiwanese researchers to Finland.²² The number of grants given can be seen in the following table, although some of the actual visits may have been postponed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Table 3.3: Mobility Grants Given by Academy of Finland to Support Exchange between Finnish and Taiwanese Researchers

Years	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Finnish researchers visiting Taiwan (number of grants)	1	1	4	1	5
Finnish researchers inviting Taiwanese researchers to visit Finland (number of grants)	3	1	3	1	3

Source: Academy of Finland

Overall, educational and research cooperation between Finland and Taiwan is limited compared to some other European countries. Moreover, certain types of cooperation in other European countries do not exist in Finland. For instance, Taiwan’s MOE has tried to persuade Finnish universities to engage Mandarin teachers, but without success. The offering of Mandarin teaching can be seen as a competition between Taiwan and the PRC’s various programs, such as the Confucius Institutes. This type of cooperation seems to have changed over time. We do not have sufficient data for a complete picture, but as far as we can tell, both the PRC and ROC governments had previously sent Mandarin teachers to

²² The Academy of Finland has published some limited information on the cooperation on its website: <https://www.aka.fi/en/about-us/what-we-do/international-cooperation/global-partnerships/bilateral-international-partnerships/taiwan/>.

Finland or offered financial support for Mandarin teaching in Finland.²³ However, at least in the past decade, such cooperation with Taiwan has not existed. Instead, the PRC government has been active and generous in supporting Mandarin teaching in several Finnish universities, such as the University of Helsinki, the University of Turku, and the University of Lapland, at various points in time.

Media coverage and public image

In general, Taiwan is not visible in all Finnish media, particularly not in local media. However, it is relatively more visible in Finland's mainstream media, such as Finland's largest newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, and Finland's state media, *YLE*. In *Helsingin Sanomat*'s digital archive, which records all its publications since its foundation in 1889, there are about 8,019 pieces of news that contain the word "Taiwan". The earliest piece dated back to September 23, 1909, but a large majority of these news pieces did not focus on reporting on Taiwan; the term "Taiwan" was mentioned as part of international news or an advertisement.

A closer examination of how the term "Taiwan" was mentioned from 2013 to 2021 suggests that the overall numbers of articles or advertisements containing the word "Taiwan" has increased over the years, particularly in 2020 and 2021, the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁴ This should match other global trends where Taiwan's management of COVID-19 and its often uneasy relationship with China became more visible in international media. If there is any real news focusing on Taiwan in *Helsingin Sanomat*, it is often about contemporary international politics related to China. In other words, in the Finnish media, Taiwan is usually depicted from the perspective of its political conflict with China.

²³ Oral history interview with Kauko Laitinen, February 19, 2016, <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/chinastudies/projects/oralhistory/kauko-laitinen/>.

²⁴ The number of news pieces mentioning Taiwan in *Helsingin Sanomat* from 2013 to 2021 is as follows: 205 (from January 2021 to December 2, 2021, when the archive was checked), 210 (2020), 150 (2019), 96 (2018), 130 (2017), 119 (2016), 77 (2015), 59 (2014), and 60 (2013).



Figure 3.1: “(Indigenous) Peoples Related to Head-Hunters”, Copyright: Helsingin Sanomat

The only exception is the series of reports that Mari Manninen wrote for *Helsingin Sanomat* in 2021.²⁵ From the end of January to May

²⁵ Mari Manninen, “Fun Things are not Forbidden Everywhere” (Kaikkialla kiva ei ole kiellettyä), *Helsingin Sanomat*, February 6, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000007785470.html>; “Skull-Hunter Family” (Pääkallonmetsästäjien sukua), *Helsingin Sanomat*, February 27, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000007828405.html>; “On a Shaky Border” (Häilyvällä rajalla), *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 6, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000007844207.html>; “My Dear Dictator, Would you Like to Taste a Piece of Pineapple? (Rakas diktaattorini, maistuisiko pala ananasta?)”, *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 22, 2021. The online version has a different title “Blind Channel Dyed Middle Finger Red the Same Reason Hong Kongers Eat Pineapples” (Blind Channel värjäsi keskisormensa punaisiksi samasta samasta syystä kuin hongkongilaiset syövät anansta), <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000007989710.html?share=8c4895a1bd7ae175256a0f2e3115ff81>.

in 2021, Manninen worked as a correspondent and reported about Asia while based in Taiwan. Her stay in Taiwan was for a practical reason: the pandemic situation and the challenge of getting a visa to enter mainland China, which many foreign correspondents faced during the pandemic. Manninen stayed in Taiwan until May, when Taiwan had its first large-scale domestic coronavirus outbreak, and as the situation soon became unfavorable for her work she then decided to return to Finland.

Manninen's reports were often featured on *Helsingin Sanomat's* front page or in the foreign news section's front page, with colorful and vivid pictures and in-depth analyses of various facets of Taiwan's society and culture, going beyond international politics. This is the first time Taiwan was not seen and discussed from a merely political perspective in *Helsingin Sanomat's* reports. Instead, the island's peoples, cultures, and society became known to Finnish readers. The stories covered a wide range of topics: indigenous peoples, people living on the military frontline in Kinmen, death metal music, and mock meat. The following figure shows the front page of a long article about indigenous peoples in Taiwan. Published on Saturday, February 27, 2021, the article is entitled "Pääkallon-metsästäjien sukua" or "(Indigenous) Peoples related to head-hunters" and talks about how indigenous peoples were discriminated against in Taiwan's society, although their situation has slowly improved.

From time to time, Manninen also covered Taiwan's relations with China, but the reports were enriched with more local stories and perspectives than the standard narrative found in Western media. For instance, the story of people living in Kinmen brought up the history of military conflicts with China. Manninen's commentary on how Taiwan's pineapples sold well in Hong Kong after China banned the import of Taiwan's pineapples revealed the vivid political tension between Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese mainland.

Another long front page article was published on Saturday, February 6, soon after Manninen started her work in Taiwan. The article is titled "*Kaikkialla kiva ei ole kiellettyä*", which translates literally as "Fun things are not forbidden everywhere" (that is, in Taiwan during the pandemic), and is basically about Taiwan's COVID-19 story. While the central message

of this article is in line with most Western reports that show Taiwan's success in taking early actions against the spread of the virus in 2020, and how that led to low COVID-19 cases, the article is distinguished by Manninen's use of the very personal experience of having fun in parties and clubs to reveal a stark contrast with the COVID-19 lockdowns in many parts of the globe. The article was on the front page of the foreign news section. Under the title, there is a summary of her article: "HS's Asian correspondent Mari Manninen having fun one day in Taiwan because it is the only place in the world where having fun is possible. Days run as usual, wine flows in crowded bars, and people cuddle each other."²⁶

Manninen did not publish as many articles on Taiwan after leaving the island in May 2021. These pieces that she wrote during her short stay provided a supplementary understanding of Taiwan, which is often only seen as a geopolitical problem in the eyes of international newsreaders. Manninen's stories gave the local Taiwanese a chance, or the "agency", to talk about their own history, culture, and society in terms that would make sense of their own values and worldviews.

In international politics, Taiwan has been constructed as and equated with "the Taiwan issue", which continues to appear in international and Finnish media. To better understand its history, one should not just examine how that political symbolism was constructed but also how its residents themselves reinterpret its development. Manninen's reports gave examples of how this could be achieved. Other journalists from *Helsingin Sanomat* also reported on news related to Taiwan, for example Emil Elo's article²⁷ on Taiwan's anarchist digital minister Audrey Tang, as well as Niclas Storås' story²⁸ on Taiwan's semi-conductor industry and its founding father, Morris Chang. Overall, the scope of Finland's leading

²⁶ In Finnish, it is "HS:n Aasian-kirjeenvaihtaja Mari Manninen humputteli päivän Taiwanissa, koska se on ainoita paikkoja maailmassa, jossa niin voi tehdä. Arki rullaa, viini virtaa täpötäysissä baareissa ja ihmiset halailevat toisiaan."

²⁷ Emil Elo, "As an Anarchist Minister" (Anarkisti ministerinä), *Helsingin Sanomat*, December 18, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/visio/art-2000008447618.html>.

²⁸ Niclas Storås, "This is How the Taiwan Business Miracle TSMC was Born" (Näin syntyi Taiwanin bisnesihme TSMC), *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 12, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/teknologia/art-2000007854436.html>.

newspaper's reports on Taiwan has widened and deepened.

Nevertheless, there is still a profound lack of understanding in the media about the "Taiwan issue", which makes it difficult for Finnish audiences to put the news regarding Taiwan's international activities and its relations with China in the right context. Reporters do not wish to use the terms "Republic" and "People's Republic", on the basis that it is less complicated to talk simply of Taiwan and China. As a consequence, Finnish audiences are left believing that Taiwan is a country in its own right, "born in 1949",²⁹ which China regards as "a rebellious province".³⁰ At times, Taiwan has even been presented as "an autonomous region of China".³¹ References to "Taiwanese independence" lead to the misconception that Taiwan needs "independence" because it is currently part of China.³² The meaning of the 'One China Policy' is often understood as recognizing that Taiwan is a part of China.³³

There are sometimes also news stories where the facts are more-or-less in place,³⁴ but all in all the media presents the status of Taiwan and the reasons for its tensions with China in a hopelessly muddled way. If there were a military conflict between Taiwan and China, and especially if it was related to the outlying areas of Taiwan, such as the Taiping Reef,

²⁹ Pekka Hakala, "Taiwanin separatistit ovat vakava uhka: Kiinan asevoimien linjauksista paistaa hermoilu Yhdysvaltojen aikeista," *Helsingin Sanomat*, July 24, 2019, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000006182987.html>.

³⁰ Mari Manninen, "Miksi HS:n kirjeenvaihtaja on Taiwanissa eikä Kiinassa?," *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 18, 2021, <https://www.hs.fi/mielipide/art-2000007982262.html?share=6e6f1b26db8c35437bb90f21a372d596>.

³¹ Hannele Muilu, "Vaatejätti Gap veti t-paitoja myynnistä – yhtiö unohti alueita Kiinan kartasta," *Yle Uutiset*, May 15, 2018, <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-10205330>.

³² Mari Manninen, "Kiina on kuin ahdistettu tiikeri, joka kalistelee häkkinsä kaltereita – Siksi se jyristelee naapuriensa merirajoilla kovempaa kuin koskaan," *Helsingin Sanomat*, September 11, 2020, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000006631688.html?share=85373b53b217fe5694862531546e8c72>.

³³ Mikko Paakkanen, "Kiinan ylin johtaja toi mukanaan pönötyksen ja niukan tiedotustavan – video tiivistää oleellisen presidenttien tapaamisesta," *Helsingin Sanomat*, April 5, 2017, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000005157688.html?share=fe89885b1d10cbea50538089bea9c552>.

³⁴ Katriina Pajari, "Lähestymme pistettä, jossa helvetti on irti" – Kiina varoittaa jälleen Yhdysvaltoja Taiwanin kanssa kaveeraamisesta, *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 3, 2018, <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000005589810.html?share=1762714994d19485e45c84c691e8aba5>.

the Finnish audience would have a very small chance of understanding what was really happening and why.

Conclusion

Despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations between Finland and Taiwan, the two sides have maintained a practical relationship through trade, tourism, and educational and cultural exchanges. The COVID-19 pandemic has created some favorable ground for certain breakthroughs, be it in terms of the Finnish government's action plan to support Taiwan's meaningful international participation, Finnish reports that offer more diverse views on Taiwan's society beyond international politics, or a Finnish parliamentarian's help in implementing Taiwan's mask diplomacy in the Finnish context. Despite tourism, educational exchanges, and actual people-to-people interactions being stalled during the pandemic, Taiwan's visibility in Finnish society appears to have grown overall.

4 Visibility of Taiwan in Norway: An Interview with Prof. Halvor Eifring

Julie Yu-Wen Chen

Halvor Eifring has been a Professor of Chinese at the University of Oslo since 1995. He has long been working on a study of the psychological structures of the great mid-18th century Chinese novel *Dream of the Red Chamber*. He is currently in charge of an international cross-disciplinary project on “mind wandering” in various traditions of meditation, contemplation, and self-cultivation. In the Chinese context, the project is about Confucianism and Daoism in the classical era, along with the Buddhism of the Ming and Qing dynasties. In addition, the project includes Indian yoga philosophy, the Christian Desert Fathers, and modern neuroscience and philosophy of mind. In this conversation, Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Helsinki, interviews Prof. Eifring about his connection with Taiwan and the visibility of Taiwan in Norway. The interview was conducted on November 23, 2022, when Prof. Eifring was in Hsinchu, Taiwan.

Chen: When did you first have contact with Taiwan or Taiwan studies?

Eifring: It began when I was studying Chinese in Oslo in the early 1980s. I can't say “most of my fellow students” because I didn't have any fellow students: I was the only one in my year. But most other students of Chinese in Oslo went to mainland China, and I didn't really want to go there, since there I would have to stay with other foreign students rather than living with a local family, as I did in Taiwan. I heard about Taiwan and about the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies in Taipei at the time. I think I heard about that through Christoph Harbsmeier, who was my teacher. I applied and got in. That's how I came to Taiwan.

Chen: Did you enjoy your first visit in Taiwan?

Eifring: I went to Japan first just for a holiday, and I was very impressed by both the kinds of aesthetics and all the rituals and everything in Japan. And when I came to Taiwan, I was shocked to see that it was so different. It was much dirtier and uglier, I'm sorry to say.

At first, my Chinese was not very good. I didn't want to spend all my time with my fellow students, so I tried to make Taiwanese friends, and that wasn't always successful. So in the beginning, I was quite lonely. But gradually I became a little better at the language. Things improved, and I ended up liking it a lot. I was originally planning to stay for only one year, but then I stayed for another year after that.

Chen: So from then until now, did you intentionally think that Taiwan would become part of your research journey and continue to develop it?

Eifring: In a way, yes, but I think part of the reason was also that while I was in Taiwan, I did what I used to do in Norway. Namely, I gave Acem Meditation courses in my spare time, and there was a group of people here who got into meditation and wanted to keep this up after I left. So, they stayed in contact. Later, another reason was that I married a Taiwanese, so every time I visited Taiwan, there would be a mixture of three things: academic contacts, Acem Meditation, and family.

Chen: Is it accurate to say that you were the first Norwegian academic to bring Taiwan or the study of Taiwan to Norway?

Eifring: Perhaps, yes. I think there have been other students who were here before. But maybe they did not end up as academics in the same way I did.

Chen: How has the study of Taiwan developed in Norway? I notice that your university has recently set up some kind of Taiwan studies.

Eifring: My research is not really concerned with Taiwan directly. I'm studying the early stages of Chinese history and Chinese culture, and Taiwan is a good place to do that. But it's not about Taiwan; it's about



Figure 4.1: Halvor Eifring giving a lecture in the local branch of Acem School of Meditation in Taiwan on November 26, 2022.

Chinese culture. What you were asking about related to Taiwanese studies or Taiwan studies is more of a teaching thing, a course at the master's level and some parts on Taiwan in bachelor courses in Chinese language and literature, society and politics, and history. We wanted to call the master course "Taiwan Matters", but the administration thought that wasn't a good idea, so we ended up calling it Taiwan Studies. This is supported by the Ministry of Education here in Taiwan. We invite different scholars for every class, so we have nine or ten different scholars connected to Taiwan studies in the course for the next semester in 2023, and the same thing will happen again for three years. We plan to keep this up as a course in our curriculum. Some of the invited speakers will also give one

or two classes for bachelor's students so that Taiwan will also become a regular part of the undergraduate curriculum. All these classes will have contributions by either scholars from Taiwan or Taiwan studies scholars, mostly from Europe.

The course will also be open to master's students from other programs, so we will see how many students we'll get in the spring. In addition, the lecture parts of these courses will be open to the public and will be announced as open lectures. Only the discussion parts will be solely for students enrolled in the course.

Chen: Interesting. We are doing the same here in Helsinki, but our money comes from Taiwan's Ministry of Culture. By the way, how about Norwegian students going to Taiwan? How many?

Eifring: We have a kind of collaboration with Beida [Peking University]. In principle, we send students to Beida. During the pandemic, Beida set up digital courses. So, our students stayed in Norway but were taught by teachers from there. It was much better than having nothing, and our students were quite content with that. I think this year students have been going to Taiwan in large numbers. We have set up a kind of collaboration with Chengda [National Chengchi University] in Taiwan for this purpose. We'll see how far that goes.

Before the pandemic, we simply sent students to China. There were always some students who applied to go to Taiwan instead. Some of them were refused because we had this collaboration with Beida that we needed to take care of. But some of them, if they were either allergic or had asthma and couldn't go to the polluted air in Beijing or were members of Falun Gong or something like that, were allowed to go to Taiwan. How this will be in the future, we don't really know yet.

Chen: At Chengda, do they just learn the Chinese language or can they take all sorts of courses?

Eifring: It's a language thing. It's in the first semester of the second year of their studies, so they don't know a lot of Chinese when they visit Chengda. But they will know much more when they go back to Norway.

Chen: Maybe your students will all come back with Taiwanese accents!

Eifring: They do. Let's see how they appreciate that.

Chen: Out of curiosity, your colleague Koen Wellens is also doing research about Taiwan. Do you also know any other researchers or individuals in Norway who are active on the same front?

Eifring: Lin Chieh-Ting; I'm not sure if you know him? He is one of our Chinese language lecturers. He is from Taiwan. I think that is also part of the reason why our students have good relations with Taiwan. But I should stress that Lin Chieh-Ting also has good relations with Beida and colleagues from mainland China.

I know in Norway there are other people who have done things on Taiwan. But I can't remember their names; I am sorry about that.

Chen: No worries. This leads to another question, which is whether there are any real resources for supporting this kind of study.

Eifring: One can apply to the Norwegian Research Council, but of course the funding is not earmarked for Taiwan studies. From the Taiwan side, there seems to be some kind of competition between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They all have money for these kinds of things. What you have in Helsinki is the Spotlight Taiwan project from the Ministry of Culture. I think we may also apply for that at some point to stage some kinds of film events around Taiwan. So we'll see.

Chen: Moving from the topic of Taiwan studies to current relations between Norway and Taiwan, can we talk about politics?

Eifring: There is no Taiwan Office in Norway, and there is no longer a Norway office in Taiwan. There used to be a Norwegian Office in Taiwan, but it was closed sometime in the early 2000s, I think. There used to be a Taiwan Office in Norway, and it was closed in maybe 2016–2017. The Taiwan representative in Norway went to Finland.

Recently, there was a suggestion for closer collaboration between Norway and Taiwan from a Norwegian political party. I think in English



Figure 4.2: Halvor Eifring visiting the small Ryukyu island in Pintung, Taiwan on November 27, 2022.

it's called the Liberals, although in Norwegian they're called the Left Party, but they actually belong to the right. So it's a little confusing. They had raised five points for increased collaboration with Taiwan and put forth these ideas in parliament. The parliament said no.³⁵ Both the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were more eager to protect relations with China than with Taiwan.

Chen: That is interesting because at least in the past, we understand Norway had a rather uneasy relationship with China because of the Liu Xiaobo issue. But that did not help Taiwan have a better relationship with the Norwegian government.

Eifring: On the contrary, it only makes Norwegian politicians more anxious and drives them to show how China-friendly they are. In 2016, there was this normalization between China and Norway, and Norway

³⁵ For more information in original Norwegian language, see the website of the Norwegian parliament, https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2022-2023/refs-202223-11-17?utm_campaign=Saksvarselet+ditt&utm_content=Link&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Mailjet&m=3.

went a long way by saying that Norway respected China's basic interests and didn't say anything about what those basic interests were. But of course, China's basic interests include swallowing Taiwan.

In this respect, Norway is probably even more China-friendly than other Nordic countries and not openly Taiwan-friendly.

Chen: In the past three years, the pandemic made the West more alert about China, but I guess that did not change the Norwegian government's attitude toward the China issue at all.

Eifring: It doesn't change very much. Sometimes, when the EU says something about China or Taiwan, the Norwegian government will sort of be part of it, but not part of all of it.

Chen: I can understand the Norwegian government's choice, but how about the local media or public intellectuals? What do they say about Taiwan or China?

Eifring: In the media, you get a much more China-critical picture. The Norwegian media is also more Taiwan-friendly. There has been much more attention to Taiwan, especially now after the invasion of Ukraine, but even before that. I mean people know much more about Taiwan now than they used to. My Taiwanese wife is regularly asked, "Are you afraid of China invading Taiwan?" In that respect, people in Norway, as in most other Western countries, are more likely to see a potential Chinese invasion of Taiwan as a threat than most people in Taiwan do. In Taiwan, there are people who believe there might be a war, but there are also people who do not believe that this will happen. And there are also people in Taiwan who believe that if Taiwan and China were unified, so be it. There are many different voices here in Taiwan.

Chen: I guess nothing will change the Norwegian government's position on Taiwan and China, even when you have elections and a new government.

Eifring: Probably not. There is a slight difference between the left and the right, but not to the extent that it would differ much on the China-

Taiwan issue. Now we have a leftist government, but also to judge from our previous government that was more on the right side, there is not much difference on the China–Taiwan issue.

Chen: How about business relations?

Eifring: As far as I understand, even business relations are much more muted between Taiwan and Norway than they are between, for instance, Taiwan and Sweden. I don't know about Denmark and Finland, but I think that's also part of politics in the sense that because bilateral links are absolutely not encouraged by the politicians, there are very few business relations. I think we will probably suffer from this lack of business relations, especially when the whole world wants to have Taiwan's semiconductors and the Norwegians are not there.

Chen: And Taiwanese might want your smoked salmon.

Eifring: I'm a vegetarian so you can have it all from my city!

5 Tracing Asian Religio-Philosophical Ideas' Response to the Global Environmental Crisis in Taiwan: An interview with Professor Koen Wellens

Julie Yu-Wen Chen

Koen Wellens is Associate Professor in Modern Chinese Religion at the University of Oslo, Norway. He has long worked on Chinese society and culture, with a special focus on ethnic minorities, folk religion and Buddhist practice, the relationship between state and religion, development in rural areas, the rule of law and human rights, and, most recently, the Indigenous Austronesian society in Taiwan. He was director of the China Program at the Norwegian Center for Human Rights at the University of Oslo in 2005 and was affiliated with several China-related programs as a researcher through July 2013. From September 2011 to June 2012, he was a visiting scholar at the Department of Anthropology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and from August to December 2015, he was a visiting scholar at the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan. In this conversation, Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Helsinki, asks Prof. Wellens about his research connections with Taiwan. The interview was conducted on December 7, 2022, a month before he embarked on a field trip to Taiwan in January 2023.

Chen: I learned about your research from your colleague Halvor Eifring, who has also been interviewed. Can you tell us about your project?

Wellens: It's actually part of a larger project called Transsustain (Transcendence and Sustainability: Asian Visions with Global Promise).³⁶ In that project, we look at how religion is contributing to

³⁶ <https://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/projects/transcendence-sustainability/index.html>.

combating or can potentially be a factor in combating climate change and loss of biodiversity in several Asian countries. We look especially at Asian religions, so we have sub-projects going on in India, Vietnam, the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. Prof. Mette Halskov Hansen is leading the project. We will look at religious or spiritually inspired organizations such as the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation in Taiwan and others that are focusing on environmental issues. Due to the pandemic, we haven't even started the fieldwork, but we will go to Taiwan in January 2023. On that trip, we will examine alternative forms of agriculture in Taiwan that are religious or spiritually inspired. One of them is a grassroots not-for-profit organization focused around Shennong (神農), the mythical god of agriculture in Chinese culture. This project is in the north of Taiwan. And in Kaohsiung, in the south of Taiwan, we will look into an agricultural project inspired by Indian spirituality. We very much want to visit these projects and do interviews there.

That's one part of the larger project, and then I have my own project that has been going on for some time. I look at indigenous groups in Taiwan and how they relate to and are influenced by a turn toward environmental policies. I'm looking specifically at the Tsou (鄒) community in Alishan (阿里山). I am interested in how their traditional ways of relating to the environment come into conflict with state authorities and agencies. For instance, they hunt, but hunting is seen by the Taiwanese authorities as counter to environmental concerns. I want to know what we can learn from the meeting of these traditional ways of relating to the environment and modern state ways of setting up nature reserves and protecting biodiversity. This also has a global perspective and promise. I mean, can we learn something from Asian ways of relating to or addressing the new environmental crisis? My work on indigenous communities came into being before Transsustain and will now become part of the Transsustain project.

Mette Halskov Hansen, who is leading the Transsustain project, is vice rector of the University of Oslo. She also wants to look at opportunities for closer cooperation with universities in Taiwan. This is also part of our January trip's agenda.

Chen: Who is the funder of this new project?

Wellens: The Norwegian Research Council. I think there are four more years left because we started just at the beginning of the COVID crisis. It was impossible to do fieldwork, and the different sub-projects were all fieldwork-based. Our Chinese and Indian partners have been able to do some fieldwork, but the participants from the University of Oslo have only recently been able to travel to their field sites in Asia.

Chen: When did you start your research on Taiwan?

Wellens: In 2014, 2015, and 2016, I traveled around Taiwan to identify interesting sites for doing this kind of fieldwork. Each visit was rather short because I had teaching obligations. Mette Halskov Hansen and I were in Taiwan for half a year in 2015 with the support of Taiwan's Ministry of Education. I was affiliated with the Academia Sinica and had several personal contacts with scholars for my research.

Chen: How about your students? Are they informed about your projects? Is there anybody interested in writing their thesis about this kind of topic?

Wellens: We're working on it. We have one MA student who will start research for his thesis in January 2023. He does research on graphic arts in Taiwan. He will be affiliated with the National Taiwan University of Arts.

Chen: Given the current situation that China is still more closed than Taiwan due to the pandemic, I guess it's natural to understand that scholars would want to look for opportunities in Taiwan. I don't know if that's also part of the reason why you're thinking about exploring research topics in Taiwan.

Wellens: In a way, Taiwan should be studied because it's Taiwan, not because you can't go to China. I was in Taiwan for the first time in 1983. I studied the language there. Since 2008, I have had problems getting a visa to China. The last time I was in China was in 2012, but every time it was quite a hassle. So I thought, why not look at Taiwan? I had already been studying issues relating to ethnic minorities in China and I did my



Figure 5.1: **Prof. Koen Wellens**
(Photographed by Mari Lilleslåtten)

PhD on religious practices among ethnic minorities in China. I became interested in doing this kind of research in Taiwan, and it turned out to be a lot easier. So, from that time on, around 2013 or 2014, I turned my main research interest to Taiwan. It is like a kind of a wave we're riding on. It's very easy to convince sponsors and students to focus on Taiwan. That's definitely a trend.

Halvor Eifring has probably told you about our Taiwan Matters course. We got money from Taiwan's Ministry of Education to organize the course. When integrating more topics on Taiwan into our teaching, the problem is the name of some of the courses. If you have a course called "Chinese Society and Politics" and you talk about Taiwan, that's a bit problematic. So, we might have to make some name changes.

Chen: Why did you choose to study the Tsou people? There are many indigenous groups in Taiwan.

Wellens: It's serendipity. I did some traveling around Taiwan. I went to Lanyu (also known as Orchid Island) and many other places with indigenous communities. I was looking first at ritual practices, especially

the revival of such practices and the link with environmental issues. Therefore, I traveled around, but then I got some contacts. I don't know if you know Lin Chieh-Ting, our lecturer in Chinese language; he is originally from Taiwan. Through him, I got in contact with somebody who knew somebody who was a professor and a member of the Tsou community. I joined her on a visit to the Alishan area and then got in contact with the local community, and they invited me to stay there and do fieldwork.

As a researcher, especially with indigenous groups, you need some kind of permission to conduct research in communities. It is not a bureaucratic thing, but it's like if they say that it's OK, you can do fieldwork in their community. So they said it's OK, and I keep revisiting their village.

Once a year, they have a special ritual, the Mayasvi War Festival, to honor gods and warriors. This was a good opportunity to study ritual practices. In looking at environmental issues among the Tsou, I focused on how to practice agriculture in forest areas. But what turned out to be very interesting was the importance that the Tsou attach to hunting. Actually, many Taiwanese indigenous communities are concerned about hunting issues. This is a very sensitive political topic, and there have been some cases of hunters being arrested and punished. When talking to people in many of these communities, I found they are eager to discuss hunting issues. That is why I've decided to turn my project in that direction.

Chen: I wonder if you have any unforgettable memory in Taiwan that you would like to share.

Wellens: Well, one of the more special memories was being part of a ritual among the Tsou people. For the whole night, people dance without stopping. It is exciting to participate in that because it's not the same people who have to dance, but the dance has to go on, so, when people need to rest, somebody takes over. It was very nice to be part of this.

6 Comparing Wartime Sound in Taiwan, Denmark, and East Germany: An Interview with Professor Andreas Steen

Julie Yu-Wen Chen

Andreas Steen is Professor of China Studies at Aarhus University in Denmark. He has been working on aspects of modern Chinese history and popular culture, and the history of the music industry in China. In 2019, he began the project “Sounds of War: The Memory of World War II in Taiwan, East Germany, and Denmark, 1945-2015” in cooperation with his colleague Prof. Wulf Kansteiner. The short name of the project is SoundTrak (<https://cas.au.dk/en/soundtrak/>) and it is sponsored by the Velux Foundations in Denmark. In this project, the researchers analyze how communities in Taiwan, East Germany, and Denmark have been using sound as interpretations of World War II – music, language, tones, or even noise – to build a collective memory and collective identity during and after the Cold War. SoundTrak takes researchers to audio and media files to find out what sounds were key sites of memory in the three communities and whether those sounds contributed to the development of specific national identities. In this conversation, Julie Yu-Wen Chen, Professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Helsinki, interviews Prof. Steen about SoundTrak and his research connection with Taiwan. The interview was conducted on December 5, 2022, before Prof. Steen departed for a research visit to Taiwan.

Chen: Can you tell us a bit about SoundTrak? How did it come into being?

Steen: I have been working on China’s recording industry for quite some time, both as a historian and from the perspective of cultural studies, and I have an interest in the politics of sound. I have a highly qualified colleague



Figure 6.1: **Prof. Andreas Steen**

and friend here, Wulf Kansteiner, who is a specialist in Holocaust and memory studies. If you work on modern Chinese history, society, and culture, you have to deal with aspects of propaganda and censorship and cultural and political memory. So, we found a common interest in sound and memory and the Second World War. After several discussions, we had the idea of developing this project together.

We obtained project funding for three years. As the project began just before COVID-19, almost everything was done online. We have two PhD students and one postdoc working on the project. Our Taiwanese PhD student, Ai Chung, works on Taiwan; then, we have a Danish PhD student, Mikkel, working on the East German part and a Danish postdoc, Sigrid, who focuses on the Danish part. Originally, we started with a much bigger idea to include the sounds and memories of China, the U.S., Russia, and so on, but due to financing and research scope, we sized

things down. We wanted to include Denmark not only because this is the place where we live and work, but also because we saw the opportunity to align with the Center of Sound Studies at Aarhus University, and work with Denmark's LARM radio archive, which is very well known among specialists. Earlier, in 2017, we had organized a workshop at Aarhus University to brainstorm the project idea with colleagues from China, Japan, and the United Kingdom, and the latter two were already quite informed and fascinated by LARM's archival structure and organization. So we definitely wanted to have Denmark in our project. But you cannot compare Denmark to China; I mean this is out of proportion because China is too big and diverse. So we decided to compare Taiwan, East Germany, and Denmark. These cases were selected because of comparable size, but they also allow for an interesting pilot project, because their postwar histories are very different, so you can actually do a very specific comparison on how countries deal with the war sounds after the war. That's quite fascinating.

Chen: Is this the first time that you have dealt with Taiwan in your research?

Steen: My main research focus has long been on the Republican period, especially Shanghai's history and culture. I have been to Taiwan a few times. I have been reading a lot about Taiwan over the last few years, and I am very happy that the project went in this direction. In fact, next week I'm going to National Chengchi University in Taiwan together with my colleague Wulf. We will take part in a workshop on history and memory and introduce our project to colleagues from Taiwan. This is very exciting!

Chen: I wonder if it is possible at this point for you to share some findings from this project with us?

Steen: Wulf and I have written an article which is under peer review; the same goes for our postdoc, and our PhDs are working on their theses, so nothing has been published yet, except for podcasts on our website. At the moment we are planning the final international conference on that project, and we are very happy to have succeeded in inviting well-

known experts in either memory or sound studies, and we're bringing them together to work on questions of sound and memory. We are also planning a conference publication, divided into two main sections: a theoretical and methodological part and an area-specific part. In the Asia section, I will focus on China, Ai Chung will deal with the Taiwan part, working on wartime military songs, and we will be joined by a scholar working on Japan. Not only are our memories very tricky and selective, but also governments and the entire entertainment industry are very selective, if not determined, to use and manipulate [people] via sound. Popular wartime songs, for example, were banned but survive, and they pop up again in other media formats, either as songs, cover songs, or in films, sometimes 20, 30, 40 years later: why? And what kind of memories do they help to create for whom? These are some of the questions that we will address in that conference, along with theory and methodology.

Chen: Tell us about the website of your project.

Steen: Integrating sounds, especially musical sounds, into a website is always tricky, mostly because of copyright issues. We found an acceptable working solution, and if you listen to our podcasts, you will find a dialogue between Wulf and me about a popular Chinese wartime song and a German one, among others. What kinds of memories can be or are associated with them, and why are they still popular or remembered today? Why were some songs banned? What made them dangerous? I realized that once you really start working on them, you never finish; you always find more. These are never-ending stories, a constant work in progress.

Chen: Previously, you said you also worked on the Republican period. What was that about?

Steen: Previously I worked on Sino-German relations during the Republican period, and I worked on the first decades of China's music industry in Republican Shanghai. Right now I am happy to contribute a China chapter to a book entitled *Formations of Phonographic Modernity in East and Southeast Asia: Exploring the Gramophone Industry and Music Zone*,

edited by Wang Ying-fen and Fumitaka Yamauchi from the Graduate Institute of Musicology, Taiwan National University. The idea was born many years ago at a conference in Taipei, followed by a subject-specific workshop there in 2017. It is an ambitious project that was also delayed by the pandemic, and I am happy to see that we are now in the final stage.

Chen: Are these songs you look at very melancholic?

Steen: No, actually not. I look at the so-called *shidaiqu*, the popular “songs of the times” from Shanghai, and scholars say that they represent life in Shanghai in all its aspects. You have a diverse mix of a lot of topics, ranging from love to social critique, satire, and fun. Of course, they can also be very melancholic, while including subtle patriotic sentiments, especially the wartime songs. But not all are melancholic.

Chen: What kinds of languages are these songs in? Mandarin, Taiwanese (Taiyu), or Japanese?

Steen: In Republican Shanghai, you probably heard all languages, not to forget Cantonese. The recording industry was very busy, and several nationalities were involved in record production. The popular songs I talk about, however, were all in Mandarin, not least because many of them were also popular film songs of the 1930s and 1940s.

Chen: You have a very unique way of connecting to Taiwan! What is your view of your Taiwan connection?

Steen: I studied at Fudan University in Shanghai for two years in the early 1990s, and when I was a PhD student at the Seminar of East Asian Studies in Berlin, working on Republican China, we were always encouraged to collaborate with archives and scholars in both the PRC and Taiwan. And so we did. We early had contacts with, and visitors from, Beijing University and the Academia Sinica, Taiwan. When Wang Ying-fen organized the first conference on The Age of the 78s in Asia in Taipei in 2008, I had just published my PhD thesis and was more than happy to contribute. Since then, I have been in contact with her and other scholars, which is fruitful and very enjoyable.

Chen: Do you have students studying in Taiwan or writing theses about Taiwan?

Steen: We have students who chose to join Chinese language training in Taiwan during COVID-19. We have a long-term engagement with Beida [Peking University], and our students usually go there to study the Chinese language during the fourth semester. However, since 2020 we haven't sent any students, and we hope it will be better next spring. Once students are enrolled in our program, they will go to Peking University, and they hardly find the time to also visit Taiwan. Today's students don't have the time and flexibility we had, but there are always some who manage to enroll in summer courses, which of course is also a budget question.

7 Genres of Translation of Swedish Literature in Taiwan: The Past, the Present, and Predictions

Teng-Chian Kuo

This paper represents an effort, using the available data and statistics, to map out the underlying tendencies in Swedish literature translated into Traditional Chinese between 1950 and 2021 while making some cautious and well-founded predictions about tendencies in the forthcoming five-year period (2022-2026). The prediction is that in the following five-year period, detective novels in Swedish literature will become the genre most frequently published and translated into Traditional Chinese and influence other genres, including Swedish children's literature.

In the meantime, quantitative data will be used to reach qualitatively relevant conclusions about which genres within Swedish literature have been translated into Traditional Chinese in Taiwan more frequently in the past 70 years, and which genres stand a better chance to become the most influential in the foreseeable future. Comparisons will be made both between various genres and within specific genres, while several significant background factors – including some characteristic traits of translated literature in Taiwan and the contributing factors or forces behind translation as an intercultural phenomenon – will also be covered in this essay.

Swedish literature translated in Taiwan (from a pan-Scandinavian perspective): 1950–2008

According to Chen,³⁷ translated literature initially held a peripheral position in the Taiwanese literary polysystem during the first years

³⁷ Jian-Chung Chen, *A Cursed Literature? A Compilation of Literary Theories in Taiwan after World War II (1945-1949)* (Taipei: Wu-nan Cultural Enterprise, 2007), 1.

after World War II, and accounted for 11.2 percent of the total literary publications in Taiwan in 1952. Nevertheless, compared with several cultural and economic major powers nearby – including China, Japan, and even the U.S. – the Taiwanese literary polysystem has had a substantially weaker repertoire and may fulfill the preconditions laid out by Even-Zohar³⁸ for translated literature to acquire and exert influence. On the other hand, Taiwan has also had a younger literary tradition, viewed historically – which has made Taiwan more vulnerable to literary and cultural influences from Japan, China, and the U.S.³⁹ Consequently, by the final years of the 1990s, translated literature already represented almost half of the overall publications in Taiwan.⁴⁰

A numerical estimation of Western literary works translated into Traditional Chinese and published between 1950 and 2008 is presented in Table 7.1, where literature translated from Japanese and Korean into Traditional Chinese is excluded.⁴¹ The table conveys the peripheral, marginalized position that translated Scandinavian literary works have attained in the Taiwanese literary polysystem while English, French, and German have undoubtedly been the dominant source languages within the category “Western literature”.

Table 7.2⁴² further highlights the Scandinavian authors most frequently translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1950 and 2008, which sheds light on the translated Swedish literature in the Taiwanese polysystem from a pan-Scandinavian perspective.

³⁸ I. Even-Zohar, “The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem,” in *Translation Studies Reader*, eds. L. Venuti, and M. Baker (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 200-201.

³⁹ Ein-Zhe Huang, *De-Japanization and Re-Sinicization: Cultural Reconstruction in Taiwan after WWII (1945-1947)* (Taipei: Rye Field Publishing Co., 2007).

⁴⁰ Jian-Chung Chen, *A Cursed Literature? A Compilation of Literary Theories in Taiwan after World War II (1945-1949)* (Taipei: Wu-nan Cultural Enterprise, 2007).

⁴¹ Huei-Rue Dong, *A Study of World Translated Literature in Taiwan: A Bibliometric Approach*. Taipei: National Cheng-chi University Press, 2008), 40.

⁴² Huei-Rue Dong, *A Study of World Translated Literature in Taiwan: A Bibliometric Approach*. (Taipei: National Cheng-chi University Press, 2008), 104.

Table 7.1: Number and percentage of translated Western literary works published in Taiwan between 1950 and 2008 (Source: Dong n. 42)

Ranking	Entries of book titles			Book-titles including repeated publications			Book-titles without repeated publications		
	Country	No.	%	Country	No.	%	Country	No.	%
1	USA	10 272	31,94	USA	8105	35,12	USA	7809	36,31
2	UK	9327	29,00	UK	6485	28,10	UK	5799	26,96
3	France (Fra)	4347	13,52	Fra	2912	12,62	Fra	2679	12,46
4	Germany (Ger)	2283	7,10	Ger	1421	6,16	Ger	1338	6,22
5	Russia (Rus)	1361	4,23	Rus	811	3,51	Rus	683	3,18
6	Central Europe (CE) ⁴³	882	2,74	CE	661	2,86	CE	614	2,85
7	Italy (Ita)	660	2,05	Ita	484	2,10	Ita	448	2,08
8	America (A) ⁴⁴	619	1,92	A	457	1,98	A	439	2,04
9	Modern Western World (MWW) ⁴⁵	561	1,74	MWW	390	1,69	MWW	395	1,84
10	Scandinavia (Sca) ⁴⁶	472	1,47	Sca	344	1,49	Sca	345	1,60
11	Spain (Esp)	360	1,12	Esp	256	1,11	Esp	237	1,10

It is salient that during the above-mentioned period, Scandinavian authors composing classical, canonized literatures (including Henrik Ibsen and Jostein Gaarder) or children's literature (including Tove Jansson and Astrid Lindgren) stood a much better chance of being translated into Traditional Chinese than authors specializing in thrillers or detective novels (including Maj Sjöwall and Henning Mankell).

⁴³ Referring to European countries such as Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg (Ibid.).

⁴⁴ The term "America" here excludes the U.S. (which already takes first place in the chart) while all other countries in the continent are covered by the term "America", including English-speaking Canada, Portuguese-speaking Brazil, and the Spanish-speaking countries (Dong, n. 42).

⁴⁵ The term "Modern Western World" includes translated Western collections where it is difficult or even impossible to identify the author of the original texts (Dong, n. 42, 122).

⁴⁶ The term "Scandinavia" not only comprises the five Nordic countries which include Sweden but also the Baltic states, including Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, and the Faroe Islands (Dong, n. 42).

Table 7.2: Number of translated literary works published in Taiwan with an original text composed by a Scandinavian author between 1950 and 2008 (Source: Dong, n. 47)

Ranking	Entries of book titles		Including repeated editions		Excluding repeated editions	
	Author	Nr.	Author	Nr.	Author	Nr.
1	Henrik Ibsen	46	Henrik Ibsen	26	Tove Jansson	27
2	Jostein Gaarder	42	Tove Jansson	26	Henrik Ibsen	26
3	Tove Jansson	36	Jostein Gaarder	18	H. C. Andersen	17
4	Knut Hamsun	26	H.C. Andersen	17	Astrid Lindgren	16
5	Par Lagerkvist	23	Astrid Lindgren	15	Jostein Gaarder	13
6	August Strindberg	20	Knut Hamsun	14	Knut Hamsun	12
7	Astrid Lindgren	17	Henning Mankell	11	Henning Mankell	11
8	H.C. Andersen	17	August Strindberg	11	August Strindberg	10
9	Henning Mankell	12	Kurt Baumann	10	Maj Sjowall	10
10	Maj Sjowall	12	Maj Sjowall	10	Kurt Baumann	9

Statistics 1999–2021

With the data concerning the period 1950–2008 at hand, it is highly relevant to closely examine the Swedish literatures translated into Traditional Chinese in the 21st century to analyze the coming trends more precisely. Therefore, www.books.com.tw (one of the biggest and most comprehensive book-selling websites in Taiwan) has preliminarily been chosen as the data source. Translated book-titles composed by authors writing in Swedish are included in this study, while the influence of the phenomenon of *indirect translation*⁴⁷ as expounded by Graeber – which implies that Taiwanese translators may have used the English translations of the Swedish originals as the source texts for translation projects in question – is excluded.

Based on the available statistics, several charts have been created

⁴⁷ W. Graeber, German Translators of English Fiction and Their French Mediators, in *Interculturality and the Historical Study of Literary Translations*, H. Kittel and A.P. Frank (eds), (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1991), 5-16.

and developed both between different genres and within certain specific genres. While repeated publications of the same translated work (for instance, in the form of compilations, book-series, anthologies, trilogies) have been excluded from the statistics comparing different genres of translated works, they are included in the statistics focusing on specific genres to visualize different Swedish authors' acceptance and popularity in the Taiwanese literary polysystem and to identify certain traits and patterns which Taiwanese publishers have exhibited.

In Table 7.3,⁴⁸ statistics regarding Swedish books within the category of fiction and belles-lettres⁴⁹ translated into and published in Traditional Chinese between 1999 and 2021 are presented. While strictly fictional novels account for only 20 percent of the total publications within this category during this timespan, translated detective novels already represent 53 percent of the translated entries. Compared with the statistics presented in Table 7.2 and Table 7.3, we see a clear shift of power where detective and crime novels gradually take over at the expense of more strictly fictional novels.

It is noteworthy that certain genres in the Swedish literary repertoire – including poetry and linguistics – receive marginalized acceptance in the Taiwanese literary polysystem. While the only two translated book-entries of Swedish poetry into Traditional Chinese between 1999 and 2021 were composed by Tomas Tranströmer (recipient of the 2011 Nobel Prize in Literature), the only translated book-entry from Swedish into Traditional Chinese regarding linguistics over the same timespan was composed by Cecilia Lindqvist (an internationally recognized Swedish sinologist).

This phenomenon fits well with *Double Consecration*, a deeper concept deduced and developed by Lindqvist:⁵⁰ The literature in a certain nation

⁴⁸ Search results for Swedish literary fiction translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2001, <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/qsub/01/sort/1/v/0/page/1/ovs/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28]).

⁴⁹ Belles-lettres is a French phrase meaning beautiful or fine writing. In the modern narrow sense, it is a label for literary works that do not fall into the major categories such as fiction, poetry, or drama.

⁵⁰ Y. Lindqvist, "Double consecration – A prerequisite for translating literary peripheries? Maryse

Table 7.3: Swedish books translated into Traditional Chinese (fiction & belles-lettres 1999-2021) and published in Taiwan, excluding repeated publications in the form of re-editions, parts in anthologies, and compilations

Genre or subject areas	Number of published and translated entries
Detective and crime novels	51
Novels	19
Youth novels	14 ⁵¹
Thrillers	5
Science-fictions	2
Poetry	2
Classical literature	1
Linguistics	1
Mythological studies	1

must be first accredited by an internationally dominant literature or literary polysystem, for instance through translation, in order to become accepted by another non-central literary polysystem. The concept may explain the relative popularity of translated Swedish detective and crime novels in the Taiwanese literary polysystem and the fact that Swedish books within certain genres or subjective areas – including poetry and linguistics – have difficulty being readily accepted in the Taiwanese literary polysystem, except for the most internationally recognized (by the English-speaking polysystems) actors within the genre or subject area.

Translations of strictly fictional Swedish novels & belle-letters in Taiwan (1999–2021)

Strictly fictional novels fall into a relative numerical minority, accounting

Condé in Swedish as a case study," *Språk och stil* 21, (2011): 142.

⁵¹ Referring to novels targeting readers between 9 and 14 years old, instead of those below 9 years old.

for 20 percent of the total number of published, translated entries. Table 7.4 further highlights some of the Swedish fiction authors more frequently translated in Taiwan during the time span 1999-2021.⁵²

Table 7.4: Some prominent Swedish authors of fictional novels and belles-lettres translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan 1999-2021

Name of Author	Number of published entries
Fredrik Backman	3 compilations and 8 single books
Simon Stålenhag	1 trilogy and 3 single books
Jonas Gardell	1 trilogy and 3 single books

Translations of non-fictional Swedish books in Taiwan (1999–2021)

In addition to statistics regarding fictional works in Swedish translated into Traditional Chinese, information about Swedish non-fictional books translated into Traditional Chinese (1999-2021) is also available on books.com.tw. Table 7.5 presents the statistics in certain numerically relevant, substantial categories.⁵³

Translations of Swedish detective novels in Taiwan (1999–2021)

The acceptance of Swedish detective novels into the Taiwanese literary polysystem can be partly attributed to the influence of English and French detective novels. Ho⁵⁴ points out that English and French authors, such as Conan Doyle, Maurice Leblanc, and Agatha Christie were given a central position in the translations of detective novels into Traditional Chinese.

⁵² Search results for Swedish literary fiction translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/qsub/01/sort/1/v/0/page/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28].

⁵³ Search results for Swedish fictional and non-fictional literature translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/sort/1/v/0/page/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28].

⁵⁴ Min Ho, *Tremendous Reasoning: The Charm of Detective Novels* (Taipei: Sho-Wei Information Technology, 2010), 157.

Table 7.5: Number of Swedish non-fictional books translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021

Genre	Number of published entries
Self-help books & General psychology	11
Arts subjects & History	7
Social Science	6
Healthcare & Medicine	4

Taiwanese readers have become used to these authors of detective novels from major European cultural powers. It has therefore, historically speaking, not been equally easy for Swedish authors in detective novels to be translated into Traditional Chinese without any form of recognition; nevertheless, the positive aspect is that since Taiwanese readers have accustomed themselves to detective novels as a genre, Swedish detective and crime novels do have the potential to be translated into Traditional Chinese and introduced in Taiwan in the forthcoming future. Table 7.6⁵⁵ presents statistics regarding the Swedish authors of crime and detective novels most frequently translated into Traditional Chinese from 1999 to 2021.

Translations of Swedish Children's literature in Taiwan (1999–2021) and some tendencies

To analyze how translations of Swedish children's literature in Taiwan become accepted, a deeper understanding of some characteristics of the Taiwanese literary polysystem is essential. According to Even-Zohar,⁵⁶ a certain genre becomes imported from the source culture to the target

⁵⁵ Search results for Swedish literary fictions translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/qqsub/01/sort/1/v/0/page/1/ovs/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28].

⁵⁶ Even-Zohar, n. 39, 200.

Table 7.6: Most frequently translated Swedish authors of crime and detective novels from 1999 to 2021 into Traditional Chinese (with publications in Taiwan)

Author's name	Number of published entries in Traditional Chinese
Henning Mankell	7 single books
Stieg Larsson	2 compilations and 6 single books
David Lagercrantz	2 compilations and 3 single books
Maja Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö	10 single books
Erik Axl Sund	1 book-series
Mattias Edwardsson	1 single book
Alexander Söderberg	2 single books

culture by means of translations because the target culture has an acute need to compensate for its own internal insufficiencies in the genre in question. Chang points out that the target culture where Chinese is used – both in Mainland China and Taiwan – has traditionally struggled with underdevelopment in children literature and it has therefore been crucial for the Taiwanese literary polysystem to reach out for more complete, well-developed repertoires of children's literature in, for instance, the Western world.⁵⁷ In this aspect, the Scandinavian – particularly the Swedish – children's literature appears to have become exactly the Western repertoire that over the years has addressed the needs in the Taiwanese literary polysystem.

As the statistics – both between different genres and within the category “Swedish children's literature translated into and published in Traditional Chinese” – from www.books.com.tw from 1999 to 2021 show, translations of Swedish children's literature indeed enjoy substantial interest and clear preference in Taiwan. As is indicated by Figure 7.1,⁵⁸ the number of pieces of published, translated Swedish children's

⁵⁷ Zhong-Liang Chang, *Translated Literature after the May Fourth Movement* (Taipei: Sho-Wei Information Technology, 2005), 6

⁵⁸ Search results for Swedish children and youth literatures translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://>

literature reaches its peak in the five-year period 2006–2010 (25). The most evident numerical gap between translated Swedish children’s literature and other main genres (including detective novels and strictly fictional novels) also appears between 2006 and 2010. In the two following five-year periods (2011–2015 and 2016–2021), the numerical gap between children’s literature and other main genres (detective and crime novels in particular) has become smaller (partly because of the increased acceptance of Swedish detective novels); nevertheless, it still may be argued that children’s literature so far has been the genre of Swedish literature most frequently translated into Traditional Chinese.

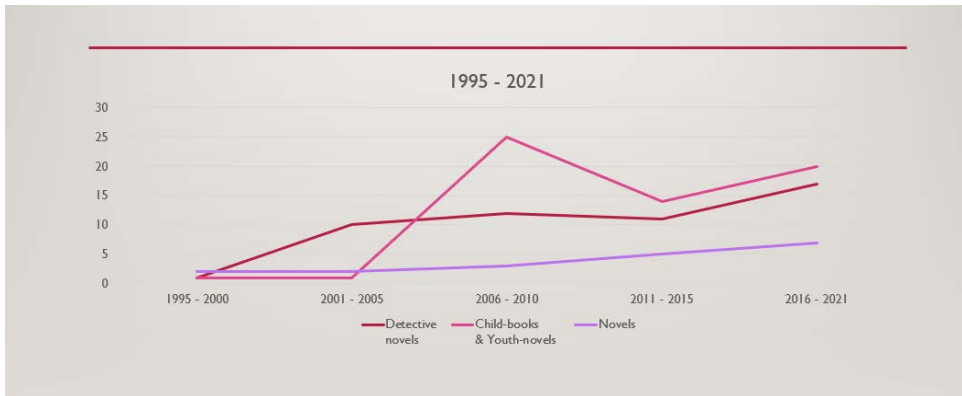


Figure 7.1: **Shift in balance between the acceptance and popularity of different Swedish literary genres in the Taiwanese literary polysystem regarding the number of translated and published entries (excluding repeated editions), 1995-2021**

When further comparisons are made within “Swedish children’s literature translated into Traditional Chinese” as a genre, it becomes evident that its popularity within the Taiwanese literary polysystem reaches a peak during the five-year period 2006-2010. On the one hand, the number of published and translated pieces within the genre during these five years (25) accounts for 42 percent of the total number of translated and published entries from

1999 to 2021 (61), which is presented in Figure 7.2;⁵⁹ on the other hand, the mounting popularity and acceptance of translated Swedish children literature can mainly be ascribed to the works of a few internationally famous authors. As available statistics on the UNESCO site⁶⁰ indicate, two internationally recognized authors – Selma Lagerlöf and Astrid Lindgren – account for 33 of 76 book-entries within the relatively narrow category “Swedish fictional works⁶¹ translated into Chinese” during the five-year period 2006-2010.⁶² Other more prominent Swedish authors of children’s literature translated into Traditional Chinese over the same period include Tove Jansson (8 published book-entries) and Elsa Beskow (1 published book-entry).

In the meantime, the preferences and interests exhibited by Taiwanese publishers for translated Swedish children’s literature have concentrated on a limited number of internationally established authors and even a single book that has already received widespread global recognition. The authorship of Selma Lagerlöf may be regarded as an illustrative example.

The Wonderful Adventures of Nils (1907) is undoubtedly Selma Lagerlöf’s most famous and most frequently translated book. According to available statistics on books.com.tw,⁶³ the book has been published 25 times between 2006 and 2021 in the form of translations into Traditional Chinese. It is thus easy to form the perception that Selma Lagerlöf’s books

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ The number of Swedish literary works translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 2000 and 2006. UNESCO, 2022, [https://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsresult.aspx?a=&stxt=&sl=swe&l=zho&c=&pla=&pub=&tr=&e=&udc=&d=&from=2000&to=2006&tie=a \[2022-02-05\]](https://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsresult.aspx?a=&stxt=&sl=swe&l=zho&c=&pla=&pub=&tr=&e=&udc=&d=&from=2000&to=2006&tie=a [2022-02-05]).

⁶¹ The term “fictional works” on the UNESCO website does not differentiate between books belonging to children’s literature and fictional works (including novels and poetry) aimed at adult readers.

⁶² The available search engine on the UNESCO website does not differentiate between Traditional and Simplified Chinese regarding the options of target languages. Therefore, the exact target language in a Chinese translation has to be deduced according to the location of the publisher.

⁶³ Search results for *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* by Selma Lagerlöf translated into and published in Traditional Chinese between 2006 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), [https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/key/%E9%A8%8E%E9%B5%9D%E6%AD%B7%E9%9A%AA%E8%A8%98/cat/BKA/fclick/autocomp-pc \[2022-01-15\]](https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/key/%E9%A8%8E%E9%B5%9D%E6%AD%B7%E9%9A%AA%E8%A8%98/cat/BKA/fclick/autocomp-pc [2022-01-15]).

have been widely accepted in the Taiwanese literary polysystem.

Nevertheless, if we examine Selma Lagerlöf's publications and authorship in Taiwan even more closely, we find that the recognition she has received in the Taiwanese literary polysystem is predominantly limited to *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*. As a matter of fact, *The General's Ring* (1925) has so far been the only book by Selma Lagerlöf to be published in Traditional Chinese translation apart from *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*.⁶⁴ This indicates that Taiwanese publishers seem to be risk-averse and are more inclined to repeatedly publish a masterpiece of international renown instead of trying to introduce other books written by the same famous author by means of translation projects.

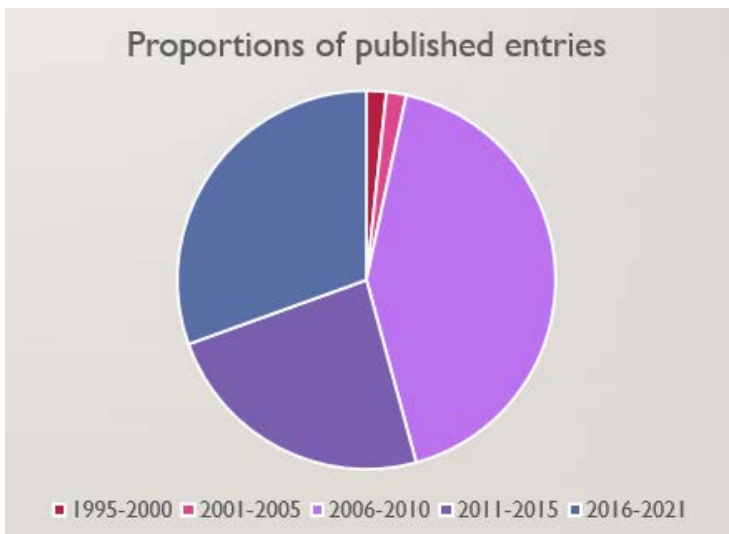


Figure 7.2: **Books within Swedish children and youth literature translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan: Shares viewed in divided five-year periods from 1995 to 2021**

⁶⁴ Entry and bibliographical records of Selma Lagerlöf translated into and published in Traditional Chinese, Wikipedia (2021), <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%A1%9E%E5%B0%94%E7%8E%9B%C2%B7%E6%8B%89%E6%A0%BC%E6%B4%9B%E5%A4%AB> [2022-01-15].

Traits of more recently translated Swedish children's and youth literature into traditional Chinese and several observations

With the success and popularity attained by internationally recognized Swedish authors of children's literature, including Selma Lagerlöf and Astrid Lindgren, in the Taiwanese literary polysystem, it is still necessary to further examine other Swedish authors in youth and children's literature who have been translated into Traditional Chinese more recently (2014-2021). Table 7.7 presents statistics of several other Swedish authors of children's and youth literature frequently translated into Traditional Chinese.⁶⁵

Table 7.7: Numbers regarding Swedish authors of children's and youth literature translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 2014 and 2021

Name of Author	Number of Published Series of Books & Part in Anthologies	Number of Published Single Books
Martin Widmark	4 (Book-series)	10
Jacob Wegelius	0	2
Ulf Nilsson	1 (Anthology)	5
Elsa Beskow	1 compilation and 1 anthology	5
Ingela Korsell & Åsa Larsson	3 (Book-series)	0
Ingela P. Arrhenius	0	2

Among these Swedish authors more frequently translated into Traditional Chinese (2014-2021), Ulf Nilsson represents more typical, characteristic, and conventional children's literature while Elsa Beskow was active as an author of children's literature during the first half of the 20th century; nevertheless, a qualitative shift within the genre may be observed as we analyze other prominent Swedish authors.

⁶⁵ Search results for Swedish children and youth literatures translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 2014 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/qqsub/14/sort/1/v/0/page/1/ovs/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28].

The storylines in the children's literature composed by Martin Widmark and Jacob Wegelius are characterized by detectives, who are essentially drawn from crime and detective novels. *The Pax Series* (2014-2016) by Ingela Korsell and Åsa Larsson reveal certain derivations from traditional children or youth literature.

The stories in *The Pax Series* take place in the Swedish town of Mariefred and cover various sights of interest and important landmarks in the town. In this aspect, the series inherits a characteristic trait of *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* – that is, to bring Swedish landscapes outside metropolitan areas into the narrative and to make readers more familiar with them. Nevertheless, compared with *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, the storylines in *The Pax Series* focus comparatively more on mystery, both physical and mental. Afzelius and Jonsson come to the conclusion that *The Pax Series* can be used as pedagogical material for schoolchildren, but that the series does portray violence in several different forms.⁶⁶ Such elements are undoubtedly reminiscent of crime and detective novels. While these Swedish youth novels and children's books still do not account for the numerical majority within the genre being translated into Traditional Chinese (compared with canonized authors like Selma Lagerlöf, Tove Jansson, and Astrid Lindgren), it is still interesting to observe whether more books in Swedish children's literature reminiscent of mystery, crime, and detective novels will be introduced to the Taiwanese literary polysystem in the form of translations in the forthcoming future since they represent a new phenomenon.

Predictions (2022–2026)

Based on the available statistics, the following predictions regarding Swedish literature translated into Traditional Chinese in Taiwan in the forthcoming five-year period (2022-2026) may be made:

- The total number of Swedish detective and crime novels translated into Traditional Chinese will surpass that of Swedish children's books.

⁶⁶ M. Afzelius, and B. Jonsson, *Jag ska döda dig! – En motivstudie om hur olika former av våld gestaltas i bokserien Pax* (2020): 3, <http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1503694/FULLTEXT01.pdf> [2022-02-15].

- Among the translated Swedish children's books in the above-mentioned five-year period, more books will be reminiscent of mystery, detective, and crime novels, making the category "Swedish children's and youth literature translated into Traditional Chinese" a more heterogeneous group compared with earlier.
- The amount of Swedish novels that are more strictly fictional, catering to adult readers, translated into Traditional Chinese will fall into a more apparent numerical minority in comparison with children's books and crime and detective novels.

As noted previously, the numerical gap between Swedish children's and youth books and detective novels translated into Traditional Chinese has narrowed in the two most recent five-year periods (2011-2015 and 2016-2021). Table 7.8⁶⁷ further points out that the Swedish children's books translated into Traditional Chinese that do currently have a strong coloring of mystery and detective novels (1999-2021) are still a numerical minority within the genre.

Table 7.8: Statistics about Swedish children's books and youth novels translated into Traditional Chinese and certain other sub-categories, 1999-2021

Total number of published entries ⁶⁸	61
Number of published entries in the genre of mystery, crime, and detective novels ⁶⁹	15
Number of out-of-print entries	5
Number of published entries in Simplified Chinese that are available in Taiwan	13 ⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Search results for Swedish children and youth literatures translated into Traditional Chinese and published in Taiwan between 1999 and 2021 on books.com.tw (2021), <https://search.books.com.tw/search/query/cat/1/qsub/001/qqsub/14/sort/1/v/0/page/1/ovs/1/spell/3/key/%E7%91%9E%E5%85%B8> [2021-12-28].

⁶⁸ Excluding repeated publications of the same book-entry such as compilations, parts in anthologies, and repeated editions.

⁶⁹ Mainly youth novels aiming at readers above 9 years old.

⁷⁰ Not included in the gross total in the chart because of the target language (Simplified Chinese),

Nevertheless, the noteworthy phenomenon is that such children's books and youth novels have been translated and published relatively recently (2014-2021) in Taiwan. While repeated publications and translations of canonized Swedish authors in children's books can still be expected, it does stand to reason to predict that more children's books in the genre of mystery and crime novels in Swedish may be translated into Traditional Chinese, making the genre in this specific language pair – involving two literary polysystems – a somewhat more heterogeneous concept.

Conclusion

Munday (2001) indicates that different literatures and genres, including non-translated and translated works, may compete for dominance within literary polysystems.⁷¹ Likewise, different genres arising from the same literary polysystem – in this case the Swedish literary polysystem – may also compete for greater acceptance and dominance in the Taiwanese literary polysystem. As Lindqvist⁷² points out, the interactions between two peripheral literary polysystems are still possible with the mediation of a more centralized, dominating literary polysystem; while influences from major polysystems (for instance, the English-speaking polysystems) may have to be accounted for when interactions from the Swedish literary polysystem to the Taiwanese literary polysystem are analyzed, the predictions can be soundly made for 2022-2026 that Swedish children's books translated into Traditional Chinese will become a somewhat more heterogeneous concept with the style of detective and crime novels, and that the number of Swedish crime and detective novels translated into Traditional Chinese will surpass that of translated Swedish children's books.

while 12 of them are repeated publications of *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* by Selma Lagerlöf.

⁷¹ J. Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

⁷² Y. Lindqvist, *Översättning som social praktik* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2002), 226.

