

Country report

The development of social and cultural geographies in Taiwan: knowledge production and social relevance

Wu Hsin-Ling¹, Jou Sue-Ching¹ & Lily Kong²

¹Department of Geography, National Taiwan University, No. 1, Sec. 4, Roosevelt Road, Taipei, Taiwan 106, d91228002@ntu.edu.tw, jouchen@ntu.edu.tw; ²Department of Geography, National University of Singapore, 1 Arts Link, Singapore 117570, lilykong@nus.edu.sg

Introduction

Social and cultural geographies have long occupied a marginal position in Taiwan's scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. Despite the influence of the so-called 'cultural turn' that has characterized much of Anglo-American scholarship since the 1990s (Barnett 1998), Taiwan's scholarship in the social sciences in general and human geography more specifically has remained relatively untouched by these intellectual currents till very recent years. This paper seeks to examine the social, intellectual and institutional contexts that explain this marginalization, and consider the possibilities for social and cultural geographies' emergence from marginality in Taiwan in the future. This possibility is considered in light of the burgeoning social and cultural geographies in Anglo-American scholarship and the emerging influence of cultural studies in Taiwan.

The following analysis draws on an examination of Chinese-language publications as well as graduate student theses in Taiwan that may be expansively construed as falling within the fold of social and cultural geographies. The publications are drawn from five major geography journals published in Taiwan¹ while the theses include those of Masters and doctoral students from five major university departments.² In short, we confine our analysis to literatures emerging from the main geographical institutions where geographical knowledge is produced. In total, we found only sixty journal articles and ninety-nine theses in the past thirty years that have been produced in Taiwan that can be considered social and cultural geography. Additionally, we also examined English-language publications produced outside Taiwan which contained social and cultural content about Taiwan and Taiwanese people. These included those written by non-geographers in non-geography

journals, but which could be considered as having geographical content. Finally, we interviewed two senior scholars to obtain a better understanding of the history and developmental contexts of Taiwan's human geography.³

The development of Taiwan's social and cultural geographies may be divided into three main periods from the 1980s onwards, based on three criteria: the volume of work, the type of issues explored and the depth of theoretical engagement (see Table 1). In what follows, we will elaborate on each period, keeping in view two questions throughout: first, the way in which social and cultural geographical works address issues relevant to Taiwan society of the day, and second, how closely they have been situated, or not, within larger intellectual currents in Taiwan and within the development of modern geographical thought internationally.

The late development of social and cultural geographies in Taiwan

Conditions surrounding early absence

It is fair to say that social and cultural geographies have been and remain underdeveloped in Taiwan. This must be understood in terms of the development of geography as a whole on the island *vis-à-vis* mainland China. Early geographical studies in Taiwan remained in the shadows of mainland Chinese traditions as the major geography departments in Taiwan were founded by faculty from mainland China when the National Government retreated. The first department was founded in 1946 in National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), a university whose mission is to train high-school teachers, under the name of Department of History and Geography. This was owing to the fact that geography had

Table 1 Key moments in the development of social and cultural geographies in Taiwan

Stage and key events	Subfield	Issue
Nascent stage (1980s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marshal law was lifted in 1987 • The Graduate Institute of Building and Planning in National Taiwan University was established in 1988 	Social geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural–urban migration • Adaptation of aboriginal migrants to urban settings • Changes in rural villages (including population structure and rural lifestyles/livelihood)
Conservative expansion stage (1990s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cultural Studies Association was established in 1998 	Cultural geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifestyles/livelihood in rural villages • Traditional religious activities and landscapes • Human ecology • Regional analysis/chorology/chorography • Phenomenology and textual analysis
	Social geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal social structure and their economic adaptation
Takeoff stage (2000s)	New cultural geography and social geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban consumption culture • Gender relations and sexuality • Cultural economy • Identity politics • Symbolic landscapes • Migration (including transnational migrants like foreign labour and foreign brides, and aboriginal migrants)

never been a single discipline and was always studied together with history and literature in Chinese tradition (Shi 1983). It was not until 1962 that the Department of Geography in NTNU was separated from History and became an independent department.

The second department was founded in National Taiwan University (NTU) in 1955. Although the department carried the name of Geography, it was actually composed of two divisions—geography and meteorology, and belonged to the College of Science from the very beginning. This was true too of the third geography department, which was set up in 1963 in Chinese Culture University, a private university. To set up geography departments in Colleges of Science also had roots in Chinese history, particularly from the 1920s when modern geographical thought was introduced into China from the West. At that time, the influence mainly took the form of physical geographical knowledge, such as geology and meteorology, the subjects of ‘science’. It resonated with the currents in Chinese intellectual movements at that time, in which the Chinese embraced the pure sciences and the philosophical paradigms of empiricism and positivism. The outcome was a strong ‘scientific’, physical geography tradition in Taiwan (Shi 1984).

Apart from the influence of the Chinese, Taiwan’s geographical development must also acknowledge Japanese influence. Japanese colonization of Taiwan (1895–1945) impacted much of Taiwanese life, and it is unsurprising that geography as an academic discipline in Taiwan also bears the imprint of Japanese influence, mainly in the form of geomorphological research and the study of settlements. The latter has relevance for our discussion about social and cultural geographies in contemporary Taiwan, for it established a tradition that emphasized fieldwork and the

systematic collection of detailed data. While the precise focus on settlement patterns during Japanese colonization may have evolved, it will become apparent later that the systematic focus on detailed fieldwork and data collection, the outcome of Japanese influence, remains.

The Japanese colonial connection also had the effect of encouraging Taiwan scholars to pursue their graduate degrees in Japan. These scholars played a significant role in reinforcing Japanese research agendas and approaches in Taiwan, as well as in introducing some major English literatures that had been translated into Japanese back to Taiwan. All of these helped to shape Taiwan’s early phase of social and cultural geographies, though perhaps more so in educational than in research programmes. This is because Japanese influence occurred mainly in the Geography Department of NTNU, where the remit is mainly to train high-school teachers, rather than knowledge production.

Given this intellectual and institutional history, it is not surprising that the early development of geography in Taiwan emphasized physical geography from its institutional base in science, and education rather than research in human geography from its institutional base in a teacher training university. It is only in the last twenty-five to thirty years that human geography has grown both in remit and areas of interest, so that more research in different areas has emerged. Some of this may be loosely categorized as social and cultural geographies.

The nascent stage: emerging social geographies

While the period before 1980 was characterized by a focus on population, industrial and

retail geography, often dominated by the quantitative tradition, the 1980s saw the influence of new faculty who had graduated from the USA and Japan who turned their attention to social geographical issues of specific and immediate relevance to local society, namely rural–urban migration (Chiang and Yang 1983), rural change (Chang 1985; Wu 1988; Zhou 1989) and urban and environmental adaptation, particularly of aboriginal migrants (Chang 1989; Lian 1989; Lin 1986; Tsai 1987; Wu 1988). Perhaps they were influenced by the 1970s debates in the Anglo-American world on relevance, or more likely, they were simply responding to the conditions that they saw around them in Taiwan society.

Apart from engaging in socially relevant research, two other features characterized social geographical work of the 1980s in Taiwan. One was the influence of English-language geography and its theoretical approaches of the 1960s and 1970s, namely behavioural geography and human ecology. Although Anglo-American geography had by then moved on and embraced humanistic geography, in Taiwan, this had yet to emerge as influential. Instead, researchers continued to use the theoretical language of behavioural geography and human ecology from an earlier period in their work. However, there was a disjuncture between adoption of these theoretical postures and the continued and profound influence of the Japanese geographical tradition of detailed ethnographic field investigations. Much of the scholarship at this time was therefore characterized by ‘accurate, orderly, and rational description[s] of the variables characteristic of the earth’s surface’ (Hartshorne 1959: 21), which did not always dovetail with the concepts and ideas within behavioural geography and human ecology.

*The stage of conservative expansion:
emerging cultural geographies*

The 1990s marked the emergence of cultural geographical works in Taiwan, influenced particularly by the humanistic geographies propounded a decade ago in the Anglo-American world. Meanwhile, the social geography of the 1980s continued, with the study of aboriginals, their social structure and their adaptation constituting a sustained research foci (Chang 1991; S. P. Chen 1998; Tsai 1998; Wang 1990).

Within cultural geography, a number of graduate theses gave attention to the lifestyles in rural villages, and the practice of traditional religious activities and the characteristics of religious landscapes (Cheng 1998; Chyr 1996; Huang 1997; Lu 1998; Pan 1993). These ‘traditional’ cultural geographical works (see Kong 1997) were coupled by the persistent influence of human ecology in the study of rural lifestyles where the interactions between human beings, environment and organizations were the subject of analyses in many rural studies (H. M. Chen 1998; Chung 1991; Lin 1995). The regional geography of earlier decades also exerted its influence on Taiwanese geography at this juncture. In fact, the goal of the first graduate programme in geography (in the Department of Geography at National Taiwan Normal University) was exactly to emphasize the regional study of small areas in Taiwan. It also aimed to build the chorology/chorography for every township/city in Taiwan through intensive field investigations and interviews. This turn of attention to the urban was in itself new, for hitherto, interest in the study of rural areas was much higher than interest in the study of the city. This stemmed from the fact that many of the students majoring in geography came mostly from central and southern rural

Taiwan and had an interest in understanding the conditions of their origins.

It was perhaps only in the reference to phenomenology and textual analysis that Taiwanese cultural geography engaged with more contemporary approaches in Anglo-American cultural geography. Examples of works in this regard include those who tried to link the form and connotation of the traditional Taiwanese courtyard houses with the body image (Chen 1992, 1993, 1994) and those who tried to interpret the ancient Chinese sense of space through textual analysis (Pan 1990, 1992).

By and large, few scholars adopted the more contemporary Anglo-American theories and methodologies of social and cultural geographies during this period. For the most part, the focus remained on regional studies with intensive field work investigations and detailed documentation of ethnographic data. Not only was close intellectual engagement and dialogue lacking with Anglo-American geography, there was also a lack of engagement with Taiwan society, which at this time was undergoing highly volatile transformation after marshal law was lifted in 1987. This was unlike other disciplines such as architecture, urban planning, cultural studies and sociology which had scholars and graduate students aggressively involved in critiquing developments in Taiwan and indeed, engaged in the activities of civil society, and taking on the role of public intellectuals, frequently offering cultural critiques in the popular media. Many of these scholars had received a Western education and returned to Taiwan in the 1990s armed with the newest theories in their fields, familiar too with the developments within a cognate human geography. The Graduate Institute of Building and Planning in National Taiwan University has been quite visible in this respect. Their research agendas reflected not only their civic concern and public participation but also resonated with

the kinds of work that cultural geography elsewhere had come to embrace. These include issues such as the power of urban landscapes, urban governance, place identities, gender identities, and cultures and landscapes of consumerism. For instance, Deng (1991) examined hegemonic relations that shaped Taipei's cityscapes and spatial structure since the 1980s (Deng 1991), just as Shu (1995) studied the complicated power relations between state and capital in shaping the urban landscape. The theoretical underpinnings of these scholarly works were closely aligned with contemporary Anglo-American ideas, including theoretical directions in social and cultural geographies.

The takeoff stage: multiplicity, diversification and the place of theory in social and cultural geographies

The turn of the twenty-first century sets a new stage for Taiwan's social and cultural geographies. Since 2000, new developments have become apparent. The feverish participation of scholar-critics in the public media has abated, and scholars, for better or worse, have reserved their efforts more for scholarly works and academic pursuits than was previously the case. Another development, begun in the late 1990s under the influence of the 'cultural turn' in the humanities and social sciences, was the rapid and vigorous growth of cultural studies. Active research agendas have been coupled by the rapid establishment of cultural studies centres and programmes. For example, the Center for Asia-Pacific Cultural Studies in National Tsing Hua University, Center of Sexuality Research in National Central University, and Graduate Institute of Linguistics & Cultural Studies in National Chiao Tung University were established during this period. The first graduate school of cultural studies—Graduate Institute

for Social Research and Cultural Studies—was also founded in National Chiao Tung University in 2000. At the same time, efforts to reach out and make connections with other Asian scholars are apparent, for example, in the establishment in 2000 of the journal *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* with a Taiwanese and a Singaporean editor.

Key research themes that have engaged cultural studies scholars in Taiwan in the last few years have influenced social and cultural geographies. They include: gender and alternative identities, media representations of social groups, national identities in the colonial and post-colonial periods, popular culture, consumption culture, localization and local cultures, and space and politics. These are not much different from the research agendas of social and cultural geographers in Taiwan, which include urban consumption culture (Gao 2001; Hsu 2002; Lin 2003; Tsai 2001), gender relations and sexuality (T. Y. Chen 2002; Chien 2002), transnational migration (Chiang and Song 2001; Shao 2000; Shu 2001; Yang, Chiang and Liao 2005), cultural economy (Chen 2001; Liang 2004; Tseng 2002), identity politics (Y. F. Chen 2002; Ho 2001), symbolic landscapes (Liaw 2000; Lin 2003) and social justice (Jou 2000; Jou and Liu 2001). Often, studies have focused on phenomena that have recently emerged in contemporary Taiwanese society, such as the emergence of foreign brides and urban disadvantaged communities. Of particular note is the shift of focus from the rural to the urban, in tandem with the growing complexities of urban life.

Apart from the greater attention and sensitivity to the dynamics of Taiwan society, recent social and cultural geographical works have also begun to adopt the linguistic and theoretical expressions and ideas from contemporary Western literatures. A quick search of the keywords used in graduate theses and

journal papers verifies this claim. For example, 'locality', 'social justice', 'postmodernism', 'feminist geography', 'identity politics', 'cultural economy', 'spaces of resistance', and so forth are the most frequently cited keywords, which were rarely used before 2000. The hegemony of Western ideas is further reflected in the emergence of review articles in Chinese by young scholars with local doctoral degrees which summarize key theoretical developments in Anglo-American research for Taiwanese audiences, such as Yang (2001) on 'geography and social justice', Liang and Chang (2004) on 'cultural economy and cultural representation of place in geography', Chang (2005) on 'feminist geography and its sluggish development in Taiwan' and Song (2006) on 'migration studies in human geography'. These have helped to introduce the development of theoretical perspectives to those who remain highly devoted to field investigations, in part with the hope that theoretical innovations may come from local empirical studies.

This hegemony of Anglo-American concepts and lexicon is perhaps unsurprisingly marked in the English-language literature on Taiwan which may be deemed to be of a social/cultural geographical nature. Based on a broad search of English-language geography journals as well as those in cognate disciplines (anthropology, cultural studies and sociology) over the last three decades, three observations may be made. First, as with the Chinese-language scene, it is also in the last six to seven years that there has been a growth of literature of a social/cultural geographical bent in English. Second, much of this work is by non-geographers, principally sociologists and cultural studies scholars, but also anthropologists, historians, media and urban planning scholars. Third, the themes and approaches of principal concern resonate soundly with Anglo-American intellectual currents, but also

reflect developments of particular significance in Taiwanese society.

The English-language literature may be grouped into three: a literature on mobility, one on identity and one on popular culture, including but not limited to its nexus with economy. The literature on mobility is dominated by contributions from other disciplines, including sociologists addressing issues confronting migrant domestic workers (Lan 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; Loveband 2004) and the mobility of the entrepreneurial class (Tseng 2000) in explicitly geographical terms, marketing scholars on cross-border marriages (Wang and Chang 2002), and tourism scholars focusing on tourism and its implications (Hsieh and Chang 2006). It was a relief therefore to find that geographers had not altogether abdicated their role in this patently geographical research area, even though their presence is slight (Chiang and Liao 2005).

A very similar pattern is evident in the English-language literature on identities. Reflecting the colonial history and post-colonial condition of Taiwan, research has focused on colonial identity (Hsia 2002), postcolonial identity (Chun 1994; Yee 2001), national identity (Chung 2000; Wang 2000), gender and queer identity (Brown 2003; Chao 2002; Erni 2005; Martin 2000), religious identity (Katz 2003) and community identity (Chiang 2002). The majority of scholars named here are non-geographers, as with the preceding summary of mobility research. Finally, a smaller emerging area of work on popular culture and cultural economy is apparent, all produced outside geography (Adrian 2006; Chang 2004; Mee 2005). In all of these, the theoretical frameworks and conceptual lexicon developed in Anglo-American literatures have tended to dominate.

It would, however, be remiss if this section ended with the implication that social and

cultural geography in Taiwan has abandoned its tradition of detailed ethnographic field work in favour of more theoretical approaches. That has perhaps fortunately not happened. The greater tendency towards importation of Anglo-American concepts and theories has not overtaken the long-held scholarly tradition of detailed documentation of field investigations, which still account for the major part of research work in Taiwan. Whereas Western scholars calling for a rematerializing of the research subjects, and an 'ethnographic' and 'empirical' turn reflect a frustration with over-theorizing (Jackson 2000; Lorimer 2005; Philo 2000), scholars in Taiwan have stayed fast on the course of solid empirical research, and have remained grounded in the realities of everyday life.

Challenges for social and cultural geographies in Taiwan

Despite some growth after three decades of development, the volume of research and the status of social and cultural geographies in Taiwan still fall behind other branches of geography as well as other social sciences such as sociology and cultural studies. The contributions of Taiwanese social and cultural geographies to international academic discourse are also marginal. To move to the mainstream of Taiwanese societal debate and international academic debate, several challenges must be overcome.

Develop a critical mass of researchers

Faculty members with expertise in social and cultural geographies at the main universities have a significant role to play in the development of these fields in Taiwan. However, the numbers are small. There are only twenty-two

teaching faculty who call themselves social and cultural geographers. For some whose work may be considered social and/or cultural, or whose perspectives show a rapprochement with social/cultural approaches (e.g. Hsu's 2004 acknowledgement of embeddedness, social networks and professional connections in his study of the high-tech industrial system in Taiwan), their professed specializations are in other geographical subfields, such as political geography, urban geography, economic geography or philosophy of geography. The small numbers impose particularly heavy teaching loads, with the result that Masters and doctoral theses have come to form the bulk of social and cultural geographical work in Taiwan. Between 2000 and 2005, fifty-four theses were produced, the vast majority at the Masters level and only six at doctoral level. Articles in the five major geography journals published in Taiwan by 'social and cultural geographers' are only seventeen in total during these five years. Thus, the earlier characterization of a 'takeoff stage' in Taiwan's social and cultural geographies must be understood as a burgeoning of student interest in the area more so than any dedicated (social and cultural geography) growth in faculty positions, faculty research output or impact. All this accounts for why these two fields have not been able to accumulate substantial research work, nor to attract the attention of scholars in cognate disciplines such as cultural studies in Taiwan, let alone build international visibility.

Develop indigenous theoretical foundation

Three conditions have dominated the development of geographical scholarship in Taiwan. The first is the heavy emphasis on teaching in many universities which has prevented the

development of a more robust research culture. The second is the emphasis on problem-solving and policy work. The third is that researchers have tended to apply familiar Western theories to their particular research problems, often inappropriately or inadequately. Even while Shi (1984) foresaw this problem in his earlier discussion of the development of geography in Taiwan, the problem still persists more than two decades later. Most doctoral theses have the potential to become better in terms of explicating their epistemological foundations and reflecting on their methodological choices in line with their epistemology. They could also benefit from more adequate situation of their research within contemporary geographical debates. Similarly, while the quality of Masters theses have improved through the years, most are still confined to the description of data collected from fieldwork without critical interpretation and explanation. This has greatly reduced their contribution to the development of a strong academic tradition in social and cultural geographies. To make the next leap, social and cultural geographies in Taiwan will need to seriously attempt to develop more indigenous theoretical foundations that speak to the conditions of that society.

Enhance interaction with other cognate disciplines

Despite the vibrant growth of cognate disciplines, particularly cultural studies, in Taiwan in recent years, social and cultural geographers have failed to capitalize on the potential for dialogue and collaboration. According to the Taiwan Cultural Studies Association, none of the 170 active members is from Geography (Table 2). The limited participation of social and cultural geographers in interdisciplinary communities despite the growing pre-eminence of

Table 2 Taiwan Cultural Studies Association—disciplinary profile of members

Discipline/specialty group	Number
Linguistics	39
Mass media and art	27
Sociology	26
Architecture	6
Ethnology	6
History	5
Geography	0
Other	61
Total	170

the 'spatial turn' is disappointing, and a missed opportunity for geographical interventions where warranted. The conditions are ripe for a favourable reception of geographical perspectives, given that some non-geographers have already adopted the frameworks of analysis that geographers in the Anglo-American world have propounded (Huang 2004). The lack of interaction and dialogue between geographers and cultural studies scholars will only serve to marginalize the geographical discipline in Taiwan, and hamper its further development.

Looking ahead

Social and cultural geographies share many interfaces with cultural studies in Taiwan. Yet, they have sufficiently distinct qualities that greater interaction and mutual influence can strengthen both fields. On the one hand, social and cultural geographies in Taiwan have established a strong research tradition in emphasizing regional studies with solid ethnographic methods and field investigations. What is lacking is the rigour of theoretical formulation. On the other hand, cultural studies in Taiwan is all too often characterized by complete importation of Western theories,

chasing the academic fashions of the West.⁴ In comparing the issues studied and approaches adopted by cultural studies scholars in Taiwan with those in the Anglo-American world, Liu and Liu (2000) found significant symmetry. For social and cultural geographies in Taiwan to gain importance and impact within Taiwanese society and to recover from its marginal status within international communities of social and cultural geographers, we suggest that dialogues, interactions and collaboration with other cognate disciplines in Taiwan (and particularly cultural studies) may prove valuable. By doing so, the sensitivity to international discourses may be enhanced. However, it is imperative that the solid fieldwork tradition is not eroded by abstract theorizing. Theoretical formulations are important only insofar as they help to comprehend and indeed, improve, empirical reality. To that extent, the importance of remaining socially relevant must not be forgotten even as the aspiration to greater theoretical sophistication is pursued.

Notes

- 1 The five major geography journals are: *Journal of Geographical Science*, *Journal of Geographical Research*, *Reports of Geographical Studies*, *Environment and Worlds* and *Bulletin of the Geographical Society of China*.
- 2 The five major geography departments are: National Taiwan University, National Taiwan Normal University, National Kaohsiung Normal University, National Changhua University of Education and Chinese Culture University.
- 3 We would like to thank Hsien-Ming Chen and Chao-Yang Pan for sharing their insights. All responsibility for the views expressed in this paper remain with the authors.
- 4 There are of course exceptions to this claim, but it is fair to say that it remains true from an aggregate perspective.

台灣社會與文化地理學的發展進程

知識生產與社會相關性

吳幸玲，國立台灣大學地理環境資源研究所博士候選人

周素卿，國立台灣大學地理環境資源學系教授

江莉莉，新加坡國立大學地理系教授

討論研究議題與當代社會及文化的相互呼應程度，同時檢視台灣社會與文化地理學的發展和台灣智識潮流，以及當代地理思潮發展的一致或相異性。

前言

台灣的社會與文化地理學在人文社會科學領域當中向來居於學術邊陲地位。儘管從 1990 年代開始「文化轉向」(cultural turn) 成為英美世界人文社會科學發展的一大特徵 (Barnett 1998)，但台灣的人文地理學界卻一直到近幾年才與這股思潮有些許的接觸。本文試圖檢視台灣社會與文化地理學的社會、智識與制度性脈絡，思考這兩個次領域在未來走出邊緣地位的可能性。

本文的分析資料包括在台灣業已出版，並可被廣泛視為社會與文化地理學的中英文獻與碩士論文，其中出版文獻部分涵蓋五本主要的地理學期刊¹，碩士論文則來自於台灣五所主要的地理學系所²。換言之，我們將分析文獻的範圍限定於地理知識生產的主要機構當中。依上述方式進行檢視的結果，在近 30 年的進程中，共計有 60 篇期刊文獻以及 99 篇碩士論文，可以被視為社會與文化地理學領域的生產。在此同時，我們也檢視在台灣以外的英文出版文獻，舉凡討論內容涉及台灣社會與文化者，都是我們整理分析的對象。因此，這個部分包含了許多非地理學者在非地理學期刊中的發表。最後，我們還訪談了兩位資深的台灣社會與文化地理學者³，協助我們對於台灣人文地理的發展脈絡有更深層的理解。

在針對這些文獻進行了初步整理之後，可以從文獻的數量、議題與理論深度將台灣社會與文化地理的發展切割成三個不同時期(見表一)。以下，本文將逐一分析各階段的歷史特徵，一方面探

台灣社會與文化地理學的發展

晚熟的處境

台灣地理學發展之初，受到中國大陸地理學的影響頗大。在傳統的中國地理學形成過程中，與西方理論的互動幾近於零，除了教科書內容透過日本著作間接應用了一些西方概念之外，長期以來的發展，一直圍繞著中國傳統地理中「文、史、地」不分家的概念(施添福 1983)。所謂的「地理學」，其實並沒有真正的獨立存在地位，而是附身於史學與文學當中。雖然 1910 年左右，學者們開始到歐美世界留學取經，並在 1920 年以後，陸續帶回西方的現代地理學思想，但在五四運動之後留洋追尋「賽先生(Mr. Science)」的知識青年，以受地質、氣象等自然科學訓練者為主，在大時代的呼應之下，目的是將地理學建立成為自然科學與經驗分析的學科。這種崇尚科學，強調實證主義與經驗分析的傳統，對於後來台灣地理學的發展具有極為廣泛而深刻的影響力(施添福 1984)。

西元 1895 年，台灣於甲午戰爭後因馬關條約的簽訂而成為日本的殖民地。往後台灣人文地理學的發展在日本殖民(1895-1945)的五十年期間，由於社會與文化地理學的探討並不符合當時的

表一 台灣社會與文化地理的關鍵分期

歷史分期與重要事件	次領域	議題
發展初期(1980s) • 1987年解嚴 • 1988年台大城鄉所成立	社會地理	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 城鄉遷移 • 原住民移民在都市環境的適應 • 鄉村變遷(包括人口結構與鄉村生活方式)
保守擴張期(1990s) • 1998年文化研究學會成立	文化地理	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 鄉村生活方式 • 傳統宗教活動與地景 • 人文生態 • 區域分析 分佈 地方誌 • 現象學與文本分析
起飛期 (2000s)	社會地理 新文化地理與社會地理	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 原住民社會結構及其經濟適應 • 都市消費文化 • 性別關係與性慾特質 • 文化經濟 • 認同政治 • 象徵地景 • 遷移(包括跨國遷移,如外籍勞工與外籍新娘;以及原住民移民)

政治與社會需求,因此除了地形與聚落歷史的調查及記載之外,相關研究極為缺乏。不過,這並不代表後來的社會與文化地理學發展與此階段的歷史完全無關,相反地,當時的聚落研究方式對於日後這兩個次領域的發展有著極為深刻的影響力。首先,由於日本地理學與人類學結合的傳統,台灣社會與文化地理學特別重視地理田野實察;再者,這也奠定了戰後二、三十年許多地理學者選擇日本作為留學取經地點的基礎。而許多對於社會與文化地理學而言相當重要的研究觀點,都是透過留日學者從日文的文獻學習而來。這樣的影響對於人文地理發展較早的台灣師範大學格外明顯。

光復之後,台灣學術院校開始有了地理系的設置。由於受中國地理學的影響,地理系的成立之初並非以獨立學門的形式出現。1946年台灣師範學院首先成立「史地系」,直至1962年,地理系才在文學院中獨立成系。1955年時,台灣大學地理系設立,雖名為地理系,但實由地理與氣象兩組所合成。而文化大學於1963所設立的地理系也是同樣的組合,而這樣的特殊形式在世界各國中是極為少見的(施添福 1984)。在這樣的背景下,台大與文化地理系均設置於理學院當中,影響所及,台灣師範大學得以成為早期人文地理發展的重鎮。然而,師大地理在成立之初,師資陣容同樣是以氣象、地圖專長的教師為主,加上師範大學本身具有特定的師資培育任務,而非以學術研究為第一

優先,如此特殊的發展背景,著實不利於社會及文化地理學的學術萌芽。

在這種特殊的制度與智識歷史發展下,致使台灣地理學早期的發展重心都在自然地理學上,對於教育功能的強調也勝於學術研究。直到最近的二十五到三十年間,廣義的社會與文化地理學才開始逐漸發跡。

發展初期：社會地理的萌芽

在1980年代之前的台灣人文地理學界中量化研究盛行,其中人口地理、工業地理與零售地理為研究主流,加上極為有限的人文師資,社會與文化地理並無發展。在一個強調學科應用性質的時勢下,這樣的發展其實並不令人感到意外。直至80年代開始,部分從日本與美國學成歸國的學者,開始將當時台灣特殊的社會處境作為研究對象;在研究議題上,特別以遷移及鄉村聚落變遷(如姜蘭虹、楊麗秀 1983)為主軸。而在各種遷移人口中,尤其是原住民的遷移過程以及面對環境變遷的生活調適議題,成為此一時期社會地理的主要研究重點(如林綱偉 1986,蔡炯民 1987,吳蒙哲 1988,連玉

龍 1989, 張文傑 1989)；而另一方面，鄉村聚落的人口組成與生活方式因為台灣 1960 年代後的都市化與工業化趨勢而產生極大變革，因此鄉村生活也開始受到地理學的關注（如張長義 1985，吳豪哲 1988，周國屏 1989）。這樣的轉向可能與當時英美世界對於社會相關性（social relevance）的呼聲有關，當然，也可能單純是對於台灣社會變遷的回應。

逐漸發跡的台灣社會地理在這一階段呈現出兩個重要特徵。一個是在理論層次上，深受 1960 與 1970 年代英美地理學的影響，大量援引行為地理與人類生態學的研究觀點。然而事實上，同一階段的英美地理學正朝向人文主義地理學的研究取徑發展，台灣人文地理學界卻還少有著墨。另一方面，這樣的理論援用同時持續受到日本田野實察與資料蒐集的傳統影響，許多的學術作品主旨都在於「正確、有秩序且理性地描述地表特徵」（Hartshorne 1959: 21），而非深入的探究行為地理學與人文生態學中的概念。

保守擴張期：文化地理的浮現

這個時期是台灣文化研究的開端期。不同於西方經驗，台灣的文化研究開端有其獨特的歷史背景。在台灣，由於戰後長期的戒嚴進行思想控管與壓制，加上與中國共產黨間決裂的關係，學院中左派思想紮根不深。直到 1987 年的解嚴前後，民間展現前所未有的批判性活力，這活力不僅激發出許多的政治及社會運動衝撞，也以文化批判／評論的形式具體呈現於大眾媒體上，例如文化批評與政治評論取代了原來文學創作的報紙版面，以及許多推陳出新的雜誌刊物紛紛上市。

面對一個發生如此巨變的社會氛圍，台灣的社會與文化地理學又如何回應呢？從相關論文與期刊文獻的整理中可以明顯看出，無論在發表篇數或是議題的數量上都出現大幅提升。在社會地理方面，原住民研究依舊是核心所在，研究焦點逐漸轉向原住民原鄉的社會結構特徵與生計適應（如汪明輝 1990，張玓 1991，陳淑萍 1998，蔡迪清 1998）。同時，文化地理的研究數量也開始大增，其中特別是鄉村生活方式與傳統宗教景觀的議題（潘朝陽 1993，池永敬 1996，黃素貞 1997，鄭雅清 1998，盧聖貞 1998）居於主流。這些「傳統」的文化地理學研究（Kong 1997）對於鄉村生活方式的研究，經常引用「人文生態」的觀點，以人類學思想為基礎的文化生態學，強調人類如何適應環境，以及在適應過程中，人類、環境、技術與組織等要素之間的相互關係（鍾寶珍 1991，林政宏 1995，陳惠滿 1998）。

此外，從這一階段台灣社會與文化地理學的研究當中，還可以看到幾十年前盛行於英美地理學界的區域地理身影。事實上，早從台灣第一所地理學研究所設立時，其目標就著重在台灣地區之專題或小區域研究，並致力於完成台灣全省各鄉鎮的地方誌。因此，從研究生產中可明顯看出小區域研究的趨勢，而其中對於鄉村文化的興趣又明顯高過於都市。這是由於作為文化與社會地理發展重鎮的台灣師範大學學生多半來自中南部鄉村地區，對於研究自己家鄉的起源興趣特別濃厚，也因此使得這一類型的論文蔚為主流。

相較於英美世界同一時期的潮流，此一階段的台灣文化地理學界唯一與之較為並行的是人文主義地理學的發展（雖然西方人文主義地理學從十年前已經蓬勃發展），部分學者引用現象學與文本分析的方式，來鑽研傳統文化與宗教地景。例如有學者以台灣傳統三合院為研究對象，探索其空間命名現象，並將身體的意象和傳統建築的形式、意識結合後加以理論化（陳文尚 1992，1993，1994），也有人透過文本分析的方式，詮釋老子、莊子作品當中的空間觀（潘朝陽 1990，1992）。

大體而言，這一時期的學生論文對於理論概念的發展多數不具累積作用，而經常是直接沿用前人或是指導教授的觀點，不同的只是研究區域上的變更，或者甚至只有經驗研究，而完全沒有哲學作為研究的基礎。這一點顯示出當時的研究訓練只重視田野經驗研究，而忽略研究哲學與方法論基礎的現實。同時，儘管議題與數量上的漸趨多樣化，以及文化地理研究的數量大增，但面對 1987 年台灣解嚴後政治與社會發生重大轉型，市民社會逐漸浮現之際，相較於文化批判與評論風氣之大興，社會與文化地理學界於此一時期卻無法在研究議題或是方法上出現重大突破與轉向。換言之，儘管社會與文化地理研究的碩博士論文數量明顯增加，但展現的卻是一種保守性擴張，完全無法即時回應或反映出社會與文化氛圍的重大變遷。

就在同一時期，相較於台灣地理學界的保守作風，建築學、都市計畫、文化研究以及社會學界的許多學者與研究生積極參與批判台灣當時的發展現況，或是現身於大眾媒體上進行文化批判，扮演公共知識份子的角色，或是挺身加入建構市民社會之活動。這些很多都是前往西方接受教育，並在 1990 年代學成歸國的學者，他們帶回了其專業領域最新的理論發展與論述，這些當然也是人文地理學界所熟悉的最新學術理論；以學科來論，其中又以台大城鄉所的表現最受矚目。他們的研究領域不只是反映出他們的市民關懷與公共參與，同時也與當時英美文化地理學研究的關懷核心相當一致，包括都市權力地景、都市治理、地方認同、性別認同、消費主義文化與景觀等。如鄧宗德（1991）批判性地檢視 1980 年代後形塑台北市地景與空間結構的權權關係，以及徐伯瑞（1995）探討形塑都市地景過程中國家與資本間複雜的權力關係。這些

研究，無論就議題或理論觀點來看，都緊跟著西方當代思潮——包括社會與文化地理學的理论方向——的脈動前進。

起飛期：理論與議題的多元發展

從 1990 年代中期以後，上文所述的文化評論在報紙上的熱潮消退了。但同時隨著一些語文學界、社會學界以及藝術學界的年輕學者返國任教，在西方「文化轉向」的影響下，學院圈內的文化研究相關課程及研討會如雨後春筍般蓬勃發展，許多建制化的文化研究機構也陸續成立，諸如清大亞太文化研究室、中央性別研究室、文化研究學會等；第一個文化研究專業系所，交通大學的「語言與文化研究所」也於 2000 年正式招生。同時，台灣的文化研究學界相當致力於跨國的區域性連結，尤其是與亞洲的連結，2000 年時還出版了期刊 *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*，由一位台灣與一位新加坡主編共同合作。由此不難看出自 1980 年代末期的民間文化批判風潮發展至今，已經成就學院中一股方興未艾的文化研究旋風。而文化研究所帶來的議題也使得台灣學術的研究更為多元，許多研究可說是前所未見，包括性別與他者認同 (gender and alternative identities)、社會群體的媒體再現 (media representations of social groups)、殖民與後殖民時期的國家認同 (national identities in the colonial and post-colonial periods)、大眾文化 (popular culture)、消費文化 (consumption culture)、地域化與地方文化 (localization and local culture) 以及空間與政治 (space and politics) 等各項全新的議題與全新的切入視角，在台灣的人文與社會研究當中開始佔有重要地位。文化研究的建制化，說明著「文化轉向」的趨勢在台灣學術界正式得到肯定與投入，而這又是否暗示著向來弱勢與邊緣的社會與文化地理學正面對一個非常好的發展契機？

進入二十一世紀之交，台灣社會與文化地理學面對這麼一個全新的舞台，在研究議題與研究方法上也出現了部分的轉變，許多在文化研究中廣受關注的議題也開始嶄露頭角，如都市消費文化 (如高碧英 2001, 許麗兒 2002, 蔡文芳 2001, 林潤華 2003)、性別關係與性慾特質 (如簡夢嫻 2002, 陳庭芸 2002)、跨國遷移 (如羅昭娟 2000, 姜蘭紅、宋郁玲 2001, 徐榮崇 2001, 楊智翔、姜蘭虹、廖鳳君 2005)、文化經濟 (如陳秀萍 2001, 曾維屏 2002, 梁炳昆 2004 等 <AQ4>)、認同政治 (陳毅峰 2002, 何致中 2001)、象徵地景 (廖依俐 2000, 林潤華 2003) 以及社會正義 (周素卿 2000, 周素卿、劉美琴 2001)。這些研究的對象絕大部分都是台灣近來的新興社會現象，如外籍新娘及都市弱勢群體等等。

此外，這一時期的研究也開始採用當代西方文獻中的語彙及理論概念。這一點可以從研究作品的關鍵字中得到證明，以 2000–2005 年的社會與文化地理期刊論文及碩博士論文來看，開始出現地域性 (locality)、社會正義 (social justice)、後現代主義 (postmodernism)、女性主義 (Feminist Geography)、消費認同 (consumption identity)、認同政治 (identity politics)、文化經濟 (cultural economy)、抵抗空間 (resistance space)、全球城市 (global cities) 等具當代理論意涵的關鍵字，這些全都甚少現身於 2000 年之前的研究中。而對於當代英美學術理論的轉向，也可以從期刊中關於社會與文化地理理論的回顧文章日現得到證明，如楊秉煌 (2001) 的《地理學與社會正義》、梁炳昆、張長義 (2004) 的《地理學的文化經濟與地方再現》等，張華蓀 (2005) 的《蝸行 20 年：女性主義地理學在臺灣的發展》，以及宋郁玲 (2006) 《人文地理學人口遷移研究的跨界與轉向：台灣與英美研究的比較》等，都有助於將理論性觀點引入仍然高度偏重田野經驗的台灣社會與文化地理學界，也為透過地方性經驗研究達成理論創新的願景帶來希望。

當我們進一步將分析範疇向外拓廣到關於台灣的英文出版文獻中時，可以更清楚看到英美概念與語彙的霸權地位。當然，這並不令人驚訝，因為這原本就是社會與文化地理的重要本質。在搜尋了過去三十年來地理學與相關學科 (人類學、文化研究與社會學) 的英文期刊後，可以得到三點觀察，首先，如同在中文文獻中所發現的，過去六到七年間社會與文化地理的文獻出現大幅成長；其次，這些作品絕大部分都非出自於地理學者之手，而是由人類學、歷史學、媒體與都市規劃等學科的學者所發表。第三，主要的研究主題與取徑和當前英美智識潮流相仿，但同時也反映出台灣社會獨特意義的發展。

英文文獻大致可以區分為三類，分別是移動 (mobility)、認同 (identity) 與大眾文化 (popular culture) (包含其與經濟的關係)。關於移動的文獻主要都是其他學科的著作，包括社會學者對於家務移工 (如 Lan 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, Loveband 2004) 與企業家階級的移動 (如 Tseng 2000) 的關注，行銷學者對於跨國婚姻 (如 Wang and Chang 2002) 的分析，觀光學者對於觀光及其含意 (如 Hsich and Chang 2006) 的探索。所幸並非所有的社會與文化地理學者都全盤放棄他們在國際期刊中可以扮演的角色 (Chiang and Liao 2005)，但數量上確實是屈指可數。

在關於認同議題的英文文獻中也出現類似的模式。由於台灣特殊的殖民與後殖民處境，研究通常聚焦在殖民認同 (Hsia 2002)、後殖民認同 (Chun 1994, Yee 2001)、國家認同 (Chung 2000, Wang 2000)、性別與同志認同 (Martin 2000, Chao 2002, Brown 2003, Emi 2000)、宗教 (Katz 2003) 及社群區認同 (Chiang 2002) 如同前面所提的移動

研究一般，以上所列的學者絕大多數也都不是地理學者。最後，在大眾文化與文化經濟的研究 (Chang 2004, Mee 2005, Adrian 2006) 中亦有相同的發現。在上面所述的各類文獻當中，英美世界的理論架構與概念語彙都具支配性地位。

不過，這一段的討論並非意味著台灣社會與文化地理已經棄守傳統的研究方法，事實上，有別於文化研究向西方理論的全盤吸收與靠攏，台灣社會與文化地理學依舊保有勤跑田野的人類學傳統。換言之，理論觀點上的借用並未使之完全取代傳統的田野調查與資料蒐集方式。同一時期，英美世界則因為文化轉向後抽象空間凌駕於實體空間之上，一味強調意義、認同與再現，而終於引發反彈聲浪。許多學者們紛紛呼籲「再物質化」(re-materialize)，主張將研究對象重新安置於物質文化上，並在研究方法上出現了「民族誌轉向」(ethnographic turn) 以及「經驗轉向」(empirical turn) 的趨勢 (Jackson 2000, Philo 2000, Lorimer 2005)。從這一點來說，我們很慶幸台灣社會與文化地理學的發展始終堅守紮實的經驗研究傳統，並紮根於日常生活當中。

當前台灣社會與文化地理發展的困境

儘管沒有西方「新文化地理學」的去物質化問題，但無論就研究議題與研究的理論基礎來看，長期以來台灣的社會與文化地理學界都明顯趨於保守，儘管議題口趨廣泛，但研究數量與地位都遠遠落後於其他人文及社會學科，包括社會學與文化研究，同時，對於國際學術潮流脈動的敏感度與對話情況也都明顯不足。要促使台灣社會與文化地理學有更為激進及突破的表現，以下是必須克服的挑戰。

社會與文化地理研究社群規模過小

台灣各主要地理及相關系所 (主要分佈於各校地理系、社教系、鄉土研究所與民族發展所) 的師資結構對於研究的發展及走向扮演極為關鍵的角色。根據統計，在各相關系所中只有 22 位教師認為自己隸屬於文化和社會地理學者。許多研究作品其實可以稱之為文化或社會地理研究，或是其研究觀點挪用自社會或文化地理的取徑者 (如徐進鈺 2004 年在對於台灣高科技產業的探討中關於鑲嵌、社會網絡及專業連結的討論)，但是他們的專業範疇通常都落於其他的次領域當中，如政治地理、都市地理、經濟地理或是地理思想。加上這

小群的研究社群還肩負著極重的教學負擔，使得研究生社群也成為台灣社會與文化地理學的主要組成。在 2000-2005 年間，有 54 本和社會與文化地理相關的碩士論文完成，其中只有六本博士論文，而以同時期 (2000-2005) 台灣主要地理學研究期刊的發表來看，由這些社會與文化地理學者們所書寫的文章也只有 17 篇左右。因此，前面所稱的「起飛期」事實上是學生在社會與文化地理學畢業論文數量上的大幅起飛，而非該次領域教師的地位或是研究成果的新氣象。台灣社會與文化地理學界既然無法累積實質的研究數量，當然更無法吸引其他領域學者的注意，更遑論建立起國際知名度。

研究議題的發展儘管口趨多元，理論性的批判與建

構能力仍然不足

關於長期以來地理學對於理論投入與貢獻的不足，施添福在 1984 年就曾提出嚴正警告，他指出台灣地理學家的研究已經養成「就問題處理問題」，或「以西方地理學理論處理台灣地理問題」的態度，這使得台灣地理學嚴重缺乏理論基礎，特別是能服「水土」的本土化理論基礎 (施添福 1984)。從施書寫此文至今已有二十年以上的時間，社會與文化地理學缺乏理論深度探索與建構的現象雖有部分改善，但直接沿用西方理論的問題卻始終存在。大部分博士論文在解釋其知識論基礎，以及進行知識論與方法論的銜接上，都必須力求更好的表現，同時，也要能夠清楚地指出自己在當代地理學論辯中的位置。同樣地，碩士論文的品質雖然在這幾年有所改善，但多半還是侷限於田野資料的描述，無法進行更為深入的結構性或文化性探討，就算掌握了具時代適切性的議題，卻缺乏當前文化研究所具有的批判性洞察。以上種種的缺失，使得研究生在打造更為堅實的社會與文化地理學過程中，貢獻大打折扣。而要跨越此道鴻溝，必須發展出能夠為台灣社會發聲的本土性理論基礎。

與文化研究社群的對話不足

台灣文化研究的發展正日益蓬勃，這不是一個單一學科，而是一個跨領域的研究取徑。在強調學科間相互對話與學習的學術趨勢中，社會與文化地理學勢必需要加入文化研究社群並與之對話。可惜在台灣社會與文化地理學界的有限人力下，與文化研究學界的交流與對話極度不足。根據資料顯示，台灣

文化研究學會 170 位成員當中，完全沒有地理學者的參與（如表二所示）。由此，可以看出地理學界與文化研究學界的對話與聯繫相當缺乏，隔閡程度令人驚訝。特別是在「空間轉向」的潮流中，社會與文化地理學者對於跨領域對話的參與如此不足，著實令人沮喪。反觀文化研究領域，近幾年來對於地理學的理论觀點卻經常多加波用（如，黃宗儀 2004）。台灣社會與文化地理學界劃地自限的結果，可能會失去一個重要的發展契機。

表二 台灣文化研究學會的會員學科領域分析

領域 專業	人數
語言學	39
大眾媒體與藝術	27
社會學	26
建築	6
人類學	6
歷史學	5
地理學	0
其他	61
總計	170

未來發展的期待

社會與文化地理學和文化研究之間的交流，可以相互截長補短，促使文化研究透過跨學科的交流而有更好的發展。而這個互補的關鍵在於兩個領域截然相反的發展歷程。透過前文的歷史回顧及各階段的議題與方法分析，不難看出台灣的社會與文化地理學是一個發展上較具「本土」特質的次領域，這個本土一方面反映在研究區域的選擇，同時也反映於重經驗輕理論的傳統。也因為這種本土的特徵，造就出台灣社會與文化地理學研究紮實的（grounded）山野實察特徵。相較之下，台灣的文化研究則是一個人量從西方移植理論的領域，緊跟著西方的學術時向前進⁴。根據劉慈慧與劉佳玲（2000）對於台灣文化研究發展所進行的整理，可以發現無論就議題與取徑上，均與英美的發展極為一致。這樣的發展進程，恰恰與台灣社會與文化地理學處於兩個極端。台灣社會與文化地理學若欲展翅突破其在國際地理學界的邊緣地位，相信與台灣相關領域，特別是文化研究社群展開積極對話，是一個關鍵契機所在，透過這樣的互動，必有助於提升其對於國際學術脈動的敏感度。不過，也必須注意在此一過程中，重視山野的傳統不可因抽象理論的引用而被棄置一旁，畢竟理論援引的目的是為強理解與改善經驗現況。因此，在追求更多理論及哲學觀點的學

習時，台灣社會與文化地理學研究可以引以為傲的社會相關性傳統必須加以延續。

Notes 註釋

- 這五本主要期刊分別是地理學報 (*Journal of Geographical Science*)、國立台灣師範大學地理研究報告 (*Journal of Geographical Research*)、私立中國文化大學地理研究報告 (*Reports of Geographical Studies*)、環境與世界 (*Environment and Worlds*)及中國地理學會會刊 (*Bulletin of the Geographical Society of China*)。
- 五個主要地理系所分別隸屬於國立台灣大學 (National Taiwan University)、國立台灣師範大學 (National Taiwan Normal University)、國立高雄師範大學 (National Kaohsiung Normal University)、國立彰化師範大學 (National Changhua University of Education)以及私立中國文化大學 (Chinese Culture University)。
- 感謝陳志明老師與潘朝陽老師不吝於分享他們的經驗與看法。不過，關於本文所提出的所有見解均由作者負責。
- 針對這個說法，當然會有許多例外的情況，不過，大致而言，確實是如此。

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- Note: Most of the English translations of the Chinese titles are the authors' original translations.
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