

IIAS Fellowship Programme

The International Institute for Asian Studies annually hosts a large number of visiting researchers (research fellows) who come to Leiden to work on their own individual research project. In addition, IIAS also facilitates the teaching and research by various professorial fellows as part of agreements with Dutch universities, foreign ministries and funding organisations. Meet our fellows at www.iias.asia/fellows

Anne Sokolsky, Chair of Taiwan Studies, Spring 2022

Anne Sokolsky



Above: Anne Sokolsky (4th from right) with her students.

I was the Taiwan Chair and Professorial Fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden University from February 1, 2022, to June 30, 2022. It was a wonderful experience for which I am truly grateful. There were three major aspects to my position: teaching, research, and outreach.

The course I taught titled “Taiwan Women’s World: The Voices of Taiwanese Women in Literature, Film and Politics” was for the Chinese Studies program at Leiden University. In the course, I had students think about Taiwan’s position not just in East Asia but with the United States and other parts of the world through the voices of Taiwanese women. Through works of fiction, diaries, travel memoirs, film, and political speeches created

by famous and not-so-famous Taiwanese women, we considered why most histories of Taiwan focus on the male perspective and how the narrative of Taiwan’s history and culture might differ if we study it through the lens of those who tend not to control a nation’s narrative. Some of my students’ favorite reading assignments were San Mao’s *Stories of the Sahara*, Shawna Yang Ryan’s *Green Island*, Yang Qianhe’s “The Season When Flowers Bloom,” and Li Hai-Yin’s short story “Candle.” A fun final project for my students was to interview someone who had grown up in Taiwan. Some of the interviews will be posted for the “Made in Taiwan” project hosted by U.C. Santa Barbara Professor Sabine Fruhstuck. Overall, I was very impressed with my students. They were a joy to teach.

My research project at IIAS examined the colonial journal *Taiwan fujinkai* (台湾婦人界 Taiwan women’s world), which was written in Japanese and supported by the colonial Japanese government in Taiwan. The journal, published between 1934 and 1939, was founded by Koga Chiyoko, the wife of a Japanese industrialist who worked for the colonial Japanese government in Taiwan. Her vision was to create a magazine for the women of Taiwan that would be on par with the cosmopolitan women’s magazines coming from Japan. She felt that the challenges for women in Taiwan were different from those for women in Japan, and thus, a special journal needed to be created to address the specific issues faced by women living in Taiwan. My particular focus was on how the role of travel was depicted in the magazine and what part, if any, such a depiction played into Japan’s greater colonial agenda in Taiwan. Thanks to the time I had doing research at IIAS, I was able to revise an article titled “The World of Women’s Travel in the Japanese Colonial Journal *Taiwan fujinkai*” currently under review.

The final aspect of my fellowship was outreach. The major form of which was a workshop I organized for the final day of my stay in Leiden. The workshop titled “The Art, Politics, and Economics of Solo Women Travelers to, through, and from Taiwan” was an extension of my research and teaching. Aside from my presentation on how travel is depicted in *Taiwan fujinkai*, my colleagues Isabelle Cheng talked about the Women’s Army Corps, Faye Kleeman talked about female sojourners to and from Taiwan, and IIAS fellow Cha-hsüan Liu talked about her own experiences as a solo woman traveler. Thanks to their informative presentations, we had a lively conversation with workshop participants, who included Leiden University graduate

students, colleagues from the Chinese Studies program, IIAS colleagues, as well as members from the Leiden community and beyond. It was a wonderful way to end my time at IIAS.

Other outreach projects included a trip to the University of Vienna, where I met Professor Astrid Lipinsky, who heads the Vienna Center for Taiwan Studies, and to Cambridge University, where I met colleagues in Japanese Studies to discuss my research on *Taiwan fujinkai*. In the Netherlands, I was able to participate in the CinemAsia Film Festival, for which I am truly grateful.

Although I have returned to the United States, I look forward to continued contact with IIAS through the Humanities Across Borders project directed by Aarti Kawlra. I am now preparing my courses for Denison University, where I will be teaching this next academic year. I will be offering the same course that I taught at Leiden University on Taiwanese women. I am also working with the director of East Asian Studies at Denison University to create a course about East Asian (including Taiwanese) women filmmakers thanks to what I learned from my attendance at CinemAsia. The time I spent in the Netherlands doing research and meeting colleagues at various European universities has given me a rich source of material and ideas to add to my courses on East Asia as well as inform new directions in my research on Taiwan.

I want to thank the wonderful staff at IIAS who supported my research, and the IIAS fellows who were great friends to have in a foreign land. I also am eternally grateful to the Ministry of Education of Taiwan for allowing me to have this amazing research and teaching experience in Europe. It will have a lasting impact on the way I teach about Taiwan in my courses on East Asia here in the United States.

Professorial Fellowship for the Chair of Taiwan Studies at Leiden University

We are pleased to announce that a new agreement has been signed to enable a Professorial Fellowship for the Chair of Taiwan Studies at Leiden University and IIAS. The new agreement runs until 31 January 2026 and provides for a Professorial Fellowship of one or two semesters at a time.

Information about the next opportunity to apply for the Chair of Taiwan Studies will be shared on our website as soon as possible.

The Chair of Taiwan Studies was jointly established by the Department of Cross-Strait Education of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China, the Leiden University Faculty of Humanities and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) to facilitate the Taiwan Studies programme at Leiden University.

Information
www.iias.asia/professorial-fellowship-chair-taiwan-studies-leiden-university

In the spotlight



Pao-Yi Yang

IIAS Research Cluster: Asian Heritages
1 March – 31 July 2022

www.iias.asia/profile/pao-yi-yang

I embarked on my PhD journey in Leiden in late 2014, and it brought me to the coruscating world of museum storytelling. After I completed my PhD, I started my fellowship with IIAS in Spring 2022, with the aim of revising my thesis into a monograph. The alley next to the building of IIAS is the same one in front of my previous office in the Huizinga building of Leiden University; hence, doing the fellowship here really felt like a homecoming.

As the initial result of converting my thesis into formal publications, I have contributed a chapter to an edited volume, *Exhibiting East Asian Art in a Global Context*, which is set to be published in Spring 2023 by the University of Chicago Press. This article explores the shifting meanings of Ming and Qing porcelain—from decorative art serving Dutch self-fashioning to fine art with its own aesthetic and art-historical values—in the Rijksmuseum’s changing display

schemes between the late 1890s and the 1950s. This time period captures how the Rijksmuseum’s collection history and the particular display aesthetics of the museum’s directors/curators can impact the meaning generated by the objects on display. In addition, I also contributed a research article to the *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, which is going to press this October. This article tackles the importance of focalization in understanding subjective interpretations of museum displays, both as a narrative device that denotes the perspectival filtration of a museum presentation and an analytical tool that can explicate the potential ideologies behind an exhibition. During my fellowship, I have also completed an object-based article, a column, and two exhibition reviews, which are going to be published later this year.

Facing one of Leiden’s beautiful canals, the IIAS building on Rapenburg street has a chic look, with white cornices, keystones, and decorated window frames on its brick-

red façade. Behind the heavy, dark-green wooden door is a corridor connecting to a quaint, spiral staircase that leads to study rooms on different floors. The corridor also reaches a verdurous backyard where fellows and staff can enjoy a picnic. The Institute’s calendar is fleshed out with plenty of (non-)academic presentations and sharing. A special activity I participated in was sharing my personal history with other fellows; more specifically, how my life stories and experience have led to the academic itineraries I choose today. This sharing took place in a cozy tea room, immersed in the smells of coffee, various strains of conversation, and moments of contemplation.

I appreciate the camaraderie and warm support from IIAS staff and fellows and cherish every moment we got to spend with each other. And now, I look forward to charting a new course on my academic voyage.