

Exploring the New Hakka Identity in Southeast Asia: History Department Invites Prof. Michael Hsin-Huang Hsiao and Prof. Han-Pi Chang to Discuss New Book

Campus focus

The Department of History, in collaboration with the Taiwan Association of Southeast Asian Studies, held the book launch for *The Diverse Expressions of Hakka Identity in Southeast Asia* (「東南亞客家族群性的多樣展現」) on September 20 at 4:00 p.m. in the Hsu Shou Chlien International Conference Center. The book was co-authored by Dr. Shu-Ming Chang, an alumnus of the Department of History and Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Hakka Language and Social Sciences at National Central University, and scholars such as Assistant Professor Tsung-Yuan Chen from the Department of History at Tamkang University. The event featured keynote speakers, including the book's 2 chief editors, Senior Advisor to the President and Chair Professor at the College of Hakka Studies of National Central University, Professor Michael Hsin-Huang Hsiao, and Distinguished Professor Han-Pi Chang from National Central University, and other authors. Other guests, including Con-Ziin Yiong, former Chairman of the Hakka Affairs Council, and young Hakka scholars, also participated in the event.

In his remarks, Professor Hsiao explained that the book was published in cooperation with the Hakka Affairs Council to promote the academic development of Hakka research and cultivate postdoctoral talent, strengthening the academic capacity of young scholars. Yiong expressed his delight at the completion of the book during his tenure, noting that the concept of a "Hakka knowledge system" was introduced when the Hakka Affairs Council was first established. As more people around the world engage in Hakka research, this book, which incorporates these research outcomes, represents a new model for global Hakka studies.

Vice President for Academic Affairs, Professor Hui-Huang Hsu, expressed his honor that the book launch was held at Tamkang University. He highlighted how the book provides the public with an understanding of the

unique cultural characteristics of the Hakka people in Southeast Asian history. Asst. Prof. Chen mentioned that the book is the 9th volume in a series on Hakka studies and is the result of an integrated research project by the Hakka Affairs Council, for which he served as a sub-project leader and author. Dr. Shu-Ming Chang, one of the co-authors, is an alumnus of our university's Department of History and Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, while Professor Han-Pi Chang, one of the chief editors, previously taught at Tamkang University's Graduate Institute of Futures Studies.

Asst. Prof. Chen introduced the book's focus on the theme of "new identity," comparing changes in Hakka ethnic identity across Southeast Asian countries. The book analyzes how the Hakka identity was shaped throughout history and its impact on personal identity, social life, and political differences. Prof. Hsiao emphasized that even though Hakka culture has spread worldwide and become increasingly localized, efforts are being made to preserve Hakka's identity through family, community organizations, temples, and festivals. He urged readers to view the concept of "new identity" in the broader context of cultural integration, which has led to the formation of a "global Hakka" identity. Prof. Han-Pi Chang explained that the localization process of Hakka communities in different Southeast Asian countries is shaped by their unique environments, reflecting the "diverse expressions" indicated in the book's title. She noted that the book portrays a "new identity" by combining historical memory and interactions with different ethnic groups, producing diverse research frameworks. She hopes that more scholars will engage in this field in the future, contributing to more varied research outcomes.

Professor Huei-Chun Chi, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Professor Chi-Lin Lee, Chair of the Department of History, also attended the event, engaging with scholars in discussions about Tamkang University's achievements in digital humanities and industry linkages and exploring the potential for further academic collaboration. Other authors, including Assistant Professor Pek Wee Chuen, Head of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at New Era University College in Malaysia Dr. Jui-Chao Liu,

Postdoctoral Fellow at the College of Hakka Studies, National Central University Assistant Professor Jung-Chia Chang from the Department of Indigenous Development and Social Work at National Dong Hwa University and Assistant Professor Shin-Yang Huang from the General Education Center at National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, also shared their experiences during the book's production.





