

Vienna Taiwan Lecture Series

The Department of East Asian Studies/Sinology and
the Vienna Center for Taiwan Studies are pleased to announce a lecture by



IAN ROWEN
National Taiwan Normal University

Liberation and Literature: From Martial Law to Transitional Justice in Taiwan

ABSTRACT

As one of her first gestures upon taking office, President Tsai Ing-wen announced a plan to set up a truth and reconciliation commission. 'For the new democratic system to move forward,' she said in her 2016 inauguration speech, 'we must first find a way to face the past together.' She continued by remarking that, 'The goal of transitional justice is to pursue true social reconciliation, so that all Taiwanese can take to heart the mistakes of that [authoritarian] era.'

This talk assesses the motivations, conduct, and outcomes of such projects. It contends that, for Taiwan as a contested state, transitional justice projects served as part of a legitimization strategy that included consolidation of a collective memory about earlier authoritarian state violence, cultural and political distinction from the irredentism and authoritarianism of China, and demonstration of adherence to international norms of democracy and human rights. As examples of the effects of the projects, it presents the speaker's edited volume of literature in translation, *Transitions in Taiwan: Stories of the White Terror*, as well as public statements asserting Taiwan's sovereignty published by members of the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee.



IAN ROWEN is Associate Professor in the Department of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature at National Taiwan Normal University. He is the author of *One China, Many Taiwans: The Geopolitics of Cross-Strait Tourism* (Cornell University Press, 2022), and the editor of *Transitions in Taiwan: Stories of the White Terror* (Cambria Press, 2021).

Previously an assistant professor of Geography and Sociology at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, he earned his PhD in Geography from the University of Colorado at Boulder.



Date: Wednesday, 08. November, 2023
Time: 18:30 - 20:00
Venue: SIN1, Entrance 2.3, Altes AKH, Campus,
Spitalgasse 2, 1090 Wien
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Introduction and moderation by Astrid Lipinsky, University of Vienna
Please register using the QR-code or via vcts.univie.ac.at!