

2024 Chuan Lyu Lectures in Taiwan Studies

Border Imagination

Taiwan on the Frontline

Professor Lin Wei-ping

(National Taiwan University)



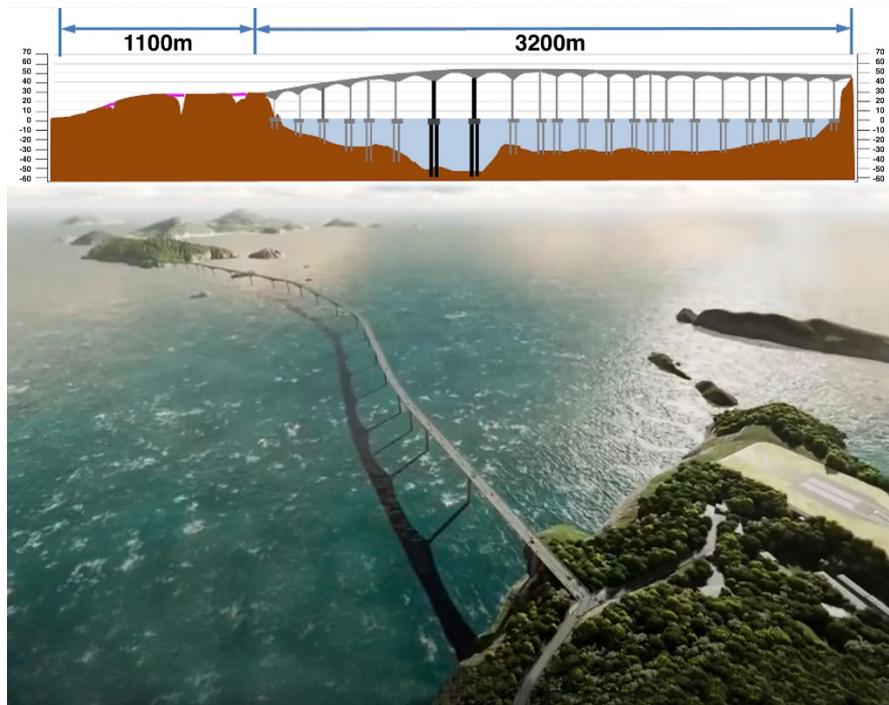
Lin Wei-ping is Professor of Anthropology at the National Taiwan University and Director of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Science Council, Taiwan. She received her PhD in social anthropology from the University of Cambridge in 1998. Her research interests are in kinship, religion and issues of place and space among the Han Chinese in Taiwan. Religious aspects in particular are the main foci and include religious change, healing cults, and sacred objects (god statues). In recent years she has been carrying out research in a military base on an off-shore island in Taiwan, exploring issues relating to de/militarization, violence, and the state. Her publications include *Materializing Magic Power: Chinese Popular Religion in Villages and Cities* (Harvard University Asia Center 2015) [Chinese version 《靈力具現：鄉村與都市中的民間宗教》 NTU Press 2020]; *Island Fantasia: Imagining Subjects on the Military Frontline between China and Taiwan* (Cambridge University Press 2021) [Chinese version 《島嶼幻想曲：戰地馬祖的想像主體與未來》 春山出版 2023]. Both monographs won Scholarly Monograph Awards in the Humanities and Social Sciences given by Academia Sinica. She also edited 《媒介宗教——音樂、影像、物與新媒體》 (NTU Press 2018); 《氛圍的感染——感官經驗與宗教的邊界》 (co-editor; NTU Press 2022). Her full profile can be found here: <https://anthro.ntu.edu.tw/en/faculty/professors/wei-ping-lin/>

Lecture One

Spectral Infrastructure

Bridge in Suspension and Marine Technopolitics on the New Cold War Frontline

5pm, 30 April, 2024 (Tuesday)
LG18 Faculty of Law



Schematic animation of the new designs for the Matsu Bridge

This paper examines the large-scale cross-sea bridge projects of the Matsu (馬祖) archipelago, a post-Cold War island chain between China and Taiwan, which suddenly finds itself yet again on the military frontline of a new 21st-century cold war. After thirty years of effort, however, the bridge has still not been built, and yet neither has it been abandoned. It exists in a state of suspension. In comparison to the growing body of work on suspension and unbuilt or unfinished infrastructure, this paper takes two different perspectives. First, I probe the marine geology and exploratory technology in infrastructural constructions which have been mostly overlooked in studies of “social-technical assemblages.” Second, I incorporate the literature on spectral studies and develop “spectralization” to depict the mode of precarious infrastructural existence in border areas. With the connotation of confronting unsettled history, subjectivity, and affect, spectralization can better capture the encounters of people, politics, technology, and affective experience and explain the volatile character of border infrastructure, teetering on edge between disappearance and rebirth.