

Taiwan Historical Research 2008: Retrospect and Prospect

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ABSTRACT

Under the concerted efforts of researchers in Taiwan history, the Conference on Taiwan History Research had been held in the past two years, with the objectives of establishing the tradition of scholastic critique, exploring directions for future research, and forming communities for academic discussion and exchange. With reference to the “2008 Conference on Taiwan History Research” organized by the Graduate Institute of Taiwan History, National Chengchi University; Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica; and Institute of Taiwan History, National Taiwan Normal University, this article describes the research findings of 2008. They are classified into four main categories, namely general works, politics, economics and social culture. The article also makes comments on the results obtained and proposes directions for future historical studies.

The research results of Taiwan history in 2008 are plentiful, though there are still flaws and deficiencies. Three possible directions for future research that merit consideration and exploration are as follows. (1) Historical studies should be conducted over a larger region and with a wider perspective using a longitudinal or comparative approach. Research on Taiwan history should also be connected with studies of neighboring countries and the East Asian region as well as world history. (2) Taiwan historical research should be a trans-disciplinary research and with distinct boundary and autonomy from different disciplines. (3) Controversial issues should be transformed into academic exchange, the pattern of academic critique and evaluation should be established, thus ameliorating the situation of historical studies being used as a political instrument.

Keywords: Taiwan History, Historical Materials, Biographies, Political History, Economic History, Socio-cultural History