

Defining the *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry* in 2024: From Taiwan to the World

Transcending 1624: Taiwan and the World

The 2024 Taipei International Book Exhibition, titled “Catch the Reading Wave,” took place from February 20 to 25, 2024, at the Taipei World Trade Center (TWTC), with the Netherlands serving as the guest country of honor. As expected, this six-day event attracted unprecedented 550,000 visitors, that were exceeding the pre-COVID-19 level exhibition visitor number of 500,000 in 2023 [1].

The choice of the Netherlands as the guest country of honor is especially meaningful for Taiwanese history because from 1624–1662 to 1664–1668, the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC) with the headquarter based in Jakarta, Indonesia, operated a colony in Taiwan. This operation was one of their most profitable colonies, with 26% of the company’s profits coming from Taiwan (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands). At the same time in contrast, the Dutch West India Company (WIC) also existed in West Africa and the Caribbean islands. The WIC not only traded in goods, but also in people (i.e., African American people, www.the-low-countries.com). Learned from the experiences of the WIC, the VOC also bought in large amount of male Han Chinese immigrants (mostly from Provinces of Fukien and Canton, China) under Manchurian Ching Dynasty for demanding workforces in newly cultivated farmlands in Taiwan [2]. Remnants of Dutch influences can be seen in Taiwan today. Even today, the Taiwanese farmers still use *ka*, a Dutch unit for the acreage of farmland, and red-hair colored people (Dutch) cement for concrete cement.

The year 1624 was exactly 400 years ago when the people in Taiwan (Siraya [2] or Han Chinese) were starting to learn to engage with people in the world (Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and British) during the age of discovery from the 16th to 17th centuries. With an adventurous spirit, all sea power countries in Europe were busy sailing into uncharted waters, in search of new colonial territories and natural resources. Due to the opportunity to broaden cultural and social recognition of groups including indigenous people, the gender diverse, immigration, and LGBTQI+ community of both Taiwan and the Netherlands, people were Taiwan during the age of discovery started to learn how to deal with foreigners, diversity, inclusivity, free speech international commercial trade, and cultivating tolerance [2]. At that time, the often-heard hero names of discovers included Christopher Columbus of Italy (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Columbus) and

Ferdinand Magellan of Portugal (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Magellan).

The lantern festival is a big event in Taiwan. The national lantern festival is rotated among cities in Taiwan in February, i.e., around January 15 in the lunar calendar every year. This year 2024, Anping and Taiwan High Speed Rail Tainan Station, Tainan, the capital of the Dutch East India Company, was chosen as the sites for the exhibitions of the lantern festival (Figure 1). There is a National Museum of Taiwan History in Anping, Tainan. The museum contains 60,000 artifacts spanning the aboriginal, Dutch, Spanish, Chinese, British, and Japanese influences on Taiwan.

What’s more, the National Museum of History of Nanhai Road, Taipei was re-opened in February 2024 with a special exhibition under the theme “Transcending 1624: Taiwan and the World,” after a four-year extensive building renovation and beatification of the surroundings.



Figure 1: A photo of the logo of the 2024 national exhibition of lantern festival in Tainan, Taiwan. The year 2024 is the year of dragon, the fifth of the 12 animals according to the zodiac calendar

Freedom, Democracy, and Economics Continue to Do Well in Taiwan

Based on the report of the 2023 Human Freedom Index (HFI) from the Cato Institute in the USA and the Fraser Institute of Canada (www.freedomhouse.org), Taiwan was rated as a “free country” with the rank of 12th place out of 165 jurisdictions in the world. In that 2023 report of HFI, Switzerland got the 1st place in the ranking. New Zealand, Denmark, Ireland, Estonia, and Sweden were ranked in the 5th place. Iceland, Luxemburg, and Finland were ranked the 7th to the 10th places. Taiwan was ranked 12th place in the world and was the highest number among Asian countries. The HFI score for Taiwan was 8.16 ranking 12. (including the score of civil liberties being 8.98, ranking 12th place; and political freedom was 7.79, ranking 11th place (www.freedomhouse.org). “The demand for freedom is universal” was still reported in the February 2024 HFI, and Japan was ranked number 1 in Asia while that in Taiwan was number 2 in Asia (www.freedomhouse.org). One of the most damaging factors as reported in the HFI in 2024 is manipulations of elections for the leaders of the countries. Spreading misinformation during election campaign is one of the most serious manipulations of elections for leaders of the countries. This score continues to be better compared to the score in previous years.

Table 1. Distributions of articles published in volume 37 of the *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry* in 2023 ($n = 34$)

Column, issue number	1	2	3	4
Editorial	3	1 (1)	0	0
Review	2 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Original article	5 (3)	4 (1)	5 (3)	6 (2)
Brief report	1	0	1 (1)	0
Letter-to-the editor	0	1	1	1

Numbers in parentheses denote those articles were contributed outside of Taiwan. Totally, 44.1% (15/34) of authors are from international countries, including eight from India, two from Nigeria, and two from the USA as well as one each from Japan, Korea, Oman, Poland, and Thailand

On January 13, 2024, the voters in Taiwan elected Ching-Te Lai and Bi-Khim Hsiao of the Democratic Progressive Party in a three-party race as the president and vice-president for a four-year term, 2024–2028. This unprecedented victory in the election is to continue the DPP ruling for the third term in a row and to make sure that Taiwan will remain in camps of the world of democratic countries.

On November 30, 2023, the International Institute for Management Development advanced Taiwan to the 9th position globally for world digital competitiveness. Taiwan has secured the 9th position, marking an improvement of two places compared to 2022 (www.investtaiwan.nat.gov.tw/news). Notably, Taiwan leads globally in five key indicators, including total R&D personnel per capita, IT and media stock market capitalization, mobile broadband subscribers, agility of companies, as well as the use of big data and analytics.

On November 28, 2023, Taiwan’s real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 2.32% from the same period of the previous year according to the latest preliminary estimate. Besides, the real GDP is predicted to grow by 1.42% and 3.35% in 2023 and 2024, respectively, as announced by the directorate-general Taiwan (www.eng.dgbas.gov.tw/Default.aspx). In an announcement of revision on February 29, 2024, Taiwan’s real GDP is projected to grow by 3.43% in 2024, rising upward by 0.08 percentage point (National Statistics, Taiwan (www.eng.stat.gov.tw)).

The Status of the *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry* in 2023

The international articles published in the *Taiwanese Journal of Psychiatry* (*TJP*) were 30% (13/42) in 2021 [3], 42.1% (16/38) in 2022 [4], and 44.1% (15/34) in 2023 (Table 1). I am glad that the ratio of the international articles to the total articles published in the *TJP* has remained sustained. As the editor in chief of the *TJP*, I always welcome those international contributions because they have given readers of the *TJP* new topics of articles and broad horizons and perspectives of the topics.

Always, the *TJP* relies heavily on tireless peer reviewers, and all accepted articles have to be approved by at least two reviewers, who have been enabling me to separate chaff (or bran) and rice clearly for me [4]. I believe that using peer

Table 2. Reviewers in 2023

Chia-Hsiang	Chan Hung-Yu Chan	Ching-Jui Chang	Hsin-An Chang
Shen-Chieh Chang	Ting-Gang Chang	Cheng-Sheng Chen	Hsing-Kang Chen
Kao-Ching Chen	Mu-Hong Chen	Po See Chen	Yi-Chyan Chen
Ying-Yen Chen	Huang-Chih Chou	Po-Han Chou	Chia-Yueh Hsu
Chih-Yun Hsu	Si-Sheng Huang	Tiao-Lai Huang	Wei-Lieh Huang
Ching-I Hung	Chih-Hung Ko	Tsuo-Hung Lan	I-Hui Lee
Chau-Shoun Lee	Chung-Hung Lee	Cheng-Ta Li	Ding-Lieh Liao
Shih-Cheng Liao	Shih-Cheng Liao	Shih-Cheng Liao	Yi-Ju Pan
Chi-Yung Shang	Yu-Chih Shen	Yueh-Ming Tai	Shih-Jen Tsai
Huai-Hsuan Tseng	Mei-Chih Tseng	Liang-Jen Wang	Tso-Jen Wang
Albert C. Yang	Yen-Kuang Yang	Yung-Chieh Yen	

review in choosing a good manuscript may not be a perfect system, but I do not know any other alternative method in screening manuscripts [4]. I have also observed about one-third of the words in the titles of all published articles in 2023 have been modified through incorporating reviewers' suggestions.

Table 2 lists reviewers in 2023. Here, I salute them for putting their time and effort in gatekeeping the quality of articles published in *the TJP*.

Conclusion

The people in Taiwan can recollect the 400-year history of the island and recount the past experiences to work and deal with people from around the world. Today, the multi-racial background of the Taiwanese consists of Hoklos 68%, Hakkas 15%, Mainland Chinese 13%, indigent people 2%, and new residents 2% [2]. To note, the first two groups are descendants of ancestors of paternal Han Chinese and those of maternal indigent aborigines [2]. The Taiwanese have well-learned the international spirits and do better together in these newly emerging competitive situations in the world. The diversity, governance, economy, and cultural development of Taiwan have made it distinct [5].

The Taiwanese Society of Psychiatry, the owner of *the TJP*, has strong support for *the TJP* [6]. As the editor in chief, I believe that the key word for *the TJP* is the word "world," and that *the TJP* will continue to do well in 2024.

My last word in this editorial: please give *the TJP* continuous support with contributed manuscripts. Only your generous support with the manuscript can sustain the continuous publication of *the TJP*.

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Data sharing is not available to this editorial because no datasets were generated or analyzed during the writing of this editorial.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author gives the message of soliciting more manuscript submissions.

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