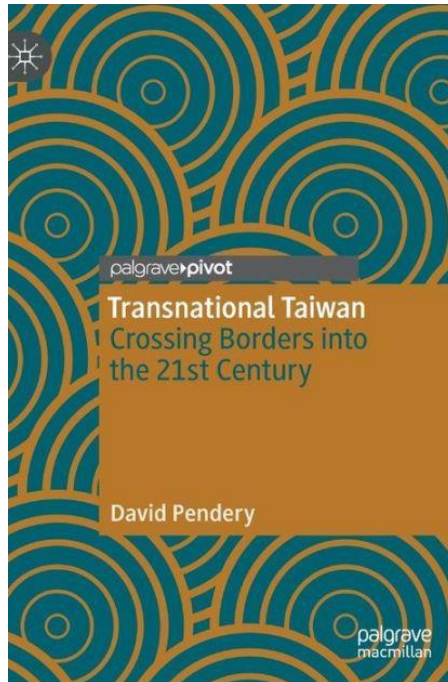


## BOOK REVIEW



**Publisher :** Palgrave Macmillan; 1st ed. 2022  
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*This book is a study of transnationalism, focusing on the experience of migrants, immigrants, travelers, expatriates, aliens, evacuees, refugees, and nomads in the world, broadly, and Taiwan, particularly. Offering an entirely new framework for what Taiwan as a contested transnational space means for Asia-a heterotopia, in which multiple visions of politics and society can flourish-Dr. Pendery's refreshing vision offers insights for scholars of greater China, international relations, and the economics of the region. Pendery establishes a dialog and debate in the book pitting Samuel P. Huntington, Stephen Toulmin, and Edward W. Said, broadly examining their views of these ideas and issues.*

**Reviewed by: Khayala MAMMADOVA**

*Baku State University, Baku, Azerbaijan*

*International Multicultural Network, Baku, Azerbaijan*



David Pendery's **Transnational Taiwan: Crossing Borders into the 21st Century** is an innovative and challenging interpretation of the overall picture of transnational life and behavior, with a penetrating analysis of Taiwan proper in these terms. This book will take a place with other excellent accounts of transnational life, such *Afterlives of Modernism: Liberalism, Transnationalism, and Political Critique* by John Carlos Rowe, and *A Century of Transnationalism: Immigrants and Their Homeland Connections*, edited by Nancy L. Green and Roger Waldinger.

Pendery opens the book with "Transnationalism: An overview and a look at Taiwan," providing an excellent overview of transnational life, and the economic, political, and social processes that extend beyond the borders of nation-states. He takes a look at the cross-border circulations of people and ideas, all driven by "migrants, immigrants, travelers, expatriates, aliens, expatriates, evacuees, refugees, exiles, and nomads," (Pendery's words) as well as "shepherds, unemployed and misfits" (from Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie). He then turns to Taiwan, and examines transnational existence in the island nation, highlighting processes and relationships that transcend nation states and seek to connect ostensibly separate peoples, world views, regions and identities. He investigates how Taiwan has achieved a transnational status globally in terms of the experiences of the diverse, international populations from all nations that live, work and are educated in the nation, imbuing them with a transnational/international view onto existence .

Pendery then turns to the fundamentals of his historical analysis, in an excellent analysis of first the "Out of Taiwan" thesis, which theorizes that peoples from Taiwan in ancient times may have been the ancestors and forebears of all Indo-Pacific peoples, and from there to the ancient Silk Road, which is vital to understanding the development of transnationalism; from there he moves to the appearance of European colonialism and imperialism, which although brought much negative to the world, created their own transnational takes on travel and exploration, and actually brought much positive in their wake.

Pendery then looks at "Out of SE Asia: A New Transnational Network," with the peoples of SE Asia for centuries now having traveled to new locales and started new lives, and very much lived a transnational existence. He then turns to Taiwan's own indigenous peoples, which we have already seen in the Out of Taiwan thesis, and looks at their modern take on this issue, interviewing two Taiwanese aboriginals in his examination.

Pendery then looks at some of the larger realities taking place, including "Transnational Governance," which is opening up views onto decisional, institutional, distributional and structural elements that are being changed and developed in governments, yielding new activism and complex multidirectional

interaction among peoples of various lands (homelands and newlands he calls them). In a word, new levels of governmental behavior and action no longer refer to sovereign state-to-state diplomacy (many feel that such nation states are completely irrelevant now), and instead is branching into many new institutions, fluctuating across global networks comprising governmental officials, business persons and workers, and private citizens, all with various codes of conduct, mandates, rules, and canons. This sort of governance can be seen within three spheres or scenarios, including one of “Experts,” one of “Statists” and one of “Community” (from Marie-Laure Djelic and Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson).

Pendery goes on to further look at transnational migration, transnational business and work, transnational conflict, security and militarization, transnational education (where he interviews Taiwanese transnational students in the U.S., and allows his Taiwanese students to speak up on their thoughts about the issues), and a final look at transnational subjectivity, with Taiwan’s population traveling across national borders and margins regularly in the present day, by way of which we see a transnational effect on their identity. This brings the overall picture into clear focus.

A very strong point in the book is the establishment of a dialog pitting Edward W. Said, Samuel P. Huntington, and Stephen Toulmin, with their views onto transnational life and activity. Pendery does not think much of Huntington’s well-known, but very controversial and overall negative outlook, and looks favorably on Stephen Toulmin’s much more accommodating view onto Transnationalism.

During all of his examination, Pendery consistently refers the ideas back to Taiwan, with its open governmental structures and processes, its history (which as we have seen has had numerous transnational developments), the island’s somewhat militaristic viewpoints, its very transnational business and working conditions, and, as noted, students and education. In this, we see a vibrant picture of the notion of transnational subjectivity, which is present in all the people who live in Taiwan.

In the conclusion of the book, Pendery reflects back on his own transnational life of more than 20 years in Taiwan, during which he has witnessed and experienced a new transnational world of cooperative, interactive, trans-social possibilities, which he notes is not only within reach, but is taking place at this moment, introducing new world views into his comprehension. A final look at the work of Fang Tzu Chang, a Taiwanese poet, and Hugo of St. Vincent, the 12th century Norwegian monk, brings the work to a satisfying literary conclusion.

This book is recommended for all interested in transnational lives, activities and behaviors—which is almost anyone these days—and provides a very intellectual, stimulating look at these new worlds and realities.

### **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

**Contact:**

**E-mail:** [q028jc@gmail.com](mailto:q028jc@gmail.com)

**ELM VƏ İNNOVATİV  
TEKNOLOGİYALAR  
JURNALI**