



Contested Memories of the Past: The Politics of History Textbooks in Taiwan

Lei Duan, Sam Houston State University, US, duanl@umich.edu

A Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945, and then a retreat for the defeated Chinese Nationalist government from 1949, Taiwan has long been struggling to find its identity. Remnants of this identity crisis can be seen in the political realm, with its extreme polarization on various social, political, and historical issues. This article explores the ongoing controversy over history textbooks in Taiwan, situating it in evolving domestic and international contexts, suggesting that Taiwanese society's representation of its colonial and Cold War past is highly contested and has been influenced by democratization. This article also attempts to provide an overview of the course of the textbook controversy in Taiwan from a historical perspective and to show reactions from educators, students, and the general public. Through an analysis of the different ways that Taiwan's history has been interpreted and represented in its history textbooks, this article shows how these factors help construct Taiwan's contested identity.



July in subtropical Taiwan, a large island off the southeast coast of mainland China, has always been hot and muggy. In the summer of 2015, the island was also permeated with an atmosphere of confrontation and conflict. On the evening of July 23, dozens of students in Taipei broke into the compound of the Ministry of Education (MOE). After a brief occupation of the minister's office, thirty-three young activists were arrested. The students' storming of the ministry was an intensification of a long protest that had been ongoing since April. Their ire was provoked by the ministry's plan to introduce a series of "minor" adjustments to history textbooks, which young activists claimed embodied a China-centric view and devalued Taiwan's national identity. One of those arrested, Lin Guan-hua, committed suicide by inhaling carbon monoxide a week later, which escalated the protest. In his final Facebook post, Lin asked the MOE to withdraw the curriculum guidelines. On July 31, the students occupied the courtyard again, displaying pictures of Lin carrying a placard that said, "Education is not a political tool (**Figure 1**)."

Public outrage did not shake the government's determination to carry out its textbook revision plan, though the MOE did hold direct dialogues with the activists before and after the protest. However, students' efforts to guard Taiwan's identity were a moral victory on the island. Six months later, the opposition party had a landslide victory in both presidential and legislative elections. The new administration, with a clear pro-independence stance, rescinded the curriculum guidelines immediately.¹



Figure 1: Students storming the Ministry of Education on July 31, 2015 (Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Occupy_Ministry_of_Education_\(2015-08-01_VOA_\)_\(16\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Occupy_Ministry_of_Education_(2015-08-01_VOA_)_(16).jpg)).

The popular protest of 2015 was not the first time that history textbook revisions erupted into fierce controversy in Taiwan. Taiwan became a colony of Japan after 1895, and then returned to China in 1945 after Japan's defeat in WWII, and then became

the offshore retreat for the Chinese Nationalists (KMT) in 1949 as the Communists were taking over the mainland. The KMT government took control of the island, and to maintain its political legitimacy, it indoctrinated orthodox Chinese historiography through historical pedagogy while also marginalizing the history of Taiwan. Parallel to the political democratization that began in the late 1980s, a Taiwan-centered perspective in history education and research emerged (though controversial at first) and gradually gained prominence. After three decades of democratization, the indoctrination of state ideology through the history textbook became a futile project. Taiwanese people, who are diverse in their ethnic and historical experiences, generated assorted (and sometimes polarized) memories of Taiwan's past that led to diverse historical perspectives. This article aims to offer an overview of the formulation of the history textbook across different periods and to explain the sociopolitical forces that shape the dynamics of historical narrative. Taiwanese society has been struggling with its mixture of cultural and ethnic identities. This article showcases how the variety of historical experiences in Taiwan and the process of political democratization have given rise to a historical view that appreciates diversity, autonomy, and consciousness. The democratization of knowledge keeps the state from monopolizing the production of historical discourse, which continues to become increasingly diverse and socially involved.

A Brief History of Taiwan

Located in the Western Pacific, the island of Taiwan, owing to its important strategic location, has been coveted by a succession of foreign regimes throughout its history. Long before the early seventeenth century, the island had been inhabited primarily by an indigenous population whose ancestors had immigrated from other Western Pacific islands. In 1624, Dutch traders set foot on Taiwan and established a nominal jurisdiction that was governed by the Dutch East India Company. The Dutch presence in Taiwan came to an end when Koxinga (1624–1662), a Chinese general under the Ming dynasty, drove the Dutch out of Taiwan in 1662, and used the island as his base against the Manchus, who overthrew the Ming Empire in 1644 and established the Qing dynasty. Taiwan was incorporated into the Qing administrative structure in 1683 as a prefecture of Fujian province and later gained its own provincial status in 1887.

Large-scale emigration from mainland China to Taiwan occurred soon after the Qing court consolidated its control over the island. By the late nineteenth century, Taiwan's population consisted predominantly of Han Chinese, who migrated from mainland China, with a small number of indigenous inhabitants. Taiwan was separated from China between 1895 and 1945, when it became Japan's colony after the Qing dynasty was defeated in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). As Japan's first colony, Taiwan was established as a laboratory for experimenting with modernization and empire-building.

Japanese colonial policy was both developmental and predatory. In many ways, colonizers promoted economic development, upgraded Taiwan's infrastructure, introduced modern civilization, and brought tremendous social change. However, Taiwanese gentry and intellectuals who harbored anti-Japanese sentiments and called for self-rule were brutally suppressed. Like their European counterparts, the Japanese authorities implemented a *dōka* (assimilation) policy to repress Chinese culture. Students were forcefully indoctrinated with Japanese language and culture. Under Japanese colonial rule, Taiwan had transformed itself from an overwhelmingly rural and agrarian society into an important industrial and commercial entity and had become closely linked to the Japanese economy and strategic demands (Lamley 2007, 209–210).

Following the end of World War II in 1945, the KMT-led Republic of China took over control of Taiwan from Japan. After half a century of colonial rule, most people in Taiwan, who enjoyed a higher standard of living than people in the mainland, were frustrated by the new administration's efforts to establish tight, centralized control in Taiwan. Taiwanese who were active in politics, who were perceived as Japanese collaborators by the new government, lost their posts and privileges in government. The conflict escalated on February 28, 1947, when a dispute between an unlicensed cigarette vendor and a government officer triggered an island-wide anti-government protest. The government dispatched troops to brutally put down the uprising, which led to thousands of deaths. Known as the February 28 incident, the government's violent suppression caused a critical deterioration of the relationship between the Taiwanese and their new rulers. As one of the most horrific events in modern Taiwanese history, the incident left deep emotional scars on the Taiwanese people and became a rallying point for the independence movement in Taiwan today (Edmondson 2002, 38).²

The island was separated from mainland China again in 1949 when the Nationalists lost the Civil War (1945–1949) to the Chinese Communist Party. From the late 1940s to the early 1950s, nearly two million Chinese, including refugees, wealthy families, government officials, military personnel, and their families, came to the island. The Nationalist Party, led by Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975), re-established the Republic of China (ROC) on the island; the ROC initially planned to use Taiwan as a staging ground for retaking the mainland and built a military base. The Taipei-based ROC claimed to be the sole legitimate government of China and continued to control the Chinese seat on the United Nations Security Council until the early 1970s. When Chiang Kai-shek realized his dream of repossessing the mainland would never be achieved, the government prioritized the modernization and industrialization of the island. After Chiang's death in 1975, his son Chiang Ching-kuo (1910–1988) launched a set of ambitious programs targeting the development of the economy. Unlike Mao Zedong, who preferred "redness" over "expertise," the ROC government placed a high priority on the development of

industry and business (Leng 1993, 118). Thanks to successful industrialization programs and economic aid from the United States during the Cold War, Taiwan's economy took off. From the 1970s through the end of the twentieth century, Taiwan underwent a rapid industrialization and became one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

Today, Taiwan is an economically vibrant and militarily strong entity, but it also faces many uncertainties. Its successful export-oriented economic strategy and robust manufacturing industry have made Taiwan a critical player in the international community. Trade and investment ties have deepened economic interdependence between mainland China and Taiwan. However, economic integration has not led to political reconciliation. The political links between Beijing and Taipei are fragile. Relations across the Taiwan Strait have never ceased to be a hotly contested issue in regional security. Beijing is still firmly committed to its One-China policy and is determined to achieve national unification, while a majority of Taiwanese prefer to maintain the status quo.³ The future of Taiwan is still uncertain.

Taiwan's Road to Democracy: Formation of Taiwanese Identity

Lying at the heart of Taipei, Liberty Square is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Taiwan. Wandering around the vast square, one cannot help but be impressed by the grand, octagon-shaped memorial hall dedicated to Chiang Kai-shek (**Figure 2**). After Chiang passed away in 1975, the KMT-run Taiwanese government decided to build the square and monument, which would promote among the people a renewed loyalty to Chiang and the KMT. However, over forty years after Chiang's death, the square underwent a gradual process of democratization. It was on this square that pro-democracy demonstrators sought to challenge Taiwan's authoritarian system in the 1980s and 1990s. After Taiwan experienced a major democratic transition, the square was renamed from Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Square to Liberty Square by president Chen Shui-bian, whose political party defeated the KMT in the 2000 election. Under his presidency, he also renamed the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall to the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall (Musgrove 2017, 297–316). The name change was short-lived. When the KMT returned to power in 2008, President Ma Ying-jeou restored the hall's original name. Since the KMT lost the 2016 election, the new administration has been seeking ways to transform the memorial into a site celebrating Taiwan's democratic transition. The hall has borne witness to Taiwan's democratic transition and is now a contested public space filled with an array of symbols.⁴ The dynamic memories and interpretations of its past, which the memorial and the square attest to, denote the cultural and political diversity in Taiwan. As this section has suggested, Taiwan's democratization since the 1980s has allowed for the coexistence of diverse identities in Taiwanese society, which has consequentially influenced the ways Taiwanese people remember their past.



Figure 2: Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei (Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chiang_Kai-shek_memorial_amk.jpg).

Defeated in the Civil War, Chiang Kai-shek and his government claimed that the KMT's exile in Taiwan was a temporary, expedient condition, and the KMT maintained an authoritarian regime in Taiwan until the late 1980s. During the authoritarian period, the KMT maintained absolute political power and its party elite occupied privileged positions. The island was under martial law from 1949 to 1987, during which a “no contact” policy with mainland China was in place. The mainlander elite who followed Chiang to Taiwan maintained long-term political dominance, while all dissident activity, especially by Taiwanese who were not new immigrants, was brutally suppressed. To strengthen the central control of the KMT, Chiang took a series of political actions (notably, the White Terror) to eradicate Chinese communists and the Taiwanese elite who challenged KMT rule or pursued Taiwan's independence (K. Chang 2013).⁵ The KMT's authoritarian rule began to be relaxed in the late 1980s, when Chiang's son Chiang Ching-kuo opened up the political system to participation by all. During his presidency, the KMT government undertook liberalization measures in response to popular political pressure. The termination of martial law and the formation of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) ushered in democracy, cultural pluralism, and open society in Taiwan. In 2000, the DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian won Taiwan's direct presidential election, which marked the first peaceful and democratic transfer of power in the ROC's history.

Taiwan's successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy gave rise to a more culturally diversified society, in which multiple versions of sociocultural identities coexist. The Chinese who came to Taiwan in 1949 (known as mainlanders,

or *waishengren*) held a pro-China position, while many other Taiwanese became more determined to assert a distinct Taiwan identity. This identity pluralism was manifested in different ways as people interpreted Taiwan's history and their own identities. During the authoritarian period, the ROC government asserted itself as the only legal government of China. Chiang Kai-shek initiated the Chinese Cultural Revival Movement in the late 1960s in sharp contrast to the contemporaneous eradication of the "feudalistic tradition" in communist mainland China. Many programs were designed to promote the KMT's Chinese nationalist ideology, which claimed that Taiwan and the mainland were inseparable as parts of China and that unification would be achieved in the future. The Confucius Temple is a famous cultural site in the heart of Taipei (**Figure 3**). These programs asserted that the island was the legitimate repository of Chinese culture and educated citizens of Taiwan with the aim of promoting a Chinese identity (Young 1992, 347).



Figure 3: Taipei Confucius Temple (Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Taipei_Confucius_Temple_-_01.jpg).

Following the lifting of martial law in 1987 and the democratic transition of the 1990s, the old social and political order was overturned, which gave rise to a process of "Taiwanization" or "indigenization." The process was marked by a boom in Taiwan studies and reform of the history curriculum, which challenged the collective memory of Taiwan's past constructed by the authoritarian regime. Native Taiwanese, as the majority population, gradually distinguished themselves from the mainlanders and generated different memories of Taiwan's turbulent past, such as different accounts of Japanese colonial rule and the KMT authoritarian period. In recent years, the Taiwanese

have tended to emphasize the distinctiveness of the island, whose multicultural identity has been shaped by a cluster of cultural and political influences.

Thirty years after democratization, an increasing number of people have come to identify themselves as Taiwanese, regardless of their ethnic origins. According to a 2016 social survey conducted by the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation, more than 80% of respondents claimed Taiwanese as their identity, whereas only 8.1% self-identified as Chinese and 7.6% said they were both Taiwanese and Chinese (Gerber 2016). The formation of Taiwanese identity and Taiwan's contemporary cultural pluralism mean that any attempts to impose nationalist ideology would be resisted in today's Taiwan.

The History Textbook Controversy and Taiwanese Society

The coexistence of Taiwanese identity and Chinese identity in Taiwan influences the ways the island's history has been presented in history textbooks. During the authoritarian period, from the 1950s through 1980s, national history in textbooks had adopted a China-centric historical view, focusing on the glories of China's past and touching only cursorily on the history of Taiwan. The ROC government designed a school curriculum that indoctrinated students into a belief that "loyalty and devotion to the ROC as a nation was the primary duty of all citizens" (Liu 2004, 101). Students were forced to appreciate Chinese culture, history, and geography and were compelled to dedicate themselves to an anti-communist ideology. When mainland China suffered from the catastrophic Cultural Revolution, the ROC government portrayed Taiwan as the reservoir for traditional Chinese culture. Taiwan was treated merely as a province of China and was labeled as a temporary expedient.

Since the democratic reforms of the late 1980s, Taiwan has enjoyed a new era of democracy, liberalization, and new identity formation. After Lee Teng-hui, a native Taiwanese politician, became the first freely elected president in 1996, he accelerated the process of Taiwanization and pursuing measures in the service of building a separate and independent nation-state. One of the concrete manifestations of this process was the reform of the school curriculum and history textbooks. In 1997, the Lee administration introduced a new set of junior secondary school textbooks entitled *Getting to Know Taiwan* (Figure 4). The textbooks rejected the longstanding KMT orthodox view that rendered Taiwanese history subordinate to Chinese history. These new textbooks portrayed Taiwan as a distinctive multicultural community, which was subject to diverse cultural and political influences dating back over four hundred years.

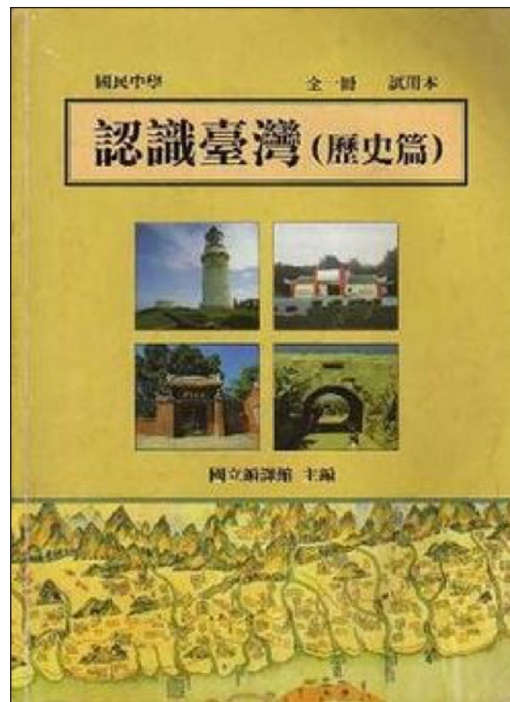


Figure 4: *Getting to Know Taiwan History Textbook*. Photo courtesy of National Institute for Compilation and Translation, Taipei.

For the first time in secondary education, *Getting to Know Taiwan* made a distinctive historical Taiwan trajectory the subject of historical narrative. One of the main arguments of these textbooks was that Taiwan had experienced a tragic historical process, during which people in Taiwan had never been masters of their own home. Rather than endorsing a China-centered ideology, the textbook attempted to erode Taiwan's links with the Chinese mainland, treating the nationalist Chinese as just one of the "occupiers" of Taiwan, alongside the Dutch, Koxinga, and the Japanese. For example, the people who immigrated from the mainland were no longer referred to as "Chinese people" (*Zhongguo ren*) but rather as "people of Chinese culture" (*Zhonghua ren*). The textbook that preceded *Getting to Know Taiwan* referred to Japan's surrender of Taiwan to the ROC in 1945 as the "glorious retrocession," but the new textbooks merely referred to it as "the end of the war." The textbook also highlighted the modernization brought by the Japanese rather than simply condemning Japanese exploitive colonial rule, as previous textbooks had done. Furthermore, the new textbook covered many once-forbidden topics, such as the February 28 incident in 1947, the White Terror of the 1950s, and the Kaohsiung incident of 1979.⁶ After a debate with the KMT, the *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum was formalized in 1998. For the first time, the history of

Taiwan was featured in a separate set, though it was still taught as supplementary reading to Chinese history. These initiatives aimed to promote a Taiwanese national identity and teach students that Taiwan had a history separate from China (Chang 2011).

Taiwanization deepened after Chen Shui-bian of the Taiwan-centric DPP won the presidential election in March 2000, ending the half-century of KMT rule in Taiwan. Though President Chen pledged in his inauguration address that his administration would not declare Taiwan's independence, he was dedicated to promoting Taiwan's cultural distinctiveness. During his tenure, most of his cultural policies were designed to deemphasize historical and cultural ties to China. For example, his administration carried out the Taiwan Name Rectification Campaign to replace "China" with "Taiwan" in all state business. Portraits of KMT leaders on the currency were replaced with images of Taiwanese landmarks. The Language Equality Law was enacted to designate fourteen languages as the national languages of Taiwan, depriving Mandarin of its status as the *de facto* national language (Hughes 2011, 53–54).

The process of Taiwanization loomed large in history education and scholarship after Chen Shui-bian was elected president in March 2000. In 2004, the Institute of Taiwan History was established in Academia Sinica, Taiwan's leading research institute. The purpose of this intellectual effort was to "lay the groundwork for an integrated and multifaceted island history that is different from conventional Chinese, Japanese and Western narratives of Taiwan" (Chang 2011, 124). In 2004, the MOE proposed a high school history curriculum guideline that suggested Taiwanese history and Chinese history (before 1949) be taught in different semesters. In 2006, the history of Taiwan was published in a single volume that would be taught separately from Chinese history. In 2007, the MOE authorized the Taiwan Historical Association to carefully review the expressions used in history textbooks. This endeavor generated a report which suggested approximately five thousand expressions downplayed Taiwan's sovereignty. For example, the MOE required that "both sides of the Taiwan Strait" be changed to "both countries" and "the retrocession of Taiwan" be changed to "post-World War II." Though Chen Shui-bian carefully avoided a formal declaration that Taiwan was an independent state, his administration downplayed Chinese aspects in the history curriculum on many occasions.

Chen Shui-bian's broad-based attempt to indigenize Taiwanese society stalled after 2008, when the KMT defeated the DPP in both presidential and national legislative elections. The popular KMT politician Ma Ying-jeou, a mainlander born in Hong Kong who received a law degree from Harvard University, began his presidency with a clear mandate to reverse his predecessor's pro-independence and de-Sinicization stances. From the outset, Ma explored ways to heal an already fractured cross-Strait

relationship and strengthen Taiwan's cultural and economic ties with the mainland. His administration endorsed the One-China concept under the ROC Constitution and took measures to create stronger lines across the Strait. Ma's initiatives were realized in cultural and educational reforms to revitalize the nationalist Chinese heritage. Under his presidency, the Taiwan Strait was no longer the flash point for the world as it had been during the Lee and Chen periods.

In the educational realm, the effort was marked by suspending Chen Shui-bian's history curriculum guidelines and introducing revised history textbooks and a revised history curriculum.⁷ The initiatives, known as "fine-tuning," proposed to re-indoctrinate a China-centric view, downplaying the distinctiveness of the island's past. According to the new guidelines, the historical links between Taiwan and the mainland were reemphasized, promoting the idea of Taiwanese culture as subordinate in relation to traditional Chinese culture. One example of this reemphasis was the treatment of Zheng Chengong (traditionally known as Koxinga in the West), who drove the Dutch out of Taiwan in 1662. Under the new guidelines, the regime established by Koxinga in Taiwan against the Manchu conquest was called the "Ming Zheng dynasty" instead of the "Zheng dynasty." Such revisions suggested that Taiwan's affiliation with the Chinese empire dated back to the Ming dynasty. Descriptions of historical incidents reflecting the severity of KMT rule, such as the February 28 incident and White Terror, were watered down. The new curriculum suggested that both incidents were results of the civil war between the KMT and the Communist Party rather than exploring the conflicts between the KMT government and the Taiwanese. It also downplayed the waves of social movements calling for democracy after 1949, but highlighted the beneficence of the KMT in its initiation of the democratization process (Tsoi 2015).

Old Version	New Version
China	Mainland China
Governed by Dutch	Invaded by Dutch
Governed by Koxinga	Governed by Koxinga of Ming Dynasty
Qing Dynasty	Qing Court
Governed by Japan	Colonized by Japan
Received Taiwan after the WWII	Recovered Taiwan after the WWII
Comfort women	Women were forced to become comfort women
Cultural Diversity	Diversity of Chinese Culture
None	Taiwan's resistance against Japanese colonial rule

Table 1: Major history textbook revisions proposed in 2015 (Source: Ministry of Education Republic of China (Taiwan)).

Wang Hsiao-po, a leading historian of Taiwan, who was responsible for drafting the new guidelines, said “the textbooks (sanctioned) by the Republic of China’s constitution, in which de-Sinicization is impossible. Without China, how can the Republic of China exist?” (Tsoi 2015). Such an explanation, however, did not help very much. Educators and young students were angry about the adjusted curriculum, which weakened Taiwanese identity and failed to respect the voices of Taiwan’s diverse population. In the summer of 2015, hundreds of Taiwanese students stormed the MOE to protest a series of history textbook revisions which, young activists claimed, emphasized a China-centric view and aimed at promoting Beijing’s One-China policy (see, for example, Table 1). One year later, the DPP, with its pro-independence stance, won the presidential election and quickly rescinded the textbook changes. After the 2015 demonstration, it has become extremely difficult for the state to impose any ideology on Taiwan’s diverse citizens without civic engagement.

Epilogue and Conclusion

Taiwan has a special history. A Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945, and then a retreat for the defeated KMT government beginning in 1949, Taiwan has been struggling with its culturally and ethnically mixed identities. Taiwan’s identity crisis has been embodied in the realm of politics, which became highly polarized on various social, political, and historical issues. This article has explored the ongoing textbook controversy in Taiwan, situating it in evolving historical contexts and has argued that Taiwan’s representation of its colonial and Cold War past is highly contested and shaped by both state actors and non-state actors. Different memories of the past have long coexisted and have helped construct a contested identity in Taiwan.

History textbooks have become a sensitive issue in many countries. These textbooks offer a primary vehicle through which official historical discourse becomes socialized. The Taiwan case, nevertheless, suggests that knowledge production and history education are by no means monopolized by the state but are rather processes of civic engagement. From 1949 onward, history education in Taiwan has undergone a transformation from a state-centered enterprise that indoctrinated nationalist ideology to a socially involved process that emphasizes autonomy and appreciates diversity and differences. Though the future of Taiwan is uncertain, given ongoing domestic and political changes and highly unstable geopolitics, the trend of public engagement in generating diverse discourse will be irreversible.

In closing, what lessons can we draw from the history of Taiwan vis-à-vis history education, as it concerns history pedagogy outside Taiwan? In the American classroom, Taiwan’s dynamic history is briefly covered in surveys of East Asian history. Most

textbooks on Asian history show Taiwan as being subordinate to Chinese history or East Asian history, thus overlooking the distinctiveness of its historical trajectory. As we have seen, Taiwan has a special status in the global community. It cannot be considered a sovereign nation-state, as Beijing has claimed it to be a province of the People's Republic of China. It also has a unique history. Various political entities have occupied and ruled the island. Taiwan has a highly diverse population whose ancestors came to the island during different historical periods. The appreciation of domestic diversity and the dynamics of historical knowledge production might be at the core of a better method for teaching the history of Taiwan in the American classroom.

Notes

- ¹ For more details about the protest, see "Birthday Suicide of Student Activist Sparks Protests outside Taiwan Education Ministry," *Hong Kong Free Press*, July 31, 2015, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2015/07/31/taiwan-students-surround-education-ministry-after-young-activist-kills-himself-on-birthday/>
- ² During the authoritarian period in Taiwan, criticizing the ROC government for its suppression of the incident was not allowed. After the lifting of martial law in 1987, memorial sites were set up to commemorate the victims. Scholarly research on this has boomed in recent years. The incident still triggers intense public discussion today, both in the context of blaming the KMT and celebrating people's fighting for democracy.
- ³ Beijing saw the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate China. Beijing and Taipei reached a consensus in 1992, known as the "1992 Consensus," which stated that "there is one China, but the definition of it on each side is different." However, the Democratic Progress Party in Taiwan, which won the elections in 2000, 2004, and 2016, did not acknowledge the 1992 Consensus.
- ⁴ In 2018, the Transitional Justice Commission was set up to transform the function of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. The Commission aims to remove all symbols of authoritarianism in Taiwan. See "Justice Commission Prioritizes CKS Hall," *Taipei Times*, June 2, 2018, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2018/06/02/2003694161>.
- ⁵ "White Terror" refers to the period from 1949 to 1987, during which the KMT government suppressed political dissidents.
- ⁶ The "Kaohsiung incident" (also known as the Formosa incident) refers to the pre-democracy demonstrations of 1979, when a group of young intellectuals held a demonstration against the KMT's one-party rule.
- ⁷ For more details about the textbook revision, see "On the Minor Revision of Curriculum" at <http://98history.blogspot.com>.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

References

- Chang, Kang-i Sun. 2013. *Journey Through the White Terror: A Daughter's Memoir*. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press.
- Chang, Lung-chih. 2011. "Telling Histories of an Island Nation: The Academics and Politics of History Textbooks in Contemporary Taiwan." In *Designing History in East Asian Textbooks: Identity Politics and Transnational Aspirations*, edited by Gotelind Muller, 117–34. London: Routledge.
- Edmondson, Robert. 2002. "The February 28 Incident and National Identity." In *Memories of the Future: National Identity Issues and the Search for a New Taiwan*, edited by Stephane Corcuff, 25–46. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe.
- Gerber, Abraham. 2016. "Taiwanese Identity Reaches Record High." *Taipei Times*, May 8, 2016. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2016/05/28/2003647291>.
- Hughes, Christopher R. 2011. "Negotiating National Identity in Taiwan: Between Nativization and De-Sinicization." In *Taiwan's Democracy: Economic and Political Challenges*, edited by Robert Ash, John W. Garver, and Penelope B. Prime, 51–74. London: Routledge.
- Lamley, Harry J. 2007. "Taiwan Under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945: The Vicissitudes of Colonialism." In *Taiwan: A New History*, edited by Murray A. Rubinstein, 201–60. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003075530-8>
- Leng, Shao-chuan. 1993. *Chiang Ching-kuo's Leadership in the Development of the Republic of China on Taiwan*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Liu, Meihui. 2004. "A Society in Transition: The Paradigm Shift of Civic Education in Taiwan." In *Citizenship Education in Asia and the Pacific: Concepts and Issues*, edited by W. O. Lee, David L. Grossman, Kerry J. Kennedy, and Gregory P. Fairbrother, 97–118. Hong Kong: Kluwer Academic Publishers. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-7935-1_7

Musgrove, Charles D. 2017. "Taking Back Space: The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall and Taiwan's Democratization." *Twentieth-Century China* 3:297–316. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/tcc.2017.0025>

Tsoi, Grace. 2015. "Taiwan Has Its Own Textbook Controversy Brewing." *Foreign Policy*, July 21, 2015. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/21/taiwan-textbook-controversy-china-independence-history/>.

Young, Yi-Rong. 1992. "Taiwan." In *Education and Culture in Industrializing Asia*, edited by Willy Wielemans and Pauline Choi-Ping Chan, 327–73. Leuven: Leuven University Press.

