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3 Strangers from the North: Russia in History Textbooks of Postwar Taiwan

Abstract. This chapter is aimed at exploring the changing representation of Russia in secondary school history textbooks of postwar Taiwan. The discussion is comprised of four main sections. Characterized by a mixture of anti-communism and exoticism, the depictions of Russia in Taiwanese history textbooks can be taken as an interesting case study in understanding nationalism and post-colonialism in modern China and East Asia. The first section offers a historical overview of the relations between Taiwan and Russia since the late 19th century. The second section introduces institutional features of history education and changing images of Europe in postwar Taiwan. The third section provides analysis of various depictions of Imperial Russia, the USSR, and contemporary Russia in secondary school curriculum guidelines and textbooks. The fourth section presents interviews of history teachers and their reflections of classroom experiences. The central argument of this chapter is that the changing discourse of Russia not only reflects the transformation of the official ideology during and after the Martial Law era but is also intertwined with the memory of the politics of the Second World War, the Chinese Civil War, and the Cold War. Further reflections on the Taiwan case in a larger context of modern Chinese and East Asian History are provided at the end of this chapter.

Keywords. Taiwan, Russia, USSR, World history education, Pedagogy.

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Taiwan-Russia Relations in a Historical Perspective

In May 2019, the Royal Flight Airlines (RL) announced its direct charter flight service between Moscow and Taipei. The first group of Russian tourists were warmly received at the airport with souvenirs of Taiwan's mascot bear. Meanwhile, the Siberia Airlines (S7) also started its new Vladivostok-Taipei route service.¹ It was nearly one and half centuries after Russian Naval officer Paul IBIS (1852–1877) first set foot on the island and visited the indigenous tribes during the Japanese expedition to southern Taiwan in 1875.² From the late-Qing encounter to the twenty-first century tourism, Russia has been a remote yet important presence in the Taiwanese historical imagination of Europe and the world.

Early Encounters in the Late 19th Century

Separated by the Eurasian landmass, Taiwan did not draw much attention of Imperial Russia until the late 19th century. Sketchy and fragmented information about the island can be found in early missionary reports of the Russian Orthodox Church, before which the founding of the Russian Spiritual Mission in Beijing was approved by Qing Emperor Kangxi 康熙 in 1712.³ After the treaty ports of the island opened in 1860, a small number of Russians visited Taiwan for coal supply and worked for the Chinese Maritime Customs Service.⁴

In May 1874, Taiwan became the focus of diplomatic crisis when the fleet of Meiji, Japan occupied southern Taiwan and invaded the aboriginal territory. A Russian gunboat Gornostai was dispatched the following month to Fujian for

I would like to thank Prof. Gotelind MÜLLER-SAINI and the participants of Heidelberg Workshop on Chinese Perceptions of Russia and the West for their comments on the draft. The opinion and possible errors are the author's sole responsibility.

1 "Tai e fuhang! Eluosi huangjia hangkong zhi hang banji mei zhou yi ban" 台俄復航！俄羅斯皇家航空直航班機每週一班 (Taiwan-Russia Flight resumes! One flight per week by Royal Flight), 2019, May 25. Available online: <https://newtalk.tw/news/view/2019-05-25/251474> (last access 2019, September 20).

2 Samuel STEPHENSON: "Paul (Pavel Ivanovich) IBIS 16 June 1852 – 1877 with a Supplemental Biography by M.F. Chigrinskii". Available online: <https://www.reed.edu/formosa/texts/IbisBio.html> (last access 2019, September 20).

3 "Russian Orthodox Church marks 300 years in China", 2012, December 7. Available online: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/russian-orthodox-church-marks-300-years-in-china/66785> (last access 2019, September 20).

4 Harold M. OTNESS (ed.): *One Thousand Westerners in Taiwan, to 1945; A Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary*, Taipei: Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica 1999.

monitoring the potential military confrontation between China and Japan. From January to February 1875, Paul IBIS was the first Russian who had travelled throughout the island and later wrote an ethnographic account of the indigenous peoples. Published first in Russian in 1876 and then in German in 1877, IBIS's work became the first well-constructed source on Taiwan's history, culture, and society.⁵

Limited Contacts in the Japanese Colonial Era, 1895–1945

Although Taiwan was featured in the famous “Frontier Defense vs. Maritime Defense” debate of the Qing court, the modernization efforts by progressive officials such as SHEN Baozhen 沈葆楨 (1820–1879) and LIU Mingchuan 劉銘傳 (1836–1896) could not prevent the cession of the island as a result of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894.⁶ The short-lived Taiwan Republic of 1895 proved to be a failed diplomatic attempt by local officials and gentry elites to solicit support from Western powers including Russia.⁷ The island and its 2.5 million inhabitants have since then undergone significant changes of colonial modernization as the first overseas colony of the Japanese empire.

Taiwan witnessed the celebration of Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the founding of the Republic of China (ROC) in 1912, and the Russian Revolution in 1917. The Taiwanese Communist Party was established in 1928 in Shanghai under the direction of the Comintern and the Japanese Communist Party. In 1937, all political and social movements in Taiwan were crushed by the colonizing authorities when Japan declared a total war on China and the Allied Powers. Some Taiwanese soldiers were detained in Siberian labor camps after Japan surrendered in 1945.

In the early 20th century, several Russian military personnel, journalists, and scholars visited Japanese colonial Taiwan. Among them was historian S.G. ELISEEV who graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University and came to Taiwan in 1912.⁸ However, most contemporary Russian newspaper and official reports

5 LIU Yuwei 劉宇衛 (Valentin GOLOVACHEV) and Moluojiakufu 莫洛賈科夫 (Vassily MOLODYAKOV, eds.): *Riben tongzhi shidai de Taiwan: Ewen shiliao yu yanjiu* 日本統治時代的臺灣：俄文史料與研究 (Taiwan Under Japanese Rule: Russian Language Sources and Studies), Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Taiwan shi yanjiusuo 2018, pp. 24–28.

6 Lung-chih CHANG: “From Island Frontier to Imperial Colony: Qing and Japanese Sovereignty Debates and Territorial Projects in Taiwan, 1874–1906”, Ph. D. Dissertation, Harvard University 2003.

7 LIU Yuwei 劉宇衛 (Valentin GOLOVACHEV) and Moluojiakufu 莫洛賈科夫 (Vassily MOLODYAKOV, eds.): *Riben tongzhi shidai de Taiwan* (2018), pp. 24–25.

8 ELISEEV's manuscripts on Taiwan are now kept in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Science.

remained narrowly focused on Taiwanese peasant and communist movements between 1920s and 1930s. In 1934, an abridged, if not distorted, Russian translation of *Taiwan Under Imperialism* by YANAIHARA Tadao 矢内原忠雄 (1893–1961) was published in Moscow in accordance with the orthodox Marxist doctrine of Soviet Russia.⁹

Mutual Hostility in the Postwar Era, 1945–1986

In December 1949, CHIANG Kai-shek (JIANG Jieshi 蔣介石, 1887–1975) and the ROC government retreated to Taiwan after their debacle in the Chinese Civil War. More than 1.2 million Kuomintang (*Guomindang* 國民黨, henceforth KMT) troops, civilians, and refugees migrated to the island where Taipei became the new capital city. CHIANG promulgated the Temporary Provisions for the Period of National Mobilization which constrained the function of the ROC Constitution. The imposition of martial law further consolidated the authoritarian rule of the KMT regime in Taiwan.¹⁰ The fate of CHIANG Kai-shek and the KMT regime in Taiwan was saved by the Korean War in 1950–1953. The signing of the “Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty” in 1954 and the U.S. military and economic aids helped push Taiwan to the forefront of the anti-communist movement during the Cold War period. The two Taiwan Strait Crises in the 1950s testify to the military threat from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) on the mainland. Despite claiming her sovereignty over mainland China, the ROC holds the de facto territory comprising only Taiwan, the Pescadores and the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu.

9 Susan C TOWNSEND: *Yanaihara Tadao and Japanese Colonial Policy: Redeeming Empire*, Richmond: Curzon Press 2000.

10 Dafydd FELL: *Government and Politics in Taiwan* (2nd ed.), London and New York: Routledge 2018.

In 1956, CHIANG published his work entitled *Soviet Russia in China* (fig. 3-1) to uphold the doctrine of anti-Communism and the ambition of retaking the mainland.¹¹

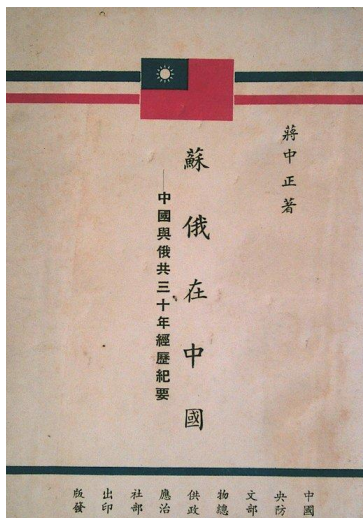


Figure 3-1: *Soviet Russia in China* by CHIANG Kai-shek
Photo taken by Lung-chih CHANG

With anti-communist and anti-Russian aggression (*fan gong kang E* 反共抗俄) being the official ideology of the KMT regime in the 1950s, there was virtually no Russian visiting Taiwan in the postwar era. People suspected of communist ties were imprisoned or executed during “White Terror” political purges. It was not until the Sino-Soviet split and border conflict in the late 1960s that the doctrine was altered as anti-communism and restoration of the nation (*fan gong fu guo* 反共復國).

In the 1970s, the KMT regime suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks and the resulting legitimacy crises; first the withdrawal from the United Nations in 1971, followed by the severance of diplomatic relations with Japan in 1972 and with the U.S. in 1979. It is against this background that the KMT regime adopted the new policy of Taiwanization while Taiwanese politicians called for political reform and greater participation in local and national elections. In 1978, CHIANG Ching-kuo (JIANG Jingguo 蔣經國, 1910–1988), who was sent by his father CHIANG Kai-shek to study in Moscow and married a Russian woman in the 1920s, was elected as the ROC president. In 1980, he proposed a new doctrine of Reunification of China

11 CHIANG Kai-shek: *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-up at Seventy*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy 1957.

under the Three Principles of the People (*sanmin zhuyi tongyi zhongguo* 三民主義統一中國).

Interactions in the Post-Martial Law Era, 1987–2019

Taiwan underwent a transition from authoritarianism to democratization in the 1980s. The first Taiwanese opposition party (the Democratic Progressive Party, DPP) was founded in 1986. In July 1987, CHIANG Ching-kuo declared the lifting of Taiwan's decades-old martial law. After CHIANG passed away in January 1988, LEE Teng-hui (LI Denghui 李登輝, *1923) became the first Taiwanese president of the ROC. He initiated a series of constitutional reforms and formally abolished the Temporary Provisions for the Period of National Mobilization in 1991. Direct elections for Taiwan provincial governors and mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung were held in 1994. In 1996, a majority of Taiwanese voters elected LEE in the first direct presidential election amidst a Chinese military test in the Straits. The ROC constitution went through seven revisions in post-martial law Taiwan that transformed presidential and parliamentary elections, restructured local government, and discarded the anti-communist ideology. In 2000, the island witnessed the first regime change when the DPP candidate CHEN Shui-bian (CHEN Shuibian 陳水扁, 1950–) won in the tight presidential election. The second and third regime change happened peacefully when the KMT candidate MA Ying-jeou (MA Yingjiu 馬英九, 1950–) and the DPP candidate TSAI Ing-wen (CAI Yingwen 蔡英文, 1956–) won the presidential elections in 2008 and 2016 respectively.¹²

Taiwan resumed interaction with Russia when president Mikhail GORBACHEV (*1931) initiated his Perestroika (Perestroika) political movement in the late 1980s. In October 1990, the mayor of Moscow paid his first visit to Taiwan after four decades of separation of Taiwan and Russia. In the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Taiwan endeavored to develop relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and other former Soviet Republics. In 1993 and 1996, representative offices were set up in Taipei and Moscow respectively for economic and cultural cooperation.¹³ In 1997, Russia joined the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In 2002, the Taiwan-Russia Association was established to promote commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges with the

12 Gunter SCHUBERT (ed.): *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan*, London: Routledge 2016.

13 "Representative Office of the MTC in Taipei". Available online: <http://www.mtc.org.tw/new/ch/main.php> (last access 2019, September 20).

Commonwealth of Independent States.¹⁴ The total volume of trade between Taiwan and Russia reached a record high in 2014.¹⁵ In terms of education, Russian used to be a division of the Department of Oriental Languages in the 1950s. As of today, Russian is taught in the Departments of Slavic Languages and Literature at three major Taiwan universities: The National Chengchi University, Chinese Culture University, and Tamkang University. Research on Russia related issues is no longer a matter of political warfare and secrecy as it was in the Martial Law era (fig. 3-2), while academic exchanges between Taiwan and Russia have been facilitated in recent years.¹⁶

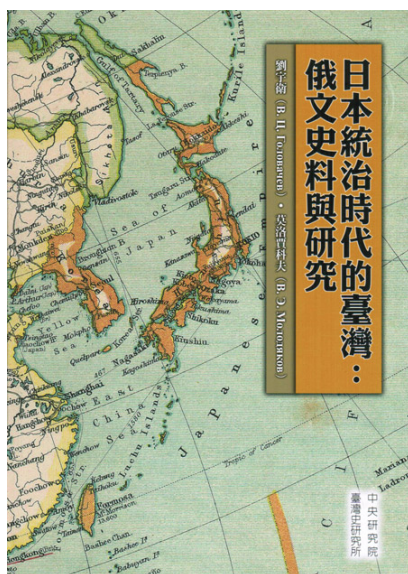


Figure 3-2: Recent publication on Taiwan-Russia relations

Photo taken by Lung-chih CHANG

14 “Taiwan-Russia Association”, 2017, June 14. Available online: <http://www.tra.org.tw/> (last access 2019, September 20).

15 “Zengjin Tai E guanxi” keneng ma, zenme zuo? – Cong Tai E guanxi yanjin yu guoji zhanlüe jiaodu tan qi” “增進台俄關係” 可能嗎，怎麼做？—從台俄關係演進與國際戰略角度談起 (Is “promoting Taiwan-Russia relations” possible, and how? – from the perspective of the development of their relations and international strategy), 2018, January 25. Available online: <https://crossing.cw.com.tw/blogTopic.action?id=845&nid=9345> (last access 2019, September 20).

16 Lin Chia-nan: “Interview: Taiwan-Russia ties promising, envoy says”, 2019, June 03. Available online: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/06/03/2003716251> (last access 2019, September 20).

History Education and Changing Perspectives of Europe in Postwar Taiwan

During the four-decade Martial Law period, history textbooks were standardized and issued by the National Institute of Compilation and Translation (NICT) under the ROC Ministry of Education.¹⁷ Teachers offered courses on Chinese history and Western history which followed the national curriculum standards. History education in Taiwan emphasizes the KMT orthodoxy of Chinese nationalism and the official doctrine of Three Principles of the People as exemplified in the following goals of junior secondary school curriculum standards in 1968:¹⁸

1. To understand the development of the Chinese nation and its territorial changes.
2. To understand the development of political institution and social life of our nation.
3. To cultivate patriotic spirits by teaching the glorious history and culture of our nation.
4. To understand the development of major nations in the world, and international status and duty of our nation.

The goals of senior secondary school curriculum standards from 1948 to 1984 also display similar features:

1. To understand the evolution of the Chinese Nation and the harmonious and interdependent relations among the constituent groups.
2. To understand the glorious history and cultural achievements of our nation as the inspiration to national revival.
3. To understand the history of major nations in the world and their interactions.
4. To understand the development of world culture and modern trends to strengthen the international role of our nation.

It was not until the removal of Martial Law in 1987 and the education reform movement in 1994 that textbook policy and curriculum guidelines were liberalized

17 The National Institute of Compilation and Translation was founded by the KMT government in Nanjing in 1931 and moved to Taipei in 1949. In 2011, the NICT was merged with the National Academy of Education Research and renamed Research Center for Translation, Compilation and Language Education.

18 CHEN Yun-Shiuan 陳昀萱 and CHEN Hsiao-Lan 甄曉蘭: "Guo zhong lishi kegang zhong de Ouzhou yixiang (國中歷史課綱中的歐洲意象 European Images in Taiwan's Junior Secondary School History Curriculum Guidelines)". In: *Jiaokeshu Yanjiu* 教科書研究 (Journal of Textbook Research) vol. 11, no. 2, 2018, p. 39.

and democratized. New curriculum guidelines no longer advocate anti-communism or patriotism but emphasize civic values and a new worldview as shown in the following goals of the 1994 Junior Secondary School Curriculum Standards.

1. To help students understand the nature of historical knowledge.
2. To help students cultivate their own interest in learning history.
3. To help students understand the hardship in nation building and personal responsibility.
4. To nurture students to become a modern citizen with open-mindedness and worldview.

The history of Europe appears in both Chinese history and Western history textbooks. Although their main contents are mostly the same, there have been important changes in the narrative structure and perspectives. The changing perspectives of Europe in secondary school history textbooks of postwar Taiwan can be summarized as follows:¹⁹

1. **Europe as modern Western civilization:** This has been the most influential and lasting image since the nine-year compulsory education was implemented in 1968. It emphasizes the rise of the West as the model for Chinese modernization while criticizing the aggression of Western imperialism.
2. **Europe as a set of modern international powers:** This image emerged in 1994–95 when the new knowing Taiwan curriculum guidelines were issued, emphasizing a Taiwan-centered perspective. New contents such as Dutch and Spanish regimes in seventeenth-century Taiwan were added.
3. **Europe in the multicultural world:** This image appeared between 2000 and 2008 when the new Grade 1-9 curriculum guidelines were issued, emphasizing world history and global connections in contrast to conventional nationalist narration and Eurocentric viewpoints.

19 Ibid., pp. 38–47.

Representation of Russia in Secondary School History Textbooks of Taiwan

As mentioned earlier, history education in postwar Taiwan is closely linked to the island's political history and corresponds to the transition from authoritarianism to democratization.²⁰ Throughout the Martial Law era, Russian history was never an independent subject and often appeared as part of Sino-Soviet relations. The representation of Russia in textbook has been dominated by the official Chinese nationalism and anti-communism advocated by CHIANG Kai-shek until the early 1980s when Taiwan began the process of political liberalization under CHIANG Ching-kuo. A Taiwan-centered narrative structure was implemented in the mid-1990s amid LEE Teng-hui's indigenization efforts and new vision of global history; and a multicultural perspective was introduced following Taiwan's first democratic regime change in 2000.

Tables 3-1 to 3-3 summarize Russia-related topics in history curriculum standards and guidelines of postwar Taiwan. Worthy of note are the following textbook depictions of Russian history. (Sources: Textbook Library and Center for Textbook Research, National Academy of Education Research. Compiled by the author.)

1. The anti-Russian aggression propaganda in early versions of curriculum standards was toned down after the Sino-Soviet split in the late 1960s and completely disappeared in the early 1980s.
2. The Cold War rhetoric of a bipolar world has been replaced by new wordings such as pluralization of international order that takes changing relations among the U.S., Russia, and China in the 1970s into account.
3. On account of Taiwan's democratization and the liberalization of textbook policy, Russian history was reconstructed according to the new Taiwan-centered narrative structure in the mid-1990s.
4. New curriculum guidelines issued in the twenty-first century not only adopt a global historical perspective but also include new contents of media, culture and society in the post-Cold War world.

20 Lung-chih CHANG, "Telling Histories of an Island Nation: the Academics and Politics of History Textbooks in Contemporary Taiwan". In: Gotelind MUELLER (ed.): *Designing History in East Asian Textbooks: Identity Politics and Transnational Aspirations*, New York: Routledge 2011, pp. 117–134.

Table 3-1: Russia-related topics in senior secondary school history curriculum standards in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s

Subject	Version	Topic *	Description **
Chinese History	1948	20. Russia's Eastward Invasion	Russian's invasion
		22. Loss of Tributary States	Russian, Japanese and British aggressions
		24. Boxer Rebellion and Crisis in the North-east	Russia's occupation of the northeast region
		27. China in First World War	Russia's occupation of the outer Mongolia
		30. New Constitution and Anti-Communism and Anti-Russian Aggression	Aggression of Soviet Russia, peril of Chinese Communist Party, and anti-Russian aggression
History of Foreign Countries	1952	15. Soviet Russia's Aggression Policy and New International Situation	
History of Foreign Countries	1962	11. Era of New Imperialism	New imperialism and the redivision of the world
		14. Second World War	Confrontation between dictatorship and democracy
		15. Contemporary World	New threats to world peace

* Showing topics that mentioned Russia directly.

** Showing descriptions that mentioned Russia.

Table 3-2: Russia-related topics in senior secondary school history curriculum standards in the 1970s and 1980s

Subject	Version	Topic *	Description **
Chinese History	1971	30. New Constitution and Anti-Communism	Aggression of Soviet Russia and peril of Chinese Communist Party
History of Modern World	1971	3. Era of Absolute Monarchs in Europe	England, France, Russia, and Prussia
		9. The World between Two World Wars	Soviet Russia under communist rule
		11. Contemporary World	Cold war and hot war
History of Western Culture	1971	4. Modern European and American Culture	Socialism and communism
Chinese History		18. Aggression of Western Powers	Russia's eastward aggression
		30. Calamity of Chinese Communists	Aggression of Soviet Russia
History of Modern World	1983	3. Rise and Fall of Absolute Monarchy	Enlightened absolutism in Austria, Prussia, and Russia
		11. Second World War	Dictatorship of Russian Communist Party
		12. Pluralization of Postwar International Order	Red peril of communism, U.S.-Russia contest for hegemony, U.S.-Russia-China tripartite relations

* Showing topics that mentioned Russia directly.

** Showing descriptions that mentioned Russia.

Table 3-3: Russia-related topics in senior secondary school history curriculum standards in the 1990s and 2000s

Subject	Version	Topic *	Description **
History I	1996	13. Impacts of Foreign Powers and Changes in Late Qing Period	Unequal treaties and loss of territories
		15. Internal Disturbances and Foreign Invasions in Early Republican Era	

Subject	Version	Topic *	Description **
History I	2005	5. The World in Second Half of the Twentieth Century	End of Cold War and the dissolution of Soviet Union, the Comintern, and the founding of the CCP
History (elective)	2009	3. Spread of Information and Communication Media	Invention and development of modern cinema

* Showing topics that mentioned Russia directly.

** Showing descriptions that mentioned Russia.

History Pedagogy on Russian History: Interviews of Secondary School History Teachers

To gain insight into the perspective of history teachers in Taiwan on the representation of Russia in textbooks, two teachers were interviewed to share their firsthand observations, which offer a glimpse of ideological and generational changes in history textbook and pedagogy of postwar Taiwan.²¹

Interview of Teacher S

On History Curriculum Standards:

“In the past, history was considered as part of national spirit education. Chinese history was dominated by linear and highly homogenous interpretations under the theme of the Chinese nation. To strengthen this national myth, the subject of world history was distorted as the history of foreign countries in contrast to Chinese history. This kind of conventional China-Foreign History is the product of Han cultural chauvinism that emphasizes the Us-Other distinction.”

21 Interviews of Teacher S (born in 1959, female, retired history teacher from Taipei First Girls' Secondary School) and Teacher C (born in 1981, female, history teacher in Taipei Song-shan Senior Secondary School) were conducted in written form in summer 2019. The English translations by this author have been reviewed and approved by the interviewees.

On World History:

“As a result of the Sino-Foreign dichotomy and the homogeneous perspective of Chinese history, world history has been reduced if not distorted as mirror images of Chinese history. Generally speaking, the core narration of Europe before the sixteenth century emphasizes the cultural inferiority compared with China, while the key words for modern world history are ‘Western powers’ and ‘imperialism’.”

On History Textbooks:

“The earlier history textbooks on foreign countries emphasize the parallel development between China and the West. In 1971, the subject was renamed World History that focuses on Western Europe. It was not until the 1995 Curriculum Guidelines that major textbook revision was conducted.”

On Russia:

“The narrative structure of world history for early secondary school level was fragmented and inconsistent. Take Russia for example: Imperial Russia always appeared in sections regarding China’s territorial issues while Soviet Russia appeared in sections between the two World Wars. There is almost no mention of Russia in the post-Cold War era.”

“The World History textbook did cover the westernization policy of Peter the Great and the enlightened despotism and expansion of Catherine II. The Chinese History textbook focused on Imperial Russia’s territorial ambition from the Treaty of Nerchinsk during the reign of Kangxi, the atrocity during the Boxer Rebellion, Russo-Japanese rivalry in Manchuria as well as Soviet Russia’s export of communism to China, the Yalta (Alta) Conference, and the Sino-Soviet unequal treaty in WWII. There was no mention of Marxism. This narration pattern remained as the standard version for decades.”

On Textbook Reform

“It was not until the liberalization of textbooks in 1999 that new efforts began to emerge. The sections on Imperial Russia and territorial aggression was shortened in Chinese History textbook. New information on Latin America and Africa was added to the World History textbook. More emphasis has been put on modern and contemporary history. The impacts of Marxism and the Cold War were discussed in the history of world culture. The new 2019 curriculum guidelines are innovative

in terms of topical teaching and hands on projects that focus more on multi-cultural Taiwan and East Asian transnational migration and modern world civilizations.”²²



Figure 3-3: Russia in secondary-school history textbooks
Photo taken by Lung-chih CHANG



Figure 3-4: Russia in secondary-school history textbooks
Photo taken by Lung-chih CHANG

22 The curriculum guidelines of 12-year basic education took effect on August 1, 2019. For more information, see Ministry of Education: *Curriculum Guidelines of 12-year Basic Education*, 2014, November. Available online: <https://cirn.moe.edu.tw/Upload/file/946/70456.pdf> (last access 2019, September 20).

Interview of Teacher C

On History Curriculum Guidelines

“The key feature of the 1995 curriculum guidelines is the emphasis on strengthening students’ core capacity in historical thinking. It is an important breakthrough compared with conventional emphasis on historical knowledge and political indoctrination. The following revisions do not alter this direction, and teachers now have better awareness of historical methodology.”

On Students’ Learning Experiences of Russia

“Students nowadays will first learn the physical and human geography of Eurasia in the second year of senior secondary school before taking the world history courses. They will learn how to interpret historical sources. In terms of European history, new sections on nomadic peoples and Asian empires were added to ancient Mediterranean civilizations to promote comparative perspectives on interaction and connectivity among world cultures. In this new global history framework, Russian history becomes more contextualized and integrated with discussions on Nordic and Mongolian cultures.”

On Prospects of History Pedagogy in Taiwan

“The new 2019 history curriculum guidelines are a continuation of the 1995 version that emphasizes the importance of historical literacy. A more dynamic narrative structure for Taiwan’s connectivity with East Asia and the globe has replaced the somewhat invariable concentric model²³ of Taiwan subjectivity. New pedagogy is required in order to build up the core capacity of inquiry and practice. The history of Russia will be explored through elective courses and teaching projects on political economic development, human migration, cultural communication, and social movements.”

23 The “concentric view of history” (*tongxin yuan shi guan* 同心圓史觀) is a historical concept proposed by former Minister of Education Tu Cheng-sheng. See “Taiwan zhuti xing – Du Zhengsheng: Yao zuo dao xiang huxi yiyang ziran 台灣主體性 – 杜正勝：要做到像呼吸一樣自然 (Taiwan Subjectivity – Tu Cheng-sheng: To be as natural as breathing), 2016, March 10. Available online: <https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/life/breaking-news/1628255> (last access 2020, April 16).

Conclusion

This article has offered a preliminary overview of textbook depictions of Russia in secondary-school history education of postwar Taiwan. Though not mentioned as much as the U.S. and Japan, Russia has been an important component in the narration of Chinese History and World History textbooks. The case of ROC in Taiwan can be compared with parallel developments in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Hong Kong, and Macau in the following ways.²⁴

First, postwar Taiwan has been taken as an interesting case study in understanding Chinese perceptions of Russia and the West as a complex process characterized by historical contingency and path dependency. For example, revisions of the anti-Russia aggression propaganda between presidents CHIANG Kai-shek in the late 1950s and CHIANG Ching-kuo in the late 1970s testify the transformation of the KMT official ideology and the international relations among the U.S., Soviet Russia, and communist China.

Second, the shifts and continuations of the representations of Russia in postwar Taiwanese history textbooks also illustrate the construction and transformation of "otherness" in different political and cultural contexts. The three major images of Europe (as modern Western civilization, international powers, and multicultural world) not only reflect the political process of Taiwan's democratic transition but also the politics of memory, as well as war legacies of WWII, the Chinese Civil War, and the Cold War.

Finally, with Taiwan's successful transition from authoritarian rule to a democratic state, the growing and collective efforts with political and institutional reform also bore fruit in the field of history education. From Sinocentric nationalist history, through Taiwan-centered island history and to transnational global history, the paradigm of history pedagogy has shown shifts. Although it is yet to be seen whether the new ideal of historical literacy and core competency can be realized, promising young history teachers have bid farewell to the old slogans of patriotism and national spirit, and endeavor to replace national history with the vision of a connected history in post-colonial Taiwan. For future Russian visitors to the island, it is certain that they will never be greeted with an anti-Communist and anti-Russian aggression song!

24 Claudia SCHNEIDER: "National Fortresses Besieged: History Textbooks in Contemporary Mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan". In: Steffi RICHTER (ed.): *Contested Views of a Common Past: Revisions of History in Contemporary East Asia*, New York: Campus Verlag 2008, pp. 245–270.

