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5 The Images of Western Countries and Russia in History Textbooks for Secondary Schools in the PRC and Republic of China on Taiwan in 1990–2000S

Abstract. This chapter deals with the analysis of the presentations of Western countries and Russia in mainland Chinese and Taiwanese history textbooks for secondary school level in 1990s–2010s. The analysis of Western states and Russia’s images in contemporary history books of the People’s Republic of China (PRC/ mainland China) and the Republic of China (ROC/Taiwan/the Republic/the Island) serves to demonstrate that in the academic and political environment of both societies, the content of these textbooks reflects complex and multidirectional trends. In recent decades, the image of the Western countries and Russia has been defined by mainland Chinese and Taiwanese political and economic policies aimed at their integration into the world’s global institutions. For this purpose, previous history concepts gave way to a new theoretical framework. From that perspective, mainland China and Taiwan became considered an integrative part of the global historical process led by the West to form a united world political and economic system. Western countries received a much more positive appraisal as the main leading states contributing to the formation of the world economy system. At the same time, this global history concept is used in the history textbooks of mainland China and Taiwan as a tool for constructing national identity and supporting their domestic political agenda.

Keywords. History textbooks, Modernization, Colonization, Globalization, Global history.

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Introduction

In recent decades, the educational systems of both the PRC and the ROC have been a major newsmaker, arousing interest not only among educators, but also experts in political science and international relations.¹ This can be explained by the Chinese and Taiwanese currently striving to redefine their political and ideological identities, which, in turn, impacts their education. In view of today's globalization of higher education, schools have taken the lead in communicating the fundamental provisions of a state's ideology as well as sociocultural and political values of a nation upon teaching such subjects as history, civic education, and social studies. For mainland China and Taiwan, where education has traditionally been a priority for the government, the school reform is of particular importance. School reform is aimed not only at its structure, but also at its philosophy, especially as far as history is concerned. Both political entities struggle to provide a comprehensive ideological framework for interpreting historical events and current affairs as well as explaining their position in the region and the world.

They are revising not only key events in the national history, but also the milestones in world history and international politics. Today's political and economic contradictions among Asian countries are therefore revealed in the way the events of the recent past – their joint history of the 20th century – are being interpreted.² Thus, the so-called “history wars” illustrate how history education in the schools of China, Japan, and Korea is in fact ideologically changed.³ It is worth mentioning that from schools, interpretations of the national, regional, and world history

1 Marie LALL and Edward VICKERS (eds.): *Education as a Political Tool in Asia*. Routledge 2009; ZAJDA J. (ed.): *Nation-Building and History Education in a Global Culture*, Springer 2015.

2 MORRIS-SUZUKI T., LOW M., PETROV L. and TSU T. Y.: *East Asia Beyond the History Wars: Confronting the Ghosts of Violence*, Routledge 2013; Gi-Wook SHIN and Daniel C. SNEIDER (ed.): *History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia: Divided Memories*, Routledge 2011.

3 However, it should be noted that the problem of interpretation and, to some extent, ideologization of history education was manifested in course of the national educational policy implementation not only in Asia but also in Europe. For example, in 1937, 26 states under the auspices of the League of Nations signed the Declaration Regarding the Teaching of History (Revision of School Text Books). Meanwhile, representatives of the most powerful states of the time refused to sign the document in view of external interference in the national educational policy. As a result, the principles set out in the Declaration have been adopted by only a small number of countries, and the international debate on history school education has been most productive between closely related states with long-standing relations, such as the Nordic and Latin American countries. See: Falk PINGEL (ed.) *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*, Paris/Braunschweig: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2010, pp. 9–11.

later, affect both interstate and interindividual relations in the globalized environment. For example, they define destinations for educational, labor, and tourist migrations, as well as strategies for cultural and niche consumption.

The way Asian countries generate mutual images and deliver them in school subjects has long interested experts, resulting in a number of topical studies.⁴ In contrast, Western images are still under researched. This article targets the images of the West and Russia in Chinese and Russian school textbooks featuring the period 1990 to 2010. The study analyses the history curricula for the junior and senior grades of secondary school, as well as the most popular textbooks developed alongside their guidelines and issued by the largest publishing houses in mainland China and Taiwan. This article discusses three issues: milestones in the school history reform over the 1990s–2010s; current trends in modern historical studies in mainland China and Taiwan applied to textbooks in view; the image of the West and Russia in history textbooks for high school level within this period.

Secondary School History Curricular Reform in PRC and ROC in 1990s–2010s

Before the analysis of Western countries and Russia's images in Chinese and Taiwanese school textbooks of the 1990s–2000s, it is necessary to outline the socio-political environment to which the educational policy of PRC and ROC has been introduced, later instigating the revision of new textbooks. Both in mainland China and Taiwan, the issue of teaching history at school is an essential part of domestic political agenda, which, in turn, is largely defined by ongoing self-determination and development of the world outlook. Since the 1990s to this day, school education has undergone a number of significant changes affecting both its structure and content. First of all, it should be noted that over the given period, the state policy for curriculum and textbook development changed significantly.

China of the 1990s continued the 1980s' shift from a centralized system of developing education and publication standards to higher autonomy for regions and therefore greater diversity in teaching methods. The policy of “*yi gang yi ben*, 一纲一本” (one educational plan, one textbook) was abandoned in favor of varying textbooks. Moreover, 1994 saw new regional educational plans, such as those in

⁴ Edward VICKERS, Paul MORRIS and Naoko SHIMAZU: *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia: identity politics, schooling and popular culture*, London: Routledge 2013.

Shanghai and Prov. Zhejiang.⁵ Further, in the 2000s, with the introduction of new syllabi for junior and senior secondary schools, the main emphasis was placed on diversifying textbooks for different regions of the country, while maintaining a single curriculum⁶. This policy of “*yi gang duo ben* 一纲多本” (one curriculum, many textbooks) allowed for several large regional publishers: *Renmin Chubanshe* 人民出版社 (People’s Publishing House); *Yuelu Shushe* 岳麓书社 (Yuelu Publishing House) in Prov. Hunan; and *Daxiang Chubanshe* 大象出版社 (Elephant Press) in Prov. Henan. However, the publishing lead was maintained by the Beijing-based publishing house *Renmin Jiaoyu Chubanshe*, 人民教育出版社 (People’s Education Press), which issued textbooks closest to the state standard.

The trend for the 2000s for more vigilant state control over development and publication of textbooks for all grades of secondary school continued to grow over the 2010s. 2012 witnessed the next stage in school textbooks reform, aimed at centralized development, compilation and publication of textbooks on such fundamental subjects in junior high school curriculum as the native language, history and politics/morality. They started to develop new textbooks on these three subjects in 2012 only to introduce them in 2017. A radical innovation at the time was the final approval of textbooks by *Guojia Jiaocai Weiyuanhui* 国家教材委员会 (the Special State Committee on Teaching Manuals) established in 2017. This establishment was meant to emphasize the centralized approach to development, revision, and introduction of textbooks. After 2017, textbook unification policy was extended to senior secondary school. In 2019, some regions of the country ventured to introduce a single history textbook for senior high school. Thus, over the past decades since 1990, China’s educational policy for textbooks aimed to limit regionalism and promote centralization for the native language, history, politics/morality, which are key subjects in terms of ideology.

The ROC showed similar trends for centralization and liberalization of state policy in school textbooks regulation over the 1990s–2010s. Starting from the 1950s and up to the 1970s, the state had enjoyed the right to develop and publish uniform versions of school textbooks for all levels of school education. In the 1970s, there was then a spell of minor liberalization – diversity of textbooks – which involved only the natural sciences. When it came to humanities subjects, they continued to use a single set of textbooks until the 1990s. This practice stopped with the 1995 reform introducing a single curriculum instead of a single textbook, which allowed

5 Alisa JONES: “Politics and history curriculum reform in post-Mao China”. In: *International Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 37, 2002, pp. 545–566.

6 Yunhuo CUI and Yan ZHU: “Curriculum reforms in China: history and the present day”, *Revue internationale d’éducation de Sèvres*, Colloque: L’éducation en Asie en 2014: Quels enjeux mondiaux?, 2014, June 05. Available online: <http://journals.openedition.org/ries/3846> (last access 2019, December 2).

for different textbooks.⁷ Later, it was the content of the curriculum which rival political parties in Taiwan fought over in their ideological and political struggles. Currently, Taiwanese schools employ several different textbooks published by major publishing houses, such as *Sanmin Shuju* 三民書局 (San Min Book/ Sanmin Publishing), *Hanlin Chubanshe* 翰林出版社 (Hanlin Publishing), *Nanyi Shuju* 南一書局 (Nanyi Publishing). To sum up, it should be noted that over the period of 1990–2010 the main trend in school textbooks regulation was the introduction of different school textbooks published by commercial publishers. However, the political and ideological struggle was mainly over the curriculum that could change ideological attitudes of the dominant political party. Qualitative changes in the educational policy of PRC and ROC between 1990 and 2010 were of similar importance. These innovations had a direct impact on emphases made upon teaching history in high school and, in particular, broadcasting images of Russia and Western countries. The next discussion will consider how the concept of teaching history on both sides of the Taiwan Strait has changed over the 1990s–2010s.

Reinterpretation of world history in China's and Taiwan's history research

As far as ideological policy of modern mainland China is concerned, a growing number of researchers note a trend for nationalism; citizens, especially the youth, manifest power and importance of the Chinese nation.⁸ Scholars attribute this trend to changes in Chinese educational policy with new civil and history education programs introduced to the schools of secondary and higher education level. This long-term trend began in the 1990s with the introduction of “patriotic education”. The campaign for patriotic education was meant to deal with the challenges associated with the geopolitical changes of the time: the collapse of the Soviet

7 Vladimir STOLOJAN: “Curriculum Reform and the Teaching of History in High Schools during the Ma Ying-jeou Presidency”. In: *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 2017, vol. 46, no. 1, p. 101–130; PENG Minghui 彭明輝: “Taiwan de lishi jiaoyu yu lishi jiaokeshu (1945–2000)” 臺灣的歷史教育與歷史教科書 (1945–2000) (Historical education and historical textbooks in Taiwan (1945–2000)). In: *Historiography East & West*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 231–232.

8 Suisheng ZHAO: “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China”. In: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1998, pp. 287–302.

Union and criticism of the socialist model. On top of that, it aspired to offer a new unifying concept after the tragic youth protests in 1989.

The key element to the patriotic campaign was the history reform in schools of secondary and higher education level, which aimed at revising the very concept of history education.⁹ In order to reinforce patriotism in 1992, it was decided to teach national history in senior high school alongside the world history. Moreover, the additional emphasis was made on modern and contemporary history of China, from which the concept of history education originated. The centenary from 1849 to 1949 was labeled as the “*bainian guoru* 百年国辱” (one hundred years of humiliation), followed by a period of slow recovery for the Chinese nation.¹⁰ Therefore, in respect of processing history materials, the focus shifted from the history of interparty confrontation between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Kuomintang (*Guomindang* 国民党, the Nationalist Party) to the conflicts between mainland China and foreign countries in the 19th and 20th centuries. In other words, the principal innovation of 1990s was a new “patriotic narrative” which replaced the class struggle discourse. The modern and contemporary history of China was no longer marked by the CCP’s triumph in interparty struggle. On the contrary, it was marked by the time China suffered from the aggression of foreign powers.

The erosion of the “class struggle” concept underpinning history education of the past continued in the 2000s with new historiographical concepts stated in new curriculum. The new educational standard for junior high school was officially launched in 2001 with a pilot session in selected provincial schools. By 2005, the new standard had been introduced everywhere.¹¹ Meanwhile, the new standard for the senior secondary school was underway. The latter was test launched in 2004 in four provinces and adopted as mandatory for all national schools in 2010.¹² The new standard for history in senior secondary school involved a number of conceptual innovations: history was no longer defined by class struggle; the history of China emerged with the world history. These novel aspects to historical presentation are of great importance for this research paper. Changes in history

9 Zheng WANG: “The Power of History and Memory: National ‘Patriotic Education’ and China’s Conflict Behavior in Crises with the U.S., 1991–2001”. A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University 2005.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

11 An updated version of the Junior high school standard was published in 2011. In: “Yiwu jiaoyu lishi kecheng biao zhun (2011 nianban)” 义务教育 历史课程标准 (2011 年版) (Compulsory education. History curriculum standard, 2011 edition). Available online: <http://mat.gting.com/edu/pdf/edu/xkb2011/20120130155914152.pdf> (last access 2019, December, 2).

12 Hong-Biao YIN and John Chi-Kin LEE (ed.) *Curriculum reform in China: Changes and challenges*, New York: Nova Science Publishers 2012, p. 18.

interpretation have set a different perspective on the image of Western countries, their role in world history and the history of China.¹³

As mentioned earlier, innovations in the standard of history education in school were closely related to the main trends in Chinese history. China's involvement in the world economy and politics meant new approaches to interpreting history. When revising the historical materialism, it was decided to rely on American and European studies, which later laid the ideological and theoretical foundations for such a modern historiographical concept as "global history".¹⁴ Interest in these studies as well as in the emerging "global history" concept was fueled by the fact that their authors did not contradict Chinese scholars. The world history processed in the global framework did not override historical materialism, which facilitated the "global history" movement in China. In fact, "global historians" criticized Eurocentrism, suggesting a new vision of regional actors in the world history. Apparently, this idea became popular with Chinese historians. Eventually, the new historiographical paradigm helped Chinese historians develop methodological tools for studying globalization.¹⁵

One of the Chinese historians who popularized "global history" in the 1990s was Prof. WU Yuqin 吴于廑 (1913–1993). As a Harvard graduate later employed at Wuhan University, he authored and helped to develop a number of major scientific works and textbooks on world history.¹⁶ Modern Chinese historiographical community praises Prof. WU Yuqin for his concept of "zhengti shijie shi guan 整体世界史观" (complex world history) which is frequently cited in today's

13 "Gaozhong lishikecheng baiozhun" 高中历史新课程标准 (History curriculum standard for senior secondary school). Available online: <http://www.zyyz.cn/%E6%95%99%E5%8A%A1%E5%A4%84/%E6%96%B0%E8%AF%BE%E7%A8%8B%E8%AF%BE%E7%A8%8B%E6%A0%87%E5%87%86%E5%8F%8A%E8%A7%A3%E8%AF%BB/%E8%AF%BE%E7%A8%8B%E6%A0%87%E5%87%86/%E9%AB%98%E4%B8%AD%E5%8E%86%E5%8F%B2%E6%96%B0%E8%AF%BE%E7%A8%8B%E6%A0%87%E5%87%86.htm> (last access 2019, December, 2).

14 LIU Xincheng: "The Global View of History in China". In: *Journal of World History*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2012, pp. 491–511; Nicola SPAKOWSKI: "National aspirations on a global stage: concepts of world/global history in contemporary China". In: *Journal of Global History*, vol. 4, no. 3, 2009, pp. 475–495.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 499–500.

16 WU Yuqin 吴于廑, ZHOU Yiliang 周一良, QI Sihe 齐思和, ZHU Huan 朱寰, YANG Shengmao 杨生茂, ZHANG Zhilian 张芝联 and CHENG Qiuyun 程秋原: *Shijie tongshi* 世界通史 (World's comprehensive history), Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1962; WU Yuqin 吴于廑 and QI Shirong 齐世荣 (ed.): *Shijieshi* 世界史 (World's history), Beijing, Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992–1994; XU Lan 徐蓝: "WU Yuqin xiansheng de shijie lishi guan yu wo de shijie lishi jiaoxue" 吴于廑先生的世界历史观与我的世界历史教学 (Mr. WU Yuqin's World History View and My Teaching of World History). In: *Wuhan daxue xuebao* 武汉大学学报 (Journal of Wuhan University), vol. 6, no. 6, pp. 29–32.

historical research.¹⁷ According to the Chinese historian, the fundamental factor for historical development was the mode of production, the quality of productive forces. This allowed for a three stage model of world history: *gudai* 古代 (antiquity), *jindai* 近代 (modern times), and *xiandai* 现代 (contemporary times). Antiquity was mainly associated with the origin and development of the agricultural society. This meant gradual involvement of formerly nomadic communities with an agricultural lifestyle.

The world's historical development took a turn in the 15th–17th centuries. 1500, the time of great geographical discoveries, opened a new era which eliminated the former isolation of nations. This time period was also defined by capitalistic production mode, which secured the future industrial revolution and the rise of industrial society. The 15th–17th century marked the beginning of “world history” with a “*zhengti shijieti* 整体世界体” (complex world system) gradually emerging as well as the industrial society being established worldwide.¹⁸ The historical development went horizontally, bringing capitalism to different parts of the world and promoting industrial societies in various forms.

One of the challenges which both WU Yuqin and contemporary scholars have been facing is to interpret a socialist model alongside the concept of global capitalization. WU Yuqin characterized the 20th century as a period of capitalist and socialist confrontation as well as their mutual influence and mutual deterrence. The collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe meant new prospects for the capitalist society. Nevertheless, the socialist model employed by the developing states was not to be abandoned. The historian concluded that new socialism would survive any transformation of capitalism.¹⁹

Interestingly, the concept of 1990s by WU Yuqin is still relevant. Being an important milestone in “global history” studies, it attracts a growing number of Chinese historians. In fact, the “global history” concept often receives political and ideological support. At a special meeting on philosophical and social sciences in China, May 2016, president Xi Jinping insisted on developing a philosophical and social paradigm with Chinese characteristics (*zhongguo tese zhexue shehui kexue*,

17 LIU Jinghua 刘景华: “WU Yuqin xiansheng dui zhengti shijie shi guan xueshu yuanyuan de tantao” 吴于廑先生对整体世界史观学术渊源的探讨 (Deep Discussion on the Academic Origins of the Overall World History View by Mr. WU Yuqin). In: *Wuhan daxue xuebao* 武汉大学学报 (Journal of Wuhan University), vol. 6, no. 6, pp. 32–40; CHEN Zhiqiang 陈志强: “Lun WU Yuqin ‘zhengti shijie lishiguan’” 论吴于廑 “整体世界史观” (On WU Yuqin's “Overall World History View”). In: *Shijie tongshi* 世界历史 (World's comprehensive history), no. 2, 2013.

18 CHEN: “Lun WU Yuqin ‘zhengti shijie lishi guan’” (2013), p. 55.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

中国特色哲学社会科学)²⁰. The subsequent academic discussion proved the popularity of Xi's idea with scholars working within the framework of "global history". In fact, the concept of "world history" became an academic achievement of Chinese scholars.²¹ Not only were new theoretical and methodological approaches applied in the actual historiographical research, but also they were employed for teaching history both in colleges and schools. This resulted in new standards of history education and textbooks.

What was new about teaching history in high school in the 2000s? Earlier it was mentioned that the very concept of the historical development underwent revision overshadowing the idea of class struggle as its main characteristic feature. History was now thought to involve all regions of the world. This brought forward the idea of the interconnectedness of different societies – the co-influence of Chinese and foreign history (*Zhong wai he bian* 中外合编), as well as the concept of continuous historical trends – and the link between past and present experiences (*guantong gujin* 贯通古今)²². As a consequence, in terms of delivering historical material, the emphasis was put on common features and similar processes. The history of China was no longer separated from the world history, but rather the former was viewed as an integral part of the latter. The amount of material concerning the world and Chinese history finally equaled, which was not the case by the previous standard.

The idea of Chinese history being in tune with the world history found its way into academic material on the main topics covering different periods in the history. Moreover, an attempt was made to abandon a restricted interpretation of history as a series of political events. Sections on economic and cultural history were finally balanced out in terms of their volume.

20 Xi Jinping. "Speech at the working meeting on Philosophy and Social Science (full text)", 2016, May 18. Available online: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016-05/18/c_1118891128_3.htm (last access 2019, December 2).

21 ZHANG Xiang 张象. "Building a World History System with Chinese Characteristics", 2016, September 5. Available online http://www.cssn.cn/zx/201609/t20160905_3188307_2.shtml (last access 2019, December 2).

22 YU Xiuping 俞秀萍: "Cong quanqiu shi guan kuitan gaozhong lishi xin jiaocai de xueshu xing shiye – yi 2007 nian ren jiao ban jiaocai wei li" 从全球史观窥探高中历史新教材的学术性视野—以 2007 年人教版教材为例 (Penetrating the academic vision of new high school history textbooks from the perspective of global history – with the 2007 People's education publishing textbook as an example). In: *Xin jiaoyu* 新教育 (*New Education*), 2015, no. 4, p. 78; LI Yun 李昀: "Zhongguo shijie shi xueke tixi de goujian yu jiaoxue moshi de gaige" 中国世界史学科体系的构建与教学模式的改革 (Construction of Chinese World History as a Discipline System and Reform of Teaching Mode) In: *Cangsang* 沧桑, 2011, no. 1, pp. 141–142.

Surprisingly, the 2000s' curriculum, which emphasized global integration, was used in the 2010s to develop a set of textbooks. The latter were characterized with the utmost attention to the issues of national identity. As this set of textbooks was carried out under centralized state control, they are featured with the sociopolitical discourse of the 2010s under Xi Jinping. Textbooks were introduced to junior high schools in 2017; they were taken up by senior high schools in 2019 as well.

The concept to be taken into account for analyzing the innovations in textbooks of the 2010s is "The Belt and Road Initiative". Another characteristic trend in today's political and academic environment of China, which should be taken into consideration, is the heated debates over the so-called "discourse power" (*huayu quan* 话语权). This means China's subjective position in formulating and communicating ideological provisions within the country and abroad. The recent development of the "discourse power" concept testifies to ambitions of China to impose its own sociopolitical outlook on the world and China's disposition in it. Clearly, this vision is meant to reinforce the real economic and political power of the country in the world system. The ambition is to depart from "global" discourse and to promote China's interpretation of the context.

In this study, the most important component of the debate over the "discourse power" should be mass media and education systems with their role in communicating new terms and meanings. Educational institutions aim to develop new textbooks. As a result, the "system of textbooks" is a step toward new social and humanitarian disciplines with Chinese characteristics, as well as a new system of academic subjects, methods of scientific research and terminology.²³ This context for junior and senior high school textbook reform is part of the focus of this chapter since it influenced three ideologically charged subjects: history, the native language, and politics/morality.

History textbooks of the 2010s were developed over five years from 2012 and put into use in 2017–2019. According to the Editing Commission, the textbook was to cover five aspects in terms of its content, structure, and pathos. Among these were China's historical and cultural accomplishments; Chinese revolution as a difficult way to statehood; China's multinational character, shared destiny, national sovereignty and the integrity of China's territory as well as "oceanic consciousness", implying recognition of the island territories of China and the country's role as an ocean power; and finally the concept of the multipolar world and the community with a shared future for mankind (*renlei mingyun gongtongti* 人类命运共

23 "Academy of Social Sciences: Promote the Construction of Discipline System with Excellent Teaching Materials", 2016, July 18. Available online http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2016-07/18/content_5092364.htm (last access 2019, December 2).

同体).²⁴ Accordingly, the standardized textbooks published in 2017–2019 emphasize China's involvement in the world's land and sea trade routes from the early stages of its development, its exposure to cultural and trade contacts. At the same time, they stress inviolability of China's state borders; both land and especially sea, which are claimed to date back to the early historical periods under Chinese government.

The history syllabus integrated into the textbook of the new edition consists of several distinctive features. The analysis of the textbook units covering the history of China's intercultural contacts and modern borders suggests two ideas to define the national discourse of modern China, namely: China's involvement in regional and world trade as well as cultural exchange, along with the emphasis on national sovereignty. Audience within the country receives these messages through the education system and mass media while external audience perceives this discourse as a number of statements and foreign policy initiatives, such as "Belt and Road".

According to LAMS, many analysts argue that the combination of political involvement and national sovereignty is a very characteristic paradox for modern Chinese political ideology, a combination of contradictory attitudes.²⁵ Meanwhile, this paradox is easily removed if the attempts of Chinese ideologists to offer their own view of the world, as discussed earlier, are taken into account. China is eager to see itself open to the world and involved in the world's political, economic, and cultural management. However, this openness and involvement should be achieved on the conditions set by China. Among these are national sovereignty and a zealous attitude to its land and sea borders.

Moving on to the ideological and political context for Taiwanese history textbooks of the 1990s–2010s, Taiwan focuses on self-determination and its opposition to China rather than conflicts with other countries, unlike the leading trend in China's reform in history education of the same period, which covered national aspirations alongside China's involvement in globalization. At the present stage, political history of Taiwan is characterized with self-determination discourse. The extreme points of this discourse are "Sinicization", which refers to close economic, cultural, and political contacts with mainland China; and "Taiwanization" of Taiwan as an independent cultural, historical, and political actor with loosened contacts with mainland China. In some way, each of these ideological and political attitudes is articulated by a certain political force, which, in turn, sets the direction

24 "Interpretation of three compulsory education textbooks", 2017, August 29. Available online http://www.jyb.cn/zgjyb/201708/t20170829_752732.html (last access 2019, December 2).

25 Lutgard LAMS: "Examining Strategic Narratives in Chinese Official Discourse under Xi Jinping". In: *Journal of Chinese political science*, 2003, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 387–411.

for political development of Taiwan. The Kuomintang (KMT), which ruled from 1947 to 2000, has been in favor of maintaining ties with mainland China whereas its rival the People's Democratic Party supports "Taiwanization".

The political leadership of either party was associated with an educational reform, curricula and textbooks revision. First of all, the reform involved historical education in junior high school, and later it was extended to senior high school. This followed a fierce political and public debate aimed at defining the historical, cultural, and current political status of Taiwan and accordingly choosing the best way of teaching the history of Taiwan. The origins of this debate were rooted in the program of Taiwan's history under the KMT. Starting in 1952, when the first reform of history textbooks published outside mainland China was carried out, Taiwan was positioned as a province of the Republic established in the aftermath of the Xinhai Revolution of 1911. The major part of the historical material was dedicated to the history of mainland China, which was conceptualized as the historical territory of the Republic temporarily under the CCP. After the loss of official international status and UN membership, the leaders of the Republic acknowledged that regaining control over the mainland rendered an almost unattainable prospect. This meant addressing the history of Taiwan and the Republic of China within that history

The most significant innovations in teaching history were introduced in the 1990s with the start of liberalization and democratization after martial law was abolished in 1987, and president LEE Teng-hui (李登輝) known for his Pro-Taiwan views came into power. The curriculum for the history course in junior high school underwent a major update. The new syllabus was approved in 1994 and implemented in 1997, which had a pronounced unit entitled "Knowing Taiwan" (*renshi Taiwan* 認識台灣). This was a section dedicated to the history of the Island that had to be studied alongside the history of mainland China and other foreign countries. Thus, the history of Taiwan's region went beyond random references to the Island as a remote province of mainland China which was involved in two historical events: the establishment of the Qing dynasty and Japanese colonization of the first half of the 20th century.

In the 2000s, the focus of political and ideological struggle shifted to history education in senior high school when a "joint nine year plan" (*jiu nian yiguan kecheng* 九年一貫課程) of junior high school and primary school curricula came into force in 2004. The updated plan did not have a course titled "Knowing Taiwan", since it was extended and emerged with a number of related subjects. The history of Taiwan was integrated with the general history course. Despite all the public criticism, the policy of "Taiwanization" in history education initiated further changes in the senior secondary curriculum. As a result, political leaders of

the 2000s–2010s were involved in the somewhat chief task in the field of education, which was to develop and approve a new curriculum. However, the political struggles of the time, such as changes of the ruling parties and policies as well as academic and public criticism resulting in street protests, led to numerous reforms and revisions of the history curriculum in senior high school.²⁶

Today's textbooks for senior high school sprang from the 2012 curriculum called "Plan 101" based on the number of the years, i.e. 101 years, in the political tradition of Taiwan that the first year of the establishment of the Republic of China was 1912. The plan was approved under president MA Ying-jeou, leader of the KMT. Since the curriculum was criticized by both "Sinicization" and "Taiwanization" advocates, 2014 saw another updated version of the plan ("Plan 104"), which resulted in major student and public protests in 2015. After the 2016 presidential elections, TSAI Ing-wen, the new head of state from the Democratic People's Party (DPP), announced to keep the "101 curriculum" and only to drop it in view of another revision under a twelve-year compulsory education reform scheduled for 2020.²⁷

The continuous reform of history curricula under the KMT and DPP in the 2000s and 2010s resulted from ongoing political and ideological debate at the academic and public level, that was launched as early as the 1990s. The focus of the debate was the relations between mainland China and Taiwan as a historical, cultural, and political actor. The actual historiography of Taiwan has also played an important role in developing key arguments in this debate. A brief description of the two viewpoints will allow for improved analysis of the images of Western countries and Russia in current history textbooks for high school level.

In the 2000s, under the DPP administration of president Chen Shui-bian, there were two curricula for senior high school: one of 2004 ("plan 95") and another of 2009 ("plan 98"). Basically, these two education plans communicated the same concept of teaching history as that implemented in junior high school. Both syllabi had a separate section on the history of Taiwan as an independent region rather than a province of China. The curricula relied on actual Taiwanese historiography for methodology. Since the 1980s when the Republic of China was stripped of its official international status, Taiwanese historians have been studying the island's history in various periods. Their ideological and political aspirations were to deliver the unique culture and history of Taiwan and to diminish its ties with mainland China.

26 Vladimir STOJAN: "Curriculum Reform and the Teaching of History" (2017).

27 "History curriculum review starts today", 2018, August 11. Available online <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2018/08/11/2003698324> (last access 2019, December 2).

One of the leading historians developing this trend in Taiwanese historiography was TSAO Yung-ho (曹永和 1920–2014). In his theoretical settings, he relied on the “annals” school and Fernand BRAUDEL. The long term research into the history of Taiwan’s early colonization by European powers in the 17th century brought about the concept of “*Taiwan dao shi* 台灣島史” (Taiwan’s island history). According to TSAO Yung-ho, it was Taiwan’s location which exposed itself to various cultural influences and numerous trade contacts but also turned the island into an independent and strategically important center of regional trade. In addition, the continuous intercultural interaction of the native population, migrants from the continent along with immigrants from various Asian and European countries, formed a special “island” identity open to communication on a global scale.²⁸ Later, TSAO Yung-ho’s work on Taiwan’s “island history” was incorporated into the broader discourse of “*Haiyang Zhongguo* 海洋中國” (oceanic China). Taiwanese history research was thus in keeping with a major Japanese and American trend for studying maritime trade interregional contacts between countries of the Asia-Pacific region. This was authored by both historians TAKESHI Hamashita and Paul COWAN.²⁹

In general, the island concept for Taiwan implies its historic independence from mainland China. The Island’s extensive economic and intercultural ties, interethnic relations, succession of rulers have been opposed to the mainland’s dominant ethno-cultural tradition. The concepts of “oceanic China” and “island Taiwan” characterize mainland China as one of the external political forces that temporarily established their dominance over Taiwan, just as Europeans in the 17th century, and the Japanese in the early 20th century. The historiographical approaches in view impacted both curricula on history and history textbooks in the 1990s–2000s when Pro-Taiwanese advocates were in office. First of all, it is necessary to mention the concept of “the concentric view of history” by TU Cheng-sheng (DU Zhengsheng 杜正勝) and a new history periodization.

The concept of “the concentric view of history” was put forward in the late 1990s by TU Cheng-sheng, a Taiwanese historian who also worked as head of the state committee revising textbooks for senior high school. Later, under the then president CHEN Shui-bian he was appointed Minister of Education. The concept implied that historical material should be delivered as a gradual development of the historical timeframe: from the history of Taiwan to Chinese history and then to world history (“take root in Taiwan’s history; with attention to mainland China;

28 Ann HEYLEN: “The Transnational in Taiwan History: A Preliminary Exploration”. In: *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 2010, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 18–19.

29 TAKESHI Hamashita, Linda GROVE and Mark SELDEN (ed.): *China, East Asia and the Global Economy: Regional and Historical Perspectives*, New York: Routledge 2008.

enter the external world”). The first textbook with this approach was on the history of Taiwan for junior high school – “Knowing Taiwan”. This textbook opened the history course for junior high school with the “native land” history, followed the history of China and the rest of the world. The concentric circle involving Taiwanese, Chinese, and global history was then made into a framework for the “unified nine year plan” for junior high school as well as the 2004 and 2009 curricula for senior high school. As a clear result, these textbooks not only set out the history of Taiwan as a separate unit but also put extra emphasis on it as a core aspect to any other section. The history of China, on the other hand, was presented as the history of a more remote and alienated region.

The cultural and historical alienation from mainland China was further stressed by a new interpretation of chronology. The public resented the way material was presented with the history of China after 1500 included in the world history section. Proponents of such periodization believed that this would finish the isolation of individual countries and foster global contacts. In contrast, the opponents believed that attributing the history of late Imperial China to a section of world history would deteriorate cultural ties with China, which had become alienated from Taiwan.³⁰ The curricula and associated textbooks developed in the 1990s–2000s under the DPP thus relied on the latest developments of Taiwanese historiography. They were characterized not only by the Taiwanese specifics but also by the revision of Taiwan’s relations with the neighboring countries and the outside world. Mainland China was seen as an adjacent country which made some historical, economic and cultural impact on Taiwan. However, the plan to use this methodology in teaching was short-lived.

The change of political leadership in the 2010s led to another revision of historical curricula and textbooks. The Kuomintang in office meant partial restoration to historiographical assessments typical of the KMT government of the 1950s–80s. This influence can be traced in the history curriculum for the senior secondary school, approved in 2012 (“plan 101”). The history of Taiwan was presented as a separate section. Meanwhile, the proportion of the content to that on the history of China is far from even. The focus shifted to the Republic of China as the historical successor of Imperial China. Taiwan was characterized as a region involved in the sociocultural model typical of China’s government. Therefore, the 2012 curriculum sought to emphasize the cultural and historical unity of the Island and Mainland. According to Taiwanese researchers, the 2012 curriculum and concomitant textbooks for high school marginalized the idea of “ocean Taiwan”. The way that

30 Bi-yu CHANG: “From Taiwanisation to De-sinification”. In: *China Perspectives*, 2004, vol. 56, Available online DOI: 10. 4000/chinaperspectives. 438. (last access 2019, December 2).

both the Dutch and Japanese governance were assessed, and some crucial events in the history of Taiwan were covered is not in keeping with contemporary Taiwanese historiography.³¹

On the whole, it should be noted that the continuous political struggle, academic and public opposition, lack of a compromise between the irreconcilable supporters of the pro-Chinese or pro-Taiwanese concept of history teaching have had a detrimental effect on the quality of educational standards and textbooks. As a result, the history textbooks in modern Taiwan high school have three sections: the history of Taiwan, China, and foreign history. Meanwhile, there is no conceptual framework or evaluation, rather we find detailed descriptions of historical events.

The Image of the Western Countries and Russia in Chinese textbooks

The discussion moves on to images of Western countries and Russia in Chinese textbooks of the 1990s–2010s. One should not forget that the history teaching over the given period has been featured with a gradual departure from the concept of social conflict and struggle in favor of continuity, mutual influence, and globalization trends. Chinese historians still adhered to materialism, making emphasis on global economic development. The list of key subjects in the history of Western countries and Russia has remained almost unchanged. The narration covers mostly modern history, the period associated with the new most ambiguous phenomena, among which are great geographical discoveries, the development of capitalistic systems across the world, the rise of nation states, socialist revolution, confrontations of socioeconomic systems in the second half of the 20th century.

The textbooks of 1990s are based on a formational approach and highlight class struggle and populace as key factors in the history of China and Western countries. In modern and contemporary times, the main role is given to economically developed countries, such as Britain, France, and the United States. Their economic

31 LIN Yinshun 林琮舜: *Taiwan shi yanjiu zai gaozhong jiaokeshu zhong de luoshi yu luocha* 臺灣史研究在高中教科書中的落實與落差 (The Practice and Disparity between Academic Research of Taiwan History and High School History Textbooks), *Shuoshi lunwen* 碩士論文 (A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Master degree), Guoli taiwan daxue lishi yanjiu suo 國立臺灣大學歷史學研究所 (Taiwan National university, History Department) 2014.

leadership manifests itself as early as the industrial revolution, later they introduce a large number of countries to capitalist framework. Germany and the United States are trying to quickly overcome the economic lag and embark on the path of modernization. They are followed by Russia and Japan, with their state reforms aimed to bridge the economic gap. Economic ambitions push European countries to foreign expansion, which marks the beginning of the world colonial system, victimizing China. These tendencies exacerbate internal contradictions in Western societies, and act as a breeding grounds of Marxism and proletarian movement.

The October revolution in Russia becomes a turning point in the history of mankind, which shows an alternative way to a capitalist development. The postwar era with the USSR and the United States confrontation implies a higher probability of a new world war. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the economic decline of the United States means prospects for a multipolar world with new centers of economic development, such as Germany and Japan. Over the 1990s, most Chinese history textbooks for high school described Western countries as colonizers and aggressors who sought the economic exploitation of the rest of the world and imposed a colonial system. It's of no doubt that Japan belonged to the list of economically developed countries alongside the rest of the Western world. In other words, Japan was positioned as a "Western", economically developed, and aggressive country. Nonetheless, due to the innovations in historiography and history education, the image of European countries and Russia in contemporary Chinese textbooks for high school was changing in 2000s. These changes in the image of Western states in Chinese textbooks have already drawn the attention of Chinese researchers, who have established that textbooks of the 1980s and 1990s present a negative vision of Western countries as colonizers and exploiters. In comparison, textbooks of the 2000s provide a neutral and rather positive assessment. Western countries are described as advanced capitalist powers, whose economic development not only led to colonization of other parts of the world but also contributed to building world economic and political ties, making room for the capitalist world system.³²

A more tolerant Western rhetoric with an emphasis on interaction with Western countries was employed in the 2000s as economic ties strengthened and mainland China was gradually integrating in the global economic system. The 2000s corpus

32 He Yingfei 何英菲: *Gaozhong lishi jiaokeshu zhong de yiguo xingxiang. Yi ren jiao ban lishi jiaokeshu wei li* 高中历史教科书中的异国形象.以人教版历史教科书为例 (Images of the other states in high school history textbooks. Taking People's education's textbooks as an example), *2009 jie yanjiusheng shuoshi xuewei lun* 2009 届研究生硕士学位论文论 (A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Master degree in 2009 school year), Huadong shifan daxue 华东师范大学 (East China Normal University) 2009, p. 19.

of textbooks for senior high school developed against the 2004 educational standard did not plot interclass struggle but rather put forward new global economic relations within “integrated global system”. The historical material in the textbook featured similar developmental patterns for different parts of the world, primarily Europe and China. The whole history course was divided into one compulsory syllabus and several electives. The mandatory part included twenty-five topics arranged in three clusters: politics, economics, and culture. The “politics” cluster included nine topics covering the political history of China and Western countries from ancient times to the present day, the rise and development of socialism, China’s foreign policy contacts, and the system of international relations. The “economics” cluster consisted of eight topics related to China’s economic development at different stages up to the period of the PRC and the present, as well as issues of capitalism and socialism in Western countries and Russia, the features of economic globalization. The “culture” cluster included eight topics observing trends in culture and science of China and the Western world.

By and large, the compulsory syllabus maintained the chronological principle of narrating the history as well as treating Chinese and world history as separate entities. In comparison, electives featured separate cross-cutting topics related to different countries and regions. The optional part included six major overlapping topics designed to compare “Chinese and foreign perspectives” as well as “antiquity and modernity”. Among those six topics were the world experience of reforms, democracy, and its implementation; war and peace in the twentieth century; personalities in world and Chinese history; the mysteries of history (vanished civilizations); and the world cultural heritage. Attention should be paid to the main topics of both compulsory and optional parts. The authors of the standard textbook focus on the following issues: the development of democracy, the rise of capitalism and promotion of industrial society; with the 15th–17th centuries, the socialist experience, the multipolar system of international relations, and worldwide implementation of reforms represented as key milestones. In fact, the world and Chinese history are defined by the topics that were the most popular in the Chinese political and public discourse of the time, which results in corresponding slogans and programs: integration of China into the world economic system; globalization and China’s involvement in it; position of China in the multipolar world system; the rule of law and democratic concepts; and finally the role of scientific and technical progress.

While historical development is interpreted as the world capitalist development, the images of Russia and the Soviet Union become of particular interest. There are several reasons for this. First, Russia is the largest Northern neighbor of mainland China, with a large and long border. Disputes over border territories have been one

of the popular topics in Chinese historiography for a long time. These have had a direct impact on Russia's perception by both professional historians and ordinary citizens of mainland China. It is crucial to analyze how this topic is observed in school textbooks since school education often becomes the main source of knowledge about the country and communicates a number of concepts relevant to the public. Additionally, the accounts of Russian history in Chinese textbooks can be beneficial to historiography by bringing in innovations discussed earlier. Those, in turn, can explain how the image of the country fits into the concept of history as the world capitalist movement.

Next, here comes the analysis of the main components of Russia's image (the Soviet Union), which are delivered in the history textbook for high school issued by the publishing house "People's Education". This textbook in view is fully compliant with the requirements of the standard that was introduced nationwide. Russian and Soviet history is covered in four main topics: the reform of the second half of the 19th century and the abolition of serfdom; the October revolution; socialist experience in politics and economics; and Russia's confrontation with the United States in the Cold War. Moreover, there is an elective on global reforms including reforms under Alexander II, with a brief insight into the history of earlier periods and a more detailed account of the country's history from the 18th century.

Special attention should be given to Russia and China's territorial disputes over the so-called territorial gains of Russia in the second half of the 19th century. This topic is touched upon in the section of modern China's history dedicated to the Opium wars and Qing's clash with Western countries. Accordingly, when describing the events of the Second Opium War, the textbook says: "the United States and Russia took advantage of China and forced the Qing government to sign unequal treaties with them. The main benefiting party was Russia which occupied most of China's northern lands."³³ It should be noted that this subtle topic is covered in a rather concise and restrained manner, especially when compared with earlier editions of textbooks. Therefore, in the textbooks of 1980 and 1991, Russia is characterized as a state with aggressive foreign policy aimed at territorial expansion. They highlight territorial acquisitions at the expense of China in the Far East and the military occupation of the Ili district in the west of the country.³⁴ Evidently, this problem, rooted in the Chinese modern historiography of Russian-

33 *Putong gaozhong kecheng biao zhun shi yan jiao ke shu: li shi (bi xu)* 普通高中课程标准实验教科书: 历史(必修) (General High School Curriculum Standard Experiment Textbook: History (Required)), vol. 1, Beijing: People's Education Press 2007, p. 53.

34 He Yingfei: *Gaozhong li shi jiao ke shu zhong de yi guo xing xiang* (2009), pp. 30–31.

Chinese relations, is no longer urgent or acute due to improved relations between the two countries and a multifaceted partnership.³⁵

The account of Russia and the Soviet history in the compulsory course starts with a chapter on the October Revolution of 1917, following the section on Marxism in Europe. The events of 1917 can thus be interpreted as another stage in Marxism development, which brought about its main theses. Interestingly, the events are set out very succinctly. The language itself is devoid of emotional evaluative utterances, unlike that used in earlier versions of the 1980s and 1990s, which describe the revolution as “a set example for the international proletariat which leads it in a new era.”³⁶ The 2007 textbook focuses on the historical background for the revolution and its historical significance. It suggests that the revolution resulted from Russia economically falling behind more developed capitalist countries in the aftermath of the First World War. Social contradictions turned the country into the weakest link in the chain of imperialism, which made the revolution inevitable.³⁷ According to the editors of the textbook, the 1917 revolution is a significant historical event since it was aimed to create the first socialist state and set a new path for Russia. At the same time, the revolution revealed a loophole in the world capitalist system, allowing for the socialist movement and the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle.³⁸

The next topic in the history of the Soviet Union deals with the features of the socialist economic model, which is why the unit is part of the economic section of the history course. It is noteworthy that the material is presented in a way that the economic development of the USSR could serve as a historical lesson for other socialist states. Covering economic reforms and starting with the New Economic Policy (NEP) by the USSR in 1920s up to the transient 1980s, it is stressed that the Soviet model was innovative and unprecedented, and in this sense, the Soviet leaders had to develop reforms by trial and error. However, despite all the achievements, the Soviet model was not devoid of significant drawbacks: excessive centralization, prioritizing heavy industry, and the military industrial complex. As a consequence, the most hard-hit were agriculture, light industry, and the public welfare. The main problem of the Soviet model was its rigidity. This thesis is supported by a quote of DENG Xiaoping that the Soviet model in the late stages was

35 At the same time, it should be noted that the textbook for junior secondary school describe in detail China's territorial loss in favor of Russia. The dates of major acquisitions and the territory itself are marked on the map.

36 *Putong gaozhong kecheng biao zhun shiyan jiaokeshu: lishi (bixiu)*, vol. 1, 2007, p. 33.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

obsolete.³⁹ Unsuccessful economic and political reforms in the late 1980s led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the editors of the textbook state that the Soviet experience of socialist development teaches valuable historical lessons, and the collapse of the USSR only stimulates the search for new ways to implement the socialist model of development.⁴⁰

The history of today's Russia is by far less interesting. In the section on the current international situation, Russia is only mentioned as the successor to the Soviet Union and one of the centers in the multipolar world. The authors of the textbook note that the international position of the country strengthens as economic reforms unfold.⁴¹ At the same time, the economic section and units on economic integration and globalization clearly indicate that the direction of history is aimed at further world integration and globalization. In this respect, the events of the 20th century – the Cold War and the confrontation between the capitalist and socialist models – are deemed to slow down the integration processes significantly. On the other hand, the collapse of the bipolar world and promotion of market reforms worldwide are believed to contribute significantly to economic globalization, as well as to introduce new economic and trade relations.

Economic globalization and integration first mentioned in textbooks of the 2000s is further developed in textbooks for junior and senior high school introduced in 2017 and 2019. They set out the period of great geographical discoveries as not only overriding isolation of certain world regions but also paving the way for building global ties.⁴² The textbooks also emphasize the importance of economic relations, the impact of the industrial revolution and technological advancement in capitalist relations. The most remarkable feature about the colonial expansion of Western countries in the textbooks is the emphasis placed on the issue of monetary relations and trade exchanges rather than colonial exploitation. At the same time, in view of fostering economic ties, the unit on Marxist doctrine is given in great detail, which could have resulted from the latest trends in Chinese domestic policy with its focus on the historical role of the CCP and Marxism.

To draw some intermediate results of this analysis, it can be said that the images of Western countries and Russia in modern Chinese textbooks for high school are largely affected by internal ideological, political, and economic trends in China

39 *Putong gaozhong kecheng biao zhun shiyan jiaokeshu: lishi (bixiu)*, vol. 2, 2007, pp. 98–101.

40 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 2007, p. 94.

41 *Putong gaozhong kecheng biao zhun shiyan jiaokeshu: lishi (bixiu)*, vol. 1, 2007, pp. 128–129.

42 *Putong gaozhong jiaokeshu. Bixiu. Zhong wai lishi ganyao. 普通高中教科书. 必修. 中外历史纲要 (General High School Textbook. Compulsory. Chinese and Foreign History Outline)*, vol. 2, Beijing: People's Education Press 2019, p. 40.

itself. The desire to bridge social gaps and produce a unifying idea for the divided Chinese society has forced China's leaders to abandon the rhetoric of struggle and conflict. Being largely integrated into the world economic processes, it is suggested that China should search for historiographical concepts that can justify the inclusion of their socialist economy in the world capitalist system. The materialist approach to history is needed when speaking about world economic development and the history of such leading Western countries as the UK, France, and the USA. However, the history of these Western countries is discussed and becomes relevant only through the lenses of China's domestic agenda and social issues that are important for the PRC government, such as national sovereignty, economic cooperation, the legal system and reforms. Therefore, Western countries are thought to unite the disparate parts of the world into a single capitalist system while Russia is praised for living up to Marx's teaching with the mistakes that should be avoided in socialist development.

The Image of Western Countries and Russia in Taiwanese Textbooks

As previously noted, the key issue in the 1990s–2010s, which defined domestic political life and public discourse of the island state, has been the self-determination of Taiwanese society and its place as opposed to mainland China. As a result, the history of mainland China and Taiwan in current textbooks has undergone a significant revision and has been prioritized over the history of the Western world. It is the history of China that defines the role of some Western countries, which have been in relation to Taiwan over different historical periods. Keeping in mind that Taiwan's historical relationship with China and the intention to distance its history from China was the background for taking Western history consideration; to prove that China was not the only source of cultural influence.

Today in Taiwanese school, the history is broken down into three major sections: world history, Chinese history, and Taiwanese history. All the sections assess political actions of Western countries and Russia. However, as it will be demonstrated further, they are not fully consistent with each other, resulting in contradictory images of the West and Russia to some extent. Similar to that in Chinese continental textbooks, the world history is represented by the leading powers: Britain, France, and the United States. Moreover, the textbooks cover modern times with their radical structural changes in the political, economic and

socio-cultural areas affecting the modern global structure. Also chosen as the watershed in the history of Western countries was the 15th–16th centuries; the era of great geographical discoveries, which gave rise to these radical shifts.⁴³ The leading trend in the 18th century, early modern times, is thought to be the rise of the nation state, i.e., a political unity of the nation with ethnic, linguistic and cultural affinity. The first nation states emerged in the United Kingdom, France, Portugal, and Spain. Then, they spring up in other parts of Europe. Later, according to the editors of the textbook, the nation state as a political structure develops worldwide, thereby inducing a system of international relations.⁴⁴ Starting with the nation state concept the authors go on to discuss its evolution and gradual democratization, namely: restrictions to the absolute power of the monarch, the so-called “enlightened despotism” under Russian emperors Peter I and Catherine II and Prussian king Frederick II the Great; the French Revolution; and the war for independence in the United States.⁴⁵

Special attention is also given to the 18th century as the age of the industrial revolution with new technologies and socioeconomic relations. It was the industrial revolution that then instigated further social changes: urbanization, mass media and public education.⁴⁶ Whereas the main political changes took place in France, the economic innovations were most pronounced in the UK.

In regards of the descriptions of the political and economic changes in Europe in the 17th–18th century, the issue of nation state is highlighted, and subsequent events are presented in the textbooks of 1990s to illustrate the nation state development in Europe and beyond. The same concept of nation state development underpins the world colonial system, which is regarded as a result of European economic and political dominance, the demonstration of their national superiority.⁴⁷

On the other hand, the concept of “nation state” in the textbook of the late 2000s in accordance with the syllabus approved by the KMT is used less often by far. In fact, there is no definition of the term. Political and industrial revolutions are associated with the new concept of “modernity”. Likewise, the concept of “modernity” implied changes in the values and normative system of European societies.

43 XIONG Bingzhen 熊秉真 (ed.): *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* 國民中學. 歷史 (National secondary School. History), vol. 4, Guoli bianyiguan, 1991, pp. 68–69; GU Weiyong 古偉瀛 and WANG Shizong 王世宗 (eds.): *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* 普通高級中學. 歷史 (General senior secondary school. History), vol. 3, Sanmin Book 2007, pp. 220–221.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

45 XIONG Bingzhen: *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* (1991), pp. 76–78; GU/ WANG: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 20–21.

46 XIONG Bingzhen: *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* (1991), pp. 93–97; GU/ WANG: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 51–52.

47 WANG Zhizhi 王芝芝 (ed.) *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* 國民中學. 歷史 (National secondary School. History). vol. 5, Guoli bianyiguan 1991, p. 28.

Technological advancement and the age of enlightenment are seen to have established new ideals: faith in the progress and power of science and rationalization of activity. Humanism, rationalism, and liberalism are considered the most important modern values, which emerged in Europe thanks to the revolutionary processes, primarily those in France. At the same time, imperialism is interpreted as a result of rapid industrial growth, which mainly took place in Britain, a great economic power.⁴⁸

Through the analysis and the interpretation of European and American history, the Taiwanese textbooks of 1990s–2010s have embodied the framework commonly used by Taiwanese historians. Their focus on the development of the nation state, democratic and industrial revolutions, the rationalization of culture, and special characteristics of “modernity” indicates that the history of Western countries is processed through the concept of modernization, which was once popular with the Taiwanese academic community under the influence of post-war American sociology.⁴⁹ The history of Europe is presented as a transition from a traditional society to a modern one with democratic institutions, capitalist economy, public education and concepts of rationality and progress. The progress from tradition to modernity sets the direction of world development, and allows Taiwan to position itself as a modern democratic state in Asia. The desire to gain independent statehood is the driving force for Taiwanese historians editing textbooks of the 1990s to focus on the rise of the nation state. In contrast, with the lingering ambiguity of Taiwan’s international status in the 2000s and 2010s, the desire to deal with Taiwan’s independence is reflected by a shift of discourse from the issues of nation building to the analysis of a less specific concept of “modern society”.

For the further consideration of the image of Western countries in Taiwanese history textbooks it is crucial to observe Taiwan’s own cultural interaction with foreign countries, which is featured in the section of the history of China. Based on Taiwanese topical studies, most events in Chinese history, especially those of the 19th century – the period of direct confrontation between China and the Western world – are associated with imperialist aggression of the leading world powers toward neighboring regions. With this in mind, the history of Europe is opposed to the history of China and that of the Republic of China. The latter have to interact only to survive Western imperialist aggression causing great economic and

48 GU Weiyong/WANG Shizhong: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), p. 96.

49 Mau-kuei CHANG, Ying-hwa CHANG and Chih-chieh TANG: “Indigenization, Institutionalization, and Internationalization: Tracing the Paths of the Development of Sociology in Taiwan”. In: Michael Burarwoy, Mau-kuei Chang and Michelle Fei-yu Hsieh (eds.): *Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for a Global Sociology*, vol. 2, Taipei: ISA-CNA, Academia Sinica, Institute of Sociology 2010, pp. 158–191.

political damage to China's part.⁵⁰ The similar view on Western countries in the modern history of China seems to be preserved in the 2000s–2010s textbooks.⁵¹ Without question, mainland Chinese historians sympathize with this approach to describing the historical contacts with Western countries.

However, when it comes to the Taiwanese history itself, the image of Western countries is significantly altered. In the 1990s and 2000s, Taiwanese historiography under the DPP government was revised in regard to the assessments of the impact of Western countries on the national history. Over the given period, historians of Taiwan added a considerable number of European countries to the list of those to be featured in the modern history of the Island. Colonial conquests by Portugal, Spain, Holland, and Japan; but also their trade, economic, social, and cultural interaction with the islanders were now rendered crucial for the development of Taiwan. Moreover, the once negative assessments of colonial presence of both Europeans and Japanese in Taiwan were also revised. This resulted in terminological replacements for Japanese governance that a more neutral term “*zhi* 治” (control) was introduced instead of “*ju* 據” (capture), which also caused heated discussions.⁵²

As the 2010s textbooks show, the arrival of the Dutch and Spanish in Taiwan, the competition of European Maritime states to gain control over the Island was considered helpful in Taiwan's integration into the world system and its transformation into an important transport hub in East Asia, which allowed further involvement of the Island in the world processes starting in modern times.⁵³ The Dutch rule, for example, is associated with the introduction of Taiwan-specific models of public administration and interaction with local elites. Furthermore, the textbooks of the 2000s as “pro-Taiwanese” ones provide positive assessments of Japanese governance and emphasize Japan's socio-economic and cultural contribution to the earlier modernization of Taiwanese society. Taiwan's openness to foreign relations and its inclusion in the world system manifest themselves in the appreciation of post-war political, financial and economic aid from the United

50 CHEN Yunxuan 陳昀萱 and Zhen Xiaolan 甄曉蘭: “Guozhong lishi kegang zhong de ouzhou yixiang” 國中歷史課綱中的歐洲意象 (Europe's Image in the History Standard for Junior Secondary School), In: *Jiaokeshu yanjiu* 教科書研究 (Textbooks Research), vol. 11, no. 2, 2008, pp. 39–41.

51 XUE Huayuan 薛化元 (ed.) *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* 普通高級中學. 歷史 (General senior secondary school. History), vol. 2, Sanmin book 2007, pp. 220–230.

52 Yoshihisa AMAE: “Pro-colonial or Postcolonial? Appropriation of Japanese Colonial Heritage in Present-day Taiwan” In: *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2011, pp. 19–62; LEE Ming-tsung: “Discoursing ‘Japan’ in Taiwanese Identity Politics: The Structures of Feeling of the Young Harizu and Old Japanophiles”. In: *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2015, pp. 49–103.

53 XUE Huayuan: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), p. 34.

States and later from Japan.⁵⁴ Alongside such positive “pro-Taiwan” assessments of economic and cultural interaction with other countries, the textbooks broaden the notion of “world history” by no longer limiting it to a selected group of European countries. They tend to introduce to students the traditions and important events in the historical development of various regions of the world, including the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

It should be noted that positive assessments of foreign influence on the historical development of Taiwan, as well as the extended list of countries in long relation to Taiwan are primarily aimed at weakening the (mainland) China centric historiography of the past. It is necessary to prove that mainland China has not been the one and only influence on the Island, but rather one of many sources of cultural influence. Apart from that, Taiwanese historians seek to identify socio-economic and political institutions which emerged in Taiwan through Europeans and differed from those of mainland China. Of particular interest for this research is the way these new historiographical approaches have impacted the image of Russia and the Soviet Union in modern Taiwanese textbooks. The restoration of relations between the Russian Federation and Taiwan took place several decades ago in the 1990s. In the 1950s–80s due to conflicts with the CCP with its support from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the consequent defeat in the civil war and forced displacement to the island of Taiwan, the ruling Kuomintang party pursued a specific ideological and educational policy. The essence of the policy was ideological rejection and harsh criticism concerning the communist doctrine and those advocating the countries which followed such a doctrine: China, North Korea, and the USSR.

This ideological struggle reached its climax in the 1950s and 60s when the CCP still seemed rather vulnerable, and the return of the KMT to the mainland was feasible. The KMT aimed at promoting hostility toward such communist countries as China and North Korea. However, the key slogan of this struggle mentioned Soviet Russia as well: “*fan gong kang E*, 反共抗俄” (oppose communism, resist Russia). The corresponding ideological education was introduced to the main subjects of primary and secondary schools. Among those were the national language, history, geography and social studies. Still, it was most characteristic that Russia was never heavily criticized for its adherence to Communist ideology, but rather for the territorial acquisitions of Tsarist Russia at the end of the Qing rein, which were regarded as unfair. The curricula of the 1950s and 60s urged to “stress seizures of national territories by Russia, to promote anti-communist and anti-

54 Frances CHAN: “How Liberal Korean and Taiwanese Textbooks Portray their Countries’ ‘Economic Miracles’” In: *Student Work*, vol. 3, 2016. Available online http://elischolar.library.yale.edu/ceas_student_work/3 (last access 2019, December 2).

Russian sentiments”.⁵⁵ In fact, even though the anti-communist and anti-Russian rhetoric was dropped by the 1970s–80s, its influence on historiographical assessments of Russia was still evident in the forthcoming years and thus cannot be ignored.

The next step in the given analysis is to trace topics and events in the textbook for secondary school associated with the Soviet Union and Russia. The first to mention would be the textbooks of the 1990s–2010s, which mention Russia in the units on mainland China and world history, but not in those on the history of Taiwan. The section dedicated to traditional China and the Republic of China before 1947 features Russia and the Soviet Union in relation to three key topics, namely: Russia’s territorial acquisitions in the late Tsarist period, the Soviet Union’s relationship with the CCP and the KMT respectively; military and technical assistance at an early stage as well as political ties between the USSR and the PRC.

It should be noted that the issue of territorial conquests of Chinese territories by Russia in the late Tsarist period is described in great detail in the textbooks of both the 1990s and 2010s. Thus, the unit on imperialist conquests in the 1990s textbook lists Russia as one of the major aggressors, alongside the UK. Since the beginning of the 16th century, Russia is said to have been advancing from the Central part of Eurasia toward the Pacific coast. First, it subjugates Siberia. By the 19th century, its aspirations are reported to be aimed at the North-East of China, Korea and the North-Western regions of the Qing Empire. They had to fight over the latter with Britain.⁵⁶ Russia is believed to act treacherously, violating previous agreements. It is the weakness of China during the Opium wars that allowed Russia to “bite like a mulberry worm and swallow a significant part of China’s territory like a whale” (*canshi jingun*, 蚕食鲸吞), causing it to be the greatest damage compared to other territorial losses.⁵⁷

Similarly, these events are narrated in the textbook of the 2010s. The text is illustrated with many map insets of allegedly seized territories in the size that visually looks equal to a significant part of China itself. The textbook emphasizes that Russia annexed not only the territories in the Northeast of mainland China, but also those in the Northwest. Overall, as the textbook reveals, 1.2 million km² of

55 WANG Enmei 王恩美: “Lengzhan shiqi xuexiao jiaoyu zhong de fan gong xingxiang: yi Taiwan yu Hanguo liang di xiaoxue jiaokeshu wei zhongxin de fenxi” 冷戰時期學校教育中的反共形象：以臺灣與韓國兩地小學教科書為中心的分析 (Anti-Communist Images in School Education during the Cold War: An Analysis Centered on Primary School Textbooks in Taiwan and Korea). In: *Si yu yan* 思與言 (Thoughts and words), vol. 48, no. 2, 2010, pp. 49–117.

56 WANG Zhizhi: *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* (1991), p. 34.

57 HU Pingsheng 胡平生 (ed.): *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* 國民中學。歷史 (National secondary School. History). vol. 3, Guoli bianyiguan, 1991, pp. 7–8.

Qing territory were ceded to Russia, of which about 0.4 million km² was to the west of Lake Balkhash.⁵⁸ Later, apart from the appropriation of land, Russia took advantage of the weakness of the then Republican China on the mainland and interfered with the political processes on the outskirts of the country, in Mongolia and Tibet, not to mention its interference in Xinjiang during the Sino-Japanese War. As a result, Outer Mongolia declared independence and China lost sovereignty over its historical region.⁵⁹ The image of Russia as an invader is supported by a visual series. In the historical cartoon from the Hong Kong newspaper of 1898, featuring the division of China into zones of influence between Western countries and Japan; Russia is depicted as a massive growling bear.⁶⁰

It is noteworthy that the textbooks of the 1990s and the 2010s provide different assessments of Russia's role in Chinese history of the twentieth century. The anti-communist rhetoric of the previous period is employed in the earlier textbooks; and the connection between Soviet Russia and the CCP, but not the KMT, is emphasized. Meanwhile, Russia's assistance to the CCP is said to be limited to military aid in World War II.⁶¹ The textbooks of the 2010s offer a fuller picture of Russia supporting the KMT by means of the Soviet Union and the Comintern (Communist International) movement. Here Russia is acting as a source of international support and specific military and technical assistance. In the textbooks it also mentions Adolf JOFFE, a representative of the Soviet government in Beijing, who together with Sun Yat-sen published the "Declaration of SUN Yat-sen and JOFFE". It was this document that laid the foundation for a temporary cooperation between the CCP and the KMT. A military school in Huangpu built under the supervision of M. BORODIN from Russia, a political adviser to the KMT, became an important step in this cooperation.⁶² Unlike textbooks of the 1990s, later editions stress the role of the Soviet Union to explain the essence of the PRC's domestic and foreign policies. On the one hand, the political experience of the Soviet Union is believed to have had a direct impact on the CCP as a party type, which in the textbooks is called the Leninist party with all critical characteristics. On the other hand, it is viewed not only as inter-party relations, but also as an interstate cooperation with the USSR. The Soviet Union was the first to recognize the PRC after its proclamation in 1949 and to establish diplomatic links with it. It also provided substantial financial, military, and technical aid, granted a big loan, and sent some skilled workers to rebuild the industry. Additional historical material is

58 XUE Huayuan: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 230, 239.

59 GU Weiyang/WANG Shizhong (eds.): *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 15–16.

60 XUE Huayuan: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), p. 238.

61 HU Pingsheng (ed.): *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi*, vol. 3 (1991), pp. 66, 88–89.

62 GU Weiyang/WANG Shizhong: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), p. 28.

illustrated with photographs: a shot of the signing ceremony of the Treaty of Friendship between STALIN and MAO Zedong, as well as a photo of a Soviet specialist surrounded by Chinese workers at a factory.⁶³

At the same time, the editors of the textbook explain in detail the development of Soviet-Chinese relations: from close and friendly cooperation in the 1950s; to the deterioration after STALIN's death, which resulted in a military conflict on Damansky Island in 1969; and later to improvement from the late 1980s. It should be noted that today the countries once involved in the conflict are trying not to address these events directly. In fact, the 50th anniversary of the collision was hardly remembered in 2019 in both countries, as well as the fact this memorable date has never been mentioned in the textbooks.⁶⁴ In stark contrast, the incident is portrayed in the Taiwanese textbooks, which seems to be set as a pathway to the subsequent events. The clashes on Damansky Island are set to be the turning point of PRC's relation with the USSR, but also with the United States. An improvement in Sino-American relations results in Taiwan losing its legitimate status in the UN and revising its domestic and foreign policy. Finally, with another improvement of Soviet-Chinese relations in the 1980s and 90s, Russia becomes a significant political partner of the PRC, only so willing to provide military and technical assistance. As cited in the Taiwanese textbook of 1990s, Russia provided the PRC with arms supplies for the PLA's modernization.⁶⁵ Therefore, in the section on the history of China and the Republic of China, Tsarist Russia is portrayed as a very aggressive state taking advantage of its neighbors' weakness for the sake of territorial expansion. However, in the Soviet period, Russia acts as an ally providing the necessary support such as economic and military assistance.

There is a small paragraph about Russia in the world history section which shows a concise and neutral layout of the main events in Russian history in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Among those are the abolition of serfdom and the reforms of Alexander II, the First World War involvement, the February and October Revolutions of 1917 and STALIN's industrialization. While Russia acts as an economically and technically obsolete state, it is one of the main actors in significant pan-European events, especially those related to military clashes. Therefore, the Crimean War and the defeat of Russia

63 Ibid., p. 101.

64 Mikhail KOROSTIKOV: "Ostrov izmeneniia mirovoi istorii. Kak konflikt na Damanskom povernul istoriiu Kitaia, SSSR i SSHA" (World history's Island of changes. How the conflict on Damansky Island turned the history of China, the USSR and the USA), 2019, March 15. Available online <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3909917> (last access 2019, December 2).

65 GU Weiyong/WANG Shizhong: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 103–107.

are presented before the unit on the causes of the First World War. The focus is put on Russia encroaching on neighboring territories.

Attention is drawn to the account of the October Revolution, a key event in the history of Russia with global implications. In the 1990s, the revolutionary events were interpreted as social upheavals caused by hostilities, which did not afford the people any relief. Although the industrialization brought the USSR to a leading economic position, it was carried out at the expense of depriving people of their freedom and normal working conditions. Textbooks of the 2010s provide similar assessments of the 1917 Revolution. Moreover, the very name of the new state, the Soviet Union, which involved other countries apart from Russia, is seen as a crafty plan to further world revolution.⁶⁶ In general, Russia, and then the Soviet Union are shown as active participants in both World Wars, taking both diplomatic and military tasks. The Cold War is described as a time of confrontation between the capitalist and socialist camps. The Soviet Union acted as a strong opponent to the United States. The competition between the two in terms of politics, economics, military technologies, and space exploration involved both European and Asian countries. The suggested reasons for the Soviet Union's collapse are poor quality of life for the population, conflicts within the socialist camp, and upward democratic trends. A brief account of the collapse is given in the textbook with the coup of 19 August 1991 followed by the ban on the Communist Party and dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Typically, there is no mention of Russia and the Soviet Union throughout 1991, and descriptions of modern Russia are not found in the textbook either.

According to the modern Taiwanese textbook, all relations with Russia are restricted to those in the history of mainland China during in the Qing period, the Republic of China, or the PRC. The Taiwanese textbook characterizes Tsarist Russia as a state driven by the desire to seize foreign lands. The world history unit suggests that Russia's territorial claims are addressed to both Eastern and Western countries. At the same time, the Soviet Union is believed to be a major ally providing military and political aid, leaving aside any trade, financial or cultural assistance. Therefore, Russia is presented as a strong military partner rather than a trade counterparty.

66 WANG Zhizhi: *Guomin zhongxue. Lishi* (1991), pp. 63–65; GU Weiyong/WANG Shizhong: *Putong gaoji zhongxue. Lishi* (2007), pp. 126–127.

Conclusion

There are several characteristic features to be seen with respect to the images of Western countries and Russia in modern Chinese and Taiwanese history textbooks for high school. First of all, it should be noted that Chinese and Taiwanese societies are still struggling to solve problems associated with teaching history in schools. Now and then, this struggle shifts into public debate. The reform of school history education has become a core aspect to largescale ideological and political transformations resulting in major state projects. Although the 1990s saw more liberal regulations for history education, the last decades have witnessed a growing trend for stricter control over the subject by the state. This trend is most evident in today's mainland China, where the reform of school history education is part of the ideological agenda targeting at control and consolidation of the society by the Communist Party and the state.

It should also be noted that innovations introduced to the school history course in both mainland China and Taiwan are in keeping with the key theses of the current domestic political and public agenda. On both sides of the Taiwan Strait, the main challenge of 1990s–2010s is globalization that urges the countries in view to define their own status in the world community and prove their unique role in world political and economic development. Meanwhile, integration into the global community should be consistent with the local-national specialty. Mainland China focuses on building the image of a strong nation state with indisputable national sovereignty, inviolable state borders, cultural continuity, and socialist ideology while acting as an active participant on the global scale. On the other side, Taiwanese political and academic communities stress the island's position in relation to its mainland neighbor and differences between their cultural and political traditions. These non-trivial items on home ideological agenda have predetermined the direction for the school history reform: changes in curricula and standards, new editions of textbooks in the 1990s–2010s. As a result, both national and world history courses in school have been aimed at highlighting the key theses of the domestic agenda.

Both in mainland China and in Taiwan, changes in the school history course have to do with the latest sound achievements of the national scholars in historical research. China's desire to abandon the rhetoric of social protest and struggle, and to integrate into the world community has brought about historiographical approaches which accentuate trends for world economic integration. As early as the 1990s, school textbooks started to drop class theory in favor of the "complex world system" concept authored by the Chinese historian WU Yuqin. The textbooks from

2000–2010 present world history as a steady development of a single economic world system, which is based on the capitalist mode of production. Unsurprisingly, mainland Chinese textbooks focus on the materialistic view of history and pay primary attention to economic processes.

In comparison, Taiwanese textbooks of the 1990s–2010s employ an earlier concept of modernization to explain the world history development and focus on Taiwan's political progress as the nation state, the democratic political system and the rational culture. The most characteristic feature of these textbooks is the "Taiwanization" of historical research and history education with emphasis on the local history of the island and its cultural and political difference from mainland China. One of the leading historiographical concepts of the time is TSAO Yungho's idea of the "island history of Taiwan", which presents Taiwan as an oceanic island located at the intersection of trade routes and exposed to various sociocultural influences. The "pro-Taiwan" trend results in major alterations which mainly follow the way Taiwanese history is presented. These trends in domestic politics and historical studies of mainland China and Taiwan have made a direct impact on how the image of Western countries and Russia evolves in the textbooks of 1990s–2010s.

References to Western countries and Russia are made in units on both world history and national history of China. However, since the mid-1990s, Taiwanese textbooks have been mentioning Western countries in the section on Taiwanese history of the 16th century and onward. Schools of both the PRC and ROC share a similar approach to modern periods of world history, which is associated with the key trends in the modern world, such as the nation state, capitalism, colonialism, integration of world regions into a single economic system, and consolidation of inequality between the West and the rest of the world. The world development has been defined by the leading countries of the West, among which are the UK, France, the USA, Italy, Germany, and Russia. At the same time, France and the United States take leading positions in political development since they have consolidated democratic forms of government. The United Kingdom plays a major role in economic development with the Industrial Revolution which led to the establishment of capitalism, imperialism, and the world colonial system.

Textbooks of mainland China seem to fail to provide consistent interpretation of the Chinese-Western military-economic clash in the 19th century. Traditionally, Chinese historiography blames Western countries for inflicting the economic and political losses on China in the Opium Wars. However, the single fiercely critical rhetoric against the Western powers has notably improved in view of China's integration into the global economy. While the textbooks stress the inflicted damage, the authors argue that clashes with Western countries refer to the end of China's isolation and new prospects for integration into the world economic system.

Taiwanese textbooks kept the section of Chinese history almost intact while major changes can be found in the Taiwanese historical narration. The list of important countries was extended with the introduction of Holland and Spain as well as extra emphasis on the United States in the recent history of the Island. However, a more significant innovation is the way earlier Dutch and Spanish colonial governance and American economic aid in the 1950s–60s are regarded as a positive factor contributing to Taiwan's modernization, special social and economic environment, and global integration.

Surprisingly, the account of Taiwan's relations with foreign colonizers in the unit on the history of Taiwan differs from that of the relations with European powers and Japan in late Qing period and Republican China units. Modern Taiwanese historiography values the colonial experience as the one fostering modernization and global integration. By contrast, the section on late Qing history of China heavily relies on the popular rhetoric of China being taken advantage of and economically oppressed by foreign powers. Therefore, the section on the history of Taiwan in the given textbook must have been written with the new historiographical assessments and the changing political context of Taiwanese society of the 2000s in view. Meanwhile, the narrative in the units on mainland China was largely borrowed from the textbooks of previous periods with dated assessments of foreign activities. The image of Russia in modern Chinese and Taiwanese textbooks seems slightly different from that of rather positively assessed Western countries. Textbooks on both sides of the Taiwan Strait tend to characterize Tsarist Russia as a state with the development strategy of outward expansion. They provide a detailed coverage of land appropriation by Russia in the Far East.

Interestingly, Taiwanese textbooks include even more negative assessments in the section on the history of China even though there has been a steady improvement in bilateral relations between Russia and Taiwan since the 1990s. This might be attributed to the anti-Soviet and anti-communist rhetoric of the 1950s–70s, which is left unattended since the main focus is placed on the revision of Taiwan's proper history. Similarly, Chinese and Taiwanese textbooks show different assessments of the 1917 Revolution, the key event in the history of Russia with world implications. Chinese textbooks describe the October Revolution as a turning point in world history, which produced a non-capitalist model of social development. The later Soviet experience of socialism is seen as an example of bad implementation, a warning against mistakes that could be made on the way. In Taiwanese textbooks, the 1917 Revolution is persistently shown as the result of military upheavals, which did not bring relief to the people, but rather deprived the country of democracy and freedom.

