

Research Article

Felix Brender*

Teaching Sleeping Dogs New Tricks? Transitional Justice as Identity-Building

<https://doi.org/10.1515/culture-2020-0137>

received March 31, 2021; accepted November 12, 2021

Abstract: Transitional Justice (TJ) mechanisms have been applied in several post-conflict spaces and commonly hailed by the academy as a – if not the – route to lasting positive peace. Taiwan has seen bouts of at times violent protest, which has given rise to popular and academic claims that renewed TJ efforts are required to achieve true, lasting peace. Against this backdrop, this text identifies sources of grievances and situates Taiwan’s case in the wider TJ literature to then explore Taiwan’s most recent TJ endeavours under Tsai Ying-Wen, focusing on its core mechanism, the Transitional Justice Commission. Engaging other readings of Taiwanese TJ mechanisms, this article argues that Tsai’s TJ mechanisms should be read chiefly as an identity-building project. Located in a wider drive to develop a positive identity for Taiwan, they are an attempt to establish shared historical narratives and ultimately aim to create a more stable Taiwanese identity independent of China as a pivotal *Other* or benchmark. This process is directed at both domestic and international audiences. This way, Taiwan negotiates, (re-)constructs and reifies a relatively inclusive positive Taiwanese identity not solely through the memories uncovered and remembered through the TJ process, but chiefly through the process itself.

Keywords: Transitional Justice, Taiwan, identity, nation-building

Introduction

Taiwan gradually democratised in the 1990s and has generally been a stable and prospering democracy (Fell 44ff). Yet, despite regular, free, non-violent multi-party elections and transfers of power, Taiwan has seen bouts of at times violent protest, such as the 2014 Sunflower Movement. This is frequently understood (cf. Rowen and Rowen) as long-term impact of hitherto unaddressed crimes surrounding the 1947 228 *Incident* and during the martial law period (*White Terror*, 1949–1987). Ostensibly in response, 2016-elected President Tsai established comprehensive Transitional Justice (TJ) mechanisms to address grievances from Taiwan’s authoritarian past, which in design and scope appear to not only represent lessons learnt from Taiwan’s previous incomplete TJ attempts, but also from other countries’ TJ experience.

This article however argues that mechanisms and institutions introduced by the Tsai government should chiefly be read as identity building efforts, rather than as a route to *positive peace* in Galtung’s taxonomy. TJ mechanisms allow Taiwan to shift the focus from narratives of identity told through the prism of Chinese history to instead consider Taiwan and Taiwanese history on its own terms, rather than assessing Taiwaneseness as degrees and in terms of or juxtaposed to Chineseness, that way implicitly self-imposing, accepting the validity of, engaging in and thus reifying these very discourses. As such, then, this emancipatory process of identity construction beyond the Taiwan–China nexus is internal, i.e. by establishing shared narratives domestically and thus performing Taiwan’s identity as a democratic country, and

* **Corresponding author: Felix Brender**, Department of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, e-mail: f.brender@lse.ac.uk

external by creating brand awareness and (re)claiming Taiwan's place within an imagined community of democratic nations. This is part of larger diplomatic efforts to emphasise a positive identity of Taiwan – what Taiwan can do for the world (Schafferer, *Foreign Aid*).

My argument is anchored in the following chain of reasoning: First, academic deliberations as to what constitutes practicable pathways to *positive peace* remain deficient: To date, no hard-and-fast, implementable guidelines for TJ processes and bodies – let alone full blueprints – have been produced by the academy. Indeed, the existence of any universal blueprint would inherently clash with commonly declared notions of TJ having to be highly localised (cf. Bell 7ff). Taiwan's TJ programmes consequently cannot be understood *ex ante* to aim to achieve positive peace. Second, the design of the mechanisms implemented under Tsai focusing on truth-finding rather than prosecution forcibly is an exercise in identifying, creating and establishing commonly shared narratives of the past: Given Taiwan's extant public democratic institutions, a comprehensive, separate set of mechanisms is arguably unnecessary to attain social justice. In fact – fourth – any TJ endeavour does indeed run the risk of alienating those in Taiwan who prefer to let sleeping dogs lie. While I by no means claim that the grievances these TJ mechanisms claim to address should be discounted, resolving the grievances of those still suffering the aftermath of the 228 Incident and White Terror is a by-product: By design, the main aim of the TJ mechanisms is to establish narratives of a Taiwanese identity which does not rest in a co-constitutive Chinese identity.

This text is structured along six core sections. It opens with an introduction to core theoretical concepts. I then provide a brief overview of Taiwan's history to contextualise unresolved tensions, earlier TJ efforts and the newly set-up Transitional Justice Committee (TJC). In this, I will trace key events since the arrival of European colonialists, focussing on the *228 Incident* and *White Terror*. I then delineate the three phases of Taiwanese TJ effort post-democratisation, employing Schafferer's (*Rise and Fall*) model, and contrast their structure, scope and remit with that of Taiwan's recent "fourth phase" TJ programmes, particularly the TJC. Locating Taiwan's case in the relevant wider literature on TJ throughout, I review the actual effects of the TJC and appraise the very limited scholarship on Taiwan's TJC available today. I conclude by outlining why Taiwan's current TJ mechanisms are geared first and foremost towards identity-building, as part of a larger shift towards creating a positive Taiwanese identity (cf. Schafferer, *Rise and Fall*, Wong): It is not so much about worrying that sleeping dogs will only lie for so long, it is rather about waking them up gently and teach them new tricks.

TJ efforts in East Asia and the Pacific generally remain understudied (Payne and Sikkink), even though this region has experienced multiple colonialisms (Rowen and Rowen 94). This not least applies to Taiwan's case: Prior to Caldwell's seminal 2018 article in the *Washington International Law Journal*, Taiwan's TJ experience had been utterly underappreciated by the anglophone academy, as Chang-Liao and Chen deplore. This article hopes to make a small contribution to this debate, and also speak to larger discussions within the TJ community *vis-à-vis* the purpose of TJ mechanisms.

Concepts

In this article, I draw on concepts from the broader social sciences and conflict studies briefly outlined below.

Social constructionism is one of the best-travelled concepts in the social sciences. First proposed by Berger and Luckmann, social constructionism contends that the social world is made – *constructed* – and meaning and meaningfulness are created through social interaction in specific cultural and historical contexts rather than naturally given or innate. Building on Hobsbawm's work on cultural practices which are considered "traditional" but in fact are recent societal inventions, Anderson by the same token argued that nations, too, as **imagined communities** are social constructs, i.e. entities imagined by their members: National identities and their features are not essentialist, not given, but constructed through social interaction. National-community creation processes rely on selective remembering, forgetting and reframing: Baldanza, for instance, outlines how terms to refer to the country now known as Vietnam that had originally

been deemed imposed by a colonising force were reappropriated as invoking national liberation – its very opposite.

Read in the context of Taiwan, Taiwanese identity, too, is the product of expected processes of identity negotiation and construction: The absence of such processes would be the aberration. Such theorising further suggests that identity can be actively constructed by actors in positions of sufficient power.

These identity building efforts are often grounded in assumptions about an imagined *Other* which is everything the Self is not: Said set forth how the West constructed the *Orient* along clichéd, exoticising lines of everything the West is not, or indeed does not wish to be.

In international relations, the concept re-appears in Wendt, albeit with a slightly different focus, emphasising the *relationship* between different states: the “daily life of international politics is an on-going process of states taking identities in relation to Others, casting them into corresponding counter-identities, and playing out the result” (Wendt 21). To Wendt, *collective self-images*, i.e. the result of said process of identity-building through relationships with significant Others, can be positive or negative: perceived disrespect from Others can prompt states to behave aggressively towards others (Wendt 336f). In a similar vein – and looking at the domestic rather than the state as a whole – Harrison and Bruter (35) argue that a negative identity, i.e. delineating one’s own community in contrast to a threatening Other, is one hallmark of right-wing populist parties.

As Harrison has posited, Taiwanese identity is located in two key factors: economic prosperity and liberal democracy. The latter in particular has led Taiwanese identity to be defined in negative terms and in contrast with Taiwan’s main negative *Other*, China (or, respectively, the PRC): Taiwan as a democratic nation, *unlike* China. This might not, as Harrison and Bruter suggest for Western societies, trigger a shift towards right-wing populism, but as I will discuss further below, might heighten the risk of such a populist turn. At any rate, any negative identity conditioned on the identity of an Other has considerable limitations and is volatile since it relies on the identity and behaviour of the Other. As Hioe (*What Do Recent Shifts in Taiwanese Identification Mean?*) rightfully wonders:

As with all forms of identity, a non-Chinese Taiwanese identity risks being only a form of “negative identity,” that is, a form of identity defined in opposition to another form of identity rather than a “positive identity” that truly has its own foundations. Where do Taiwanese draw the borders between themselves and Chinese, then?

With this in mind, a positive identity – who one is, rather than who one is not – is presumably more sustainable. This is further compounded by the fact that any negotiation of Taiwanese identity as a shade of or entirely distinct from (a) Chinese identity/identities would forcibly co-opt those negotiating Taiwanese identity into narratives promoting Taiwanese identity as a variety or modulation of Chineseness: From such a starting point, any discussion of Taiwanese identity has to happen against the backdrop of Chineseness. At best, then, they provide a credible defensive argument but can never truly escape the hegemonic discursive structures of the Taiwan–China nexus. Overall, this renders open and experimental discussion of Taiwanese identity impossible and instead reifies discourses which necessarily locate Taiwanese identity in a Chinese context.

Finally, this article engages Galtung’s concept of *positive* and *negative peace*. Galtung – frequently held to be the founding father of peace studies – argued that the mere absence of interpersonal violence is *negative peace*, while real, *positive peace* describes an extended concept of peace spaces where people resolve conflicts non-violently. *Negative peace* refers to the absence of personal violence, while *positive peace* (“social justice”) more comprehensively suggests the absence of structural violence. This concept has been at the heart of much peace-building and peace-keeping research, and is commonly assumed as the sole benchmark of successful TJ processes in the field.

Historical Overview

As in most contested spaces, historiography is heatedly debated in Taiwan. In the following, I propose an introductory review of historical events commonly cited as triggers for TJ efforts.

There is some debate as to whether Taiwan's Austronesian indigenous people came to settle in Taiwan, or indeed if Taiwan is the place from which Austronesians moved South. Either way, Taiwan's indigenous population were clearly the first group of people to live on the island. Today, indigenous people account for only around 2% of Taiwan's total population of 23.5 m, making them the quantitatively smallest community on Taiwan (Rigger). In the seventeenth century, Dutch and Portuguese colonisers encouraged resettlement of migrants from the mainland in Taiwan to work in agriculture and Dutch- and Portuguese-established trade operations. Koxinga – *Zheng Chenggong* 鄭成功 – a half-Japanese, half-Chinese pirate/warlord ousted European settlers from Taiwan in 1661/62, establishing Taiwan as a base for fellow Ming loyalists. In 1683, the island was claimed by the Chinese Qing dynasty as an overseas possession, although Qing administration of and control over Taiwan was highly fragmented (Rowen and Rowen). Following the Qing dynasty's 1895 defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, China ceded Taiwan to the victorious Japanese Empire under the Treaty of Shimonoseki. To validate claims of Japan being a potent colonial power, Japan launched a range of educational, economic and legal reforms transforming Taiwan into a model colony, from which the Taiwanese did benefit to some extent (Caldwell 5ff). Notwithstanding, the Japanese did curtail the rights of Taiwan's non-Japanese population, ranging from virtually no representation in media, government and politics to monopolies restricting the locals' economic space (ibid.). Hwang, whose framework is commonly used in analyses of Taiwanese TJ (cf. Caldwell), identifies this as the **first of three sources of injustice**. This framework does however not capture the persistent, structural discrimination of Taiwan's indigenous population under Japanese rule and by Chinese migrants (cf. Simon).

Following Japanese defeat in WWII, Japan surrendered sovereignty over Taiwan, and the Republic of China (ROC) under the Kuomintang (KMT) asserted control. As Rowen and Rowen (99) posit, many intellectuals hoping for eventual self-administration initially welcomed the KMT as liberators from a “colonial Japanese police state” (ibid.). The KMT was at this stage deeply mired in the Chinese civil war against the Communists under Mao Zedong and took to exploiting Taiwan's resources in support of the war effort on the mainland. Alongside unjust government monopolies and inadequate administration, this created a widening rift between the local population and mainlanders – chiefly military, police and administrative staff – gradually arriving from across the Taiwan Strait (Phillips 40ff). Simultaneously, KMT administrators – often traumatised by Japanese assaults during World War II – harboured deep mistrust *vis-à-vis* local Taiwanese: Unaware of and largely unaffected by the violence Japanese forces had unleashed onto China, the Taiwanese had to a great extent been Japanised and appeared visually indistinct from the Japanese the KMT had fought a few years earlier (Phillips).

The situation came to a head on February 27, 1947, when a Taiwanese woman selling contraband cigarettes was struck by government inspectors (Phillips 75f). A crowd rallied to defend the saleswoman, and violence erupted when a police officer fired his gun and killed a bystander. This triggered popular protests and riots across Taiwan, focussing on symbols of KMT rule. In response, the KMT administration imposed martial law (ibid.). These events, now known as the *228 Incident*, are pivotal to the discussion of TJ in Taiwan, and marks the origin of the **second source of injustice** in Hwang's framework: In the months that followed, thousands of Taiwanese were summarily executed, disappeared, imprisoned and expropriated by KMT police (Caldwell). Exact casualty totals remain unknown to date. Caldwell quotes Taiwanese military reports speaking of 398 killed, 72 missing and 2,131 injured, contrasting this to later accounts of death figures estimated to range from 5,000 to as many as 28,000.

The 228 Incident has been emblematic of atrocities in pre-democracy Taiwan, the “founding trauma” as Stolojan (28) would have it, providing a rallying cry for the pro-democracy movement. As Stolojan notes, memories of the Incident had subsided in overseas Taiwanese communities in the West and Japan, yet only gained traction again when it became part of the shared memory in Taiwan itself to then become a “model” for how other atrocities were to be addressed.

The KMT retreated to Taiwan following its defeat in the civil war. Mainlanders now accounted for one fifth of Taiwan's total population of six million (Fell 17f). The KMT administration implemented minority authoritarian rule of the Mainlanders (*waishengren* 外省人), systematically and institutionally subordinating the local population, i.e. the descendants of earlier migrants from China, as well as the indigenous population. This group was henceforth collectively referred to as *benshengren* 本省人 (Caldwell 8f).

Discursively, this ethnicised the conflict; these ethnic dimensions were later realigned with political fault lines and continue to play into ongoing debates on Taiwan's past. The émigré KMT government under Chiang Kai-Shek imposed a Chinese nation-building programme of forced sinicisation of the *benshengren* majority. Taiwanese identity was not so much suspended but rather subject of a political project which aimed to cover it in layers of government-sanctioned definitions of (Chinese/ROC) identity to eclipse any contesting identities.

Chiang extended martial law and the state of emergency in Taiwan *ad infinitum* until the envisaged eventual recovery of the mainland from the Communists, which ultimately failed to materialise (Fell 24ff). During the next four decades, known as *White Terror* (1949–1987), the authoritarian government targeted not only *benshengren*, but anyone suspect of obscurely defined “political crimes” (Caldwell 9). Later framings suggesting that *benshengren* suffered while *waishengren* were spared during the White Terror period are factually incorrect: even *benshengren* activist-scholar Wu (100) estimates that approximately 40% of the victims of *White Terror* were Mainlanders, suggesting that *waishengren* were in fact overproportionately affected by the KMT government's wanton arrests, expropriations and executions. Cultural production and collective memory commonly do not reflect this (cf. Wu): Hou Hsiao-hsien's 侯孝賢 groundbreaking 1989 film *City of Sadness* 悲情城市, popularly read as an accurate depiction of life in Taiwan in the immediate aftermath of the 228 Incident, focuses on a *benshengren* family and reinforces the narrative of *benshengren* suffering at the hand of *waishengren*. The experience of *waishengren* families displaced to Taiwan from China is captured in works such as Pai Hsien-yung's 白先勇 *Taipei People* 臺北人, yet the true scope of the trauma experienced by the hundreds of thousands of ordinary people escaping to Taiwan where they then lived in an eternal loop of anticipating soon return as victims of a conflict they had been embroiled in is hardly known: Yang's exploration of these under-researched histories is thus particularly needed.

As the extent of crimes committed remains unknown, establishing clarity has been one of the key aims set for the TJC. Caldwell (9) quotes estimates indicating 140,000 civilians court-martialled, thousands imprisoned and deprived of property, around 3,000–4,000 executed. Whatever the actual quantitative ramifications, the qualitative impact of the 228 Incident and its aftermath on Taiwanese (discussions of) identity is undeniably substantial. Hwang identifies this as the **third source of injustice**.

In response to international and domestic pressure (Fell 28), KMT rule transformed into “soft authoritarianism” in the 1980s, allowing both *waishengren* and *benshengren* personnel within its technocratic government and shifting towards less frequent, legalist in-lieu-of direct repression (Fell 26ff). Reforms towards liberal democratic governance followed the 1987 lifting of martial law: More than 50 parties ran in the 1989 elections, although only the KMT and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, born out of organised resistance to the KMT before democratisation) won significant numbers of seats (Fell 36). Due to the design of the KMT-established electoral system, the 1989 elections would and did not shift the balance of power. Then-President Lee Teng-Hui engaged with substantial changes to the political system demanded in the 1990 Student Protests; they were gradually implemented (Fell 38). However, the societal and institutional impact of the authoritarian period continues to be felt in Taiwan: “With some revisions, Taiwan's 1947 constitution and government structure remains in place. Taiwan's ethnic divide, though narrowing, is still structured among the same lines that prompted the 228 Incident (Fell 29).”

Three Stages of TJ Efforts (1987–2016)

Taiwan's democratic transition was flanked by concurrent engagement with – and then disengagement from – TJ. Caldwell, whose 2018 review of Taiwanese transitional efforts “turned academic attention to the TJ regime of Taiwan” (Chang-Liao and Chen 619), views any TJ efforts prior to the Tsai administration as one single period. Schafferer (*Rise and Fall*) instead reads pre-Tsai efforts as three separate main stages. As Schafferer's framework provides greater nuance and highlights the transitions in TJ more lucidly, I adopt his taxonomy for this article.

“Compensation and Apology” (1988–2000)

The KMT remained in power until 2000. In the immediate aftermath of the 228 Incident, the KMT had imposed their narrative of events, blaming the “Japanised” Taiwanese, citing Communist conspiracy theories and material shortages as explanations for the Incident and ensuing repression (Phillips 84f). In the run-up to the 1987 elections and in view of waning popular support, the KMT issued full amnesties to 237 political prisoners and passed the 1987 *National Security Act*. This Act saw the return of civilian cases – previously tried in military courts – to civilian jurisdiction (Caldwell 13ff). Notwithstanding, the law did not prescribe re-assessment of sentences imposed during White Terror and insulated the KMT from legal responsibility (ibid.). The Constitutional Court, consisting entirely of KMT-appointed judges, confirmed legality of the law (Caldwell 15f), thus preventing TJ for years to come (Hwang 171). The 1995 *Recovery Act* sanctioned reparations and full restitution of civil and political rights in individual cases which had occurred between 20 May 1949 and 14 July 1987, i.e. implicitly excluding cases pertaining to the 228 Incident (Caldwell 17f). In reaction to entrenched ethnic divisions and increasing press freedom dismantling KMT control over public narratives, however, the 1995 *228 Compensation Act* expressly addressed the victims of the 228 Incident and established a mechanism for victims to apply for compensation. Nonetheless, though linguistic finesse the Act avoided apportioning blame to specific perpetrators. Simultaneously, it suggested that victims had been subjected to individual cases of injustice in an otherwise fair system, perpetuating the KMT’s stance of its own innocence and shielding it from further consequences (Caldwell 19f).

As Schafferer notes, this phase is closely associated with President Lee Teng-Hui. Taiwanese-born Lee was no staunch supporter of ROC-style Chinese nationalism, yet also had a long career during the authoritarian era and relied on support from within the KMT, of which he himself was a member. This, Schafferer posits, explains his cautious approach to TJ, offering compensation and apologies to acquiesce public demand, while not launching investigations into the KMT’s authoritarian-era activities: a 1992 government-financed report found Chiang indirectly guilty of the 228 Incident, yet did not inspire any further action by Lee. In conflict study terms and Graybill’s taxonomy, Lee’s approach is decidedly *amnestic*: People should forget and look ahead; truth-seeking and finding did not feature in Lee’s policies.

“Identifying the Perpetrators” (2000–2008)

The 2000 Presidential Election marked a watershed. The DPP’s Chen Shui-bian was elected as the first non-KMT president of Taiwan. Considering the DPP’s origins as non-parliamentary opposition to KMT dictatorship, Chen’s attempt to revisit TJ was a logical choice. He further promoted policies of *bentuhua* 本土化 [localisation] launched under Lee, emphasising Taiwan’s unique identity and foregrounding the Taiwanese language over KMT-introduced Mandarin. Beyond removing statues of Chiang Kai-Shek, Chen implemented several highly symbolic – and contested – name changes, such as renaming the square around Taipei’s Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall as *Liberty Square*. Stolojan (30) and Caldwell (23) concur that Chen’s most pivotal but largely unnoticed achievement was terminological in nature, amending the Chinese term used for “compensation” from *bu chang* 補償 to *pei chang* 賠償 in extant legislation; the latter implies that compensation is paid to mediate and offset damage arising from *illegal* actions. Nevertheless, the DPP did not hold the majority in Taiwan’s legislature, hence the government found itself in what Sisk (140) calls *cold peace*: Chen and the DPP were ultimately unable to pass any substantial TJ-related legislation (Caldwell). Corruption scandals later in his presidency sent Chen’s approval ratings dwindling. This further restricted his ability to undertake TJ projects (Rowen and Rowen 102).

Overall, Chen’s policies are aptly described by Rowen and Rowen (ibid.) as an “inconsistent and scattershot effort rather than the implementation of a comprehensive TJ agenda.” In Graybill’s taxonomy, Chen’s approach – albeit incomplete – seems to mark a turn towards *punishment*, aiming to identify individual White Terror-era perpetrators. As a lasting consequence, Schafferer notes, Chen’s endeavours saw TJ becoming racialised, with TJ and the DPP being identified with the *benshengren* community. Schafferer

relates how KMT-foregrounded notions of a TJ-racial prosecution nexus played out in their 2014 election campaigns in which they compared Chen to Adolf Hitler. Repercussions remain palpable, as Schafferer, too, indicates and as this article will explore further below.

“Chinese Historical Revisionism” (2008–2016)

Succeeding Chen, the KMT’s Ma Ying-jeou (in office 2008–2016) reversed much of his predecessor’s work. While he did attend 228 Incident memorial events and offered public apologies, Ma also visited shrines dedicated to Chiang Kai-Shek. As a result, popular discourse accused Ma of paying lip service (Caldwell 28, Stolojan 30f). His unwavering pro-China stance promoting close ties with the PRC caused widespread discontent and protests (ibid.).

Most voices in academia and popular discourse alike contend that these protests stem from the relatively limited scope and success of previous TJ efforts, and demand further, more targeted TJ campaigns (Chen and Chung, Hwang, Stolojan, Wu). Employing Lederach’s (*Civil Society and Reconciliation* 854) terminology, Taiwanese society senses the lack of an “ecosystem” for lasting peace. Indeed, such sentiment became evident e.g. at the 2013 Gongsheng [coexistence] Music Festival, where one of the founders equated Ma’s policies to those of the dictatorship (Rowen and Rowen 106). A certain culture of impunity among the KMT had been perceived in instances such as the KMT’s attempts to interfere in media reporting in the run-up to the 2008 elections (Fell 269).

Finally, the 2014 Sunflower Movement brought simmering dissatisfaction with Ma’s pro-China legislation and his refusal to revisit past KMT-perpetrated injustices to the fore, marking the largest protest in Taiwan’s history at 350,000 to 500,000 participants, during which students, activists and the general public occupied Taiwan’s legislative assembly (Rowen and Rowen 102f).

Rowen and Rowen (106) argue that this highlights that Taiwan had never truly been at peace and that grievances stemming from the 228 Incident and White Terror had transitioned into a cross-generational issue, with descendants of victims of the authoritarian regime demanding justice. Broader conflict research indeed suggests this consequence: Employing Graybill’s framework of post-conflict methods in Africa, Taiwan had unsuccessfully traced a path of “disremembering” or “amnesia.” Contrasted with other spaces where such methods were employed – Graybill (1125f) cites Mozambique, where ritual healing ceremonies reintegrated perpetrators and victims into the community – Taiwan designed no such re-integrative mechanism, nor fully recognised historical oppression (Stolojan 31), be it under Lee, Chen or Ma.

A Fourth Stage?

The DPP’s Tsai Ying-Wen, a lawyer by training, was voted into office mandate in 2016. Caldwell (28ff) identifies this as a fundamental break with Taiwan’s previous TJ efforts. In her campaign emphasising civil society over party politics (Fell 277), Tsai had expressly included TJ as one of the “five pillars of reform,” focusing on systemic injustices arising from Taiwan’s contemporary political and justice system which largely stemmed from the pre-democracy era. She further vowed to acknowledge grievances of Taiwan’s indigenous population including under Japanese colonial rule and engage in truth-telling and truth-finding *vis-à-vis* the 228 Incident and White Terror alongside reassessment of assets illegally seized by the KMT pre-democratisation (Tsai, *VOTE 2016*). Warding off potential criticism of pursuing *benshengren* clientelism at the expense of *waishengren* interests, Tsai had crucially distanced herself from the previous DPP president, Chen (Fell 271).

Tsai reaffirmed this commitment in her 2016 inaugural address, which included a 30 min The Light of Taiwan dance routine providing one reading of 400 years of Taiwanese history, comprising unequivocal references to the 228 Incident and the White Terror period and recognised Taiwan’s aboriginal population as the island’s first inhabitants. Tsai (*VOTE 2016*) further outlined the TJ process she envisaged as a

government-guided process “with civil society to align its policies with the values of diversity, equality, openness, transparency, and human rights, so as to deepen and evolve Taiwan’s democratic institutions.” Tsai (ibid.) specifically announced a TRC to “discover the truth, heal wounds, and clarify responsibilities” so that “history will no longer divide Taiwan.” This indicates that Tsai is acutely aware of the societal rifts ill-advised TJ projects can widen (cf. Lederach, *Civil Society and Reconciliation*) and which – the academy suggests – can only be mended by fully recognising the structural, systematic nature of pre-democratisation crimes. Echoing academic research of TJ as a tool to prevent future crimes against the local population (Sriram 591), Tsai (*Inaugural Address*) argued that the past had to be confronted to avoid similar mistakes in the future: “Instead, it [history] will propel Taiwan forward.”

Heeding these campaign promises, the Tsai administration has since passed the 2016 Illicit Assets Act and the 2017 Act on Promoting Transitional Justice (Caldwell 31ff). The former triggered the set-up of the Ill-gotten Party Assets Settlement Committee investigating assets illegally expropriated by “political parties” – not referring to the KMT by name – and, if possible, returning these assets to their rightful owners (Ministry of Justice). Tsai’s DPP has always been in an uphill funding struggle while the KMT has maintained access to vast amounts of funds dating back to the White Terror period and beyond – assets that the DPP has claimed should be the state’s, rather than the KMT’s. Caldwell (33f) concludes that while it is too early to assess the full impact of the Committee, it has already begun dismantling the KMT’s “vast property empire.”

Finally, grounded in the 2017 Act on Promoting Transitional Justice, the Transitional Justice Commission was established to launch operations on 31 May 2018, tasked with “making political archives more readily available, removing authoritarian symbols, redressing judicial injustice, and producing a report” (Legislative Yuan; own translation). Practically, the Commission is to effect exonerations, remove symbols of authoritarianism, declassify documents and review school curricula (ibid.). In the following analysis, I focus on the TJC given space constraints and the body’s centrality to TJ efforts.

Contextualising Taiwan’s TJC: Paper Tiger or Disruptive Force?

A purely executive rather than judicial body, the TJC’s main duties are revisiting White Terror-era sentences and truth-finding, for which it has been granted unfettered access to previously classified archives. In so doing, it is tasked to focus on structures, not individual perpetrators, although the TJC has exonerated nearly 6,000 victims as of late 2020 (Chen and Chung). Among the exonerated were people as well-established as ex-vice president Annette Lu, suggesting that exonerations are chiefly symbolic. Yet, focusing on structures of repression instead of judicial prosecution, many of those who might not be able to share their own accounts may feel represented in the TJC’s work, producing a collective narrative with which a majority can identify.

Structural changes and a collective truth were not achieved in South Africa, for instance. Similar to how *ubuntu* was leveraged in South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Taiwan’s approach seems to mobilise its culture emphasising the individual as part of a larger community. More pragmatically, this approach also negotiates the impossible number of individual cases, an issue which had brought the International Court on Rwanda (Graybill 1123) and South Korea’s TRC (Hanley 156ff) close to collapse. Since Taiwan’s former authoritarian leaders are predominantly dead or unable to stand trial, *post mortem* and/or *in absentia* rulings would be neither practicable nor do justice to Taiwan’s democratic identity.

Nonetheless, prioritising structures over individual responsibility not only allows for justice despite the above difficulties, but also requires no individual perpetrator to repent for justice to be served: Unwillingness to confess majorly hampered South Africa’s TRC amnesty mechanism (Graybill 1119). Similar to public health strategies to crime (e.g. Slutkin et al.), Taiwan’s TJC discursively creates an imagined scapegoat which can be ritually killed by ensuing systemic reform. Furthermore, this reflects Pankhurst’s (242) deliberations admonishing that pursuing criminal justice can thwart reconciliation: Tsai’s approach – reminiscent of Lederach’s (*Civil Society and Reconciliation* 853) claim that to attain peace, “violent patterns” must be confronted – negotiates the tension Pankhurst identifies between justice and reconciliation not through a trade-off but fusion – reconciliation through non-criminal justice.

Taiwan's TJC has certainly had teething problems. Most centrally, radical KMT members disrupted hearings in the early stages (Hioe, *Anger After KMT Disrupts TJC Meeting*). The first vice-chairman of the TJC was caught on tape suggesting the TJC could investigate a KMT mayoral candidate for New Taipei City to benefit the DPP candidate. Following public outcry, the vice-chairman and chairman – a DPP member – resigned; Yang Tsui – an independent – succeeded him (ibid.).

The TJC has produced results beyond the exonerations mentioned above. Most pivotally, it has developed a database of politically motivated court cases prior to democratization, which reportedly included over 13,000 entries as of late February 2021 (Focus Taiwan, *Chiang Kai-Shek*). The database also confirms earlier estimates that *waishengren* were disproportionately affected under White Terror, accounting for 45% of sentences (ibid.).

As the key product of its work, the TJC was expected to produce a final report by May 2021. A preliminary 1,200-page *Draft Report on the Truth of the 228 Incident and Transitional Justice* commissioned by the TJC and compiled by historians was published in March 2020. The TJC published a partial draft of its final report in September 2021, to have its mandate extended again to May 2022. The extension by no means suggests that the TJC is a paper tiger. As I outline below, its strength lies in its discursive power, which grows through the extension.

Taiwan's TJC: Cui Bono?

As outlined above, fresh TJ efforts were deemed necessary by many in the Taiwanese and international academy and the general public. The wider conflict research community would echo this and argue that Taiwan is not at *positive peace*: amnesia has failed. However, this line of argument is not unproblematic. Galtung's definition of *positive peace* is so strict that it might ultimately be unattainable. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find a society which would be at positive peace in the Galtungian sense. This, in turn, questions if Galtung's taxonomy might not be overreaching. Galtung (167) avoids this tension by positing that as matter of principle (!) while *positive peace* might be complex, it is not impossible to attain, hence appealing to the reader's faith in the model rather than providing further clarification.

More globally, conflict and peacebuilding research has not resolved the inherent tension located in it claiming TJ approaches need to be highly localised and reflect the cultural and historical background of the respective space (Bell 7ff, Sriram 582) while aiming to provide universal turn-key solutions. Even cases deemed successful instances of TJ are tremendously troubled: Arguing that South Africa – commonly upheld as the TJ gold standard and posterchild – is at peace – negative or positive, for that matter – is certainly a far cry from local realities.

At the same time, many leading scholars in the field are clearly working through Western cultural lens (es). Lederach (*The Journey*) – one of the eminent scholars in the field – readily declares that his work is grounded in his Christian faith. The pillars he proposes – truth, mercy, justice and peace – are imbued with Christian conceptualisations. Most pivotally, however, the academy has to date failed to identify hard-and-fast guidelines for conflict resolution. In light of this, claiming any (especially non-Christian) space *requires* TJ to be at peace seems somewhat spurious. By extension, then, we might question if and to what extent TJ is the right choice for Taiwan, given Taiwan is a stable democracy and violence surrounding events such as the Sunflower Movement might be isolated events. Domestically, public support might have been lukewarm, yet TJ still is generally deemed necessary (Caldwell, Chang-Liao and Chen, Hwang, Stolojan, Wu). Notwithstanding, in view of prior experience, the conflation of identity politics and TJ since the Chen administration renders any TJ project by default a particularly hazardous affair, implying that Tsai's decision to set up TJ institutions was not taken lightly.

Not unexpectedly, the KMT has critiqued what it considers the excessively narrow scope of the TJC and sought to expand the TJC's capacities to include the European and Japanese colonial periods (Caldwell 237). While this might have been an attempt to ridicule TJ and ultimately whitewash the KMT's actions pre-democratisation, it could equally be read as the KMT being inextricably co-opted into the TJ agenda set by the DPP; recent news that KMT legislator Chiang Wan-An suggested to widen the scope of compensation for

victims of the White Terror (Chen and Chung) might indicate that TJ as an agenda item is inescapable even for the KMT.

Reviewing the work of the TJC until 2021, Donovan Smith notes the fact that issues ultimately addressed appear eclectically selected along the lines of political salience: street names referring to KMT ideology and rulers have not been renamed, Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall remains unchanged, Sun Yat-Sen has not been removed from Taiwanese banknotes. Overall, then, the TJ record is mixed.

Considering the above, scholars, too, have wondered about the TJC's true purpose. Rowen and Rowen posit that relatively stable democracies such as Taiwan can leverage TJ as part of a geopolitical strategy when faced with a hostile authoritarian power at their doorstep. Stolojan (36), by contrast, reads Taiwan's most recent TJ as an attempt to create a collective memory amalgamated from the individual experiences of White Terror victims; this process is hitherto incomplete and difficult to complete.

There is salience in both assessments. I concur with Stolojan in that the work of the TJC is chiefly an exercise in creating a collective memory in view of defining a new Taiwanese identity: a shared understanding of events as central in the collective imaginary as the 228 Incident is indispensable to develop a shared identity. Tsai's emphasis on unity suggests as much. This in part is possible because distinctions between *waishengren* and *benshengren* are increasingly blurred. Many families are mixed, and even *waishengren* today hardly feel less Taiwanese than *benshengren*, even if they generally care for their *waishengren* identity (cf. Corcuff). In this process of collective memory creation, the specifics of the final results might not however carry as much weight as Stolojan may suggest, and the emphasis is rather on the trajectory than on the result.

The act of negotiating a national identity *per se* is an emancipatory act and an expression of factual sovereignty. Rowen and Rowen reading TJ as a geopolitical survival strategy *vis-à-vis* China does not explain how the existence of TJ mechanisms encourages other democracies to extend protection. In particular, it remains unclear why TJ programmes should yield any impact on other nations that other markers of democracy do not: If countries did not consider Taiwan's democratic institutions sufficient, why should TJ processes be a game-changer?

Unlike Rowen and Rowen, who refer to Taiwan as a contested state, I read Tsai's TJ programme as an – successful, in the interim – attempt to escape the *China lens* through which Taiwan is frequently seen (Sullivan and Lee). This should not suggest that China is irrelevant to Taiwan; I rather argue that the academy, too, should avoid viewing Taiwan through a Chinese prism *ex ante*, lest we be co-opted in narratives promoted by pre-democracy ROC ideologues or today's PRC statesmen: In too many an analysis, China is implicitly or explicitly the starting point of Taiwan research, rather than one aspect of it. *In extremis*, everything Taiwan does is framed against the context of China, rather than aiming to understand Taiwan on its own terms – an analysis in which China may or may not feature. After all, the academy would not apply the same standards in researching Singaporean policy-making as reflective of Malaysian behaviours, or Austria's as mirroring German attitudes: Scholars would rather aim to avoid becoming implicated in an external political agenda, inadvertently taking for granted, implicitly prioritising and reifying certain discursive structures and power relations, severely diminishing the explanatory power of any analysis – especially when this link between Taiwan and China is created *ex post* by analysts and journalists, and not *ex ante* by policymakers (ibid.).

Drawing on deliberations laid out above, for Taiwan domestically a *positive identity* which is self-contained and independent of the Other – China – is then more stable. At the same time, it opens a greater space for experimental approaches to Taiwanese identity, beyond discussions orbiting the question as to what shade of Chineseness constitutes Taiwanese. Tsai not mentioning China once in her Inauguration Address alludes to this shift from China as the Other, as does the remit of the TJC: By considering events after the arrival of the *waishengren*, it preempts debates on the legitimacy of *waishengren* membership of the Taiwanese national community and avoids re-opening Pandora's box dividing the population in two groups which have become increasingly indistinguishable. By not incorporating any expressly external actors from Taiwan's history (namely colonial powers and Koxinga), the TJC discursively defines the 228 Incident as the starting point of modern Taiwanese history, implicitly after the last direct contact Taiwan had with China – the KMT's retreat to Taiwan. By zeroing in on structures and emblems such as Chiang Kai-Shek

rather than individuals, it overcomes the conflation of KMT and the Taiwanese state in pre-democratic Taiwan which Stolojan (29) had identified as a potential source of further conflict and tension. In this, the fact that most perpetrators of the revisited crimes have died and cannot be held accountable does not suggest that Taiwan has “missed the boat” as Bruce Jacobs (qtd. in Rickards) has argued – it is a strategic choice: the central target is to define common narratives of Taiwanese identity which as many Taiwanese as possible can identify with.

Beyond speaking to a domestic audience, Taiwan’s TJ under Tsai is embedded in a wider international discussion: First, by communicating with and speaking to debates on TJ, and building on and engaging with the experience of other (post-conflict) states. More crucially, however, the TJC has established partnerships with TJ organisations abroad, including Germany’s Stasi Records Agency (Focus Taiwan, *Taiwan, Germany Sign Deal*) and South Korea’s May 18 Memorial Foundation (Chen and Xie), encompassing regular exchanges, workshops and exhibitions. This enables Taiwan as Taiwan to project the identity narratives produced to an international audience (cf. Schafferer, *Foreign Aid*).

Conclusion

In this text, I argue that Taiwan’s TJC is a carefully crafted project not chiefly to address past wrongs, but primarily to establish shared narratives central to the modern Taiwanese national imaginary, namely the 228 Incident and the White Terror period. Cardinaly, it does so to negotiate a broad, yet ultimately more stable Taiwanese identity which does not rely on China as an Other.

My review of earlier Taiwanese TJ efforts and their undoing suggests that re-engaging in TJ once again is a potentially divisive endeavour, and as such is unlikely to be an end in itself. In my analysis, I contrast Taiwan’s TJ approaches with the wider literature and experiences elsewhere, and engage assessments of the Tsai administration’s TJ system other scholars have proposed. I then put forward a critique of these readings, concluding that ultimately, Taiwan’s TJ under Tsai is best understood as a narrative-establishing and identity-building project, and is situated in wider efforts to create a positive Taiwanese identity at home and abroad. This then opens a much greater space for experimental and open definitions of Taiwanese identity which could not exist in the context of the stifling Taiwan/China dichotomy/nexus. As such, it is a highly meaningful process, rather than another iteration of an exercise in futility.

Since preliminary results of the TJC have only been made available and its efforts remain ongoing – for instance in that the TJC only in September reignited a debate by recommending the removal of Chiang’s statue from Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall – both the TJ and Taiwan Studies community might want to closely follow future developments of Taiwan’s TJC – also in a few years from now – to assess the true extent to which TJ might have served Taiwanese identity-building efforts.

Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank Dr Dafydd Fell (SOAS) for his guidance throughout the years.

Conflict of interest: Author states not conflict of interest.

Works Cited

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2016 [1983].
- Baldanza, Kathlene. *Ming China and Vietnam: Negotiating Borders in Early Modern Asia*. Cambridge UP, 2016.
- Bell, Christine. “Transitional Justice, Interdisciplinarity and the State of the ‘Field’ or ‘Non-Field’.” *The International Journal of Transitional Justice*, vol. 3, 2009, pp. 5–27.
- Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Anchor Books, 1966.

- Caldwell, Ernest. "Transitional Justice Legislation in Taiwan Before and During the Tsai Administration." *Washington International Law Journal*, vol. 27, no. 449, 2018. SOAS, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID3089601_code2054980.pdf?abstractid=3089601&mirid=1.
- Chang-Liao, Nien-Chung and Yu-Jie Chen. "Transitional Justice in Taiwan: Changes and Challenges." *Washington International Law Journal*, vol. 28, no. 619, 2019, pp. 619–44.
- Chen, Chun-Hung and Han-Hui Chung. "Unfinished Democracy: Transitional Justice in Taiwan." *Studia z Polityki Publicznej/ Public Policy Studies*, vol. 4, no. 12, 2016, pp. 13–35.
- Chen, Yun and Jake Chung. "Expanded Legislative Options Mooted for White Terror Cases." *Taipei Times*, 13 January 2021. <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2021/01/13/2003750488>.
- Chen, Yu-Fu and Jake Chung. "Justice Commission Overturns White Terror Convictions." *Taipei Times*, 8 November 2020. <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2020/11/08/2003746572>.
- Chen, Yu-Fu and Dennis Xie. "Exhibition on S Korea's Gwangju Uprising Opens." *Taipei Times*, 7 December 2019. <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/12/07/2003727127>.
- Corcuff, Stephane. "Wang Shi: Changes in the National Identification of a Third-Generation Mainlander Under Ma Ying-Jeou." *Changing Taiwanese Identities*, edited by J. Bruce Jacobs and Peter Kang, Routledge, 2019, pp. 111–126.
- Donovan Smith, Courtney. "Taiwan's Transitional Justice in 2021: Accomplishments and Frustrations." *Katagalan Media*, 1 March 2021. <https://ketagalanmedia.com/2021/03/01/taiwan-transitional-justice-2021-accomplishments-frustrations/>.
- Fell, Dafydd. *Government and Politics in Taiwan*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2018.
- Focus, Taiwan. "Taiwan, Germany Sign Deal on Promoting Transitional Justice." *CNA English News*, 13 December 2019. <https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/201912130020>.
- Focus, Taiwan. "Chiang Kai-Shek Participated in Over 4,000 Political Trials: TJC." *CNA English News*, 26 February 2021. <https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202102260018>.
- Galtung, Johan. "An Editorial." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1964, pp. 1–4.
- Graybill, Lyn S. "Pardon, Punishment, and Amnesia: Three African Post-Conflict Methods." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 6, 2004. pp. 1117–1130.
- Hanley, Paul. "Transitional Justice in South Korea: One Country's Restless Search for Truth and Reconciliation." *University of Pennsylvania East Asia Law Review*, vol. 9, 2014, pp. 138–166.
- Harrison, Mark. *Legitimacy, Meaning, and Knowledge in the Making of Taiwanese Identity*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Harrison, Sarah and Michael Bruter. *Mapping Extreme Right Ideology: An Empirical Geography of the European Extreme Right*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Hioe, Brian. "What Do Recent Shifts in Taiwanese Identification Mean?" *New Bloom*, 23 March 2016. <https://newbloommag.net/2016/03/23/shifts-taiwanese-identification/>.
- Hioe, Brian. "Anger After KMT Disrupts Transitional Justice Commission Meeting." *New Bloom*, 12 December 2018. <https://newbloommag.net/2018/12/12/transitional-justice-disrupt/>.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge UP, 1983.
- Hwang, Jau-Yuan. "Transitional Justice in Postwar Taiwan." *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan*, edited by Gunter Schubert. Routledge, 2016. pp. 169–183.
- Lederach, John Paul. *The Journey Toward Reconciliation*. Herald Press, 1999.
- Lederach, John Paul. "Civil Society and Reconciliation." *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, edited by Chester A. Crocker et al. United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001, pp. 841–854.
- Legislative Yuan. "促進轉型正義條例草案總說明 (Explanations on the Bill of the Transitional Justice Act)." 30 March 2017. https://lci.ly.gov.tw/LyLCEW/agenda1/02/pdf/09/01/07/LCEWA01_090107_00045.pdf.
- Ministry of Justice. "政黨及其附隨組織不當取得財產處理條例 (Act Overning the Handling of Illicit Assets of Political Parties and Their Affiliates)." 10 August 2016. <http://law.moj.gov.tw/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?PCode=A0030286>.
- Pankhurst, Donna. "Issues of Justice and Reconciliation in Complex Political Emergencies: Conceptualising Reconciliation, Justice and Peace." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1999, pp. 239–256.
- Payne, Leigh A. and Kathryn Sikkink. "Transitional Justice in the Asia-Pacific: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives." *Transitional Justice in the AsiaPacific*, edited by Renée Jeffrey and Hun Joon Kim. Cambridge UP, 2013, pp. 33–60.
- Phillips, Steven E. *Between Assimilation and Independence: The Taiwanese Encounter Nationalist China, 1945–1950*. Stanford UP, 2003.
- Rickards, Jane. "Coming to Terms with the Past." *Taiwan Business Topics*, 18 September 2018. <https://topics.amcham.com.tw/2018/09/coming-to-terms-with-the-past/>.
- Rigger, Shelley. *Why Taiwan Matters: Small Island, Global Powerhouse*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011.
- Rowen, Ian, and Jamie Rowen (2017) "Taiwan's Truth and Reconciliation Committee." *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, vol. 11, 2017, pp. 92–112.
- Schafferer, Christian. "The Rise and Fall of Transitional Justice in Taiwan." *Middle East Institute*, 13 February 2014. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/rise-and-fall-transitional-justice-taiwan>.
- Schafferer, Christian. "Foreign Aid, Democracy Promotion, and Taiwan's Quest for Recognition." *The Niche Diplomacy of Asian Middle Powers*, edited by Brendan M. Howe. Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, pp. 57–78.

- Simon, Scott. "Making Natives: Japan and the Creation of Indigenous Formosa." *Japanese Taiwan: Colonial Rule and its Contested Legacy*, edited by Andrew D. Morris. Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. 75–92.
- Sisk, Timothy D. "Power-Sharing After Civil Wars: Matching Problems to Solutions." *Contemporary Peacemaking*, edited by John Darby and Roger Mac Ginty. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 139–150.
- Slutkin, Gary et al. "Cure Violence: Treating Violence As a Contagious Disease." *Envisioning Criminology*, edited by Michael D. Maltz and Stephen Rice. Springer, 2015, pp. 43–56.
- Stolojan, Vladimir. "Transitional Justice and Collective Memory in Taiwan: How Taiwanese Society is Coming to Terms with Its Authoritarian Past." *China Perspectives*, vol. 2, 2017, pp. 27–35.
- Sriram, Chandra Lekha. "Justice as Peace? Liberal Peacebuilding and Strategies of Transitional Justice." *Global Society*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2007, pp. 579–591.
- Sullivan, Jonathan, and Don S. Lee. "Soft Power into Popular Geopolitics: Western Media Frames Democratic Taiwan." *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*, vol. 1, 2018, pp. 273–300.
- Tsai, Ying-Wen. "VOTE 2016: Tsai Ying-Wen's Five Major Reforms." *Thinking Taiwan*, 17 September 2015. <http://thinking-taiwan.com/vote-2016-tsai-ing-wens-fivemajor-reforms/>.
- Tsai, Ying-Wen. Inaugural Address of ROC 14th-Term President Tsai Ing-Wen, 20 May 2016. <https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/4893>.
- Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge UP, 1999.
- Wong, Timothy K.-Y. "From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: The Formation and Changing Nature of Taiwanese Identity." *Asian Perspective*, vol. 25, no. 3, 2001, pp. 175–206.
- Wu, Naiteh. "Transition Without Justice, or Justice Without History: Transitional Justice in Taiwan." *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2005, pp. 77–102.
- Yang, Dominic M.-D. *The Great Exodus from China: Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Modern Taiwan*. Cambridge UP, 2020.