

# Human Rights Education in Taiwan: The Second Ten Years 2008–2018

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## Abstract

This paper is designed as a follow up of the report on the first decade. It picks up from where the first article left off. As the last three years of the Chen Shui-bian administration did not bring about any perceptible development in the field, this article will concentrate on the years 2008 to 2018, that is from the Ma Ying-jeou administration to that of the first two years of Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) presidency. It is primarily concerned with human rights education in the primary and secondary schools and the universities, leaving the education and training of government officials and the citizenry for later study. A fairly detailed analysis of the efforts of the Curriculum and Instruction Consulting Team(s) sponsored by the Ministry of Education, the National Human Rights Museum under the Ministry of Culture and the Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University will be provided.

Similar to the previous article, this paper relies mainly on official documents, especially those of the government ministries and civil society organizations, the reviews of international experts, the studies by scholars as well as my personal observation. As usual, I also circulated my paper for comments and criticism to several colleagues who have been intimately involved in the field.

## Keywords

human rights education, curriculum guidelines, Curriculum and Instruction Consulting Team(s), national human rights museum, Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights

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## I. Introduction

In my paper “Human Rights Education in Taiwan: The First Ten Years”(2018) I briefly describe and analyze the initial efforts of three higher educational institutes—Soochow University, Yang-ming Medical College, now Yang-ming Medical School and Taipei Teachers College, now the Educational University of Taipei—their motivations, the support by the Taipei Municipal Government and then the Central Government when Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) was elected in 2000 to the presidency, the narrative ending in a sad note on the great setback in the years 2004–2005. Given the shift to an emphasis on Taiwanese identity, with a focus on teaching the history, geography and culture of Taiwan, the government for all practical purposes withdrew their support, and the academic community and non-government organizations dedicated to promoting human rights education were left to fend for themselves. My paper also makes it clear that in an unexpected turn of events, the ratification of the two international human rights covenants by the Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) administration in 2009 made the implementation of human rights education part of the treaty obligations of the government and provide the academic community and NGOs a new opportunity to keep plodding on, facing new challenge, without any assurance of progress.

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involved in the field.

## II. Human Rights Education and the Ma Ying-jeou Administration

In evaluating the policy and performance of the Ma Ying-jeou administration, a long infectious issue must be accounted for first as it directly affected human rights education. Almost all of the eight years of Ma Ying-jeou's presidency was consumed by a controversy over the ideological underpinning of the courses of history and social studies being taught in the high schools. The battlefield was the course guidelines the Ministry of Education provided to the textbook publishers for compiling and editing the textbooks. And the battle cry chosen by the supporters of the government was no less than to redress the chaotic situation and return to normalcy, i.e. to overthrow the policy guidelines adopted by former Minister Tu Cheng-sheng (杜正勝) who had advocated a Taiwan-centered educational policy and to return to the policy supported by the Chinese Nationalist Party (Huang, 2018: 77). On the other side, the opposition emphasized both the need for a pluralist approach to the writing and teaching of Taiwanese history, respect for professionalism as well as the upholding of procedural justice in the decision-making process.

The use of curriculum guidelines for the textbook publishers was a fairly recent institution, not earlier than the year 1999, as part of the educational reform. Prior to that time, writing and editing of all textbooks for all levels of schools, including the universities, was a prerogative of the Ministry of Education under the authoritarian government of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and his son. The new policy, referred to as “one guideline, many texts,” adopted in 1999 was taken as a loosening up of the ideological control of the minds of the young students, and for the first time, the publishers enjoyed some freedom in how they would follow the guidelines (Chou, 2017: 11). By consensus the year attached to the guidelines indicates the year that they would be implemented. Thus, Guidelines 98 means those for the year 2009, using the year 1911 when the Republic of China was founded as year one.

The controversy, indeed, had been coming to a head for a long time. In the year 1997 during the presidency of Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), “Knowing Taiwan” was made part of the curriculum of the high schools, thus provoking the accusation that the government was covertly aiming at Taiwanese

independence from China. In 2006, with Dr. Tu serving as the Minister of Education, the writing of the textbooks and teaching of the history of Taiwan was separated from that of China and given equal status (Chou, 2017: 17).

A year later, Dr. Tu Cheng-sheng proceeded to announce that some five thousand phrases in the textbooks were erroneous and needed be corrected, reinforcing the charge that he was dedicated to removing any connections with China in the history textbooks.

At the end of the Chen Shui-bian presidency, Minister Tu left behind the curriculum guidelines 98 which had been discussed yet not formally adopted. The first Minister of Education appointed by President Ma Ying-jeou without much warning declared in October 2008 that the guidelines for the history of Taiwan and those for Chinese language for high schools textbooks were to be suspended and a new ad hoc group was set up in 2009 to revise the Guidelines 98, in which both Professor Chou Wan-yao (周婉窈), a professor of history of Taiwan at the National Taiwan University who would later play a crucial role in the dispute on the opposition side, and Professor Wang Hsiao-po (王曉波), also of National Taiwan University but a fervent advocate of Chinese nationalism who was fairly sympathetic to the position of Beijing government, were recruited into this ad hoc group, thus beginning a new round of bitter and dramatic confrontation that came to a close only when the Democratic Progressive Party won both the presidency and the majority of the Legislative Yuan in 2016 (Chou, 2017: 21). During the eight years of controversy, both sides were passionate and worked hard in mobilizing their support from civil society. President Ma, several of his Ministers of Education, members of the Legislative Yuan, the NGO community, university professors and schoolteachers, as well as students and their families were all deeply committed in their engagement. Professor Wang Hsiao-po apparently thought of himself as the spokesman of the government and acted arrogantly in the opinion of the opposition. On the opposition side, Professor Chou Wan-yao was the first to warn of the dangers of the maneuvers by the supporters of the government in her Facebook on February 8, 2010 and was quickly joined by many university and high-school history teachers and their students (Chou, 2010). After two years of heated debate, accusations and counteraccusations and mobilization for support, the work was done and it was scheduled to be implemented in 2012, and thus became known as the 101 Curriculum Guidelines.

The 101 Curriculum Guidelines apparently did not pacify either camp. President Ma Ying-jeou, if he had not taken part in this dispute earlier, definitely was motivated to intervene at this point. This should not come as a surprise. President Ma had been known through his long career of public service for his commitment to upholding the claims of legitimate rule of the Chinese Nationalist Party government in Taiwan and the enduring value of Chinese tradition, especially the political and social philosophy of Confucianism. And it is worth mentioning that in the face of the Confucian Institutes set up in universities abroad sponsored by the Chinese government, it was President Ma who countered with the establishment of Taiwan Academies in selected countries in Asia and the US (“Confucius Says; Soft Power,” 2014). What he chose to do at this point was to declare in a meeting of the Central Standing Committee of the Chinese Nationalist Party on July 11, 2012 that any materials relating to Taiwanese people as Imperial subjects of Japan or advocacy of Taiwanese independence from China must be excised, and that the history of Taiwan and that of China must be grouped together into a single volume of national history, for only this was in conformity with government policy guided by the Constitution (Ching Cheng, 2012). Prior to that, Professor Hsieh Ta-ning (謝大寧), a Chinese Nationalist Party steward, a former member of the Legislative Yuan and a member of the ad hoc group to review the 98 Curriculum Guidelines for Chinese language, had warned the President of the dire situation if no urgent action was taken to revise the 101 Guidelines. According to Professor Hsieh, the President was shocked when he personally examined some of the newly edited textbooks (Xie, 2015: 8). Professor Hsieh did not act alone. Precisely a month before President Ma’s instruction, Professor Chang Ya-chung (張亞中) of National Taiwan University, a long-time advocate of a traditional Chinese historical perspective, was recruited as an expert to review the textbooks compiled by the publishers and was dissatisfied with what he saw. Professor Chang had written extensively taking an uncompromised position that Taiwan history must be understood as a component part of Chinese history and that the purposes of Presidents Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian, in their efforts to tamper with the textbooks was nothing less than a subversion of national identity (Chang, 2012: 241–244). His participation immediately provoked an alarm.

Yet in January 2014 it became public knowledge that an ad hoc group which had been set up since August 2013 to examine the textbooks and

undertake “minor changes” as needed, had instead surreptitiously changed the texts quite substantially. With this exposure, a pitched fight was inevitable. On February 4, several high school civic education teachers came together and organized the Action Coalition of Civics Teacher with Mr. Chou Wei-tung (周威同) of National Taitung Girls’ Senior High School as the convener. They proceeded to stage a hunger strike on February 8 (Chou, 2017: 29).

In April 2015, another teacher organization, the History Teacher Alliance for the Defense of Our Story (*Lishih Jiaoshih Shen’gen Lianmeng*) was convened under the leadership of Huang Hui-chen (黃惠貞) of Banqiao Senior High School. Following that, some 24 scholars and 39 civil society organizations together founded the Anti-Black Box Curriculum Guidelines Action. Professor Chen Tsui-lien (陳翠蓮) of the National Taiwan University, Mr. Wu Mi-cha (吳密察), then-director of Academia Historica (now Director of the National Palace Museum), Professor Xue Hua-yuan (薛化元) of National Chengchi University, Professor Wu Jieh-min (吳介民) and Professor Chang Mau-kuei (張茂桂) of Academia Sinica, among others, supported the fight. The students at the First High School in Taichung publicly declared against the Guidelines on May 1. Other high schools followed. Professor Chou Wan-yao and her colleagues were invited to lecture in high schools, and to their great surprise and delight, they were warmly welcome. Press conferences were held, lawsuits filed, and students took to the streets. At this point, the controversy turned into a social campaign by the opposition.

Facing widespread opposition, the Ministry of Education, nevertheless, refused to budge. The students began to demonstrate outside the Ministry on July 22 and attempted to occupy the front courtyard the next day. They were arrested and charged with trespassing. For many young students in their teens, it was their first test of open rebellion against the government, and in some cases, against their parents. A student committed suicide on July 30. Her mother, who had not been supportive, was moved to affirm his independence, saying that he had not been maneuvered by any political group to join the campaign—that is not by the Democratic Progressive Party. As a long time foreign resident-observer put it, it was a fight of the young students committed to a more open and democratic society and style of living against the traditional Confucian values championed by the authoritarian Chinese Nationalist Party / government (Cole, 2015).

The whole episode, as mentioned earlier, was brought to an end by the new administration under Tsai Ing-wen in 2016. Yet the quarrel over the issues which had provoked the confrontation still lingered on. At this writing, an editorial of the *China Times* again boldly blamed President Ma Ying-jeou for not thoroughly revamping the curriculum guidelines for high school history whilst allowing the erroneous idea to survive that the status of Taiwan in international law is undetermined (*China Times*, 2019). Professors Wang Hsiao-po and Chang Ya-chung should be gratified that their arguments still are alive and well.

### III. The Endeavors of the Ministry of Education.

The Ma Ying-jeou administration, as has been described elsewhere, had ratified the two international human rights covenants in 2009, and experts and scholars were invited from several countries to review the national reports in 2013 and 2017, thus assuming the obligation for human rights education in schools (Huang, 2018: 79). This of course was a turn for the better, which had not been anticipated, and contributed to the patchwork situation of the second ten years.

Through the second ten years, the government obviously played a lesser role, with the universities and schools as well as NGOs moving in on the field. A comprehensive national plan is needed yet the government would not or could not provide it.

Compared with the disciplines, such as history or social sciences which are provided for by the curriculum guidelines, the teaching of human rights, as referred to in my previous article (Huang, 2018), was to be incorporated into the disciplines without allocated teaching hours and it goes without saying without designated teachers. Indeed, a debate had been going on for some time whether it would be better to advocate allocated teaching hours or not. It is fairly clear that the present arrangements tend to neglect and inaction, as not many teachers would voluntarily assume the extra workload. Yet to go for allocated teaching hours would risk turning human rights education into a lifeless, routinely taught subject, a mere feeding from hand to mouth subject.

Nevertheless, to provide some guidance for the teaching of human rights as well as other subjects such as gender equality, education for the environment and ocean education, referred to as the 4 important issues, an



ad hoc group was organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Education to compile a handbook for the teachers in these fields. In this ad hoc group, Professor Lin Chia-fan (林佳範), a well-known scholar and experienced administrator at National Taiwan Normal University represents so to speak the field of human rights and simultaneously leads the Curriculum and Instruction Consulting Team which is, in the judgment of this writer, the most important undertaking by the Ministry of Education in the past decade.

To be precise, in 2008 a decision was made that as the disciplines such as history, social sciences and language have their curriculum guidelines, so the four important issues referred to above need theirs also (Lin, 2018: 97).

The Curriculum and Instruction Consulting Team was first set up at the national level, to be followed by their counterpart at the local, that is county level in 2009. This was different from the “central schools” the purpose of which was to implement the “friendly campus” campaign described in this writer’s article in 2018 in that the “central schools” were only concerned with the administrators, for the aim was to maintain a friendly environment on campus, and human rights education was simply abandoned. Professor Lin’s teams instead were and still are to help the teachers on the front line to do a good job in teaching human rights. They aimed at creating a learning community, from the national team to that of local government to that of schools. By far, the national team was better organized, by far: some members / teachers were given reduced teaching hours, using two days in a week to take care of chore tasks of the team. More than forty school principals, deans and university professors were invited to serve as consultants. Internally, the national team set up an executive committee and a consulting committee. During the summer break, it used to hold three training sessions, the beginning and the advanced training sessions taking five days and that for the conveners of the local teams three days, reminiscent of the practice in the first years of the Chen Shui-bian administration (Lin, 2018: 99).

Next to the training sessions described above, the national team also implemented what is referred to as “regional guidance” sessions, that is, either arranging lecture tours or sending down members of the national team to do a demonstration of teaching for the local teams. In the first phase, the country was divided into five regions, but later only three survived, they are the North, South and Central Taiwan regions. At times, when there was a need, different regions would come to gather, pooling their resources and



sharing their experiences. This is referred to as “regional strategic alliances.” The national team also sponsored many an “empowerment and study camps” which were open to the members of the local teams. Usually these camps were a one-day exercise: in the morning a workshop tailored to the needs of specific local teams, and in the afternoon, a visit to a site connected with gross violation of human rights in the painful past (Lin, 2018: 100). Beginning in 2011, the national team would produce a teaching kit for Human Rights Day, such as “Sending love to Darfur” (2011) asking the children to write letters to express their concern about the civil war in Darfur, or “You are my old friend: listening to aged persons”(2015). Some of the local teams would use these kits for their teaching lessons. Some of them learned to produce their own teaching materials. For example, the local team in Taipei city published a booklet in which the students were encouraged to use it as a guide to visit important human rights sites in the city. In the year 2014, the Ministry of Education sponsored a competition for the local teams, and the team from Miaoli County won the first prize and Taipei, Taichung, Chiayi, Kaohsiung and Hualien were awarded the “challenger prize” (Lin, 2018: 101).

Now in its tenth year, the Curriculum and Instruction Consulting Team is still alive and well. The support by the Ministry of Education was and is meager, yet the enthusiasm and dedication of the schoolteachers more than make up for it. They are indeed the moving force of the enterprise.

#### IV. The Efforts of the Ministry of Culture

In comparison with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture did not get involved with human rights education until much later. The Ministry of Culture was a rather new government unit established in May 20, 2012. Its predecessor was the Council of Cultural Affairs. And much of its work was done through the National Human Rights Museum. With the passage of time and the consolidation of its organization and experience, however, the activities of the Museum became more varied, well-thought out and well-implemented.

The National Human Rights Museum, it needs to be noted, has a most tortured history. Apparently as early as the first years of Chen Shui-bian’s administration, the Presidential Office managed to create the preparatory office of the National Human Rights Memorial Hall with Bo Yang (柏楊) as the convener of the Committee for the promotion of the National Human

Rights Memorial Hall (Peng, 2002). This move, of course, was heatedly contested by the Legislative Yuan, which was in the hands of the opposition party, and finally the office was to be dissolved by the Legislative Yuan in January 2006 (Ho, 2006). It was not until July 2010 that the Council of Cultural Affairs announced that a national human rights museum would be set up. In the following year a preparatory office was set up but it took six years for the idea to be materialized. On March 15, 2018, the National Human Rights Museum was formally inaugurated.

The Museum was mandated to preserve the historical materials and archives relating to violation of human rights by the authoritarian government under Chiang Kai-shek and his son, to sponsor exhibits, to help preserve the sites of injustice (i.e. where violation of human rights took place,) to publicize the idea of human rights and to liaise with the international community. Both the Green Island prison complex (now renamed the Green Island White Terror Memorial Park) and the Taiwan Jing-mei Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park (now renamed the Jing-mei White Terror Memorial Park) near Taipei city were placed under its jurisdiction. Indeed, these two sites also have a long history of their own, changing names many times through the years. Briefly, the former is the offshore prison complex, comparable to Robbin Island of the Union of South Africa, where political prisoners were detained. The latter was formerly the detention center for the Taiwan Garrison Command Headquarters where court martials took place. The trial of the opposition leaders for the demonstrations on December 10, 1979, generally referred to as the *Formosa* or Kaohsiung Incident, were held there in January 1980 and attracted world-wide attention. Moreover, it needs to be pointed out that two separate units, the February 28 Incident National Memorial Hall and the February 28 Incident Taipei City Memorial Hall had been around for some time. They were in charge of the historical materials, archives and other activities related to that Incident but with different focuses, the former from a national perspective, and the latter on what happened in the City of Taipei. It is clear that they all had different jurisdictions and functions. Yet it was also clear that they needed cooperation as well. Therefore, on March 1, 2017, the three institutions signed an agreement for cooperation in the use of resources and in promotion of their goals.

During the six years leading up to the inauguration of the Museum, much resources and energies had been devoted to repairing and restoring old

buildings, planning new buildings, the layout of the landscape and personnel management. The planning committee worked hard to maintain very good relationships with the victims or family members of the victims who had suffered from political persecution in the authoritarian era. Many volumes of memoirs have been written and published and as many as 395 interviews were recorded (Wang, 2014). Some of the publications were done through the cooperation of local governments funded by the Preparatory Office. For example, Taoyuan County brought out a series of oral-history publications by local political victims or their family members (Preparatory Office of the National Human Rights Museum, 2015). Exhibitions were held and efforts were made to attract more visitors to the Museum. And during the summer months study camps were sponsored for the teachers of primary and secondary schools to make them acquainted with the painful past of oppression and injustice.

In terms of international cooperation, connections were established with several foreign human rights museums, such as the Chilean Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago and the German Museum of Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial (Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights, 2013a, 2015).

For the past two years, building upon the earlier achievements, the Museum has been actively expanding its scope of activities and intensely cultivating the support of young artists, poets, playwrights and stage designers, and using their talents in its work. Exhibitions have been held, and workshops sponsored, with a distinctive emphasis on the issue of transitional justice and the rights of the child, the latter perhaps to a degree could be attributed to the personal interest of the new Director, Dr. Chen Chun-hung (陳俊宏) who had been the Director of the Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University. A brief account of the selected activities in the years 2018 and 2019 amply demonstrates this trend.

On May 19, 2018, the Museum held a workshop on the management of archives relating to political persecution. Mr. Roland Jahn, the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records (BStU) in Germany and 18 local experts and scholars were present, including Ms. Lin Chiu-yen (林秋燕), the Director-General of the National Archives Administration under the National Development Council, three commission members of the (Promoting) Transitional Justice Commission and the then-Director of the Academia

Historica. In his keynote speech, Mr. Jahn drew upon his work experience and emphasized that opening up of the archives was not only for the purpose of ascertaining how many people had been persecuted, but to find out the truth and redefine inter-personal relationships. He also said that to simply divide the parties into “perpetrators” and “victims” was of no significant help for dealing with the question of accountability. It is far more complex than that. And to

isolate the perpetrators from society need not be the best way of solving the question. The most severe punishment should be to allow the perpetrators to face the community and the victims, so that they would face the mistakes they had committed and acknowledge their responsibilities. (National Human Rights Museum, 2018)

Five months later, on October 25 and 26, the Museum with the collaboration of the National Taiwan Museum, the National Museum of Taiwan History and others sponsored the 8<sup>th</sup> International Biennial Conference of Museum Studies, the theme being “representation, inheritance, and forgetting.” It focused on the history and memories of violations of human rights. 98 papers were submitted to the Conference, from which 42 from Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Korea, Egypt and India were selected for presentation. During the conference, three lectures were given respectively by Professor David Fleming, the Founding President of the Federation of International Human Rights Museums, Dr. Hamzah Muzaini, the National University of Singapore and Professor Jennifer Carter, Director of Graduate Museology Program at Quebec University, Canada. In the afternoon of October 25, Mr. Jan Durk Tuinier from the Peace Education Foundation, the Netherlands, gave a workshop to train peace and human rights advocates.

During September and October, the Museum sponsored two-day training camps for human rights teachers in Taipei and Taichung. It endeavored to bring in arts, music, drama and historical sites to stimulate the writing and teaching of human rights. Several well-known victims and family members of victims of political persecution from the authoritarian era shared their personal experience with the participants. This type of training camp, as has been mentioned earlier, had been run by the Museum since 2012.

As to teaching the children their rights (and perhaps their parents also), the Museum began in 2018 a project to recruit a group of artists to produce children’s books. The books must deal with the White Terror, transitional

justice or sites of injustice. Two age groups of children were targeted: those from 6–10 years old, and those from 11–15. The selected artists must first receive training for three months. This project in the following year was enlarged by a series of related activities to accommodate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coming into force of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The heart of it was a series of movies related to the rights of the child, and parents and children were invited to see the movies first and then participate in a workshop moderated by an experienced teacher. Six movies were chosen, including *Like Father, Like Son*, *Capernaum*, *Promises*, etc. (National Human Rights Museum, 2019). From the description of a former primary school teacher, who served as the moderator, the participation of the parents exceeded her expectation. They were especially concerned with parent-child conflict and eager to know what rights they should concede to their children. It was a good beginning for rights education, she concluded (Wang, 2019).

## V. The Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University

The Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights at Soochow University, with the collaboration and support of the other two institutes of higher education has apparently thought of itself as the pioneer in human rights education in higher education. During the second ten years, it expanded its scope, proceeding from a research center first to encompass an undergraduate program designed to meet the needs of the students from different disciplines and then a MA degree in human rights. Moreover, taking advantage of the scholars and experts invited to review the first and second national reports on the implementation of the two international human rights covenants in 2013 and 2017, the Center held a series of international conferences, thus establishing a fairly close relationship with many scholars who had served in the United Nations, and university professors and NGO people, which contributed much to a wider vision of world culture and a broader perspective of human rights on the part of both the Center's faculty and students. As indicated on the Human Rights Program's Web site, it also prided itself in having forged a close relation with the NGO community in Taiwan, with many experts from the front line invited to teach at our programs, and our students required to serve as interns at their offices.

Chronologically, the Chang Fo-chuan Center came first, being set up

in the year 2000. Four years later, the undergraduate human rights program followed and finally the M.A. Degree program was established in 2008. In both programs, human rights are broadly conceived, emphasizing both civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. Moreover, the link between theory and practice is taken seriously.

Closely related to these two programs, a study group was organized for both the faculty and students, beginning in 2003 and, with disruption from time to time, is still running. The study focused almost entirely on contemporary thinkers, including Carlos Nino, Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Antjie Krog, John Rawls, Martha Nussbaum, Ronald Dworkin, Amartya Sen, and others. And when the opportunity presented itself, a mini-course given by visiting scholars has been made available since 2007. Invited guest lecturers included Professor Theo van Boven of Maastricht University, Professor Ian Neary of Oxford University, and Professor Bill Black, Law School, the University of British Columbia, Canada.

As for the international conferences referred to above, a pattern can be easily identified since the 2001 conference on national human rights commissions: every two years a large international conference is held, the primary concern being either the international human rights covenants and their incorporation into Taiwan's domestic law or human rights education and the role of national human rights museums. Several conferences attracted much international attention. In 2011, the Conference on International Human Rights Covenants was a fairly ambitious undertaking. It went on for two days and many distinguished scholars and experts were invited to present their papers, including Professor Nisuke Ando from Japan on "The Purpose and Procedure of Human Rights Committee's Consideration of National Reports of Member States", drawing upon his twenty-year experience as a member of the Human Rights Committee, Professor van Boven on "The Implementation of International Human Rights Law in Domestic Courts: Potentials and Prospects", Professor Kyong-Whan Ahn of South Korea spoke of "The National Human Rights Commission: A Decade of Glories and Despairs, 2001–2011", Professor Margaret Ann Bedggood, a former Chief Commissioner of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission spoke on economic, social and cultural rights, and Dr. Allan Rock, President of Ottawa University, Canada on "The Responsibility to Protect—10 Years On: Reflections on Its Past, Present, and Future". From Taiwan, almost all

scholars and experts who are known for their work in the human rights field, either from the universities, Academia Sinica, the judicial branch of the government, the bar associations or the NGOs were present. On the whole, the scholars and NGO representatives tended to be very critical of the performance of the government, more so than the distinguished visitors, who were rather encouraging, perhaps in part realizing that Taiwan was only beginning to deal with international human rights standards. For example, Professor Huang Song-lih (黃嵩立), Institute of Public Health, National Yang-ming University and Secretary-General of the Taiwan International Medical Alliance, took the government to task for not taking seriously enough the implementation of the two international human rights covenants, and Mr. Lin Feng-cheng (林峯正), then the Chief-Executive of the Judicial Reform Foundation, and Ms. Lin Hsin-yi (林欣怡), the Executive Director of the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty, in their joint presentation, came close to doubting the sincerity of the government in its desire to abolish the death penalty (Huang, 2011: 357–360; Lin and Lin, 2011: 368).

The most aspiring and the largest conference ever organized in the past two decades by the Chang Fo-chun Center was the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Human Rights Education under the theme of “Global Convergence and Local Practice” in November 2013. It was the fourth in a series of international conferences on human rights education initiated by Professor Sev Ozdowski of Western Sydney University, Australia. Sometime in 2013, Professor Ozdowski wrote to this writer and Legislator Yu Mei-nu (尤美女) inquiring if the Center would agree to serve as the host for the fourth conference, the conference held in Western Sydney University in 2010 being the first in the series. After lengthy consultation with the university administration and many other interested parties, the decision was made to accept the invitation. The planning and later on the fund raising, organization and management of the conference was very much under the leadership of Professor Hawang Shiow-duan (黃秀端), then the Director of the Center. To learn more as to how the series had been run, Professor Hawang and I with a group of students from the Center and the Department of Political Science attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference which was held in the ancient Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland. It was a great learning experience. We took advantage of the opportunity to visit the notorious concentration camp in Auschwitz and the Berlin Wall.



Professor Hawang managed to obtain the support of the Preparatory Office of the National Human Rights Museum and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, a semi government foundation as well as funding from many organizations, public and private. Altogether, more than one hundred foreign scholars and experts attended the conference, and for the first time, several important directors of human rights museums abroad came to share their experiences with the Preparatory Office of the National Human Rights Museum.

Briefly, the Conference began on November 21 and ended on November 26, and the topics for discussion were all encompassing. A group of panels tackled substantive rights, ranging from women's rights, LGBTQ, the abolition of the death penalty, prison reform and migrant and refugee rights, etc. Another took up the institutional dimensions, including the UN and international legal framework, legal pluralism and the rule of law, states in transition and human rights, as well as regional NGOs in Asia, etc., and a third was concerned with human rights education broadly defined, in Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and many other Asian countries. A special panel was set up for the three distinguished directors of human rights museums: Mr. Hubertus Knabe of the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial, Germany, Mr. Ricardo Brodsky of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Chile, and Mr. Stuart Murray, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. They reported on the work their museums had been doing and expressed their hope for close collaboration with Taiwan (Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights, 2013b). They also visited the Jing-mei Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park on November 22 and met with a group of victims and families of political persecution from the authoritarian era. This session was open to the public as well (Chang Fo-Chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights, 2013a).

Two years later, in November 2015, another international conference on human rights museums and civic culture followed. The preparatory Office of the National Human Rights Museum under the leadership of Mr. Wang Yi-chun (王逸群) played a significant role.

In the year 2017 Professor Chen Jau-hwa (陳瑤華) of the Department of Philosophy at Soochow University succeeded Professor Chen Chun-hung as the Director of Chang Fo-chun Center and gave the Center a new impulse and energy. Among the many things she accomplished, or attempted to

accomplish, before her resignation in August 2019, the effort to promote a Moot Asian Human Rights Court must be regarded as the most significant. In the beginning, the Center worked closely with retired Grand Justice Hsu Yu-hsiu (許玉秀) and many ambitious projects were contemplated. However, things did not materialize as planned. So, Professor Chen concentrated on organizing two workshops in May and July 2019 to explore the possibilities of an Asian Human Rights Court by investigating the people's tribunals and people's courts in different parts of Asia. In each workshop, about twenty scholars and NGO people were invited to participate, most of them coming from South-east Asia. The discussions were probing and sharp, pointing to potentialities as well as limitations. What would issue from this endeavor remains to be seen (Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights, 2019).

## VI. Criticism and Recommendations for Human Rights Education Policy in Taiwan

The evaluation of what has been done in the second ten years of human rights education poses a serious challenge. What criteria should be used? Evaluation by whom? Fortunately, the review by the international experts of Taiwan's national reports on the implementation of the two international human rights covenants in 2013 and 2017 came to the rescue on this complex question. Both times, the experts insisted that the government was obligated to have a comprehensive plan and that what had been done was not sufficient. The 2017 review says:

The appropriateness and effectiveness of human rights education and training continue to be a serious concern. There appears to be little improvement since the initial review in 2013, when the Review Committee noted the “over-emphasis on quantity rather than quality” in the relevant programmes. (International Review Committee, 2017: par. 14)

And again:

The Review Committee strongly recommends that Government authorities prioritize attention to human rights education and training, relevant and suitable for each intended target group. It wishes to stress and remind the Government that the objective of human rights education and training is to instil awareness of the human rights principles and values, and of how they can be enjoyed, respected, protected and fulfilled by the various

sectors of society. (International Review Committee, 2017: par. 15)

This criticism, frank and to the point as it is, can only remain at a fairly abstract level. Many critical comments by scholars in Taiwan, definitely supplement well what the international experts said. To begin with, Professor Tang Mei-ying (湯梅英) and others had complained as early as 2002 that by incorporation into the curriculum instead of having a specific course, the teaching on human rights was more likely to be absorbed and melted down with no trace left (Tang, 2018: 105–106). Dr. Li Yang-huan (李仰桓) argues that human rights education in the Curriculum Guidelines for 12-year Basic Education suffers from the following deficiencies. First, the Guidelines have given lip service to the universality of human rights, encouraging pluralism and toleration and urging students to be concerned with international issues, yet insufficient attention is paid to the international standards set by the U.N. documents. This criticism clearly dovetails with that of the international experts cited above. Furthermore, the Guidelines tend to shy away from the violation of human rights, especially neglecting discrimination against the disadvantaged groups in society, the poor and downtrodden. By doing so, the Guidelines absolved the government from its treaty obligations. Thirdly, the Guidelines emphasize the responsibility of the state and the individual to uphold human rights, without clearly pointing out that the primary responsibility must lie with the state. In many places, the state is the source of denial of human rights and Taiwan has witnessed serious and gross violation of human rights by the state merely a few decades ago. This imposition on the individual will no doubt greatly hinder the protection of individual rights. Finally, the Guidelines confuse charity with rights. In teaching samples for the use of the teachers, this tendency is so predominant that love and toleration preempt the idea of rights. Apparently, for many sectors of society rights are still regarded as alien ideas from the West (Li, 2018: 52–57).

In summing up, Dr. Li agreed that incorporation can be a proper channel for teaching human rights, but a comprehensive plan taking into account the situation in the campus must be provided for, and teachers must possess a certain degree of expertise in the field of human rights (Li, 2018: 60).

The concern with the qualification of teachers has certainly been discussed through the years. In his interview with this writer on September 4, 2019 for the series of “Human Rights Group Portraits” which seeks to preserve a record of the experiment and experience of human rights education

in Taiwan, Professor Lin Chia-fan emphasizes that teachers are indeed the key to the success of the whole enterprise. He lamented that many teachers are not qualified, and many others are intimidated by the school authorities and/or parents to take teaching rights seriously.

## VII. The Future Prospect

The situation of human rights education in the second ten years is by now fairly clearly delineated, leaving aside by choice the efforts of the government in the training of the bureaucrats and the endeavor of the NGOs in educating their staff and the targeted groups for whose rights they advocate. By comparison with the first ten years, the government did not do that much for human rights education in schools. The primary and secondary schools, the universities and the NGOs began to do more.

Looking towards the next few years, the fate of human rights education is closely tied to the political situation. Assuming the Chinese Nationalist Party comes to power under Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜), it is unlikely that the government will be that much concerned with human rights education. If President Tsai Ing-wen were reelected to a second term, the Ministry of Education still could not be expected to do much in terms of either presenting a comprehensive plan or in allocating more resources. The Ministry tends to be lacking in commitment and will hardly take any initiative. On the contrary, the Ministry of Culture could be moving to take the lead, emphasizing issues of transitional justice and the rights of the child as well as expanding its connections with human rights museums abroad

As for the academic community and the civil society organizations, the situation is clear. They would be doing what they have done for more than two decades and do better, because they have learned much and are more effective. Yet they would certainly be confronted with a lack of resources and the need to face up to the nitty-gritty of what to teach and how to reach their audiences in a rapidly changing environment, for example through the use of films, theatre and other new communication technology.

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# 台灣人權教育：第二個十年

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## 摘要

這篇文章描述、分析 2008–2018 年這十年之間台灣人權教育的情況，檢討其得失並展望今後幾年可能發展。簡約來說，較之陳水扁執政之初（2000–2003 年），馬英九、蔡英文政府對學校中人權教育缺乏完整政策，大部分動力來自各級學校與民間組織。本文分析集中於下列三個機構：教育部隸屬的人權教育輔導團、文化部國家人權博物館與東吳大學張佛泉人權研究中心。

## 關鍵字

人權教育、課綱、人權教育輔導團、國家人權博物館、張佛泉人權研究中心

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