

A national rebirth could start with end of KMT

Written by Lee Min-yung 李敏勇

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A nation's mother tongue education includes language as well as literature. When educating people, an advanced program is one that lets students first read works by native authors and then read works by foreign authors, so that learners get both a domestic and an international outlook.

Is the Republic of China (ROC) a Taiwanese nation or a Chinese nation? Is the mother nation Taiwan or China? Deep in people's hearts, it is crystal clear to most that the nation is Taiwanese, but the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), which has not changed its mentality as a colonial ruler, does not think so.

By making adjustments to the social-studies curriculum guidelines, Chinese elements are once again being reinforced, while Taiwanese elements are being de-emphasized. The KMT's occupation and rule over Taiwan through the empty shell of the exiled ROC is being praised, while wrongdoings are deliberately overlooked in a renewed attempt at brainwashing, which is aimed at nurturing a new generation of KMT followers.

It is a malevolent, reactionary attitude.

Literature and language education is controlled by the colonial attitudes of the KMT — which does not separate itself as a political party from the nation that it was elected to govern — with the objective of cultivating a conservative China-centered mindset based on the KMT's values and its governance ideology.

The study of traditional Chinese literature is secondary, and the major purpose is political indoctrination. This becomes a thought framework that is not intended to enlighten, but used to embellish colloquial modern Chinese literature, focusing mostly on works by pro-KMT or pro-China authors, while suppressing Taiwanese literature and the nation's spirit.

The curriculum set out to teach Taiwan's mother tongue is not advanced and it does not meet the requirements for producing impetus for political progress.

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Civic education in Taiwan is intentionally oriented toward China and the KMT, which thinks that by maintaining this situation, the public might develop a slave mentality and learn to obey the party's commands.

However, this is wishful thinking on the KMT's part and a wasteful obstruction to education. The party's lack of ruling legitimacy is likely to end in its collapse. Society is becoming increasingly civilized and advanced, and the force of democratization can surely bring about a critical ability that would demolish the reactionary forces standing in the way of advancement.

After World War II ended in 1945, the KMT occupied Taiwan. The history of its rule is filled with oppression, including the 228 Incident, the White Terror era and the Kaohsiung Incident.

Despite the endless oppression, Taiwanese have managed to overcome layers of impediments, and found ways to rediscover and rebuild themselves. This same force can forge a counteracting mechanism to the KMT's scheme of using language and history courses to control the minds of Taiwanese.

The KMT ceaselessly exposes its true nature as a colonial ruler. Its desire to monopolize power has not dissipated. It even seeks the assistance of the Chinese Communist Party.

However, in the end, it is destined to be discarded as society awakens. The party might even disappear permanently from Taiwan.

New generations of Taiwanese would then be born and grow up free to draw up a new vision for the nation of Taiwan.

Lee Min-yung is a poet.

Translated by Ethan Zhan

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