

## Hung needs to read up on history

Written by Gerrit van der Wees  
Tuesday, 29 August 2017 06:27

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Former Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀珠) certainly got a number of things wrong in her comments on Taiwan's history ("Former KMT chairwoman Hung slams 'desinicization,'" Aug. 27, page 3).

At a forum commemorating Ming-era warlord Cheng Cheng-kung (鄭成功, also known as Koxinga) she criticized President Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) administration for substituting "Cheng's governance of Taiwan under the Ming Dynasty" with the "Cheng Dynasty" in school textbooks.

While Cheng was a Ming loyalist, by the time he came to Taiwan (1661-1662), the Ming Dynasty had long disappeared, as the Qing Dynasty took over in 1644. The new formulation is thus more factually correct than the old.

Hung also said that "had Cheng not reclaimed Taiwan from the Dutch 350 years ago, there would be no Taiwan as we know it today."

The operative word here — reclaimed — is incorrect.

Before the arrival of the Dutch in 1624, Taiwan was not part of China: The Dutch found only a few hundred Hokkien fishermen and traders living along the coast, and no administrative presence from China whatsoever.

Indeed, when the Dutch tried to establish a trading post along the Chinese coast in 1622, they were told by Ming Dynasty emperor Zhu Youxiao's (朱由校) envoys that they needed to go "beyond Chinese territory," so the Dutch established Fort Zeelandia in what is now known as Tainan.

Certainly Hung is correct in saying that if history had been different 350 years ago, there would be no Taiwan as we know it today. We could surmise that if Taiwan had continued under Dutch rule, today it would have been a free and democratic nation, internationally recognized, just like

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Indonesia.

While today Koxinga's legacy has traditionally been presented in a positive light, Taiwan's majority population in the 1600s — Aborigines such as the Siraya — saw him as a corrupt and brutal warlord who killed many people, destroyed their culture and took their land.

This sentiment still lingers: In a survey among high school and college-aged Aborigines in Tainan earlier this year, 44.4 percent of respondents thought that Koxinga's rule had been bad for Taiwan, while only 32.7 percent said it had been positive and 22.8 percent did not know.

So perhaps Koxinga's legacy is not as positive as Hung would like it to be.

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Source: [Taipei Times - Editorials 2017/08/29](#)