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From regime change to paradigm shift: A philosophical perspective on the development of Taiwan's citizenship curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Citizenship education configured according to different curriculum paradigms is expected to produce differing outcomes. Conservative, liberal, and communitarian citizenship paradigms exhibit different varieties of citizens' characters and social roles. During the authoritarian period in Taiwan, the authorities created a conservative version of citizenship education stressing morality and obligations in order to cultivate 'obedient' citizens who would be easy to rule over. In the wake of democratization since the late 1980s, liberal thoughts gradually permeated Taiwanese society. The newest citizenship curriculum, officially introduced in 2010 across senior high schools, swings away from conservatism towards two other types, as the 18 interviewed curriculum designers have revealed in the research. Shifting from an 'obligations-oriented' to a 'rights-based' curriculum, the new guidelines aim to emphasize the indispensable value of human agency and the critical and reflective capability of the individual. Based on Charles Taylor and Wilhelm von Humboldt's 'holist individualism', an integrative approach to overcome the liberal-communitarian tension is created. The new curriculum is rooted in the liberal construct and softened by communitarianism to avoid fostering self-interested individuals and to encourage wider social participation.

1. Introduction

Taiwan, lying around 120 km off the coast of Mainland China, was once a haven for Dutch and Spanish explorers in the seventeenth century, before coming under the rule of the Qing Dynasty of imperial China. Later it was taken by Japan before finally becoming the Republic of China (ROC). Since the Kuomingtang Party of China (KMT), defeated by Chinese communists, moved the Republic of China from Mainland to Taiwan in 1949, Taiwanese society has experienced authoritarian rule under martial law, democratization and now constitutional democracy. Citizenship education (CE), as one of the most sensitive subjects, at the nexus between politics, society, and economics, has witnessed these 'regime changes' and been an integral part of the social transformation of Taiwan. Before democratization, education was predominantly guided by political forces and the curriculum and government-published textbooks were designed with disciplinary purposes in mind (Deng, 2012). In August 2010, a new citizenship curriculum renamed *Curriculum Guidelines for Civic and Society* was officially introduced in senior high school replacing the previous rigid *Curriculum Standard*. After the deregulation of the textbook market supplies of teaching materials were no longer monopolized by the government. With the waning of political interference and growing openness of society, the curriculum's position in schools was more dynamically redefined and the contents of the subject gradually changed.

When it comes to the definition of citizenship, Ichilov (1998, p. 11) maintains that 'the classical definition of citizenship rests on the assertion that citizenship involves a balance or fusion between rights and obligations. More recent definitions stress the affinity and identity dimensions of citizenship'. The differing emphasis on rights and duties demarcates the great divide between the liberal and communitarian paradigms of CE. The former champions unimpeded basic rights, personal identities and autonomy; the latter stresses collective membership and social engagement. While democratic countries lean to differing degrees between these two flavors, Heater (2002) analyzing dictatorial regimes, observes a conservative style of CE, which aims to secure social stability and bolster the ruling class in power. Along similar lines, Arthur and Davison (2000, 16) also propose a 'paleoconservative' construct that is championed by more traditional and reactionary societies. These types, namely conservative, liberal and communitarian, have left their imprints on many countries' citizenship curricula and Taiwan is no exception. Other offshoots (for example, multicultural, radical, feminist

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constructs and so on) derived from the above three main streams which lean towards specific ethnic, cultural and gendered dimensions of citizenship, will not be brought into this general philosophical discussion of the curriculum.

The philosophical arguments ensuing from the publication of John Rawls' seminal book, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), and the debates between the liberal and Communitarian camps since the 1980s, have provided a new way to examine social issues, including education. This liberal-communitarian dialogue has enriched the theoretical foundation underpinning curriculum studies. A prime example is the advocacy of a communitarian curriculum by Bernard Crick in the English citizenship curriculum (Advisory Group on Citizenship Education, 1998) and the substantial discussions on different curriculum paradigms from both viewpoints. In Taiwan, influenced by the prevalence of western scholarship, the liberal and communitarian constructs gained momentum in recent curriculum developments reflecting the changes taking place in society. This research focuses on the curriculum designers of the latest *Curriculum Guidelines of 2010* who voiced their critical perspectives on the past CE in Taiwan and reveals what type of citizenship program they endeavored to create by unveiling the philosophical messages underlying the new curriculum. How the Curriculum Committee members approached these paradigms differently and found a new way of weaving them into the current Taiwanese CE will be exhibited in this empirical inquiry. Before developing the core argument, the trajectory of curriculum development in Taiwan as it rapidly transformed from authoritarianism to democracy will be illustrated so that the position from where the curriculum makers started before initiating their changes can be better understood.

2. The history of the Taiwanese citizenship curriculum and the switch of paradigms

When the objectives of the *Curriculum Standards* of 1952 and 1971 are comparatively aligned alongside the new *Curriculum Guidelines* of 2010, it can be seen that the desired-for outcomes regarding the 'kind' of citizens to be fostered have been reshaped and in some respects re-invented. Based on the synthesis of the definitions of citizenship proposed by Ichilov (1998) and Delanty (2000), the notion of citizenship contains four essential components—rights, duties, identity and participation and varying the balance between the components formulates different types of citizenship. This section will illustrate which type was used in each period to demonstrate the switch of paradigms that has taken place.

2.1. Curriculum Standards of 1952 and 1971 in the authoritarian period

The establishment of the Republic of China (ROC) in 1912 in China (at which time Taiwan was a colony of Japan) was the end of Imperial China—the Qing Dynasty. In 1945, after WWII, the Chinese government, then led by the KMT party, recovered the island of Taiwan and its outlying islets from Japan. However, following the four-year full-scale Chinese Civil War, which saw the Communist Party take control of Mainland and declare a People's Republic, the defeated KMT moved the ROC government to Taipei in 1949. The aim of retaking the Mainland, which deterred the KMT from treating Taiwan as a permanent residence and developing a new nation-state, diffused through every aspect of the Taiwanese' life, including school ethos. Pride in being Chinese, explicitly promoted in the curriculum and textbooks, was utilized to strengthen people's Chinese identity, thereby maintaining the determination to return to the Mainland (Roy, 2003; Chun, 2005; Su, 2006; Clark, 2008). To prevent resistance from native Taiwanese and head off potential upheaval, martial law was enforced and basic civil, political and social rights were restrained.

While the curriculum aims and the textbooks are closely examined, characterized by Chinese-centeredness, Confucian ethic principles and Chinese culture, the curriculum with its spirit of 'Han cultural nationalism' was focused on passing on monolithic Chinese consciousness to the Taiwanese (Hughes, 1997, p. 218; Lee, 2004; Yao, 2012). While a specific set of values centering on tradition, family, fraternity, morality and allegiance is regarded as the salient civic virtues to be transmitted to the next generation, this normative tendency demonstrate the features of the conservative paradigm (Arthur and Davison, 2000, p. 16). It attempts to convince pupils to follow the mainstream vision of life and consolidate the public's loyalty towards the existing social norms. The distinctiveness of national characters, moral principles, duties, and traditions are taught to have stood the test of time.

Besides, whereas 'citizenship' as a concept has a balance of rights and responsibilities, the emphasis on 'responsibility' and the repeated advocacy of 'morality' outshone the mention of 'rights' in the curriculum. Compared with the other paradigms, the conservative version substantially downplays the importance of 'rights' and 'social participation', instead putting emphasis on 'duties' and 'compliance'. This paradigm is, therefore, mostly used to maintain the status quo and cultivate obedient civilians by authoritarian and totalitarian regimes (Heater, 1999; Arthur and Davison, 2002; Heater, 2002).

In 1987, the lifting of martial law heralded democratization and the goal of retaking Mainland has gradually faded away. Since the 1990s, with the increasing popularity of the opposition party—Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) which urges the promotion of Taiwanese identity and native cultures, including Hoklo, Hakka and aboriginal heritages, the momentum of Taiwanization and multiculturalism has gradually replaced the previous ethnocentric curriculum structure (Morris and Cogan, 2001; Law, 2002, 2004; Liu, 2004; Lee et al., 2008). Moreover, the *Curriculum Standard* was eventually replaced by the current *Curriculum Guidelines*, which relaxed central control of the subject content and gave teachers more freedom to decide what to include in class. The sense of liberation palpable in this period heralded the end of the conservative era and the transition to the liberal strand of thinking. The Taiwanese citizenship curriculum mirrors the changes that took place in society, politics and values within this East Asian society and the evolution of the curriculum can be seen across its long history during both authoritarian and democratic regimes.

2.2. Curriculum Guidelines of 2010 in the democratic period

After the lifting of martial law and the subsequent social transformations of the 1990s, the new citizenship curriculum reveals the projected visions of a modern society. The curriculum identifies the 'Objectives' and 'Core Competences', which are supposed to be fostered in pupils. Three 'Objectives' includes:

(1) Facilitating pupils' awareness of social science and related knowledge.
(2) Fostering open-minded perspectives of pluralistic values and civil awareness.
(3) Enhancing the ability of action based on democratic social participation.(Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 1)

The 'Core Competences' further depict a clearer vision of future adult citizens with the ability to:

(1) Obtain multifaceted knowledge of psychology, sociology, culture, politics, morality, law, economics, sustainable development, etc.

(2) Value the importance of adolescents' self-perception and -development and encourage them to admire others, care for communities, respect cultural differences, identify with the political system of democratic nation-states, appreciate the established rule of law politics, universal human rights, and pursue economic and sustainable development.
(3) Enhance pupils' active abilities of thinking, judging, decision-making, reflection, communication, problem-solving, creation and proactive action for social participation.(Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 1)

With a wide range of social science knowledge, mainly sociology, political science, law and economics, the new curriculum encompasses more academic knowledge than before (Hung, 2013). The normative discourse of 'morality' and 'responsibility' has been reduced a great deal in the new guidelines, while on the other hand, inalienable basic rights, critical and reflective ability, and the vision of an active civil society are stressed. A 'responsibilities-based' CE designed to cultivate 'obedient citizens' over the past six decades has given way to a 'rights-oriented' one, more conducive to the value of individuality. In comparison to the old curricula, the virtues promoted in the new curriculum are fewer in number, such as 'civil awareness', 'respect for cultural differences', 'human rights' and 'communication', in line with liberal concepts, for instance 'rationality', 'openness to criticism', 'toleration of dissent', 'mutual respect', 'obligation to maintain democracy' etc. (Rawls, 1988, p. 263; Macedo, 1990, p. 254) and one of the tenets behind the new curriculum is a reluctance to include more for fear that too many may interfere with personal free choice.

However, as opposed to the individual-oriented foundation which underpins the liberal paradigm, the communitarian type pays more attention to collective values and visions of life bequeathed from the community and these common good should not be regarded as obstacles in the way of liberation but as stepping stones for the individual to understand and fulfill the self, something which is impossible for people to do without taking their existing 'given' roles in the society into consideration (Brighouse and Swift, 2003, p. 361). Communitarian features can also be discerned where the latest CE touches on issues concerning the self, otherness, family, community and social participation in *Guidelines 1 Self, Society and Culture* (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 7). The new guidelines, seemingly standing at the crossroads and deriving inspiration and ideas from both liberalism and communitarianism, deserve a further inquiry to clarify which paradigm the curriculum truly rests on and shine a light on how the curriculum designers dealt with the limits within, and tensions between, paradigms.

3. Methodology

The paradigm each citizenship curriculum derives from is guided by the visions the curriculum designers uphold. A different group of designers may create a markedly distinct syllabus. In a totalitarian and authoritarian regime, it is likely that the Curriculum Committee is an extension of the governing powers. In democracies, multiple social, political and economic factors are taken into consideration to create a curriculum with maximum acceptance. To meet the needs of the civil society and nation building, Curriculum Committees in the history of the Taiwanese education have shifted the paradigm over six decades to respond to social change.

The new curriculum in Taiwan, issued in 2010, was drawn up by a Committee of 'curriculum developers' comprised of nine social science specialists, from fields such as sociology, political science, law, economics and educational and cultural research, as well as six senior high school CE teachers who were all qualified teachers with more than ten years teaching experience. In addition, approximately 20 academics and teachers were 'curriculum advisors' who played an auxiliary role and provided opinions by participating in four public hearings and four focus group seminars. With each individual's picture of CE brought into the Committee, a new version was shaped after debates, deliberations, negotiations and final agreement. The end product has been implemented as a compulsory course in the senior high level (for the first and second grades, aged 16–18; 2 h per week) and since 2009, taking this subject became necessary to matriculate. The new curriculum is composed of four major themes, *Guideline 1: Self, Society and Culture, Guideline 2: Politics and Democracy, Guideline 3: Morality and Legal Regulations and Guideline 4: Economics and Sustainable Development* (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009). To tease out the deeper meanings behind the text, this research examined the official curriculum and interviewed (a) eight curriculum developers (coded from 'A' to 'H') and (b) ten curriculum advisors (coded from 'I' to 'R').

Interview questions were centered on: (a) the Curriculum designers' perspectives on the previous CE development, (b) the characteristics which the new curriculum embodies by contrasting with the values emphasized in different paradigms and (c) the Curriculum Committee's views on the liberal-communitarian constructs in relation to the structure of the curriculum and the future citizens they hoped to foster. IQ(a) revolved around the changes and close links between education, politics and society and the designers' reflections on the old curricula. IQ(b) investigated the traits which the curriculum attempted to cultivate whilst IQ(c) was designed to identify the curriculum's liberal and communitarian features, which tilt towards individualism and collectivism, respectively. Through these questions, we can see the kind of civil society and the citizens who would inhabit it as envisaged by the curriculum designers. Semi-structured interviews, conducted in Mandarin Chinese, were held between October 2012 and February 2013 in Taiwan and by using the abovementioned paradigms – differing amount of stress on rights, obligations, identity and social participation – as the analytical tools, interview narratives were examined to ascertain which vision of CE the latest curriculum drew closer to (see Appendix). It should be noted that although interviewees were CE developers, not all of them were familiar with the types and theories of citizenship due to their varying backgrounds in social science (for example, some were economists or legal specialists) so that a straightforward probe into their views on the paradigms was not conducted. Moreover, as an outsider not involved in the construction of the curriculum, the researcher triangulated the views from curriculum developers, advisors and documentation to uncover the ideologies and intentions embedded in the curriculum.

4. Findings and discussion

The critical views regarding the previous CE curricula held by the Curriculum Committee of the latest *Citizenship Guidelines* foreshadowed the reforms made to the CE curriculum during the design process before its official implementation in 2010. In this section, through the empirical data, the desire to make a paradigm shift can be uncovered, followed by an elaboration of the committee's conceptual reconstruction of the new curriculum. The analytical tools of liberalism and communitarianism will then be adopted to identify which paradigm the new curriculum is more deeply rooted in.

4.1. The switch from the 'obligations-based' to the 'rights-based' curriculum

To maintain order and freeze any moves to implement constitutional democracy while the KMT party moved the government to Taiwan, the authorities imposed martial law in

1949, which highly restricted freedom for citizens. The recurring allusions to 'self-cultivation' and 'responsibilities' in *Curriculum Standards* of 1952 and 1971 implied no more than that a citizen's self-perception and value should be defined by the individual's position in society and the consequent degree of contribution that they might make to the country. The series of 'obligations' and 'good virtues' were aligned with the KMT's viewpoint. The former President Chiang Kai-shek also elaborated the objectives of CE in 1968:

> There are two purposes of the subject 'Civics and Morality' for high school. First, developing students as human beings and good students. Second, cultivating students as good Chinese who love their country and fellows, work cooperatively and responsibly, and appreciate Chinese morality and culture. (Chen, 1983, p. 41)

A longitudinal CE researcher, 'Q', comments:

> The old curriculum in 1952 and 1971 not only attempted to educate the youth but also to discipline pupils. The well-known *Youth Regulations* structured the moral parts of both curricula. . . . Almost every pupil who attended school before the education reforms in the 1990s could recite the twelve moral codes from the first one to the twelfth. The *Youth Regulations* were drafted by the then president, Chiang Kai-Shek, and without question, it became the highest guiding principle for school education under the authoritarian atmosphere. (Interview with 'Q')

Interviewee 'Q' points out how education policy was directly influenced by the authority's political concerns and the ways in which Chinese traditions played a decisive role in school life. The twelve moral codes of the *Youth Regulations* stemmed from Guan Zhong's *Four Pillars* and the *Eight Virtues* from the Song dynasty, portraying a virtuous person with the highest standard of loyalty, courage, filial piety, compassion, honesty, righteousness, propriety, responsibility, diligence, neatness, intelligence and persistence. The incorporation of these twelve life mottos into education and Chiang Kai-shek's remarks on the love of nation, countrymen and the Chinese heritage display the attributes of the conservative curriculum, namely, upholding social conventions, loyalty, parochialism, fraternity and family values which were perceived as timeless, and worthy of preservation (Hung, 2014). The majority of citizens were given a sense of what 'ought to' be done for the country rather than what they deserved from the government. In Foucauldian term (1977, pp. 170–194), if martial law is regarded as a violent force to suppress rebellion, these moral codes represent a corresponding 'disciplinary power' constantly operating to diminish resistance and incorporate more followers.

According to Deng Yu-Hao's research (2012, p. 6), an abundance of excerpts abridged from ancient Confucian manuscripts, such as *Analects* and *Xiao-Jing* (Classic of Filial Piety) can be discovered in old textbooks. A particular vision of human excellence was stressed and students were pointed to a particular way of life, more precisely 'a Confucian moral life', despite the fact that Hoklo, Hakka and aboriginal people displayed their own distinct cultures along with Taoist, Buddhist and Austronesian influences in Taiwan. From the liberal perspective, the imposed Chinese culture and moral standards ushered in the way to live a 'good' life and set goals for citizens. Curriculum developer 'A' shows concerns about the old curricula and contends:

> A modern educational system should provide 'options' to students rather than 'prescriptions'. People nurtured and shaped by different beliefs, cultures and life philosophies can enrich the society and to create a monotonously built society through the school curriculum was never our intention. Everyone should be entitled to bond with different views and identities and this approach of curriculum design is more compatible with a multicultural society (Interview with 'A')

To lessen the fetters of the rigid moral value system, the new curriculum illuminates the way of basic rights, limited government by rule of law, and the embracing of social diversity to grow democratic values in schools. For instance, *Guideline 1-3 Human Beings and Basic Rights* stresses the entitlement of everyone to various rights and *Guideline 3-4 The Constitution and Human Rights* reiterates the dignity of the individual, respect for personal choices and the value of democracy (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, pp. 4, 23). The discussion of contentious issues and promotion of a deliberative democracy model applied in teaching is anticipated to equip students with the competence of critical thinking, as well as communication skills and problem solving (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009; Hung, 2013). In contrast to the training for loyalty and obedience which the conservative curriculum aimed for, the new Curriculum Committee is willing to see a society upheld by informed, autonomous and creative citizens.

However, when comparing old and new curricula, some may have a certain degree of sympathy for the weighting given to moral education in the older versions. In this vein, one question that should be raised is, while the new more liberal curriculum is regarded as being more commensurate with a modern democratic society, what went missing in the process of transforming from a curriculum focused on morality to a rights-based one? 'Responsibilities' is the answer from the interviewees. The media have criticized the new curriculum for being an 'immoral citizenship course' in contrast to former curricula which highly stressed morality (Xue, 2007; The Central News Agency, 2008). Two curriculum developers and one curriculum advisor comment on this criticism as well as the reasons why they decided not to pay so much attention to responsibility:

> In public hearings, I heard some teachers mention that the curriculum encourages students to fight for their rights and fails to remind students of their responsibilities in return. I think this is what we should probably work on in the future. (Interview with 'J')

> We [curriculum developers] are always aware of the lack of emphasis on responsibilities in the curriculum. We spare much more space for basic rights. This criticism is sometimes very tricky because honestly we do not know how to approach the issue of responsibilities without making the curriculum sound too commanding and indoctrinating. Is it really essential to include this in the curriculum? Teachers and parents always tell pupils to be responsible. Do we need another lesson to raise this topic? It is not necessary. Could a student know nothing about responsibility? I beg to differ. There are always too many demands for obligations in daily life. (Interview with 'L')

> In the *Curriculum Guidelines*, we mention 'rights' frequently but it can be easily observed that when textbook editors write texts, they constantly embed moral duties and the public's expectations in the content. For example, in speaking of public facilities and resources, we can always see sentences in textbooks like, 'we should always feel grateful and cherish the accessible resources' and 'we should not waste the taxpayer's money'. Is it not a kind of demand of responsibilities? Textbooks writers more or less show a tone of authoritative instruction or condemnation between the lines. So, I highly doubt whether our curriculum still needs to stress this part. On the contrary, I want to pose a more radical question. When we talk about underage children, we always remind them of what they cannot do, such as drinking, smoking and sex. But we never change our discourse to notify them that 'you can drink, smoke and have sex once you are over 18'. Is it not their right to do these after a certain age? (Interview with 'B')

The conundrum of deciding the weight of responsibility is well exemplified in interviewee 'L's words. While interviewee 'J' argues that future revisions can include more elements of duties, curriculum developer 'B' disputes this proposal. The morally laden curriculum pictures a society of individuals fulfilling obligations to each other, displaying a tendency towards social control especially in the authoritarian period, given that these duties are prescribed by the ruling power to make its rule easier. However, it is worth noting that strong control may suffocate diversity and creativity and that this would amount to discrimination because we assume that in a pluralist society, everyone can create their own good life according to the views they espouse, within certain limits. If more promotion of morality might strike a balance between responsibilities and rights in the new curriculum, we should reflect whether families, schools and this East Asian society in general have already put on a moral cloak, as 'L' and 'B' observe, so that the discourse about responsibilities can be minimized in the curriculum.

Interviewee 'B' brings forward 'underage legal constraints' as an example to point out that the Taiwanese educational environment tends to use 'ought-to' language to outline a path for students to follow. Therefore, the curriculum in fact can speak a different language to display the rights and choices ahead of them and help them create their own path as long as they have weighed the pros and cons. Besides, interviewee 'B' also points out the lack of respect for pupils' rights can be clearly found in the more normative language in education. The language of rights is often expressed through the language of responsibilities in the process of parenting and teaching, and interviewee 'B' reminds us to consider whether rights and responsibilities are two mutually exclusive concepts, the flourishing of one of which results in the withering of the other. As long as rights are legitimately and justifiably prescribed, others, in some way, 'owe' the rights-claimers the obligation to either respect their entitlements or assist them to secure and fulfill their rights (Campbell, 2006, p. xii). These rights cannot be sustained without obligation; therefore, the counterpart of 'rights' is not 'egotism' but 'obligation'. The language of rights is also 'a language of duties' (Campbell, 2006, p. 20). Thus it can be seen, on close examination of the new curriculum, that following the advocacy of basic rights in *Guideline 3-4 The Constitution and Human Rights*, the boundary and limits of liberty and the opposite side of personal rights – namely, respect for and defense of others' entitlements – are laid out (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 23).

It is also worth mentioning that many of the benefits claimed by individuals are simultaneously advantageous to unspecified others and many rights-holders argue for collective entitlements instead of simply their own personal well-being. When the curriculum designers manifest the importance of rights to awaken self-conscious individuals, it cannot be denied that corresponding obligations are interwoven. The oversimplified link between a rights-claiming curriculum and individualistic features might downplay the multi-faceted values of rights which have grown throughout human civilization. Although interviewee 'B' points out the inextricable relationship between rights and responsibilities, curriculum developers generally have not surmounted the dualistic and isolated views on both concepts and have not identified the concomitant responsibilities behind the advocacy of rights. Thus, this article would like to argue that the accusation of 'immoral and self-absorbed design', which is leveled at the new guidelines, is untenable.

The on-going debate on the balance between rights and responsibilities in the curriculum keeps reminding us of which is more needed for students and current society. From the outcome of the new guidelines and the interview accounts, it is clear that the caveat of fostering 'the greedy citizen' who claims entitlements and disregards obligations does not really concern the Committee members more than the oppression of the moral ethos existing in schools and wider society. This view, harbored by the Curriculum Committee, disentangled the new curriculum from the conservative paradigm and the motivation of constructing a subject which would awaken the individual's rights pointed to the necessity for a new paradigm. The philosophical argument between 'the right' and 'the good' among liberals and communitarians provides this question with rich arguments. In the next section, this philosophical crossfire will be used to investigate how the Curriculum Committee approached this issue and set the tone for the new curriculum.

4.2. The liberal and communitarian paradigms underlying the curriculum

When the new curriculum is checked against the aforementioned paradigms, we can see that the conservative type has been side-lined by the Curriculum Committee. The distinction between the other two paradigms lies on the different focus they put on 'the right' and 'the good'. Kantian liberals drew a line between 'the right' and 'the good' according to the distinct framework of basic rights which does not presuppose any preferred values, and the conception of the good that people may opt to pursue (Sandel, 1984, p. 16). Liberalism does not aim to exhibit a series of teleological goods to individuals but instead intends to guarantee a maximum degree of freedom for everyone to pursue their own goals. Under this notion, all preferences carry equal weight and individual choices should be made based on rationality and autonomy, free from interference and judgment by others as long as their freedom is not impinged upon (Kymlicka, 1990, p. 206). This original concept of liberalism can be extended to the advocacy of self-determination, human rights, and constitutional democracy, and the celebration of diversity, which have been included in 'Objectives' and 'Core Competence' in the new curriculum (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009).

Emeritus professor, Weng Zhi-Zong from the National Academy for Educational Research specifies that the new CE is in line with the principle of justice to accommodate and integrate diverse ways of life to allow future citizens to live with characters of 'pluralism and tolerance on the basis of constitutionalism' (Weng, 2007, p. 46). The 'skills of thinking, judging, decision-making, reflection, communication, problem-solving, creation and proactive action for social participation' addressed in 'Core Competence: Point 3' also draw upon the power of the autonomous and self-critical individual according to liberal thoughts (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009). In this respect, the liberal citizenship paradigm forms the basis of the major aspects of the new curriculum.

However, apart from the above liberal values, the curriculum also reveals communitarian qualities. In *Guideline 1-1-1 The Meaning of Self*, 'In the center of the individuality, the uniqueness and the social position of the individual is constructed in the network of the society and culture'. *Guideline 1-1-2* also delineates that the individual's development is embedded in the 'interplay between self, society and cultures'. *Guideline 1-4* focuses on public interests and illustrates 'the existence and characters of the public interests and its related topics' and the civic value of 'participation'. *Guideline 1-5 Citizens' Social Participation* reiterates the significance of a commitment to fellow citizens and society and an engagement with public affairs, surrounded by the relevant issues, such as social welfare, non-profit organizations, the labor movement, environmental protection and the feminist movement (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, pp. 8,12,13). *Guidelines 1-1-1 & 1-1-2* particularly correspond to the communitarian description of human beings as 'encumbered' and 'situated' individuals, soaking up the collective ambience of shared values and a common identity. The interwoven social network reminds the individual of their social roles and the common good underlying the community and society enriches individuals who are therefore inclined to the reciprocal dedication in return to fulfill social goals.

To tease out which paradigm stands closer to the core of the curriculum, the research proposes to investigate curriculum designers' perception of 'the good'. Communitarians believe in a 'thicker' conception of the good which envisages the common values the citizens share and a set of virtues people can follow. In contrast, a 'thinner' theory of the good, encompassing freedom, equality, respect and toleration, is held by liberals due to the diversity which exists among individuals and only this lowest-common-denominator type of common values, or 'overlapping consensus' in Rawlian language is inclusive enough to embrace the variety in society (Lehning, 2009, p. 129). The communitarian view of common values is challenged for its assumption of a 'perceived' unitary and shared value system which may exclude and therefore anger others who are not on the same footing (Kukathas, 1998; Nye, 2007, p. 111). The untenable common ground may undermine some people's distinct identity and faith, and, therefore, Taiwanese scholar Jiang (1997, p. 106) contends that this communitarian concept can only be applicable in a relatively small country or culturally homogeneous society. The strong promotion of the assumed common ground may result in a paternalistic society, showing limited respect for differences and diversity.

When asked whether the existence of 'common ground' was borne in mind among Curriculum Committee members, all interviewees gave a positive answer. For example:

> Of course we have the common good in mind and our curriculum aims to strengthen the common good as a basis for social integration. With these shared values and beliefs, the society can grow stronger and avoid fragmentation. (Interview with 'D')

> It is unrealistic to deny the existence of common ground despite the influx of diverse cultures and values. We can always find similarities within the distinct opinions [Yi-Zhong-Qiu-Tong, ?中?同]. Or, more precisely, we can say that the toleration of and respect for differences is a kind of common value as well. (Interview with 'R')

Apart from the remarks above, the recognition of common ground can also be found in the written curriculum. *Guideline 3-1-3* states that 'moral pluralism means the co-existence of multiple moral theories and is opposed to moral absolutism or moral relativism. There might be some objections and conflicts among diverse cultures, but they can compensate, incorporate or facilitate each other to a varying degree' (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 19). The objection to relativism indicates the possibility of integration based on the existing social foundation. In the above excerpts, it may be noted that three terms, namely 'common ground' (Gong-Tong-Dian, ?通?), 'common values' (Gong-Tong-Jia-Zhi, ?同??), and 'common good' (Gong-Gong-Shan, ???) are used interchangeably by the interviewees. 'Common ground', in interviewee 'R's account, is construed with a broad meaning that includes biological, behavioral, psychological, social, cultural and ethical similarity among human beings – something cross-cultural or trans-cultural – and the latter two terms, as shown in both excerpts, point to the more intangible values that can unite people and achieve harmony. In the analysis of the interview accounts, due to their being used indistinguishably, the semantic differences between these three terms is glossed over and they are uniformly defined as the shared similarities and communal beliefs across different social groups.

However, confronted with the criticisms of communitarian communal values, the interviewees also demonstrate reservations regarding the 'imagined' unity of Taiwanese society on account of the increasing population of immigrants and a strong resentment against previously assumed 'monolithic Chinese values' from the previous conservative citizenship curriculum. As curriculum advisors 'D' and 'R' mention:

> An artificially manipulated common ground such as the Chinese-centered values in the old curricula has not only failed to consolidate the society, but actually incites hostility and antagonism. The aboriginal people, who are culturally and linguistically different from the Chinese, were subordinated to this uniformity and labeled a primitive and inferior culture not worthy of preservation. So, while a common ground is good for social cohesion it should be naturally formed and discovered rather than enforced. (Interview with 'D')

> In theory, a common ground is supposed to be beneficial to the society. If this concept is in good hands, it may achieve its ideal form. However, history tells us that it is often exploited by ethnocentric rulers and many minorities are therefore sacrificed to fictitious common values and xenophobic narrow-mindedness. (Interview with 'R')

Therefore, at face value, the concept of a common ground is welcomed by the Curriculum Committee, but in reality, they are aware of the danger of suffocating and endangering the diversity underlying the discourse. In this respect, the interviewees are torn between the ideal form and reality. This question is no longer regarding whether they like this communitarian view or not, but how the common ground can be justifiably found and how 'deep' this commonality could be.

Significantly, in the remark from interviewee 'R' – 'We can always find similarities within the distinct opinions [Yi-Zhong-Qiu-Tong, ?中?同]' and 'we can say that the toleration of and respect for differences is a kind of common value as well'– it can be construed that 'R' does not insist on a 'thick' common good, as promoted by communitarianism, but rather subscribes to a 'thin' version suitable to the plurality of the society. Interviewee 'L' points out that 'respect, anti-discrimination, pluralism and equality' are the common values embedded in the curriculum. In this respect, it seems that even though the Curriculum Committee is positive about the existence of communal values, these values are closer to Rawlsian liberalism rather than the communitarian construct. The abundance of the good upheld by every individual may clash but the 'thin' theory of the good stemming from the 'overlapping consensus' is compatible with a variety of different life plans and can be treated as the core of the social structure. The interviewees and the curriculum lean towards liberal theory and sidestep espousing any particular superior vision of human society. The new curriculum shares more similarities with liberalism in this regard. However, the liberal citizenship construct is not free from criticism given that doubts arise from its 'thin' concept of the good and the consequent hesitation to present pupils with any vision of life or virtues. The lukewarm attitude towards public affairs and social participation in liberalism is also likely to undermine the sustainability of a civil society.

4.3. The combination of the liberal and communitarian paradigms in the curriculum

Liberalism has come under attack from communitarians for its premise of the 'unencumbered self' and the existence of 'free choosers' (Sandel, 1982, p. 179). Asked whether this liberal citizenship curriculum would be indifferent to public affairs and fellow citizens which are the fears of the communitarian camp, curriculum developer 'L' replies:

> Some school teachers, education specialists and media have raised this concern before. We are often inclined to consider issues with a dualistic view. It is an easy way to clarify human behavior but it might trap our way of thinking as if there is a big gap between the divide. ... We [curriculum developers] never conceive that the manifestation of individuality would harm the collective good as long as we don't push it to the extreme. I

am confident that the new curriculum does not go overboard. Even though we indeed prioritize the 'human agency', we do not discount the value of social dedication and participation. From the frame of the curriculum, you can obviously notice that it is full of public issues and our ultimate goal for this curriculum is to expect the independent individual to be driven by the altruistic spirits. (Interview with 'L')

This excerpt sketches the intent to avoid defining the curriculum as an individuality-oriented curriculum. Interviewee 'L' objects to this oversimplified binary way of thinking and believes that the autonomous and reflective features from the liberal perspective can prevail in the curriculum while socially engaged and participatory values can be included as well. Curriculum advisor 'K' also concedes:

I feel this is not completely a liberal curriculum. More precisely, I would say this is a curriculum imbued with diverse ideologies. I always think its 'stance' switches across topics. When we talk about personal development and human rights, the priority of individuality is highly stressed. However, when it comes to community and the nation-state, the premise of an inescapable 'situated' self, bound to the larger society, is brought forward. The importance of participation takes precedence in the discourse. (Interview with 'K')

Another interviewee, 'D', shares the same view and elaborates below:

As we know, the curriculum is always the end product of negotiation and compromise. Each curriculum design participant brings their own perspective into this process and it is not a surprise that the hybridity of different thoughts caught the curriculum in the middle. I don't think it is a bad thing. The concept of 'pluralism' guides the development of the curriculum and this hybridity is in accordance with this spirit, reflecting this pluralistic society. It is quite acceptable to me. (Interview with 'D')

The above accounts have disabused us of the idea that the curriculum is a manifestation of a specific strand of thinking but is rather an amalgamation of compromises between several ideologies. Arguably, the power relationships among curriculum committee members and the degree of popularity of some subjects over others to a certain degree determine which series of knowledge is given more weight. The social science disciplines of sociology, political science, law and economics which comprise the Taiwanese citizenship curriculum often harbor incompatible or even conflicting visions. The Curriculum Committee therefore functioned as a cosmetician tasked with glossing over the inconsistencies and smoothing out or harmonising the coexistence of different views. The incorporation of liberalism and communitarianism, without exhibiting the conflicts between them, is, for example evident. The resulting 'concoction' somehow mirrors the long-lasting discussion of how to integrate both strands of thinking in philosophical studies. The new curriculum swings to the liberal side in manifesting the significance of basic rights and autonomy and swings back to the communitarian version when justifying the encouragement of social participation. In the curriculum, the foreword for *Guideline 1-4 Public Interests* states:

The civilized life and the glory of morality are built upon the pursuit of private and public interests. Based on this understanding, this section aims to illuminate the importance of 'public participation' and 'the protection of personal basic rights'. . . . This section will also focus on students' awareness of the existence, features and related issues of the public interests and invoke the civic value of 'social participation'. (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 12)

Besides *Guideline 1-4*, *Guideline 1-1-1* (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 8) points out that 'the uniqueness and the social position of the individual are defined in the network of the society and culture', and this is consistent with what Brighouse and Swift (2003, p. 361) remind us when they declare that while free choosers make their choices, they tend to take account of their 'given' roles, including family, school, community and tradition. *Guideline 4-4 Economics and Sustainable Development* also touches on how a successful enterprise can honor its social responsibilities and prevent negative external effects on the environment while pursuing maximum profits (Taiwan Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 31). In fact, individuals are not as egoistic as communitarians claim, and may not simply bypass their own obligations.

As can be observed, the Curriculum Committee seeks to find a middle ground for the communitarian version to compensate for the liberal citizenship paradigm. Liberalism and communitarianism in the curriculum designers' eyes are no longer construed as opposing ends of the spectrum. Rather, they can work in tandem to arrive at equilibrium without sacrificing either like a zero-sum contest. Gutmann (1985, p. 320) also contends that liberal and communitarian concepts are not so distinct that the gap cannot be surmounted and communitarian views can compensate for the shortcomings of liberalism instead of replacing it.

The Chair of the Committee, Professor Chang Mau-Kuei in an in-service teacher training course in October 2012 mentioned Charles Taylor's *Modern Social Imaginaries* (2002) as one of the guides for the Committee members to envision what drives Taiwanese society and how this subject can be conceptualized to support the current development of democracy (Chang, 18th October, 2012). Taylor (2002) argues that new ideologies, such as human rights in the American Revolutionary War and the French Revolution, have emerged over time and gradually dismantled the pieces of the 'former society' and that these 'mutations' brought substantial social and cultural shifts to civilization (Abbey, 2000, p. 78; Taylor, 2002, p. 91). Education imbued with groundbreaking views can therefore be an integral part of this transformation.

Another Curriculum Committee member, Professor Liu Ching-Yi, a specialist in law from National Taiwan University (NTU), also hosted an in-service lecture for nationwide CE teachers to introduce Taylor's theories. These actions indicate that the Committee shows great sympathy for the Canadian philosopher's insights. It is noted that Taylor is renowned for his integrated view on liberal-communitarian dualism, which corresponds with the Committee's way of dealing with this issue. By approaching the concept of the self from the hermeneutical tradition, Taylor holds that individuals live in 'webs of interlocution' and are constituted and defined by the relation and 'dialogical' structure of identity (Taylor, 1989, pp. 36,38). Without perceiving individualism as atomism, Taylor, following Wilhelm von Humboldt's 'holist individualism', maintains that 'it [holist individualism] represents a trend of thought that is fully aware of the social embedding of human agents, but at the same time prizes liberty and individual differences very highly' (Taylor, 1989, pp. 36,38). Holistic individualism shows a hybridity of self-perception, individuality, collective values and social goals. Many individual benefits are obtained through collective actions, for example social movements, and this type of collectivism can boost instead of suffocate individuality, and thereby, this transcendental form of individualism does not conceive of collectivity as detrimental to freedom and autonomy.

While the debate between liberalism and communitarianism is still unsettled and the bifurcation has been extended to the field of citizenship research and education to form different paradigms, (for example, Arthur and Davison's four versions of citizenship, 2000; Delanty's theories of citizenship, 2000), the Taiwanese Curriculum Committee, in seeking to resolve the long lasting

liberal-communitarian divide, have incorporated a boundary breaking view and aimed to absorb both philosophies into a single CE program. The praxis of this Taiwanese curriculum reform may provide the philosophical argument with the hint of reconciliation and develop a transformative approach in accordance with the social changes in Taiwan.

Using a 'water-riverbanks' analogy to describe the Taiwanese curriculum structure, the new curriculum can be conceived of as a river. 'Human agency' is water flowing through a field and the worry is that its momentum may fiercely flood the whole area. Hence, water needs riverbanks to shape its stream and thus extend its length leading to a certain direction. The curriculum developers resorted to public issues to orchestrate those riverbanks to confine the overflow as the communitarian citizenship paradigm complements the lack of collective awareness and public-spiritedness in the liberal version. The discourse of 'human agency', envisaged as conscious individuals with independent and critical judgment, conditioned by social awareness is the pivot of the curriculum design. Neither 'atomized' nor 'encumbered' roles of citizens are exclusively premised. While liberalism shows the salience of human agency in the Taiwanese citizenship curriculum, communitarianism leads the way to the realization of social participation and cohesion in the curriculum.

5. Conclusion

Over more than six decades, the trajectory of Taiwanese citizenship curriculum has shifted from a conservative to a liberal paradigm. The paradigm shift began after moves to democratization in the late 1980s and saw the previous 'obligations-based' CE replaced by a 'rights-based' liberal version. Its introduction in 2010 was met by reactionary voices claiming that the individualistic flavor of the new curriculum may cultivate socially apathetic and self-centered citizens. However, the counterpart of 'rights' is not 'self-interestedness' but 'obligation'. 'The language of rights is also a language of duties' because without other people's obligatory acts, rights cannot be sustained (Campbell, 2006, p. 20). As a result, the accusation that the new guidelines are an individualistic design is untenable.

Meanwhile, some curriculum designers tend to argue that the main threat currently facing Taiwanese society is a deficit rather a surplus of individualism given that this young democracy has experienced a long period of authoritarian rule and there is a need for people to be vocal about their interests and needs. This indicates that the decision to make the paradigm change necessitates careful consideration of the past and the cultural norms of a society. American Sociologist Amitai Etzioni (1993, 25) contends that in the 1980s, American society celebrated 'the self' but recently, as the pendulum swung back, restored the spirit of community. He speculates that Asia and Eastern Europe are heading in the opposite direction as those societies currently seek to 'make more room for self-expression, to slash excessive government control, and to roll back severely enforced moral codes that suppress creativity and impinge on individual rights'. From the interview accounts and the written guidelines, we can see that Taiwan's new CE curriculum mirrors Etzioni's supposition. However, this liberal tendency does not completely overwhelm the spirit of communitarianism in the new guidelines.

The curriculum acknowledges the existence of communal values but shies away from the 'thick' version of 'the good' due to the diversity of Taiwanese society. The Curriculum Committee members, alongside liberals, believe that a 'thin' overlapping commonality can prevent exclusion and discrimination against those with different visions of a meaningful life and accommodate the plurality of the modern society better. However, evidence from the interviews indicates that the liberal paradigm alone cannot satisfy the needs of the Taiwanese curriculum and the lack of public-spiritedness and social participation presents great concerns. In line with Charles Taylor and Wilhelm von Humboldt's 'holist individualism', the interviewees point out that the dualism of liberalism and communitarianism segregates the two ideologies and overlooks the feasibility of integration. The new curriculum absorbs liberalism's determination to manifest the value of the individual and the collective harmony pictured by communitarians to integrate between two strands of thinking. Even though the new *Curriculum Guidelines* stands closer to the liberal citizenship paradigm when evaluated for the weight given to both strands, communitarianism plays an auxiliary role to compensate for the shortcomings of the liberal curriculum. This integrative approach reflects that while many philosophers have attempted to bridge the gap between both strands of thinking, these two paradigms are no longer been seen as separate entities by the citizenship curriculum designers.

When the possibility of balancing liberalism and communitarianism and integrating them into one subject is seen in the curriculum, it should be heeded that any equilibrium arrived at can be put in peril when either exceeds a certain amount. Either a surplus of individualism or suppression of collective values is likely to lay the curriculum open to controversy and criticism. Moreover, the linear thinking that society and citizens' characteristics can be shaped merely through different selections of paradigms is a mistaken belief. Curriculum paradigms can be easily twisted or swamped when contextual factors or social contingencies come into play, so that the limitations of curriculum studies as such should be always borne in mind. For instance, the exam-driven and cramming culture in East Asia may stifle the cultivation of individuals capable of critical thinking inclined towards social participation, no matter how profoundly these traits are stressed through education. Despite these constraints, the transition of the Taiwanese citizenship curriculum outlined here, displays how a curriculum can be transformed from a conservative construct and absorb liberal strands of thinking after social openness. Curriculum developers initiated the paradigm shift and curriculum reform to meet the needs of the society as they saw it. The philosophical and critical analysis of how Taiwanese curriculum designers consider the merits and limits of the conservative, liberal and communitarian constructs may be extended to reflect on the messages embedded in the citizenship curricula of other countries, especially for young democracies evolving away from an authoritarian past. In an attempt to cultivate socially engaged citizens, some countries suffering from increasing distrust in politics and apathy among young people such as the UK, Australia and Hungary, have, in contrast to Taiwan, favored a communitarian approach (Ichilov, 1998; Crick, 2000; Kerr, 2003; Dejaeghere and Tudball, 2007). Meanwhile, while many democracies have left behind the conservative construct and chosen either the liberal and communitarian approach, we still saw attempts in 2012 in Hong Kong to impose a conservative-leaning new subject, named *Moral and National Education*, which includes traditional doctrines and mechanistic allegiance towards the Beijing government (This implementation of this subject was cancelled by the end of 2012 due to strong resistance). As societies grapple with these different paradigms, each one corresponding to particular socio-political changes or the visions of those in power, the underlying philosophical intents within a curriculum herald certain expectations of future generations.

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Appendix A

Interview questions		Codes
1	What were seen as the characteristics of a 'good citizen' according to your understanding of the 'old' national curricula?	Code 1: comments on the old curricula
2	In terms of different types of citizenship education (e.g. emphasis on community participation/civic knowledge acquisition/personal character cultivation/political literacy etc.), how would you describe the new citizenship curriculum?	Code 2: perspectives closer to liberalism
3	Do you agree with the characteristics promoted in the current curriculum? Are there any other elements that, in your view, should be included in the curriculum?	Code 3: perspectives closer to communitarianism
4	Has the current curriculum attempted to find 'common values' across communities in Taiwan?	Code 4: perspectives shared by liberalism and communitarianism
5	How did the Curriculum Committee deal with contentious or competing values and divergent identities in a modern society as Taiwan?	Code 5: views on rights and obligations
6	What are the potential implications the Curriculum Committee expected to see from including these promoted characteristics in the new curriculum?	Code 6: comments on common values and identities Code 7: visions on future generation

(translation by the author).

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