

Modern and
Contemporary
Taiwanese Philosophy

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*Traditional Foundations
and New Developments*

Edited by

Jana S. Rošker

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

JANA S. ROŠKER

The present book is related to an unusual chapter of Chinese intellectual history. Largely, it is a collection of translations of texts on modern Taiwanese philosophy, which were originally written in Chinese, and mainly deal with traditional Chinese thought. However, this philosophy did not originate in mainland China, that is, in some supposedly logical “centre” of Chinese culture, but on its alleged “periphery,” namely on the beautiful island of Taiwan. The main reason for compiling this book is thus to show to the wider circles of Western readers that Taiwanese philosophers have played an important role in the development of modern Chinese philosophy, and especially in the second half of the 20th century. Therefore, the book also includes several pioneering Western studies regarding the work of different modern and contemporary Taiwanese streams of thought.

In contrast to the mainland, Taiwanese philosophy of that time had almost no connection with either Marxism or any of the many streams of post-Marxist philosophy. While theorists from the PR China were mainly been dealing with various forms, issues and innovations in the field of the sinization of Marxism, those working in Taiwan devoted themselves to the exploration and adaptation of other forms of Western modernity, especially those deriving from Kant and German classical philosophy. They wanted to modernize their own (i.e. Chinese) traditions through the ideas of the European Enlightenment. While in the 1950s the Chinese conceptual tradition (in particular, Confucianism) fell into disfavour and was often

prohibited, or at least severely criticized, on the mainland, Taiwanese philosophers were constantly striving for its preservation and development.

However, at issue was not only the preservation of tradition; in the second half of 20th century several complex and coherent philosophical systems emerged in Taiwan. The creation of these discourses is proof for the great creativity and innovativeness of many Taiwanese theorists. Here, it is particularly important to highlight the Modern or New Confucianism and its most famous Taiwanese representative, Mou Zongsan. But in post-war Taiwan we can also witness many other forms of investigating and upgrading traditional Chinese thought. In this regard, the Neo-Daoist current and the Taiwanese Buddhist studies are certainly worth mentioning. Besides, modern Taiwanese philosophers have also enriched and advanced the originally Western medieval scholastic thought by establishing a specific school of the so-called Taiwanese Neo-Scholasticism, which was founded at Fu-jen Catholic University. However, the rich palette of philosophical thoughts that emerged in Taiwan in the second half of the 20th century cannot be limited to these few streams of thought.

The book opens with my introduction in which I present the conditions that have shaped the second half of the 20th century in Taiwan and highlight the contribution of Taiwanese philosophy for the preservation and development of traditional Chinese thought during this period. This introduction is followed by four chapters, each of which includes several articles fitting into the overall chapter theme.

Chapter one deals with Taiwanese Modern Confucianism. It contains four articles, written by Lee Ming-huei, Jong-Mo Jung, Tak-lap Yeung and Téa Sernelj. The chapter begins with the contribution written by Lee Ming-huei, who is certainly among the most well-known representatives of contemporary Taiwanese Confucianism. This paper was originally

published in Chinese as a part of the book *Confucianism and Modern Consciousness (Revised and Enlarged Edition)* [*Ruxue yu xiandai yishi (zengding ban)* 儒學與現代意識 (增訂版)] (2016), and translated by Jan Vrhovski. In this article, the author offers a critical survey of the contemporary debates on the re-interpretation of the ancient Chinese concept of inner sage and external ruler (*neisheng waiwang*). The second paper critically presents the great variety of contemporary Taiwanese discussions and controversies in relation with the problem of Confucian Orthodoxy (*daotong*). This chapter was translated from Korean and represents a good example of the Korean research in Neo-Confucianism through the lens of the cultural consciousness in contemporary Taiwan. In the third and the fourth papers of this chapter, the authors Tak-lap Yeung and Téa Sernelj critically examine the philosophy of two famous representatives of the second generation of Modern Confucianism, namely Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan, respectively.

The second chapter is entitled *Research on Daoist Philosophy* and consists of three papers, written by the representatives of the Taiwanese contemporary Daoist current. The chapter opens with a contribution written by Chen Guying, who is one of the most renowned specialists in Daoist philosophy at the international level. His paper analyses Laozi's view on and application of three of the most debated binary categories which shaped the methodology of traditional Chinese philosophy, namely the categories of Presence and Absence, Movement and Stillness, and Essence and Function. The second paper in this chapter was written by one of his former students, namely Wu Hui-ling, who explores the principle of mutual complementarity, which defines the theoretical structuring of such binary categories. The third paper in this chapter is Ye Hai-yen's article on the Neo-Daoism of the Wei and Jin Dynasties.

Chapter three is devoted to Taiwanese studies in logic and methodology. In his paper, Jan Vrhovski offers a critical and very coherent survey of the origins of Taiwanese studies in modern logic, focusing upon the logical thought of Mou Zongsan and Yin Haiguang. Lee Hsien-chung, the author of the second paper, is Taiwan's most well-known expert on traditional Chinese logic, who is also developing his own, innovative methodology for researching Chinese philosophy. In his essay, he discusses some crucial problems related to concepts in philosophical thinking.

The fourth and last chapter deals with modern and contemporary Taiwanese philosophy from the East Asian and global perspective. It opens with a paper written by Huang Chun-chieh, who is well known in Taiwanese academia for his pioneering contributions to the contemporary research of East Asian Confucianism. In this paper, he focuses on the history and methodology of the intellectual interactions and exchanges between China and Japan. The second paper in this chapter also explores and compares Chinese and Japanese intellectual production, but this time through the lens of a concrete comparison between the philosophies of Tang Junyi on the one side, and Nishitani Keiji on the other. This paper was written by Huang Kuan-min, who is particularly well known for his studies of phenomenology. Last, but not least, there is Nevad Kahteran's informative and important paper on the project of Islamic-Confucian-Daoist dialogue in the Balkans, which was carried out in cooperation with the famous Taiwanese-American scholar Tu Weiming.

As we can see, the present book is focused on the connective role played by Taiwanese philosophy, and it also presents its intercultural dimensions. In this sense, it can doubtless be seen as a bridge that links different discourses across time and space by illuminating and exposing various otherwise neglected traditions of Chinese philosophical thought. I believe

that this book will show that this connective function and dialogical nature is precisely the greatest significance of contemporary Taiwanese philosophy, and hope that it will raise awareness of this significance among wider circles of Western readers.

Jana S. Rožker

INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF TAIWANESE PHILOSOPHY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

JANA S. ROŠKER

Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century, the philosophers in mainland China were mostly investigating Marxist and Leninist theories, aiming to adapt them to specific Chinese conditions. In this process, they had to deal with ideological directives from the Communist Party of China (CPC). Hence, while on the mainland, the Chinese ideational tradition was being exiled to the graveyards of “feudal ideologies” up until the 1980s, Taiwanese theoreticians—similar to those in Hong Kong—were developing, upgrading and modernizing mostly Confucian and partly Daoist thought.

Without the continuity that was sustained, preserved and developed by Taiwanese theoreticians, a lot of important research topics would have faded into oblivion, as it would not have been possible for them to keep developing. This interruption of knowledge could certainly have had catastrophic consequences for the development of new methodologies for researching Chinese philosophy. Besides, Taiwan in the second half of the 20th century was also a place of highly innovative philosophers, who developed their own theoretical systems and are among the most important personalities of Chinese philosophy in the last century. At this point, we must not overlook Mou Zongsan, who, in the eyes of academia, is one of

the astounding masters of Modern Confucian philosophy, which was—prior to him and his contemporaries—being shaped by great minds such as Xiong Shili and Feng Youlan. Besides some of his contemporaries, who also belonged to the Modern New Confucian intellectual movement, several of his younger colleagues who only passed away at the turn of the millennium, such as Liu Shu-hsien, were also important figures.

The importance of Taiwanese philosophy for maintaining and developing the methodology for exploring Chinese philosophy, as well as Chinese intellectual traditions in general, is not well known outside the region. That is why one of the main goals of this chapter is to fill this gap in knowledge.

Specific political and intellectual situation of Taiwan after 1949 and the maintaining of continuity in the research of traditional philosophy

The contribution of Taiwanese philosophy was of particular importance in the field of Confucian philosophy, which was in the first twenty-five years of the People's Republic—at least on the explicitly formal level—silenced. Its crucial ideas and main approaches were developed further mostly by Taiwanese and, to a lesser extent, Hong Kong-based theoreticians. Unlike the People's Republic of China, where Confucianism was treated as an “ideology of outlived feudalism” up until the 1980s, many intellectuals in Hong Kong and Taiwan, which were both (each in its own way) defined by the social discourse of post-colonialism, had defied the ever growing Westernization of their societies. Because of this culturally, nationally and politically multi-layered context, Taiwanese intellectuals played an important role in this process from the very beginning.

They warned that the dependency of the island on colonial forces was by no means limited to culture alone. After the victory of the CPC and

founding of the People's Republic of China, the seat of the exiled government became Taiwan under the ruling Nationalist Party (*Guomindang*), and because of this the small island desperately needed foreign aid for its political and economic survival. During the first decades after the war, the Taiwanese government practiced a mild autocracy. In this period American donations, which became a regular part of the country's "anti-communist" strategy after the Korean War, were a crucial and necessary condition for Taiwan to maintain its economic and political stability. Taiwanese dependence on US capital investments, technology and markets did not stop even after the official end of American aid in 1965. Shortly afterwards, American donations and investments were joined by Japanese ones, as Japan regained its former economical supremacy over the island. Together with the US, it established effective control over Taiwanese industrial development and foreign trade. By this time, American and Japanese capital presented 85% of all Taiwanese investments (Lai Ming-Yan 1995, 103).

This supremacy of American and Japanese capital meant that the oppositions between labour and capital were often interpreted as parallel or analogous to the opposition between the Chinese and foreigners. Instead of a "class awareness" it was "national identity," as defined by the yearning for national autonomy and independence, that developed faster in these conditions among the Taiwanese people. This shift is conditioned by the fact that we can understand Taiwanese modernization better if we look at it through the lens of post-colonialism.

The nature of the new Taiwanese identity was always uncertain. The island, originally inhabited by different Pacific tribes, was under the control of colonial forces from 1683 until the start of Second World War, and arguably beyond this (Day 1999, 9). The first Han Chinese immigrants were already inhabiting parts of Taiwan in the 17th century, which at the time

was still under Dutch colonial rule. After the defeat and departure of the Dutch, the island came under the rule of Manchurian government of mainland China. When the Japanese defeated the Chinese in 1895, they took over the island as one of their colonies. The largest wave of Han Chinese migrants (about one million people) came to Taiwan after the civil war between the Communists and Nationalists, at the beginning of the People's Republic of China. When the original, earlier "indigenized" inhabitants were confronted with these newcomers, a new "Taiwanese" ethnic and cultural identity began to be shaped and strengthened. During the last decades of the 20th century, a differentiation between Taiwanese and Han Chinese (mainland) identity had a great influence upon political and intellectual developments of the island, the modernization of which was accelerating (with a lot of help from foreign investments). The Nationalist Party, which remained the only ruling political party in Taiwan until 2000, was all the while promoting the idea of the political unity of China, and a Han Chinese cultural and national identity, while the second most important party that won the elections in the same year (*Minjin dang*) was emphasizing a separate "Taiwanese" identity.

This is the context within which Taiwan, as a place of refuge for the defeated Nationalist government after the civil war, represented that part of "modern" China where the emerging philosophy of Modern Confucianism found its most fertile ground. Chinese philosophers who lived and worked in Taiwan after 1949 (and whose functions and contributions will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter) did not deal with the questions of the sinization of Marxism and its diverse connotations, but were instead confronted with problems of modernization and capitalism much earlier than their mainland colleagues. In this way, they were continuing to pursue a constant discursive development that started in China

as early as by the end of the 19th century and was interrupted “only” by the turbulent events of the war with Japanese and then the civil war on the mainland (ibid.). Hence, a profound desire for solving urgent practical problems in the areas of politics, society, economy and culture can clearly be seen in the works of such philosophers. Because of the “generous support” from the Western countries who were, led by the US, trying to preserve the Taiwanese “democratic alternative” as a counterbalance to Chinese communism, and also in Hong Kong because of its colonial status, these two societies started a period of intense Westernization in the 1950s. The process of their integration into the world of modern capitalism was in an ideological sense accompanied by traditional Confucian ethics based on a hierarchical system of obedience to authority. As such, it had already proven itself in Japan as an ideology which is very compatible with the demands and often intolerable social conditions of early capitalism.

Moreover, such trends can be seen in not only Japan but also the other “Asian Tigers,” namely South Korea and Singapore, as well as Taiwan and Hong Kong, whose successful modernization was often seen as “the victory of Confucian capitalism” (Wang 2000, 19).

It is not surprising that from the very start Modern Confucians based their research mostly on the thesis by which the Confucian thought is perfectly compatible with capitalistic development. Elements that enable this combination are diverse. Most Chinese scholars see this compatibility as primarily the result of a general willingness to engage in cooperation and the so-called “communicative method of action” (Trauzettel and Moritz 1993, 65), which is supposedly typical of Confucianism. Besides the abovementioned hierarchical structure of society at the formal and interactional levels, which is also the basis of the traditional Confucian view of interpersonal relations in society, we can also mention here the meaning

of personal, intimate identification with one's own clan as a basic unit of the individual's social environment. The concept of such identification is in the process of capitalistic production transferred from one's own clan to one's company, and this transfer allows for a very efficient integration of the individuals employed by the firm. In connection with the absolute and uncritically accepted obedience to authority, based on a specific modification of original Confucian teachings which took place in the autocratic reform during the Han Dynasty, the transformation of this concept of identification can lead to a surplus in production and profit.

In the 1950s there was a polemic between the Modern Confucians of Hong Kong and Taiwan on the one hand, and the liberals among the Taiwanese intellectuals on the other. The latter were led by Hu Shi, who was an established scholar and politician. The polemic, which will be discussed in more detail later, mostly revolved around the question of whether traditional Chinese culture, and especially Confucian thought, was suitable for the development of science, technology and a democratic political system of the Western kind. Modern Confucians claimed that even though such elements were not present in the traditional Confucianism, this fact alone did not mean that the Confucian tradition was suppressing the development of a modern society. The liberals, however, were convinced of the opposite. They emphasized that in order to become a modern, technologically developed and democratic country, China needed to eliminate all remnants of Confucian thought. In this polemic it turned out that although Modern Confucians recognized the difference between politics and morality, they still linked political liberty with moral liberty at the theoretical level. The representatives of the liberal camp rejected the assumption that political liberty should be based on morality, because in their view, this would—even in a best case scenario—lead to a “totalitarian

democracy.” In this context, the modern Taiwanese philosopher Lee Ming-huei highlights (2001, 89–129) the difference between “positive” and “negative” liberty which was described by Isaiah Berlin in the book *Four Essays on Liberty* in 1969. Lee also writes in this context that this idea was already mentioned earlier by Chang Fo-chüan in his book *Liberty and Human Rights (Ziyou yu renquan)* published in 1954. Following this conceptual pair, Taiwanese liberals developed the idea that a democratic order can only be established on the basis of “negative liberty.” In their opinion, the introduction of “positive liberty” would lead to totalitarianism. Modern Confucians, on the other side, not only advocated negative liberty, but were also certain that such liberty was still lacking in Chinese culture. Nonetheless, they emphasized that negative liberty should, on a theoretical level, be conditioned by positive liberty and that, in practice, negative liberty alone would not be enough to prevent totalitarianism (Lee 2001, 78).

Numerous theoreticians have highlighted the idea that negative liberty is necessarily conditioned by positive liberty (Taylor 1985, 221–229). The representatives of the liberal current, however, were persistently upholding the sole significance of negative liberty; this implied that they followed the paradigm of individualism, which is based on the idea of the individual as a subject, totally divided from his or her community, ergo on the idea of an “unencumbered self” (Sandel 1984, 81). Some theoreticians even think that in this polemic Modern Confucians were closer to communitarianism than may seem at first glance (Lee 2001, 78). That which they were searching for could be summed up with the term “Confucian liberalism,” a kind of liberalism which should “naturally” evolve in the context of the Confucian tradition.

Philosophical currents and key figures

This section will help us understand how Taiwanese scholars have contributed significantly to the preservation of the continuity of Chinese traditions, and specifically Confucian, Daoist, as well as Mohist, Nomenalist and Buddhist traditions, in Sinophone academic circles.

Taiwanese scholars also played an important role in establishing and developing various connections with the history of Western philosophy, while on the mainland this was allowed only to a limited extent. This mostly involved research, presentations and extensions of German classical philosophy (particularly regarding the three main critiques of Immanuel Kant) as well as certain works of American pragmatism.

We should also mention the importance of the liberal current (*Ziyou pai*), particularly of its central representative Hu Shi, already mentioned above, and who became the first director and academic leader of the Academia Sinica, after it was moved to Taiwan.

Numerous important dialogues with Western philosophy were also nurtured by the Taiwan-born scholars who moved abroad, predominately to the US. Let us mention at least a few of these key researchers of comparative philosophy. Some of them have already passed away, for instance Fang Dongmei (Tomé Fang), Tang Junyi (Tang Chün-i), and Liu Shu-hsien; then, there are the still active representatives of the older generation, such as Cheng Chung-ying, Tu Wei-ming, Liu Shu-hsien and Wu Kunru. Here, we should also mention two of the prominent figures of the younger generation: Shen Qingsong and Fu Peirong (Wang Qishui 1998, 70).

Established and developed at the Catholic Fu-jen University (*Furen daxue*), the Taiwanese Neo-scholastic philosophy (*Xin shillin zhexue*) made a particularly important contribution to the field of modern Taiwanese

philosophy. Luo Guang, the most important pioneer and representative of this school of philosophy, was important not only because he was spreading knowledge of and dismantling the prejudice towards scholastic philosophy and its history, but also because he developed a number of innovative guidelines for the development of the methodology of Chinese philosophy, especially its hermeneutic aspects. Lao Siguang (Lao Sze-kwang) also made important contributions in this field.

Probably the most well-known school of Taiwanese philosophical thought is the Modern or New Confucianism (*Xin ruxue*) one. Its main Taiwanese representatives are Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan and Liu Shu-hsien.

Nevertheless, one should not overlook the various other discourses developed in Taiwan. We have already mentioned the Taiwanese Neo-scholastic philosophy, which was most active at Fu-jen University. Modern Daoism (*Xin daoja*) is another such example. Its most prominent representatives are Lin Yutang, Yu Peilin, Yan Lingfeng and his younger colleague Chen Guying. The latter has gained somewhat of a reputation in mainland China as well, and has been a regular lecturer at China's most famous university, the University of Beijing (*Beijing daxue*) for many years. Chen's legacy also includes a number of young researchers, such as the young associate professor Wu Hui-ling. Under the guidance of Professor Lee Hsien-chung, she is not only examining Modern Daoism, but also the pre-Qin logics and the methodology of Chinese philosophy. We should also mention Zhang Qidiao, a member of the younger generation of philosophers who are studying Daoism and were also engaged in its popularization.

In the last few years, a group of philosophers studying the philosophy of the *qi* has also been gaining importance. They call themselves *Qi Pai* ("the current of *qi*") and are led by Yang Rubin from the Tsinghua University

(*Qinghua daxue*) from Xinzhu. As an interesting fact, let us mention the German philosopher Fabian Heubel (He Fabi), who is also part of this group, and has been living in Taiwan for over 20 years. He studied Sinology in Germany and went on to become a full member of Academia Sinica (*Zhongyang yanjiu yuan*), Taiwan's leading academic and research institution. A number of other extraordinary scholars of Chinese and Taiwanese philosophy are currently active at the Academia Sinica as well: Huang Kuan-min, for instance, is mostly known for his studies on hermeneutics, as well as Lee Ming-huei and Mou Zongsan's student Lin Yueh-hui, an outstanding female scholars with many notable international achievements.

At National Taiwan University (*Guoli Taiwan daxue*, NTU), several extraordinary theorists are advancing research in Chinese philosophy. Several professors at the department for Chinese Language and Literature (*Zhongwen xi*) are prominent in this field, but even more important in this regard is the Department of Philosophy (*Zhexue xi*), with a large number of experts in Chinese hermeneutics, such as Lin Ming-Chao, and in Buddhist studies (such as Duh Pao-ruei).

One also cannot overlook the achievements of the long-standing head of this department and the current vice dean of the Faculty of Arts at the NTU, Professor Lee Hsien-chung. His importance is not only evident in his outstanding and internationally acclaimed publications in the area of classical Chinese (especially Mohist, Nomenalist and Confucian) logics, but also in his innovative studies on the development of methods of researching Chinese philosophy. Professor Lee gained international recognition by establishing a new methodological system, based on the method of "thought units" (*sixiang danwei*). Professor Lee is also the editor of the leading Taiwanese philosophy journal, *Philosophy and Culture* (*Zhexue yu wenhua*)

and the president of the most important Taiwanese philosophical organization, the Taiwanese Academic Society for Philosophy (*Taiwan zhexue xuehui*).

The National Taiwan University is also home to the Institute of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (*Renwen shehui gaodeng yanjiu yuan*). Its long-standing head is Professor Huang Chun-chieh, a former full member of the Academia Sinica. He is important for his contributions in methodology, history of ideas, hermeneutics of classical Chinese, especially regarding the philosophy of Mencius and Confucianism in East Asia. In this context, he is very active in researching and evaluating the work of Xu Fuguan, a great cultural historian, who we have already mentioned and who is also a prominent representative of Modern Confucianism.

The Taiwanese members of this school of thought belong, as noted above, to the most important and most famous theorists of the modern age. In the next chapter, we shall therefore briefly examine Modern Confucianism, its main goals, methodology and distinctive features.

Modern Confucianism (*Xin ruxue*) as the main intellectual movement of the preservation of Chinese tradition

The present introduction of this important and world-renowned branch of modern Chinese philosophy is rudimentary and represents only an outline of its most important approaches, its representatives as well as its achievements. This presentation is meant to remain simple, chiefly because there are already many books and articles on this topic. Therefore, I will limit this section only to the most significant information about its main contributions to the development of modern Taiwanese philosophy.

The central theses of the Modern Confucian philosophers follow their conviction that Confucianism, as the foundation of a specifically Chinese system of social, political and moral thought, can—of course in a modernized form which answers the requirements of the contemporary era—function as a basis for establishing an ethical meaning of life, and as a mental cure against alienation, which they understand as a side effect of a capitalist glorification of competition and its unlimited pursuit of profit.

Hence, they were following an aspiration for the reconstruction of those main approaches of traditional (Confucian) thought, which would be able to surpass the prevailing ideological trends and preserve the Chinese cultural identity, while at the same time contributing to the continuous development of philosophical and theoretical dialogue among Euro-American and Chinese cultures. After 1949, this branch of thought came to define the spirit of Taiwanese philosophy and later (at first only partially and in an obscured fashion) also that of mainland Chinese modernization. All these endeavours manifested themselves in extensive attempts to revitalize traditional (particularly Confucian and Neo-Confucian) thought with the help of new impulses derived from Western theoretical systems. The spirit of German idealism also played a key role in the search for these synthesizes, but certain theories and approaches created by the Viennese circle also drew much interest. But for the Modern Confucians, the most important alternative to the developments which have in Asia, as elsewhere, led to social alienation and the aforementioned “vacuum of values,” was to be found predominantly in the framework of the classical Confucian thought.

Modern Sinology counts as members of this philosophical current all prominent Chinese philosophers who were from the beginning of the 20th century on searching for possibilities of reviving the main methodological and theoretical aspects of the Chinese tradition, and particularly of

premodern Chinese philosophy, which emulated the Neo-Confucian theoretical renovation. Alongside Xiong Shili and Feng Youlan, who were the most notable among the representatives of the so-called “first generation” of this current, we also have to mention Liang Shuming, Zhang Junmai and He Lin.

The Taiwanese contribution to the preservation, development, and improvement of Chinese philosophy is most evident within the second generation of this idealistic branch, since two of its four representatives mainly lived and worked in Taiwan. These four philosophers were Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan, Tang Junyi, and Fang Dongmei. The first two chose Taiwan as their second home after 1949. Their philosophy is therefore to a great extent defined by the particularities of the cultural and political background which marked Chinese social reality between 1950 and 1980. Both were students of Xiong Shili, who is acclaimed by many as the greatest pioneer of the Modern Confucian renovation (see, for example, Yu 2002, 127). Despite this, their works differed greatly from those of Xiong; even though they stayed loyal to their teacher in matters of fundamental methodology and basic orientation, they still fundamentally modified and improved upon his teachings – each in their own way, of course (Feng 1992, 227).

The representatives of the second generation generally desired a revitalization of their cultural identity in the sense of “replanting the old roots” of their tradition, for they saw this as the only possibility for the survival of the cultural tradition from which they originated when confronted with the challenges of Western culture. However, this renovation of “roots” was not meant only for survival, but would, if conducted conscientiously and thoroughly, ensure an active and innovative

role of Modern Confucianism or modern Chinese thought in the international dialogues of modern societies (*ibid.*).

Important modern philosophers of this philosophical current also include the aforementioned theoretician Liu Shu-hsien (1934–2016), who according to most scholars, belonged to the third generation of Modern Confucianism, as well as the (mostly still active) members of the fourth generation, such as Lee Ming-huei and Lin Yueh-hui. Liu Shu-hsien, who was also a researcher of the Academia Sinica, passed away a few years ago, while Lee and Lin still work in this institution. However, if we follow the famous saying that contemporary masters always stand on the shoulders of giants, it is important to study their most significant Taiwanese predecessors. Hence, in order to understand the work of the contemporary members of the Modern Confucian current, we must first familiarize ourselves with the main philosophical contributions of Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan. Because of space limitations, we will limit ourselves only to a short presentation of the basics of Mou Zongsan's philosophy. Even though Xu Fuguan also belongs among the giants of modern Taiwanese theory of the second half of the 20th century, his work fits more into the field of cognitive history than the field of philosophy in a narrower sense. On the other hand, Mou Zongsan is one of the rare Chinese philosophers of that period who developed their own innovative theoretical system. In this sense, we can state that his work is the best, most exemplary and at the same time symbolic, depiction of what Taiwanese philosophy actually means for the wider field of Chinese theory.

But before that, let us take a brief look at the work of the Taiwanese branch of Modern Daoism, since our image of 20th century Taiwanese philosophy would be imperfect without the documentation and evaluation of this important aspect.

Theoretical and methodological contributions of Modern Taiwanese Daoism (*Xin daojia*)

The research on Daoist philosophy carried out by Taiwanese philosophers is certainly worth mentioning, because of its supplementary and frequently oppositional role in its relation to Confucianism. This was the tradition role of Daoism, and a similar role is played by Daoist research within the contemporary discourses of modern and contemporary Taiwanese philosophy.

The period second half of the 20th century saw the release of more than a hundred books which discussed the work of two main philosophers of classical Daoism, i.e. Laozi and Zhuangzi (see Zhang Jinghua 1999, 51). One of the pioneering works in this regard was Qian Mu's *Redaction of the Studies of Zhuangzi* (*Zhuangzi zuanjian*), which came out in 1951.

In the 1960s and early 1970s we witnessed the publication of several works discussing different aspects of Daoism in detail. The most prominent authors of Modern Daoism of this period were Chen Guying, Yan Lingfeng, Wang Shumian, Xiao Chunbo, Cai Mingtian, Lai Rongxiang, Zhou Shaoxian, Feng Siyi, Zhao Jingzhang, Ding Yanzhi, Zhang Chengqiu, and Chen Guanxue, among many others. The Taiwanese production of research on the subject of Daoism was already quite rich at the end of the 1970s, especially between the years 1976 and 1979 to be precise, since many works about Laozi's and Zhuangzi's philosophy came out every year.

Many researchers believe that it is no coincidence that the contemporary branch of research into Daoist philosophy seems to be less relevant than the investigations of Confucianism performed by Modern Confucians, since Daoism was traditionally less relevant than Confucianism in China. However, the prevailing opinion among Taiwanese researchers is that the

discourses of both schools were mutually and inseparably connected in the pre-Qin period (ibid.):

Many Daoist ideas were later adopted by Confucians, that is why the research on Daoism would be beneficial for the propagation of Confucianism. But even more importance was placed upon the political function of Daoism in actual social reality.

道家的某些思想也曾为以后的儒家所吸取，研究道家有利于宏扬儒家。但主要是着眼于道家哲学对现实社会的政治作用 (ibid.).

Yan Lingfeng, who lectured at NTU, was an important public figure in the last decades of the 20th century. In 1979 he re-released his main work about Daoist philosophy with the title *Research on Laozi and Zhuangzi (Laozhuang yaniju)*. In the conclusion, he wrote the following:

Currently, our people are facing historical changes. Even though the philosophy of Laozi and Zhuangzi is mostly apolitical, we can nevertheless assess that their principals of “absolute emptiness” and “preservation of silence” are much more positive in comparison to the vulgarity of many other ideas.

方今我国族正遭空前的历史巨变 一老庄之学虽无施于治道。然`致虚、守静、之理，容有裨于薄俗也 (Yan Lingfeng 1979, 21).

Li Shiji believes that this is an indirect critique of the ever-worsening isolation of Taiwan in the international geopolitical space (ibid., 24–25). He also believes that the same can be said for Zhang Qidiao and his work *The Philosophy of Laozi (Laozi zhexue)*, which was published in 1977. Zhang also wrote critically on the subject of Taiwan at the end of the 1970 in the last chapter. He metaphorically described its position as one of a “sickly

state” (*bibing*) and emphasized that “Daoist philosophy can provide an incredibly effective medication for this illness” (*ibid.*). However, this can by no means lead us to the conclusion that the author has this statement tried to covertly criticize the Taiwanese government and politics. Apparently, Li Shijia used a considerable amount of imagination when interpreting this sentence.

Taiwanese research on Daoist philosophy reached an even greater peak in the 1980s. It is within this period that we can actually speak of the creation of the Modern Daoist current in Taiwan.

In the 1980s, research into Laozi's and Zhuangzi's philosophy experienced an unexpected blossoming in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Several young scholars began appearing in this field, and they began to publish the most varied works, with which they substantially enriched the previous publications in this field. Their research is much more extensive and systematic when compared to the works done in the past and managed to reach many more readers. In this way, we paid witness to a new peak of such studies, which are by no means comparable to the work of the acclaimed branch of “Modern Confucianism.” In this sense, we could also speak of the branch of “Modern Daoism.”

80 年代台港地区对老子、庄子道家学说的研究，取得了十分可观的进展，涌现出了一批中青年学者，出版的各类著作非常丰富，研究比以前更加深入，更为系统，也更为普及，出现了一个新的高潮。在海外“新儒家”思潮一波又起之际，给人的印象是似乎也产生了一个“新道家”的思潮 (Zhang Jinghua 1999, 51).

In recent years, there has been a noticeable tendency to theoretically unify Daoism and Confucianism. Many theoreticians stress the fact that the categorization of pre-Qin philosophy to individual schools is artificial, and

that it was not formed until the Han Dynasty. These philosophers, who mostly also derive from Daoist studies, stress the importance of mutual interactions between the paradigms of Confucian and Daoist ideas. Yang Rubin, for instance, belongs to this group. In 2016 he released a controversial book on the subject called *Zhuangzi as a Member of the Confucian School (Rumen neide Zhuangzi)*, which caused quite a stir in academic circles.

Chen Guying also works ever more intensively on the unifying paradigms underlying the neo-holistic discussions of classical discourses. As early as in 1955, he already published an article entitled “Early Daoisation of Confucianism” (*Zaoqi Rujiade daojiayhua*). However, it is beyond any doubt that Chen is among the most significant representatives of Modern Daoism.

Conclusion

Beside the abovementioned scholars, numerous other Taiwanese philosophers have also assumed extremely important roles in the context of preserving and developing the Chinese philosophical tradition, even though their contributions are still widely unknown. The main goal of this chapter was to present the key currents and trends that determine the work of modern and contemporary Taiwanese scholars of Chinese philosophy. I have tried to place them into the context of the political, economic and ideational circumstances that prevailed in Taiwan during the second half of the 20th century.

As we have seen, the role of Taiwanese philosophical research was especially decisive in the period between 1949 and the late 1990s. During this period, the philosophical production in mainland China was largely dominated by censorship, and the official governmental guidelines called