

# Patriotic songs in primary school textbooks in Taiwan from 1949–1987

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## Abstract

This study focused on the inclusion of patriotic songs in schooling that were popular in Taiwan between 1949 and 1987. Many patriotic songs were composed after 1949, and these frequently found their way into primary textbooks. School curriculum policies such as 'education for patriotism' cultivate Chinese consciousness among Taiwanese students (Yang, 2001). An analysis of these patriotic songs elucidates their qualities and character and explores how patriotism permeated school song texts. These factors can be considered through an examination of school textbooks produced after the Chinese restoration: Music 1952, Music 1968, and Music 1975 for primary schools. The findings of this study show that during 1949 to 1987, the inclusion of patriotic songs in the school curriculum, had everything to do with the cultivation of national sentiment and loyal service toward the mainland, and sacrifice for one's country. The findings confirm Hebert and Kertz-Welzel's (2012) assertion that music clearly contributes to the conditions in which individuals are more susceptible to the emotional appeal of mass movements, which is why all across the world music has for so long played such an enduring and prominent role in the political spheres.

**Key words:** patriotic songs, primary school, textbooks, patriotism, music education

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## Introduction to patriotic songs

Patriotism is inextricably linked to the concept of citizenship; you become a member of a state by being born into or becoming a citizen of that state (Keller, 2012; Poole, 2007). For a person to self-identify as patriotic, her emotions and her perceptions of herself, her country and the world must all be engaged. Disagreements about the virtues (or vices) of patriotism are often expressed as conflicts and enacted in the education of children. The way children are taught to think about their relationship to their nation is contentious because it is thought to ultimately influence the level and type of patriotism in a given society (Keller, 2012). It is natural that questions about patriotism should arise for

music teachers and for anyone who is concerned about the music in schools. Through shared musical experiences, many believe, emotional attachments to a country can be formed and nurtured, and identities can be created and expressed (Keller, 2012). Generally speaking, patriotism refers to a love for one's country and is frequently conceived as a positive attribute (Eckersley, 2007). Poole (2007) conceptualizes patriotism as implying "a commitment to one's country, a special concern with its well-being, and a readiness to make sacrifices on its behalf, especially in times of crisis" (p. 129). Patriotism is likely to be used in a positive sense. Patriotism is also conceived in political and juridical terms through expression of loyalty to one's group

(Kleining, 2007). The choice of songs present in school curricula reveals deliberate choices to foster the qualities of liveliness, courage, the appreciation of beauty, tolerance and the spirit of patriotism. This article will focus on the inclusion of patriotic songs in schooling that were popular in Taiwan between 1949 and 1987.

Patriotism has long played an important role in the development of music education (Hebert & Kertz-Welzel, 2012). In fact, music curricula worldwide are replete with patriotic ideology to the point where it is considered crucial to the formation of loyal citizens. Such songs imbue cherished values, cultural characteristics and virtues and impact a positive appreciation of the national history. When music education is used for patriotic purposes, such an approach often strengthens the presence of music education's role in schools and society. In other words, music education is widely recognized as a highly effective activity for ideological indoctrination of patriotism. This is so because the content of music education is powerfully ingrained into our minds across a lifetime of indoctrination, particularly via schooling. This was the case in Taiwan during 1949-1987 where music education in schools is designed to encourage pride in one's citizenship of the Republic of China (ROC) (Ho and Law, 2010). Evidence of this is frequently found in music textbooks (*Music 1952*, *Music 1968*, *Music 1975*), particularly those for primary schools. During World War II (1945) Fischer (1945) vigorously demonstrated that music education in schools was vital in providing aid to local community war efforts. School choral groups and their directors were enlisted to implement lightly effective programs in pursuit of this end.

The words of patriotic songs carry messages and the use of patriotic songs as a medium to pass on patriotic ideologies have both been topics for discussion by scholars in many countries. Patriotic songs have been a staple of school musical activity since the inception of the modern school approximately two centuries ago (Southcott, 2012). The recognition

of the power of songs continues to hold true. Teaching and singing patriotic songs in school is essential to the development of a national identity (Veblen, 2012). Heimonen and Hebert (2012) assert that music education has often been connected to patriotism, with the aim to evoke a sense of love for one's home country, especially during wartime. Presently, the National Anthem Project of Music Educators National Convention (National Association for Music Education, NAFME) uses music education as a means for promoting patriotic songs and activities among schoolchildren and communities in the United States. Hebert (2012) contends that patriotic songs are commonly considered healthy and essential ingredients of school curricula, nurturing the respect, loyalty and 'good citizenship' of children. This discussion focuses on the extent to which the texts of children's songs have been used in nationalistic indoctrination and the promotion of other political agendas, specifically the inclusion of patriotic content in songs used in primary school textbooks. Examples of patriotic songs within *Music 1952*, *Music 1968*, and *Music 1975* textbooks are used to illustrate this narrative. Patriotic songs used in music education in this period are also examined not only to understand political and social phenomenon of the era but also to recognize the possibility of social change for the future.

## Historical background

In 1949, following the Chinese communist rebellion, the democratic government of Chiang Kai-Shek (1887-1975) relocated its offices to Taiwan. During 1895-1945 Taiwan was a Japanese protectorate. Taiwan was returned to China in August 1945. The period until 1987 was a time of consolidation for the Chinese authorities and during which process of political reform called Martial Law was implemented (Hsueh *et al.*, 2000). Chiang Kai-Shek set up the government of the Republic of China (ROC), which claimed to be the legitimate government of China

(Ho, 2007). He had served as the leader of the Nationalist Chinese Kuomintang (KMT). Many people migrated from China to Taiwan, following the democratic government of Chiang Kai-shek and the protection this offered. These people rejected the Republic of China's communism and reverence for the Chinese past – its culture, customs and ethics – as the essence of the nation (Law & Ho, 2011). Instead, the Chiang Kai-shek government implemented the principles of nationalism, democracy, the livelihood of the people (a political philosophy developed by Sun Yat-sen). These principles encouraged the people to be aware of their nationhood, to accept mutual responsibility as fellow citizens, and to learn that “the continuity of the blood and food of lineage” (p. 340) define the fate of their nation. Chiang Kai-shek stressed a strong policy of educating for patriotism in schools in order to promote anti-communist ideals and a desire to restore the invaded homeland. Ministry of Education Director Ching (1954), asserted that the content of the education should cultivate student learning about the military, teach guarding skills, and imbue the spirit of contribution to the nation. Along with education reform, Chiang understood the utility of patriotic songs and required composers who served in the army to compose many patriotic songs. An example is ‘Protected Great Taiwan,’ which utilized rousing collective singing to emphasize the people's sense of belonging to China (*Music 1968*). These songs were explicitly against communism and were intended to arouse strong patriotic emotions. As well as anti-communist songs, songs rejecting Russian imperialism appear in the *Music 1968* textbook for primary schools. The Chiang Kai-shek government believed that the Soviet Union supported the communist party in its stance against the KMT. Emotive catch phrases and political slogans were very popular in the general public between 1950 and 1960 (Lee, 2003). These typically expressed anti-communist sentiments, revealed in the defeat and expulsion of

the Russian enemy, and propagated the ongoing need to eradicate communism. The Taiwanese government encouraged people to compose many songs based on patriotism. Under such circumstances, patriotic songs were to be used as vehicles for comforting the hearts of the people who had lost so much through their migration to Taiwan and stimulating the spirit of patriotism.

Many patriotic songs were composed after 1949, and these frequently found their way into primary textbooks. School curriculum policies such as ‘education for patriotism’ cultivated Chinese consciousness among Taiwanese students (Yang, 2001). The inclusion of patriotic songs in the school curriculum, therefore, has everything to do with the cultivation of national sentiment toward the mainland. It is thus of interest first to analyze the patriotic songs used in the textbooks in order to elucidate their qualities and character and second, to explore how patriotism permeated school song texts. These factors can be considered through an examination of school textbooks produced after the Chinese restoration: *Music 1952*, *Music 1968*, and *Music 1975* for primary schools.

### ***Music 1952***<sup>1</sup>

Class textbook, *Music 1952*, was based on the 1952 *Curriculum Standards* and was published in eight volumes by the Ministry of Education. For each year level (third, fourth, fifth and sixth) there were twenty chapters presented in two volumes. *Music 1952* predominantly focused on the study of patriotic songs. The curriculum for each year level included twenty-four songs, which totals ninety-six songs across the eight volumes. Of these one hundred and twenty-eight songs, forty-five were specifically used for patriotic purposes, and another sixteen were for music appreciation purposes. Thus 35% of the eight volumes was dedicated to patriotic songs. The songs used in the textbook appeared to reflect the children's learning, social environment and political history.

This is not surprising as, at that time, Taiwan was attempting to establish its own unique identity.

In Taiwanese music education after 1949, the inclusion of song literature reinforcing the idea of loyalty is evident within and external to the school environment (Brand & Ho, 1999). This can be seen in the two most commonly used songs: 'The National Anthem' and 'The National Flag.' These two songs have been sung nearly every morning and every afternoon in assemblies for decades. Such patriotic loyalty may concur with the statement of Hebert (2012) that "many educators from USA and Japan see little harm in consenting to the promotion of musical patriotism in school music classes" (p. 13). Southcott (2012) explained that, "schools have been continually exhorted to teach children about loyalty to their country. National anthems are clearly important in teaching of patriotism in schools" (p. 43). Veblen (2012) concluded that, "a national anthem indicates what is important to a society and elicits feelings of patriotism and unity" (p. 152).

In addition, the songs 'Beautiful Chinese', 'The Great Wall Ballad', and 'Heroes Came Back' have often been chosen for chorus competitions held in schools. These are also based on the theme of the Republic of China. The writers and composer of the 'Beautiful Chinese' song is unknown. The lyrics describe the importance of china's landscape, wealth, bright future, the diligence of the people and it's national identity. The lyrics in the 'The Great Wall Ballad' (see Figure 1) were explained by Brand and Ho (1999) as stemming from anti-Japanese sentiments in the 1930s and 1940s. The meaning behind the lyrics was to rally the people to form a united front against the threat posed by the enemy (The Xi'an Incident of December 1936)<sup>4</sup>. For 'The Great Wall Ballad' written by Liu Xuean (Mainland China) during the war, expressed the suffering of the people to foster the people's solidarity with our homeland. This song has frequently been sung in solo or chorus until the present.

With strong national style in music, folk tune, western melody, both lyrical and narrative features. The lyrics of the songs include: "Great wall of miles long, great wall outside the home, Sorghum was fat and soybean was fragrant, our streets were paved with gold without disasters. Since the disaster on the plains, we suffered rape and plunder. Hardship so unendurable we fled to a foreign land, separated from our kin, our parents passed away." The lyrics, containing messages of patriotism, loss, heroism and loyalty, are deeply rooted in the national psyche.

Patriotic songs address different purposes and functions including themes of revolution and restoration, the Republic of China, and patriotic indoctrination. The songs in the eight volumes can be divided into three categories as shown in Table 1:

Twelve songs were selected for inclusion in the textbook that reflected revolutionary or restoration messages and served to foster

Figure 1: 'The Great Wall Ballad' from Music 52.

Figure 1 shows the musical score for 'The Great Wall Ballad' (長城謠). The score is written in staff notation with lyrics in Chinese. The lyrics describe the Great Wall and the suffering of the people during the war. The score is divided into four systems, each with a line of music and a line of lyrics. The lyrics are: 高 原 肥 美 大 豆 香 滿 地 黃 金 少 兵 強 壯 大 家 齊 心 打 回 去 勝 似 敵 人 寇 強 壯 自 從 大 難 平 地 起 轟 隆 轟 隆 苦 難 當 萬 里 長 城 萬 里 長 兵 城 外 誰 是 敵 苦 難 當 奔 放 力 會 向 敵 人 鬥 爭 全 國 的 同 心 一 德 新 的 長 城 萬 里 長。

**Table 1: categories of song types in *Music 1952*.**

| Titled                         | Name of Songs   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Revolution, Restoration        | <i>Hitting the Metal</i> (vol. 1), <i>Army with Young Children</i> (vol. 2), <i>I am Willing</i> (vol. 3), <i>Fighting communism</i> (vol. 4), <i>The Great Wall Ballad</i> (vol. 5), <i>Stand Up! Children in the Republic of China</i> (vol. 5), <i>Breaking through the Iron Curtain</i> (vol. 7), <i>Winning Honors for Our Country</i> (vol. 7), <i>Admiration of Being a Soldier</i> (vol. 7), <i>New Children</i> (vol. 7), <i>Forward! Forward! Forward!</i> (vol. 8), <i>Heroes Came Back</i> (vol. 8) |
| Praising the Republic of China | <i>Beautiful Chinese</i> (vol. 3), <i>Adorable Chinese</i> (vol. 5), <i>Our Nation</i> (vol. 8)   |
| Patriotic indoctrination       | <i>The National Anthem</i> (vols. 1-8), <i>The National Flag</i> (vols. 1-8), <i>United Nations' Day</i> (vol. 3), <i>Happiness Everywhere</i> (vol. 3), <i>Rebuilding a New China</i> (vol. 3), <i>Patriotic Song</i> (vol. 6), <i>Victory</i> (vol. 6), <i>I Want to</i> (vol. 7), <i>My Hometown</i> (vol. 8)  |

children's patriotism and citizenship. For example, the song 'Heroes Came Back' was written by Zhao, You-Pei and the melody was adapted from a folk tune of the Xinjing province. The lyrics mainly describe the destruction of beautiful landscapes by Chinese enemies, our young soldiers defeating these enemies, beating the communists, and returning victorious. Thompson (2007) argued that each generation should honor the sacrifices of their forebears and continue their national struggle, so that each successive generation builds upon their own rich legacy. As is evident songs have strong power to arouse people's heartfelt patriotism.

The lyrics of these songs encouraged the ideology of revolution and restoration (12%), songs that praised the Republic of China (3%), and songs that conveying patriotic indoctrination (24%). These patriotic songs were included in the textbooks because the government expected music teachers to promote loyalty to the homeland (Brand & Ho, 1999). Kleinig (2007) contends that those concerned with running the affairs of a country should consider loyalty to the nation as of considerable importance, given the various challenges a country may face. The teaching of such ideologies was strongly supported by the government of Chiang Kai-Shek. Sixteen years later the next edition of *Music 1968* was published and there were more songs but the underpinning philosophy of the material changed little.

### **Music 1968<sup>2</sup>**

Prior to 1968, shortcomings were apparent in educational growth, despite highly successful land reform policies, industrial modernization, steady economic growth, and a rise in attendance rate in schools from 79.98% in 1950 to 97.16% in 1966. In 1968, the government of Taiwan introduced a system of nine years of compulsory education. Fang (1981) stated that the extension of compulsory education served as a means of raising the quality of people's knowledge relative to international standards, which was a common goal for countries after the Second World War. The eight volumes of the *Music 1968* textbooks formed part of that compulsory curriculum. The content of *Music 1968* is revealing. It includes songs designed to develop children's wisdom and an aestheticism for music that was intended to lead to an enhancement of student's happiness, liveliness, and optimism. Most tellingly, the songs encourage children to love their home and country, and to co-operate and serve society. The curriculum for each year level included thirty-four songs, with the exception of the third year, which contained thirty-two songs. Thus one hundred and thirty four songs were included across the eight volumes. There are an additional sixteen songs included for use at the teacher's discretion. There are fifty-four patriotic songs (40%) in the eight volumes. The songs used in the textbook appeared to reflect the children's learning, social



body responses when the song is heard in emotionally charged contexts. The goal is to engender an immediate willingness in students to risk their lives for the Republic of China should the country be under threat. The next edition of the school music textbook appeared only seven years later. This time there were differences due to changing economic and social factors.

### **Music 1975<sup>3</sup>**

From the 1970s, developments in music and music education saw the setting up of a multiplicity of musical organizations that encouraged the performing arts and composition. Some songs written by local composers were adapted for the school textbooks. *Music 1975* based on the 1975 *Curriculum Standards: Music* and published in a series of volumes from 1981 to 1986 (Lee, 1981–1986). The aims of this textbook were to foster children's happiness, delight, courage, patriotism, co-operation and to establish the foundation for contemporary citizenship. Each volume consisted of eight chapters, containing practical teaching instructions, with one chapter being taught every two weeks. Each chapter involved a single topic with comprehensive supporting materials. Twelve supplementary songs were provided for use at the teacher's discretion. *Music 1975* contained two hundred and four songs that included ninety-six supplementary songs. There are fifty-nine patriotic songs that together

comprise 29% of the eight volumes. *Music 1975* is distinctively less focused on the study of patriotic songs. This decrease in the number of patriotic songs suggests changes in ideology, politics and economics, and that the music or songs have developed in different ways in Taiwan. Nevertheless, the meaning of the songs remained underpinned by spirit of patriotism. This textbook emphasized two principles – efficient teaching competence and the children's interests and abilities – rather than emphasizing a deep attachment to and pride in Taiwan.

The song texts and original melody in *Music 1975* can be categorized. Six songs were compulsory from the fourth to the sixth grades: 'The National Anthem,' 'National Flag,' 'National Birthday,' 'Sun Chung-Shan Memorial Song,' 'Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Song,' and 'Fighting Communism Song.' All of these had appeared in the previous *Music 1968*. The songs in the eight volumes can be divided into three categories as shown in Table 2:

Songs of patriotic indoctrination or praising the nation are exemplified by 'Ode to the Republic of China,' 'The Plum Blossom' (Mei Hua) and 'Su U Shepherding.' These songs frequently appeared on concert programs for solo, chorus and singing competitions. The 'Ode to the Republic of China' was written and composed by local composer Liu. The lyrics reflect upon the shared ancestry of a homeland built over more than five thousand years, the beautiful expanses

**Table 2: categories of song types in *Music 1975*.**

| <b>Titled</b>                  | <b>Name of Songs</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Revolution, Restoration        | <i>Joining the War</i> (vol. 4), <i>The Great Wall Ballad</i> (vol. 5), <i>Re-building a New China</i> (vol. 5), <i>Memory of Our Ancestry</i> (vol. 8), <i>Su U Shepherding</i> (vol. 8)  |
| Praising the Republic of China | <i>Beautiful Chinese</i> (vol. 3), <i>Ode to the Republic of China</i> (vol. 6), <i>Taiwan Restoration Day</i> (vol. 7)  |
| Patriotic indoctrination       | <i>The National Anthem</i> (vols. 1–8), <i>The National Flag</i> (vols. 1–8), <i>National Birthday</i> (vols. 1–8), <i>Flag</i> (vol. 1), <i>Victory</i> (vol. 1), <i>Cohesive</i> (vol. 2), <i>Dragon Boat Festival</i> (vol. 2), <i>The Plum Blossom and Bamboo</i> (vol. 3) <i>Longing for Our Hometown</i> (vol. 6), <i>Isolated and alone in a Foreign Country</i> (vol. 6), <i>Long Live the Republic of China</i> (vol.6), <i>The Plum Blossom</i> (vol. 7) |

of the landscape, and the Republic of China's strength to withstand any adverse conditions. The text argues that just like the Huanghe River and the Yangtze River never stop running, so should the Republic of China's life never end. Liu composed this song to help spread patriotic ideas and he knew that students would seldom reflect upon the words themselves nor the power of the song in fostering loyalty to the nation.

The writer of the 'The Plum Blossom' song is unknown. It appears in volume seven and the melody was adapted from Beethoven's music. The lyrics are: "I travelled around the world, I saw various flowers, but I love The Plum Blossom the most". The Republic of China made the Plum Blossom its National Flower on 21 July 1964. The plum blossom has long been an important symbol in Chinese culture. As a 'friend of winter,' the plum blossom most vividly represents the value of endurance, in the face of adverse conditions, as life ultimately prevails through the vicissitudes of time. Souls are shaped through the depth of life experiences; they grow in inner strength and unrelenting courage. The plum blossom grows in the winter season, which represents the Chinese people, always strong and resilient when they face adverse conditions. Another song 'Su U Shepherding' (see Figure 4) was composed by Yu-C Hwang and described

how Su U offended the emperor and for his political crimes was sent to shepherd sheep in the freezing north. Su thought a lot about revenge on the one who sent him there. The lyrics gave people hope but reflected loneliness.

Revolutionary messages were less prominent in this textbook; instead songs served to foster children's patriotism and establish the foundation for a contemporary citizenship. Overwhelmingly, the songs in the textbook were intended to promote 'usefulness' amongst young children. From a historical and social viewpoint, the content and themes of these songs is understandable due to the focus on economy and agriculture during this period. The content of *Music 1975* demonstrated that one of its teaching aims was to develop children's sense of morality and an aestheticism for music that could lead to happiness and liveliness.

## Conclusion

Songs selected for children, including patriotic songs, reflect their political and historical context. Song lyrics in the primary school textbooks proved an important medium to convey the spirit of patriotism and citizenship. Such songs were intended to influence children's feelings of patriotism and understandings of citizenship. As

Figure 4: 'Su U Shepherding' from Music 1972.

Urbain (2008) maintains “music has tremendous power to move people in any direction, towards peaceful and noble goals, or violent and destructive ones” (p. 2). The findings of this study show that during 1949 to 1987, the inclusion of patriotic songs in the school curriculum, had everything to do with the cultivation of national sentiment and loyal service toward the mainland, and sacrifice for one’s country. The findings confirm Hebert and Kertz-Welzel’s (2012) assertion that music clearly contributes to the conditions in which individuals are more susceptible to the emotional appeal of mass movements, which is why all across the world music has for so long played such an enduring and prominent role in the political spheres.

The findings of this study reveal that there is a notable difference in patriotic content in songs used in three primary school textbooks. *Music 1968* contained 40% patriotic songs, *Music 1952* contained 35% patriotic songs, and *Music 1975* contained 29%. This finding suggests that from the 1950s to 1960s, the words of patriotic songs carried ‘anti-communism’ and ‘defeat the Russian enemy’ messages. Whereas from the 1960s to 1970s the song literature reinforced the idea that children should carry forward the struggle, honoring the sacrifices of their forebears, worshipping their leaders, and revering China’s past, culture, customs and ethics. The ‘The National Anthem,’ ‘National Flag,’ ‘National Birthday,’ ‘Sun Chung-Shan Memorial Song,’ ‘Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Song,’ and ‘Fighting Communism Song’ sung through fourth, fifth, and sixth year particularly highlight these ideological goals. From the 1970s onwards, due to economic, social changes and global influence, patriotic song use was reoriented as a political tool to develop a contemporary notion of citizenship. The aim of *Music 1975* intended to foster children’s happiness, delight, courage and co-operation but overall had less patriotic theme.

The terms ‘Education in patriotism’ or ‘patriotism in music education’ are both part of my educational background in Taiwan. Patriotic songs deeply influenced my mind and soul whilst studying. As a child attending school in Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s, I have clear memories of song lyrics which had been chosen to foster strong emotional attachments to mainland China and also of robust melodies designed to impress audiences. Body movement and facial expression were involved. I admit that patriotic songs had a great impact on me, such as upon my loyalty to my country and respect of our ancestry. The power of songs in forming the understanding of children is undeniable, in Taiwan and across the globe.

## Notes

1. K’ang, O. 1956-1957, vols. 1-8, Taipei: Cheng-Chung Bookstore, referred to as *Music 1952*, vols. 1 & 7 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) were published in 1956, vol. 2 (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) was published in 1957, vols. 3 & 5 (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) were published in 1957, vols. 4 & 6 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) were published in 1956, vol. 8 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) was published in 1957.
2. Tai, T. L. 1968-1972, vols. 1-8, Taiwan: National Publishing Office, referred to as *Music 1968*. Vol. 1 were published in 1968, vols. 2 & 3 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) were published in 1969, vols. 4 & 5 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) was published in 1970, vols. 6 & 7 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) was published in 1971, vol.8 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) were published in 1972.
3. Lee, P. C. 1981-1986, vols. 1-8, Taiwan: National Publishing Office, referred to as *Music 1975*. vols. 1, 3, 5 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) were published in 1981, vol. 2 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) was published in 1982, vols. 4, 6, 8 (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) were published in 1986, vol. 7 (8<sup>th</sup> ed.) was published in 1985.
4. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, S. V. “Xi’an Incident”, accessed September 02, 2013. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/542537/Xian-Incident>

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