

Taiwan: Island at the Crossroads

Masaryk University

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Course Description:

For most of human history, the island of Taiwan was an unremarkable, and mostly ignored, island off the coast of Asia. Today, it is an economic powerhouse and a potential flashpoint of regional and perhaps even global conflict. In fact, now is not the first time that Taiwan has been contested territory. It has been a crossroads of empires since the 17th century, a space into which a variety of nations and peoples have expanded their influence and presence as part of larger projects of empire-building. This history has had a profound effect upon contemporary Taiwan and the identities of its residents. This course will examine the historical forces that have forged the Taiwan of today, and how these forces have helped shape the ways in which those living in Taiwan view themselves and their place in the world, both now and in the past.

Objectives:

After successful completion of this brief course, students should understand the following:

1. the general outline of Taiwan's history;
2. the political and economic development of the Republic of China on Taiwan;
3. Taiwan's position in the recent global context, in connection to China, the United States, and Japan;
4. how nationalism could lead to armed conflict in the Straits, and how that conflict could involve the United States and Japan.

Expected Academic Background:

None

Textbook:

Reading materials will be provided as detailed for each session. Students looking for overviews of Taiwan's history should consider reading one of the following:

Murray Rubinstein, ed., *Taiwan: A New History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2007)

John Manthorpe, *Forbidden Nation: A History of Taiwan* (New York: Palgrave, 2009)

John Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013)

Assessment:

Your grade in this course will be based on your attendance and participation in in-class activities, and on the role-play exercise on the final day of the course. For that last exercise, students are expected to prepare some research, incorporate their knowledge of history into a hypothetical crisis, and write a short commentary on how the past shapes the present.

There are assigned readings for several of the sessions that are intended to give you context for the lectures and thus to help you to understand those sessions.

Suggested Readings before the Start of the Course:

BBC. "Taiwan Profile."

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16164639>

United States Library of Congress. "Taiwan: Country Profile." 2005.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Taiwan.pdf>

Detailed Class Schedule:

Day 1: Monday, October 8 10:00-11:40; 14:00-15:40 (B2.21)

We will discuss Taiwan's history and the island's connections to China and Japan. Some questions to consider: How and why did Taiwan become part of Qing China? How did it become of part of Meiji Japan? What influence did Japanese colonial rule have on Taiwan?

1. Taiwan in Imperial China

- early contact with the mainland
- aborigines: *yuanzhumin* 原住民; *shandi tongbao* 山地同胞; *shengfan* 生番 = "raw" aborigines; *shufan* 熟番 = "cooked"/assimilated aborigines
- Taiwan as part of Maritime China
- Ming/Qing transition
- Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功; a.k.a. Koxinga 國姓爺
- part of China's frontier: 移民社會 (immigrant), 移墾社會 ("frontier")
- ambivalence toward the mainland

2. Japanese rule (日治時代)

- Treaty of Shimonoseki (*Maguan tiaoyue* 馬關條約)
- economic development and exploitation
- employment and education opportunities, and discrimination
- stability and a police state

- Asia's Orphan *Yaxiya de gu'er* 亞西亞的孤兒
- movements for expanded autonomy
- changing Taiwanese elite

Readings:

None.

Day 2: Tuesday, October 9 12:00-13:40; 14:00-15:40; B2.21

This day's session will examine Taiwan's post-war history and its incorporation into the Republic of China. Some questions that we will examine are: How did the early failures of Nationalist Chinese rule spur the Taiwanese Independence Movement? What were the secrets to Taiwan's economic success? How did Taiwan's international position collapse in the 1970s? How did the shifting international context affect the island's domestic politics?

1. Retrocession

- Nationalist government (*Guomin zhengfu* 國民政府) preparations, Cairo Conference
- Chen Yi (陳儀)
- conflicting expectations of Nationalist rule
- economic problems, corruption, etc.
- February 28 Incident (*Ereba shijian* 二二八事件, *shibian* 事變, *can'an* 慘案, *tusha* 屠殺)
 - clash of world views?
 - failed policies
 - poor leadership
 - systemic versus situational factors
 - tragedy, incident, massacre, failed rebellion?

2. Nationalists (*Guomindang* 國民黨) build a police state

- Kuomintang (KMT) in old romanization system, now often called GMD (*Guomindang*)
- martial law and the White Terror (*baise kongbu* 白色恐怖)
- retreat and chaos
- Korean War
- reforms of the Nationalist Party, local political structure, and the military
- Nationalists promise to retake the Mainland (*fangong kang'E* 反共抗俄)
- 1952 Peace Treaty with Japan and 1954 Mutual Security Treaty (MST) with the United States (*Gongtong fangyu tiaoyue* 共同防禦條約)
- Taiwan Strait Crises of 1954-5 and 1958

3. Economic success

- rent reduction and land reform
- Joint Committee on Rural Reconstruction
- import substitution policies
- US alliance and peace with Japan
- rule of the technocrats

4. 1970s

- Sino-American Rapprochement
- UN debacle
- death of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蔣介石)
- Taiwanization (*Taiwanhua* 臺灣化) of the party, state, and economy
- recognition of the PRC, end of the MST, and the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979

Reading:

Chu, Yun-han, and Jih-wen Lin. "Political Development in 20th Century Taiwan: State-Building, Regime Transformation, and the Construction of National Identity." *The China Quarterly* 165 (2001): 102–129.

Day 3: Wednesday, October 10 8:00-9:40; 10:00-11:40; B2.23

On day three, we will look at the Taiwan Independence Movement in its global contexts. We will explore the international emergence of that movement, we will discuss Beijing's One-China Policy, and how the United States and Japan reacted to that policy. This international dilemma will be placed in the context of the evolution of Taiwan's domestic politics.

1. Reform and rising opposition

- independence movement (*Taidu* 臺獨) in Japan, then the United States
- Dangwai (黨外) and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP; *Minzhu jinbudang* 民主進步黨)
- Chiang Ching-kuo (Jiang Jingguo 蔣經國) and reform, 1975-1988

2. China's Taiwan policy

- Mao Zedong (1937-1976)
- Deng Xiaoping (1978-1992) One Country-Two Systems
- Jiang Zemin (1992-2003), Eight Points
- Hu Jintao (2003-2012)
- Xi Jinping (2012-???)

3. United States

- Nixon through Carter
- Taiwan Relations Act
- Strategic Ambiguity

- Continued arms sales

4. Japan

- recognition switched in 1973
- growing fears of China's power
- ongoing ties with Taiwan

Readings:

Chai, Winberg, "Relations between the Chinese Mainland and Taiwan: Overview and Chronology" *Asian Affairs*, 26: 2 (Summer, 1999): 59-76.

Stephen Phillips, "Building a Taiwanese Republic: The Independence Movement, 1945–Present," in Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, ed., *Dangerous Strait: The U.S. – Taiwan – China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 44–69

Day 4: Thursday, October 11 12:00-13:40 B2.22; 16:00-17:40 J22

On day four, we will discuss the development of cross-Strait interaction from 1990s to 2008. An increasingly powerful and prosperous China pushed for greater integration across the Strait while Taiwan struggled to maintain its international presence. How did democracy on Taiwan impact cross-Strait relations?

1. Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), 1988-2000

- One China policy remains in place, "'92 Consensus" (*Yige zhongguo de yuanze, Jiuer gongshi* 一個中國的原則，九十二共識)
- Taiwanization of the Nationalists, including military, security, and intelligence services
- Cornell trip and PRC missile tests in the mid-1990s
- cross Strait tensions by the late 1990s
- growing Taiwanese identity?
- competing visions of the nation and national identity

2. Chen Shuibian (陳水扁), 2000-2008

- Pan Green victory (DPP and Taiwan Solidarity Union) over Pan Blue (KMT and People First Party)
- nation building efforts of the DPP in power
- conflict between DPP and independence activists
- constitutional reform and referenda
- China's military build-up, White Paper, and the 2005 Anti-Secession law (*fan fenlie guojia* 反分裂國家法)
- corruption and comparisons to "old" Nationalist rule

Readings:

Council of Foreign Relations. "Background: China-Taiwan Relations." 2009.
<http://www.cfr.org/china/china-taiwan-relations/p9223>

Day 5: Friday, October 12 10:11:40; 12:00-13:40; B2.24

The final class will explore how the past shapes the present in relations involving Taiwan, China, Japan, and the United States. How do these countries and their populations view the past? What influence does the past have on contemporary domestic politics and international relations? How might the past shape responses to a shift in the current status quo? The bulk of this section will be taken up with a final role-play on what might happen if Taiwan were to formally pursue independence; and with a final writing assignment.

1. The rise of nationalism

- Nationalist resurgence under Ma Ying-jeou (Ma Yingjiu, 馬英九); DPP return under Tsai Ing-wen (Cai Yingwen 蔡英文)
- No independence, no unification, no use of force; One China with different interpretations
- the Strawberry Movement
- the PRC's patriotic education campaign
- LDP resurgence under Koizumi Junichirō and Shinzō Abe

2. Role-play: Crisis Management and History

- How would China, the United States, and Japan respond to a referendum on independence in Taiwan?

Readings:

Barak Kushner, "Nationality and Nostalgia: The Manipulation of Memory in Japan, Taiwan, and China since 1990," *The International History Review* 29:4 (December 2007): 793-820

Other materials to be determined, based on individual research assignments related to the final role-play.

Some Useful Online Resources:

China Websites:

China-Taiwan <http://eng.taiwan.cn/>
This is a key site that combines data from many sources on the mainland.

[New China News Agency](http://www.xinhua.org/english/index.htm) www.xinhua.org/english/index.htm
[People's Daily](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn) english.peopledaily.com.cn
[PLA Daily](http://english.pladaily.com.cn) english.pladaily.com.cn

Taiwan Websites:

Central Daily News <http://focustaiwan.tw/>
China Post <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/>
[Taiwan Security Research](http://www.taiwansecurity.org) www.taiwansecurity.org
Taipei Times www.taipeitimes.com

Because of Taiwan's democratization, there is a plethora of websites offering different views of the island and cross Strait relations.

Nationalist Party <http://www.kmt.org.tw/>
(current ruling party)
Democratic Progressive Party: <http://www.dpp.org.tw/>
(opposition party)
E-government (Taiwan) <http://english.www.gov.tw/index.jsp>
(links for information on Taiwan)
Mainland Affairs Council <http://www.mac.gov.tw/mp.asp?mp=3>
(body for handling cross-Strait relations)
Taiwan Solidarity Union <http://www.tsu.org.tw/>
(pro-independence, allied with DPP)
TaiwanDC, a pro-independence group <http://www.taiwandc.org/>

United States Websites:

American Institute on Taiwan <http://www.ait.org.tw/en/>
(US rep. in Taiwan)

Japan Websites:

Japan's Foreign Ministry <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/taiwan/index.html>