Politics and Security in Taiwan

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Introduction

Throughout its history, Taiwan’s internal politics have been inextricably linked with its cross-Strait relations with China. This lesson examines the modern history of Taiwan, and then focuses on the current political and security situation of the island.

Standards Addressed

World Geography TEKS
1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18

World History TEKS
1c, 2b, 6c, 7a, 9b, 10a, 25bdeh

Objectives

The students will:
• Understand the modern history of Taiwan
• Analyze the current political climate of the island
• Assess the security situation in Taiwan
• Analyze and evaluate secondary information
• Make inferences by evaluating data
• Interpret, evaluate, and generalize from sources of information

Time Required

Lesson 1: History of Taiwan 30 minutes
Lesson 2: Politics and Security in Taiwan 90 minutes
   A. Internal Politics 25 min
   B. Security issues 25 min
   C. The U.S. position 15 min
   D. Public opinion in Taiwan 25 min
Assessment 30 minutes

Materials

✓ General Background information on Taiwan
✓ Map of Southeast Asia
✓ Map of Taiwan
✓ Fast Facts on Taiwan, student handout
✓ Fast Facts on Taiwan, answers
✓ Politics & Security in Taiwan background information
✓ The KMT Party
✓ The DPP Party
✓ The DPP vs. the KMT chart
✓ The 2004 Referendum
✓ The U.S. sounds off on the Taiwanese Referendum
✓ U.S. Statement on Taiwan elections
✓ Changes in the Party Identification of Taiwanese
✓ Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese
✓ Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Relations in the ROC - 1
✓ Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Relations in the ROC - 2
✓ Taiwan in the 21st Century
✓ Answer Key, Taiwan in the 21st Century
✓ Critical Thinking Questions

Procedure

Preparation

1. Prior to the execution of the lesson, the teacher should become familiar with all elements of the lesson.
   a. The General Background information on Taiwan and the Politics and Security Background Information is provided for the teacher’s benefit. This information may be used as talking points in class discussion, or as lesson extensions.

2. make copies of the following handouts for each student:
   a. Fast Facts on Taiwan, student handout #1
   b. The DPP vs. the KMT, student handout #2
   c. Taiwan in the 21st Century, student handout #3

3. make overheads of the following:
   a. map of Southeast Asia, overhead #1
   b. map of Taiwan, overhead #2
   c. Fast Facts on Taiwan, answers, overhead #3
   d. The KMT Party, overhead #4
   e. The DPP Party, overhead #5
   f. The 2004 Referendum, overhead #6
   g. The U.S. sounds off on Taiwanese Referendum, overhead #7
   h. U.S. Statement on Taiwan elections, overhead #8

4. make a class set of the following graphs:
   a. Changes in the Party Identification of Taiwanese
   b. Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese
   c. Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Relations in the ROC - 1
   d. Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Relations in the ROC - 2

Lesson 1: History of Taiwan

1. Begin by asking students, “What do you already know about Taiwan?”
2. Display and examine the map of Southeast Asia and the map of Taiwan. Brainstorm with students what kinds of security issues may exist on the island.
3. Pass out “Fast Facts on Taiwan” (student handout #1) to students. In pairs, encourage the students to read through the information and fill in as many blanks as possible.
4. After about 5 or 10 minutes, bring the class back together to discuss the information and provide correct answers.

Lesson 2: Politics and Security in Taiwan

1. Internal Politics
   a. Pass out student handout #2, the DPP vs. the KMT
   b. Project overheads 4 and 5, one at a time. Discuss with the class the main elements of each of the two major political parties in Taiwan.
   c. Students should take notes on handout #2.
   d. Divide the class in half and assign each half a political party. Students will create political ads for their party. The ads can be print ads or television ads. Encourage students to share their ads with the class upon completion.
   e. Discussion Question: If you were a Taiwanese citizen, which party would you have voted for in the 2004 election?

2. Security Issues
   a. Project overhead #6, the 2004 Referendum
   b. Discuss the history of the referendum and the two issues on the ballot
   c. Discussion Question:
      i. Would you vote for 1? 2? Why or why not?
      ii. Should China be alarmed by the referendum?
      iii. What do you anticipate the U.S. stance will be on the referendum?

3. The U.S. Role in Cross Strait Relations
   Background: The U.S. has historically taken a strong role in cross-strait relations. In many instances, we were all that stood between Taiwan and a threatening mainland.
   a. Project overhead #7, The U.S. sounds off on the Taiwanese Referendum.
      i. Discussion Questions:
         1. Why might the Bush Administration be taking the stand that it is in regards to Taiwanese independence issues? (answers should include: newly cultivated economic ties with China; there would be little public support in the U.S. to extend our military into the Taiwan strait given the current situation in Iraq and Afghanistan.
         2. In looking at the four quotes, which opinion do you most agree with? Why?
   b. Project overhead #8 U.S. Statement on Taiwan Elections. This was the official U.S. statement on Taiwanese elections, as released by the White House Press Secretary, and provides another example of the Bush Administration’s position on Taiwan.

4. Public opinion in Taiwan
   a. Pass out the class sets of the four graphs
      i. Changes in the Party Identification of Taiwanese
      ii. Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese identity of Taiwanese
      iii. Public opinion on Cross-strait relations in the ROC -1
      iv. Public opinion on Cross-strait relations in the ROC -2
b. analyze each graph with students and discuss the implications

Assessment

1. Pass out “Taiwan in the 21st Century”. Have students answer the questions either individually or in pairs.
2. Discuss the answers to Taiwan in the 21st Century
3. Project the “Critical Thinking Questions” on the overhead. Students can either answer these questions in writing, to be turned in, or these questions can be used for a more in depth class discussion.

Enrichment

1. The Four Tigers

   Introduction: The Four Tigers, or the Asian Tigers, are Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan. The Tigers received their name because of their astounding economic growth following World War II.

   A. Divide students into groups and assign each group a “tiger”. Each group should research:
      1. the history of the tiger
      2. the economic framework for the tiger’s growth
      3. potential for future growth; the direction the economy is heading today

   B. Upon completion of the research, have each group create a presentation for the class. Presentations should include visuals, either overheads or handouts, and should contain the main points of researched information.

   C. Following the presentations, have students write a comparison/contrast paper of the four tigers. How was their growth similar? How was it different? What does the future hold for the Four Tigers?

2. The “One China, Two Systems” policy

   Introduction: The Chinese government’s official position on Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Tibet is what they call “One China, Two Systems”. Each of these three regions has a very unique history with China, and the policy is enacted differently with all three.

   A. Divide students into groups and assign each group a region. Have students investigate the “One China, Two Systems” policy in their assigned region.

      1. Describe the history of the region and explain how it is tied to China.
      2. Identify how China is enacting the One China, Two Systems policy in this region.
      3. Analyze the effectiveness of the system. Be sure to include a discussion of regional resistance to the policy.
      4. Discuss how the international community views the situation in this region.
B. Upon completion of the research, have each group create a presentation of their region. Presentations should include visuals, either overheads or handouts, and should contain the main points of researched information. Re-divide the class so that you have multiple groups of three, with one representative from each region in each group. Have the threesomes teach each other about their region.

C. Following the small group presentations, lead a class discussion about each of the three regions. How are they different? How are they similar? What does the future hold for these regions and their relationship with the PRC?

D. Ask students to respond to the following in writing:

As a high ranking official in the PRC, you are given the task of evaluating the “One China, Two Systems” policy. Give a brief evaluation of the history of the policy for each of the three regions. Provide policy recommendations for the future of this system.

3. Religion in Taiwan

**Introduction:** The religion in Taiwan is very representative of religion in East Asia in general. Taiwan is traditionally Buddhist, with strong Taoist and Confucian influences. Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism are practiced as philosophies rather than as religions, for the most part.

A. Discuss with the class the general tenets of these three Eastern philosophies.

B. Ask students to choose one of the philosophies. Next, have them choose a cartoon character or a character from a children’s story. Using either multiple cartoon strips, or a children’s story, have the student create a character profile based on the eastern philosophy. How does this character personify this eastern philosophy? Be specific and use examples both from the character’s actions and speech.

C. Break students into groups of three, so that each philosophy is represented in each group. Have the groups share their “characters” with each other and identify how this character represents their philosophy.

4. Medical Geography & the spread of SARS

**Introduction:** Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) is a viral respiratory illness that was recognized as a global threat in March 2003. SARS was first reported in Asia in February 2003. Over the next few months, the illness spread to more than two dozen countries in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia before the SARS global outbreak of 2003 was contained.

A. Have students research the SARS outbreak and trace its rapid spread throughout East Asia and the world.

B. Discuss with students the “geography of disease” and how quickly diseases can spread in our modern world.
C. Perhaps, include a discussion of historical diseases and their spread. For instance, the Bubonic Plague.
General Background information on Taiwan

People

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen

China's last dynasty collapsed in 1911 following a nationwide rebellion led by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was the founder and first President of the Republic of China. He was only the leader for a short time, however. In 1916, civil war broke out in an attempt to restore the emperorship. Unity was restored by Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT, or Nationalist, Party. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen is revered both on the mainland and in Taiwan. The mainland sees him as their liberator from the dynastic days, Taiwan sees him as the founder of the Republic of China.

For more information on Sun Yat-Sen, visit the Time magazine feature story.

Chiang Kai-Shek

The KMT, or Nationalist, Party was led by Chiang Kai-Shek. Chiang led the Nationalist army that eventually fled mainland China for Taiwan following the Communist Revolution of 1949. The KMT, representing the Republic of China, fled to Taiwan, taking with them their flag and the ROC Constitution. The mainland became known as the PRC, People's Republic of China.

For more information on Chiang Kai-Shek, visit the Time magazine feature story.

Mao Zedong

Mao Zedong led the Communist Party in its struggle for control of mainland China following the fall of the dynasties. Mao's main rival was Chiang Kai-Shek of the Nationalists Party. Mao’s efforts were successful in 1949 when the Communist Revolution succeeded and the Nationalists fled to Taiwan.

For more information on Mao Zedong, visit the Time magazine feature story.
http://www.time.com/time/time100/leaders/profile/mao.html

Culture

Religion

Taiwan is traditionally Buddhist, with strong Taoist and Confucian influences. They follow the Eightfold Path of Buddha: right view, right thought, right speech, right behavior, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration; as well as related Taoist principles of freedom from desire and a quest for simplicity.

Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism are practiced as philosophies rather than as religions, for the most part. A wide variety of gods can be accommodated under this philosophical stance.

Art
**The National Palace Museum** holds the world’s largest collection of Chinese artifacts.

Throughout the Chinese Dynastic period, emperors collected Chinese art. In the 1400's when the Forbidden City was established, the art was all brought here. In 1933, under threat of Japanese invasion, the Chinese boxed up all these treasures into 7,000 crates. During WWII, the crates were hauled back and forth across China to ensure the Japanese would not get them. The crates eventually came to rest in Nanjing, the KMT’s capital. When the KMT fled to Taiwan in 1949, all but about 700 crates were transferred to Taiwan.

From 1949 -1965, the crates were housed in a warehouse, because the general belief was that the Nationalists would regroup in Taiwan and then re-invade and take back the mainland. Over time, the Nationalists set this desire aside, and in 1965, The National Palace Museum was opened to display the art. Amazingly, it is reported that not a single piece of art had been broken during all of that transporting.

It is especially lucky for the world that these treasures were transferred to Taiwan (or stolen as the mainland likes to say), because it is highly unlikely that any of this art would have survived the Cultural Revolution in China during the 1960's when “old customs” and “old ideas” were summarily destroyed all over the mainland.

**T’ai Chi**

It is quite common to see people in park first thing in the morning, doing their T’ai Chi. T’ai Chi is basically a form of exercise, but it is also an art and a form of Chinese martial arts. T’ai Chi, or Taijiquan, movements are similar to Kung Fu, but at slower speeds.

T’ai Chi is very popular in Asia. The movements are supposed to develop the breathing muscles, promote digestion, and improve muscle tone.

**Health**

**SARS**

Since the outbreak of SARS in the Spring of 2003, there is great concern in Taiwan and Asia about future outbreaks. There were many signs on the street warning people if they felt flu-like symptoms to seek a doctor immediately.

At the Chiang Kai-Shek memorial in Taipei, visitors must get their temperatures taken before they may enter. Each person had to put their forehead up to this machine that would take their temperature. A fever is one symptom of SARS, so if someone had a fever, they would not be allowed into this public and heavily trafficked memorial. This is just an example of how careful the society is about SARS and the spread of SARS.

Visit the CDC website for more specific information about SARS.

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/index.htm
Map source: http://www.askasia.org/image/maps/asias1.htm
Lesson 1: History of Taiwan
Student Handout #1

Fast Facts on Taiwan

☐ Taiwan’s official name is the “________________”. It is located on the island of ________, which means “beautiful”.

☐ In 200 B.C., the Chinese began exploring the island and eventually established themselves as the rulers. In 1895, after being defeated by ______ in the Sino-________War, China ceded the island to _______. _______ ruled the island until the end of WWII when it was returned to China in 1945.

☐ At the conclusion of WWII, the KMT Party, led by ________________, and the Communist Party, led by ________________, renewed their struggle for control of mainland China. (The two groups had been fighting one another prior to the war as well)

☐ In 1949, facing defeat in its civil war with the Communists (otherwise known as ______________________), the KMT withdrew from mainland China and fled to Taiwan. The KMT fled with the purpose of re-grouping and eventually returning to mainland China to re-establish themselves as the rightful rulers of all of China.

☐ The KMT began quickly re-building the economy of Taiwan. Taiwan is today referred to as one of the “_______________”, because their economic growth has been so rapid and successful. (The other three are Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea)

☐ Until 1971, Taiwan was internationally recognized as the Republic of China; the “official” China. In 1971, the ________________, under growing pressure from “Red” China, ousted the island and began recognizing mainland China as the “official” China. From this point forward, Taiwan is viewed as a “____________________”.

☐ In 1979, the U.S. switched its diplomatic recognition as well. Under the ____________________ of 1979, a private enterprise, called the American Institute in Taiwan, was started. The AIT has one contract; it is with the State Department, and its purpose is to represent U.S. interests in Taiwan. Its headquarters are in Washington, D.C. Its office in Taiwan serves as the de-facto U.S. embassy.

☐ The U.S./Taiwan relationship has always been a good one. Taiwan is our 8th largest trading partner; 2nd largest for military equipment. Taiwan is the 2nd largest market for U.S. agricultural products (2nd only to Canada). The U.S. has stood by Taiwan militarily since 1949 - serving as a “bodyguard” from mainland China.

☐ The People’s Republic of China declares its relationship with Taiwan as “____________________”. They reject the notion of an independent Taiwan; however, Taiwan is independent of China but without the official recognition. There are no boats or planes that travel directly from Taiwan to the mainland. The leaders of the PRC have stated that there is only “one China” and that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) will invade Taiwan if the island ever makes a formal declaration of independence.
Lesson 1: History of Taiwan
Student Handout #1, answers

Fast Facts on Taiwan

☐ Taiwan’s official name is the “Republic of China”. It is located on the island of Formosa, which means “beautiful”.

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Lesson 2: Politics & Security in Taiwan

Background information

Pre-democracy Taiwan

From 1949, Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Party, composed largely of exiled mainlanders and known as the KMT, ruled the Taiwanese with a stern grip. The KMT ruled Taiwan, as its sole political party until 1986, when the DPP made a successful bid for recognition and won seats in the Parliament. The country was ruled under martial law until 1987.

Taiwanese Democracy

Taiwan is a young democracy. They have only been holding presidential elections since 1996. Prior to the 1996 Presidential election, the KMT or Nationalist Party ruled Taiwan without elections. The two main parties that have vied for the presidency are the KMT and the DPP.

1996 1st Presidential election. The KMT won the election. China’s reaction: They performed military exercises in the Taiwan Strait as a form of intimidation just prior to the election.

2000 The DPP, Democratic Progressive Party, won the election. Chen Shui Bian, President. China’s reaction: Viewing the DPP as a pro-independence party, China publicly declares it will wage war on Taiwan should they declare their independence.

2004 The DPP won the election in a highly contested race. Chen Shui Bian, President

The 2004 Election
March 20, 2004

Controversies:

1. The Referendum
   a. see 2004 Election Referendum, overhead #6 for information

2. The assassination attempt
   a. On Friday, March 19th, the President and his VP were both wounded in an apparent assassination attempt. The KMT alleged the assassination was staged in order to gain sympathy votes. The candidates were not seriously wounded in the attempt.

3. The vote
   a. The margin of victory for Chen Shui-Bian was under 30,000 votes. The KMT called for a recount of the ballots.
   b. A recount validated the original election results. About 1,600 judges and other court officials supervised the recount, in addition to international observers.

President Chen Shui-Bian won a second term.

80% of all eligible voters voted. (Compare to the 2000 U.S. presidential election where 51.3 % of registered voters voted. Source: http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0781453.html)
   - It is estimated that 50,000 Taiwanese living in the United States paid their way back to the island just for the privilege of casting a ballot.
The KMT Party

KMT = Kuomintang = the Nationalists Party = Blue
Lien, Presidential candidate, 2004

**History:** The history of the KMT party is tied to mainland China. This is the party of Chiang Kai-Shek that fled to Taiwan in 1949.

**Stereotype:**
- The KMT has long been associated with corruption. The term “black gold” refers to its mafia connections and history of dirty politics.
- It is considered the party of the rich, and it has great wealth as well.
- The KMT acknowledges this image, and struggles to improve it and erase the “corruption” tag.
- More of a conservative party

**Support Base:**
- Their support base is in the northern part of the island; particularly in Taipei.
- Women tend to support the KMT slightly more than the DPP, men are evenly split
- The business community tends to support the KMT more
- 30-50 year old tend to support the KMT more than the DPP
- The higher the education level, the more they tend to support the KMT

**Cross Strait Relations:**
- The KMT favors the status quo...they don’t want to anger the mainland.
- Lien announced he would take a “journey of peace” to China if elected.
- Believe that Taiwan has no clear and present danger from China
- Endorses the resumption of cross-strait negotiations or dialogue, direct navigation and air links

**2004 Election Slogan:** “Fight for economics, fight for peace, save Taiwan!”

The party platform for 2004 stressed that they were the “party of peace”. They worked to convince the Taiwanese that a vote for the DPP was a vote for war with China.
The DPP Party

DPP = Democratic Progressive Party = Green
Chen, presidential candidate/incumbent, 2004

History:
✓ The DPP was formed in 1986 when it was illegal to form new political parties.
✓ They called for the end of martial law (lifted in 1987), called for elections, fought for freedom of speech and democracy.
✓ Many of the leaders in the DPP, including President Chen, served prison time as they struggled for their rights early on. (20 years ago, Chen’s wife was run over by a truck 3 times as a “political accident”. She is in a wheelchair today.)

Stereotype:
✓ The DPP is more of a grassroots organization.
✓ The KMT label the DPP as a violent, street fighting party.
✓ More of a liberal party
✓ Favor independence from China
✓ Favor constitutional reform with a possible change of name and flag.

Support Base:
✓ Its support base is in the southern part of the island.
✓ The DPP is very appealing to the young.
✓ 20-30 year olds favor the DPP
✓ 30-50 year olds favor the KMT
✓ 50+ favor the DPP

Cross Strait Relations:
✓ the DPP has historically favored independence from China, although in the 2004 election, they declared no vote on independence would be pushed
✓ Chen says there is no need to declare independence because they are already a sovereign nation
✓ Endorses the resumption of cross-strait negotiations or dialogue, direct navigation and air links

2004 Election Slogan: “Believe in Taiwan, persist in reform”
The party platform for 2004 stressed that they have historically been the party of reform, and they are continuing their struggle for reform. They will not declare independence from China at this time.
## The DPP vs. the KMT

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The 2004 Election Referendum

- In November 2003, Parliament passed a referendum law that allows the president to call a “defensive referendum” when he deems Taiwan’s sovereignty is under external threat.

- Currently, there are 500 missiles in China, pointed at Taiwan. Taiwan is only 125 miles off the coast of mainland China. President Chen asserted that these missiles constitute a national security threat, and so he called for a referendum on the issue. According to the DPP, the purpose of the referendum was “defensive, peace, and preventive”.

- This referendum was extremely controversial within Taiwanese society, and it became a campaign tool for the KMT. Opposition candidate, Lien Chan, of the KMT, declared the referendum illegal and meaningless. Beijing, which says Taiwan is a renegade province that must be recovered, by force if necessary, views the ballot as a dry run for a vote on independence that could lead to war.

- By Taiwanese law, the referendum would be declared void if fewer than 50% of voters collected a referendum ballot paper. Picking up a paper ballot constituted as taking part in the referendum. The referendum would then be approved if more than 50% of those who took part cast yes votes. One strategy of the KMT to defeat this referendum was to encourage voters not to vote on the referendum at all. It succeeded. The referendum did not have the required number of votes to be considered valid.

The referendum asked voters two questions:

1. The People of Taiwan demand that the Taiwan Strait issue be resolved through peaceful means. Should mainland China refuse to withdraw the missiles it has targeted at Taiwan and to openly renounce the use of force against us, would you agree that the government should acquire more advanced anti-missile weapons to strengthen Taiwan’s self-defense capabilities?

2. Would you agree that our government should engage in negotiation with mainland China on the establishment of a “peace and stability” framework for cross-Strait interactions in order to build consensus and for the welfare of the peoples on both sides?
The U.S. Sounds Off on the Taiwanese Referendum

President Bush (12/8/03), “We oppose any unilateral decision by either China or Taiwan to change the status quo and the comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally, to change the status quo, which we oppose.” (responding to Chen Shui-Bian’s announcement that the referendum would be put on the March 2004 ballot.

Colin Powell, “We really do not see a need for these referenda. Taiwan is a democratic place, if they choose to have a referendum, they can have a referendum. We’ve made clear to them, however, that we do not want to see these actions lead in any way to change in the situation.”

Joseph Lieberman, “This was not a declaration of independence by the Taiwanese. This was a call for a referendum on whether the Chinese should remove the missiles from across the Taiwan Strait. And for the President (Bush), when China griped about it, to knuckle under, that’s not what the leader of the greatest democracy in the world does.”

Christian Science Monitor, editorial, 12-11-03, “Mr. Bush might have shown more empathy toward Taiwan’s concerns by recalling what President Kennedy did when the Soviet Union put missiles 90 miles off Florida in Cuba. The US almost started a preemptive war. By comparison, Chen’s referendum would be the height of restraint, and a good use of democracy as a defensive weapon.”
Statement on Taiwan Elections
Statement by the Press Secretary
Announcement of Election Results on Taiwan

We join the American people in congratulating the people of Taiwan on the successful conclusion of their March 20 presidential election. Taiwan's Central Election Commission on March 26 officially proclaimed that Mr. Chen Shui-bian has won reelection, and we congratulate Mr. Chen on his victory.

We recognize that there are pending legal challenges to the results of the March 20 election. We applaud the people of Taiwan for embracing established legal mechanisms and rejecting extra-legal options to resolve their differences. We reject calls for violence, which threaten the very democratic principles to which we and the people of Taiwan are committed.

The maintenance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and the welfare of the people of Taiwan remain of profound importance to the United States. To advance these goals, the United States will fulfill its obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act. It falls to Taiwan and Beijing to build the essential foundations for peace and stability by pursuing dialogue through all available means and refraining from unilateral steps that would alter Taiwan's status.

We will continue to maintain close unofficial ties with the people on Taiwan through the American Institute in Taiwan in accordance with our one China policy, as embodied in the Taiwan Relations Act and our three Joint Communiqués with the People's Republic of China.

###
Changes in the Party Identification of Taiwanese as Tracked in Surveys
Changes in the Taiwanese Chinese identity of Taiwanese as tracked in surveys

by the Election Study Center, NCCU (1992-2003)
Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Relations in the Republic of China – (1)
Mainland Affairs Council, Executive Yuan, Republic of China, Nov 2003

Tel: 886-2-23975589  Fax: 886-2-23975286  WWW URL: www.mac.gov.tw

Unification or Independence? (line chart)

Unification or Independence? (area chart)

If Developing Foreign Ties Led to Rising Tension on Cross-strait Relations, Would You Agree with Such an Effort?
Taiwan in the 21st Century

1. How do the majority of Taiwanese feel about the issue of unification or independence from mainland China?

2. When was the first presidential election held in Taiwan?

3. Describe the changes, over the last 10 years, in how the people of Taiwan identify themselves. ( Taiwanese, Chinese, Both T & C)

4. What are the three basic religions/philosophies practiced by the people of Taiwan?

5. The 2004 Presidential election was between what two groups? Who won?

6. Who is Chiang Kai-Shek?

7. Who is Sun Yat-Sen?

8. Describe the nature of cross-strait relations with China.

9. What is Taiwan’s official status in the international community?
Taiwan in the 21st Century

1. How do the majority of Taiwanese feel about the issue of unification or independence from mainland China?

   The greatest majority of people wish for the status quo to remain for now, and for a decision to be reached at a later date. The smallest percentage of people wish for unification asap, second smallest wish for independence asap.

2. When was the first presidential election held in Taiwan?

   1996

3. Describe the changes, over the last 10 years, in how the people of Taiwan identify themselves. ( Taiwanese, Chinese, Both T & C)

   The number of individuals who consider themselves both has remained fairly stable. The number of people who identify themselves as Taiwanese has risen dramatically, and the number who identify themselves as simply Chinese has dropped dramatically.

4. What are the three basic religions/philosophies practiced by the people of Taiwan?

   Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism

5. The 2004 Presidential election was between what two groups? Who won?

   KMT and DPP

   winner: DPP, Chen Shui-Bian of the DPP

6. Who is Chiang Kai-Shek?

   Chiang Kai-Shek was the military leader of the KMT who fought against the Communist Party and Mao Zedong in China. He led the KMT to flee to Taiwan in 1949 after the Communist Revolution. They set up a “temporary” government of the Republic of China in Taiwan to re-group and eventually re-take the mainland.

7. Who is Dr. Sun Yat-Sen?

   Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was the leader of the nationwide rebellion that overthrew the final dynasty in China. He was the founder and first President of the Republic of China. He is revered in both Taiwan and the mainland.

8. Describe the nature of cross-strait relations with China.
Very tense. The People’s Republic of China declares its relationship with Taiwan as “one china, two systems”. They reject the notion of an independent Taiwan; however, Taiwan is independent of China but without the official recognition. There are no boats or planes that travel directly from Taiwan to the mainland. The leaders of the PRC have stated that there is only “one China” and that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) will invade Taiwan if the island ever makes a formal declaration of independence.

9. What is Taiwan’s official status in the international community?

It is considered a “renegade province” of China. All but a few minor countries recognize the People’s Republic of China (mainland) as the official China. It has no seat in the UN.

Even the WHO will not recognize it. During the SARS crisis of spring 2003, Taiwan requested assistance from the WHO when they realized they had a SARS problem. In an effort to not anger mainland China, the WHO did not send help to Taiwan, but rather said the help would come via the mainland…it never did. This is an example of how international recognition goes beyond the simple political acknowledgement.
Discussion Questions

Who would you have voted for in the Taiwanese Presidential election? Why?

What can the United States do to help diffuse tension between China and Taiwan?

In your opinion, should Taiwan declare its independence from China, or maintain the status quo?

If Taiwan were to declare its independence, what should the international community do?
Lesson Plans

The U.S.-Taiwan Textile Trade Case
In this activity 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students will learn about the issues of free trade and protectionism by role-playing. In particular, they will learn how these terms apply to an understanding of U.S.-Taiwan trade in textiles. The activity takes a day and a half.
http://www.askasia.org/teachers/Instructional_Resources/Lesson_Plans/Taiwan/LP_taiwan_1.htm

One China, Two Systems
Building a Model of Peaceful Coexistence Between China and Taiwan
In this lesson, students demonstrate an understanding of the term 'peaceful coexistence' and the role that the term plays in the current Chinese process for reunification with Taiwan. Students work in small groups to research and assess the political ideologies, economic stability and national identities of the countries involved in the One China policy.

One China for All?
Understanding 20th Century Relations Among Taiwan, China and the United States
In this two-day lesson, students explore relations among Taiwan, China and the United States in the 20th century. On the first day, students work in small groups to research these relations in different decades and create timelines relaying their research. On the second day of the lesson, students participate in a research-based discussion about the relations among China, Taiwan and the United States in the 20th century and examine the causes and possible effects of Taiwan's desire to abandon the 'One China' formula by reading a related New York Times article.

Taiwan's Declaration of Referendum Re-ignites Tensions with China
A PBS article and accompanying lesson.
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/july-dec03/taiwan_12-08.html#

Internet Resources

American Institute in Taiwan
The de facto U.S. Embassy.

CIA World Factbook, Taiwan

Government Information Office, Republic of China
A comprehensive information about the ROC government on Taiwan includes announcements, official documents and A/V presentations.
www.gio.gov.tw/

Official Sites of Taiwan
Office of the President, Republic of China.  
www.president.gov.tw
Taiwan e-Government  
E-Government entry point of Taiwan.  
www.gov.tw

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Official Web Site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
www.mofa.gov.tw

Government Information Office  
www.gio.gov.tw

Information Division  
Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York  
www.taipei.org

Taiwan News

China Times  
National news  
www.chinatimes.com.tw

eTaiwan News.com  
Taiwan and China related news  
www.etaiwannews.com

The Taipei Times  
National and international news  
www.taipeitimes.com

Taiwan Headlines  
Offers a daily collection of english news articles from many media sources in Taiwan. Includes stories on business, politics and society.  
www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/

Books

Is Taiwan Chinese? : The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities (Interdisciplinary Studies of China)  
by Melissa J. Brown

Taiwan: A Political History  
by Denny Roy

From Opposition to Power: Taiwan’s Democratic Progressive Party  
by Shelley Rigger

The Generalissimo’s Son: Chiang Ching-Kuo and the Revolutions in China and Taiwan  
by Jay Taylor
Defending Taiwan: The Future Vision of Taiwan’s Defence Policy and Military Strategy
by Martin Edmonds (Editor)

The Emergence Of Greater China: The Economic Integration of Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (Studies on the Chinese Economy)
by Yun-Wing Sung

Lesson Bibliography


“Taiwan begins election recount”, AP. Houston Chronicle, May 9, 2004.


Interviews at the following:

American Chamber of Commerce in Taipei

American Institute in Taiwan. Taipei, Taiwan

Council for Economic Planning and Development, Executive Yuan. Taipei, Taiwan.

Democratic Progressive Party campaign headquarters. Taipei, Taiwan.

Election Study Center, National Cheng-chi University. Taipei, Taiwan.

Hon. Cher-Jean Lee, Deputy Director-General Government Information Office, Executive Yuan. Taipei, Taiwan.

Kuomintang campaign headquarters. Taipei, Taiwan.
Mainland Affairs Council, Executive Yuan. Taipei, Taiwan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr. Eugene Y.H. Chien. Taipei, Taiwan.

Mr. Hsui-hsuing Bai, Political Deputy Mayor of Taipei, Taipei City Government.

National Policy Foundation. Taipei, Taiwan. (a KMT thinktank)

National Security Council. Taipei, Taiwan.

Taipei Economic & Cultural Office, Houston.