

Introduction to the Taiwan Question

by Thomas Walker Lynch

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Preface

In 1980 I met a Japanese exchange student whose worldview was very curious. Our differences were profound even at the level of small details. She painted trees in colours unfamiliar to my Western eyes, and I learned that her language had but one word for both green and blue.

During my time at the university, I delved into the study of Japanese and explored a variety of liberal arts subjects, encompassing East Asian history and cultural anthropology. This academic journey brought me into contact with a diverse array of individuals from all over the world. My studies led me to travel extensively, visiting Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, among other nations. I was warmly received into the homes of my friends. I then married a wonderful Taiwanese woman and lived in Taiwan.

People in Taiwan have diverse backgrounds, including the Hakka, indigenous Austronesian Taiwanese,

families with deep-roots in Taiwan, and families descendent from the Nationalist refugees. Although some people express that Taiwan is already independent, and some express a desire for closer ties to China, most people desire for the Chinese to simply leave them in peace so that they may pursue happiness in life, whether through their studies, work, family, business, or other personal endeavours. All appear to agree that a Chinese takeover would serve no purpose.

In revisiting my research on Taiwan for this book, I have been struck by the remarkable growth in academic literature on the subject. The depth and breadth of this scholarship is vast, so this concise book can only touch upon a fraction of it. Nonetheless, it is my aspiration that this work will serve as a valuable primer for Western readers, equipping them with the necessary knowledge to engage with more complex discussions and scholarly works on this topic.

I have concentrated on information from primary sources, which are cited. Some of these sources are

quite old and thus occur within a different socio-political context. Hence, the third to last chapter briefly discusses some of the authors.

The penultimate chapter presents a list of major sources, while footnotes throughout the book provide citations including direct citations to lesser sources. At the very end of the book there are images that complement the "Life in Taiwan" chapter.

Throughout I have endeavoured to strike a balance between detail and accessibility. While over 80 names appear in my notes, I have chosen to focus on the main players and witnesses, occasionally speaking in more general terms such as 'Chinese Communists' or 'Chinese Nationalists.' This approach allows us to avoid getting lost in the weeds of party names and acronyms. Anyone who has studied this subject will understand these terms.

For the convenience of my Asian readers, I have included the traditional and simplified Chinese variations of names in parentheses the first time they appear. However, a Chinese-capable font is required

to view these characters. I recommend the Google Noto CJK JP font for those using a Kindle reader.

I am thankful to all those who have assisted me in this research. I am thankful to Reed College of Portland, for their expansive Taiwan maps and travel logs; to the Internet Archive which turned what would have been months of waiting for rare books into mere minutes of electronic search; and especially to the staff at the NTU library. Without them I would have never deciphered map legends, found some of the source material, or understood some of the Chinese passages.

Should you happen upon any inaccuracies in the text, please do not hesitate to contact me so that they may be corrected in the next edition.

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Life in Taiwan

Taiwan is a nation of modernity and tradition that stands as a testament to the resilience and adaptability of its people. Its cities are bustling hubs of commerce, echoing the rhythm of global metropolises with their big box stores, expansive shopping centres, and ubiquitous cafes. The nation's supply chains are interwoven with the global network, facilitating a seamless flow of imports and exports.

The country's infrastructure is robust, with an extensive network of trains, including high-speed express lines, that connect even the most remote villages to the urban centres. Motorways criss-cross the island and there are large thoroughfares in the cities.

Education is a cornerstone of Taiwanese society, with a strong emphasis on science and technology, though the liberal arts are not neglected. Universities abound in the major cities, their students often found collaborating in the numerous cafes, while the elderly

enjoy the cool respite these establishments offer from the tropical heat.

The daily life of a typical office worker in any of the major cities of Taiwan mirrors that of their counterparts in other major cities worldwide. The rhythm of waking early, commuting via packed metro trains, and returning home after a long day is a familiar one. Despite the adoption of Western-style labour laws, the Taiwanese work culture often demands longer hours, especially during crunch times. The lines between professional and personal life sometimes blur, with bosses reaching out to employees during off-hours and teams bonding over shared meals or group outings, sometimes including vacations.

Yet, amidst the modernity, the old Taiwan persists, adding a unique dimension to the nation's character. Outdoor farmers' markets, brimming with fresh produce, are a common sight in both urban neighbourhoods and small towns. These markets, far from being mere novelties, serve as primary shopping

centres for many. Night markets, with their festive atmosphere and food vendors, attract both locals and tourists, adding to Taiwan's appeal as a tourist destination.

The culinary scene in Taiwan is diverse, ranging from street vendors and open-air restaurants to upscale cafes and Western chains. Many of these restaurants are open to the street, featuring counters with stools where cooking is done, often with entrances around the counter leading to a space with tables. Many residents, particularly students and single office workers, rely on these establishments for their meals, as their accommodations often lack kitchens. For those with kitchens, the absence of an oven is common, reflecting the local preference for eating rice instead of baked bread, and for cooking with large pots and frying pans.

Housing in Taiwan varies greatly, from luxurious houses with garden vistas to compact flats in towering buildings. The urban landscape is often marked by buildings erected closely together; a sight particularly

noticeable, for example, when travelling into Taipei from Keelung.

Despite its tropical climate, which leads to a higher prevalence of insects and rodents, Taiwan maintains a high standard of cleanliness. The streets are generally free of litter, and the sewer systems are modern and efficient. The handling of rubbish is swift and efficient, with rubbish trucks playing music, such as Für Elise, to signal their arrival and then residents bringing out handing their rubbish bags directly to the workers.

Taiwan's socioeconomic landscape is diverse, with both affluent and less privileged neighbourhoods. Yet, even in the poorer areas, crime rates remain low.

Agriculture is a significant part of Taiwan's economy, with crops ranging from sweet potatoes and rice to tea, spices, and a variety of fruits and vegetables. Taiwan crashed the world market price for orchids when it started exporting them. Animal husbandry focuses primarily on pigs and poultry, with the quality of pork being particularly noteworthy. Farming techniques span from traditional to modern.

The nation also boasts a large industrial base, specialising in computer chip and computer manufacturing, with brands like ASUS and Acer being globally recognised. Other exports include metal products, bicycles, tyres, stone, hardwoods, and more. The Taiwanese were the first to produce fiberglass sailboats.

Despite its modernity and economic success, Taiwan faces challenges. The declining birth rate, while not as severe as in neighbouring Japan, is causing a shift in family dynamics. The traditional expectation of children caring for their elderly parents is being challenged, leading to disappointment among the older generation. However, the nation's social medicine and universal retirement systems provide a safety net.

Cross-strait business ties are prevalent, with many Taiwanese working in China and returning for holidays. However, this number has been decreasing in recent years.

This chapter provides a glimpse into the vibrant, multifaceted nation that is Taiwan. Images illustrating the aspects discussed here can be found at the end of the book, following the sources list. This is the status quo of Taiwan, a status quo that an invasion would disrupt.

Origin of the Name

There is consensus that the Dutch used the name *Taiwan* when they attempted a settlement around modern Tainan in the 17th century. In modern times, there has been some debate as to where the Dutch got the name from.

When Wen Zhenhua (溫振華), professor and Dean of the Taiwan Research Institute of Evergreen University was asked this question, he replied in a letter explaining the following:¹

The Taijiang Inland Sea is a large lagoon fed by one large river and two smaller ones. The Dutch used it as a harbour. The Austronesian Taiwanese called it the equivalent of ‘big bay’, and in their language this word sounds close to *Taiwan*. The professor thinks this is why people have speculated that ‘big bay’ is the origin of the name. However, based on a linguistic analysis, he concludes that this speculation is incorrect.

¹<https://wwwacc.ntl.edu.tw/public/Attachment/85161437791.pdf>

Professor Zhenhua then points to a reference that suggests that another Austronesian Taiwanese word is more likely the origin. This word has the meaning of ‘two coming together’, which is also used to mean ‘meeting place’. (Rivers come together at the lagoon, so this might still be referring to the lagoon.)

When I asked a local Taiwanese person where the name came from, she pointed out that the Mandarin characters for Taiwan, which when literally translated, mean ‘a terrace or flat place near the sea’.² This describes what the alluvial plains look like when viewed from a boat coming to the island from the straits. The Microsoft AI gave me the same answer.

Professor Victor H. Mair holds the position of Professor of Chinese Language and Literature in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the

² Taiwan - 臺灣, 臺 is Tai, meaning something flat, a platform, a stage, a terrace, 灣 meaning nearby the water, a bay, a gulf.

University of Pennsylvania. He gives his opinion on this question in the reference cited in this footnote.³

The first thing he says is that the “Terrace Bay” “sounds nice” and is “even poetic”, but that it is an inauthentic etymology. He then continues on to say that the “true derivation” of the name *Taiwan* is an ethnonym for an Austronesian Taiwanese tribe. There is a big authoritative footnote in this paragraph, but it does not lead to a citation, so it appears this is based on the professor’s analysis.

Yet another hypothesis is that the Dutch got the word from pirates who had been on the island before them⁴

³ “How to Forget Your Mother Tongue and Remember Your National Language”, by Victor H. Mair, <https://pinyin.info/readings/mair/taiwanese.html>. Note the section “The Fundamental Unwritability of the Nonstandard Sinitic Languages” paragraph 11.

⁴ note: 「蓉洲文稿」曰：「萬曆間，海寇顏思齊踞有其地，始稱臺」，Lian, Heng (1920). 臺灣通史 [The General History of Taiwan] (in Chinese). OCLC 123362609.

However, this merely begs the question, so we are again left with the above hypotheses.

When the Portuguese happened upon Taiwan in 1544, they called it *Formosa*. This name for Taiwan was in use into the 20th century, and you will see it again in this book. It is commonly said that this means 'beautiful' in Portuguese, but there is a bit more to it. For example, as of this date Google Translate finds no translation for 'formosa', and the English word 'beautiful' translates to something else in Portuguese. However, upon entering the title of the book by poet Danial Jonas, "Moça formosa, lençóis de veludo" Google Translate will reply "Beautiful woman between velvet sheets". The word applies to a special type of feminine beauty.

The Portuguese did not put a settlement in Formosa. After observing the island's feminine beauty from the railings of their ships, they decided to continue sailing and ended up in Macao. This might be fortunate for us as they were able to keep their heads long enough to pass on this lovely name they gave to the island.

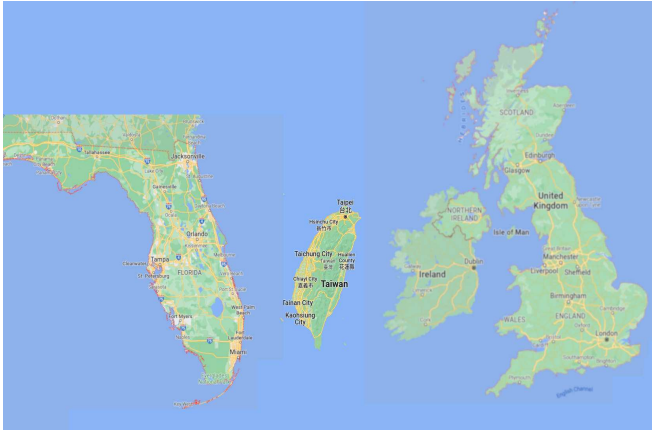
About the Question

Now that we have acquired some familiarity with Taiwan, we can better understand what the Taiwan Question is asking. From the point of view of the Taiwanese, the Taiwan Question asks how the people of Taiwan will be able to continue their pursuit of happiness without having to worry about being invaded by their large neighbour to the west, China. Today, this is an unanswered question, not only because we generally do not know the future, but also because the Taiwanese are being threatened.

The current rhetoric indicates that we need a new point of view or there will be a war, and given the various defence alliances, perhaps a world war. The Chinese say they have no intentions of backing off their claims to the island, and the Taiwanese have no intentions of being assimilated. The arms build-up is continuing at a frenetic pace.

There has been a lot of suffering in East Asia for a long time. Much of it has been the result of religion, colonialism, and political philosophies of all kinds. The recent stability is a welcomed historical exception, but in Taiwan, it is not a tranquil stability. Discussing the Taiwan Question can provoke strong emotions among those who live in the region. The issue has more than two sides, and some people in each camp seem to have memorized what they know to be the 'one true way'. Though it should be noted that the most common opinion among the people I interviewed is that they just want Taiwan to stay as it is so that they may continue following their life plans. It is only a minority of people who care about such political questions. This only makes sense, as a person cannot live every day for decades on end while worrying about the arrival of an invasion.

Geography



This map shows Florida, the main island of Taiwan, and Ireland and the UK, at the same scale and placed next to each other. Not shown on this map are the 167 additional smaller islands of Taiwan. These additional islands occur in about seven groups, some of them are directly off the coast of China.

Taiwan is long and narrow. About the same height as Ireland and about a third the land area of Florida. Today it is possible to take a fast train and traverse

from the major city of Kaohsiung in the south to the capital of Taipei in the North within six hours.

This next map shows the main island of Taiwan as it is located next to China. Note the blue arrow indicating its position.



This is a Mercator projection, so the north side of China is exaggerated in size, but generally this gets the point across. China is a very large country.

China is about 130 kilometres (81 miles) to the west of Taiwan across the Taiwan Strait. It was noted in the 19th century that China could be reached by a day's sail when the weather is good. However, the strait is

stormy for much of the year. This combination of a short but stormy separation between China and Taiwan bears an eerie similarity to the political situation.

On a very clear day the mountain tops of the main island of Taiwan can just barely be seen while standing on the opposing Chinese coast.⁵

The bottom third of Taiwan dips below the Tropic of Cancer. The island is hot and often rainy, and rainy even more so in the north. Typhoon season is from April to October. Before modern medicine, hospitals, and pesticides, Taiwan was rife with tropical diseases.

Taiwan is surrounded by rocky shores and some beautiful beaches. It is located at the convergent boundary between the Eurasian and Philippine Sea tectonic plates, so it is seismically active, especially in the east. Yushan peak reaches 3,952 meters (12,966 feet) while being merely 50km (31 miles) from the coast. Scientists say that the Tatun volcanoes are

5 (Barclay 1954) p4. (Pickering 1898) p40. (Wheeler 2022)

active, but there has not been an eruption in 200,000 years. East of Taiwan there is a deep ocean trench that causes strong undercurrents. Swimming on much of the east coast is treacherous. In the past many Taiwanese believed that ghosts of the drowned lived in the waters and would pull people under.

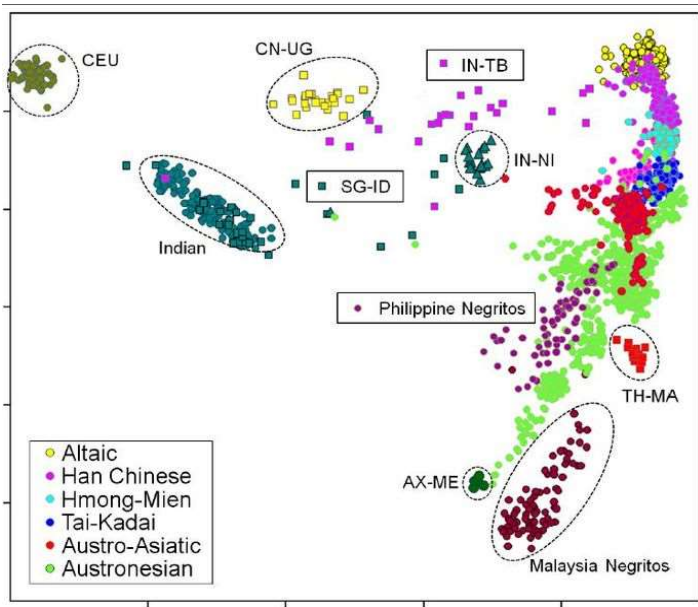
There is no state religion and beliefs vary widely, with well-known international religions sitting side by side with animistic religions. The people of Taiwan tend to be highly educated and rational, so many people appreciate the social aspect and colourful musical ceremonies without taking seriously such things as ghosts in the water.

In modern times, air pollution and trash on the water can blow in from China. Taiwan also has a sophisticated technology sector and industrial base which is capable of creating its own air pollution alerts when the wind is not blowing.

Genetic Makeup

Sometimes an argument is made that the people in Taiwan are mostly Han Chinese. The implication being that they are all Chinese immigrants, so Taiwan is in fact Chinese land. If such an argument were valid, the US would be in jeopardy of claims from European countries. Perhaps they should consider it. Can you imagine what the results would be?

However, there is no need to work out the validity of such reasoning as genetic studies do not support the contention that Taiwan is overwhelmingly Han.



The diagram above shows the results of a genetic study that identified dominant ethnic markers.⁶ The red dots are those that express mostly Han markers.

Nor is there purity of blood, even for those identified as having Han genetic markers, because interracial marriage is common in Taiwan,⁷ and has been for

6 (Hugo Pan Asian SNP Consortium 2009)

7 (Tsai 2010)

centuries.⁸ Such nuances in genetic heritage are rarely a social factor in Taiwan. Dropping of taboos against intermarriage might have come about because there was a shortage of brides for early settlers, but there looks to be a more profound reason. I think the evidence suggests that it was important for settlers to intermarry with the natives so as to gain resistance to tropical diseases, both genetically and from adopted habits.

8 (House 1875) p141 "coast men often seek wives from the interior [Austronesian Taiwanese]" He describes marriage ceremony with visitors from the mountains. (Pickering 1898) p41 says Dutch built churches and schools and intermarried with the natives. again p119.

Historical Population of Taiwan

During the Japanese occupation from 1905 to 1943 the Japanese kept a census of Taiwanese.⁹

By 1905 the Austronesian Taiwanese had been on the island for thousands of years, and they did not advance much technologically during that time. In my opinion, it would be reasonable to estimate their population at about the same level for the entire late period, which would then be about 200,000.¹⁰

The population of the alluvial plains, later also including the north coast, numbered a few thousand in 1600.¹¹ So few in fact, that they could have easily been overwhelmed by the Austronesian Taiwanese.

9 (Barclay 1954) This is stated specifically on p9, p10.

10 (Barclay 1954) p16 table. The text on that page explains why only the 1935 number is meaningful. Given that so many natives were missed on the prior census we have to wonder if many are missing on this one. Perhaps this number should be taken as a lower limit.

11 (Barclay 1954) p5 para 3.

By the 1905 census this number had risen to about 3 million.

The last census taken by the Japanese in 1943 showed Taiwan reaching 6 million people. If we extrapolate to 1949, we arrive at 7 million. If we then add the 600,000 refugees arriving due to the Chinese Civil War, subtract those who left including many Japanese, the estimate comes to about 7.4 million in 1949.¹² This correlates well as the UN puts the 1950 population at about 7.85

12 (Yang 2020) p42 "Between 1948 and 1955, roughly one million KMT personnel and Chinese civil war refugees poured into Taiwan" p40 "Taipei City's total population surged from 300,000 to 600,000". Thus, the about 1 million referenced here arrived over a 7 year period, the 600,000 cited here looks to be a rough maximum if 1949 if the 1951 census is to make sense. (Gates 1987) bottom p26 states without citation that there were 2 million Chinese Nationalists, *including their children, at the time of his publication in 1987*. This is the number I have heard most often but this is not the crossing the straits number. This 1987 implies a smaller than 1 million total number for 1948 to 1955. These references also do not say how many Japanese picked up to go back to the main island of Japan, here I surmise a couple hundred thousand.

million.¹³ As of 2022 Taiwan is not listed directly in the UN population data, nor is there a country area as there is for Macao and Hong Kong, see <https://data.un.org>. The Taiwanese government puts the 2021 population at a little over 23 million.¹⁴

13 (UN 1951) p27.

14 (Taiwan 2022)

The Austronesian Taiwanese

The great Austronesian migration across the Pacific started around the 4th millennium BC when Austronesian people crossed the straits to Taiwan. The migration continued south to Indonesia, then east across the Pacific.¹⁵ A common misconception is that the Austronesian people as a group picked up stakes in one place and then moved to the next. The actual case is that they *expanded* across Pacific, the old tribe staying behind and a new tribe forming at the frontier, repeatedly. Many people of Austronesian descent currently live in Taiwan, and they come from dozens of different tribes.¹⁶ Throughout the history of the island,

15 (Diamond 1998) Chapter: "Speedboat to Polynesia", bottom p339,"The first archaeological signs of something different within the Austronesian realm come from -- Taiwan. Beginning around the fourth millennium B.C." etc.

16 [1895 Pic] p75 Says to have visited 20 tribes implying there being many more he had not visited. p73 says his experience extended chiefly to the centre and south of the country. p190

these tribes variously formed alliances and confederations and warred against each other. This pattern implies that we might also find descendants of the Austronesian people in Southern China.

There were no interactions of noted historical significance between the Taiwanese and the outside world until the 17th century. Then up until the 20th century the Austronesian Taiwanese controlled all of Taiwan except for the alluvial plains in the West and North. Much of the Austronesian area is mountainous and covered by jungle. Thus, immigration into Taiwan before the 20th century was limited to the western alluvial plains. Minerals and coal were found on the north tip of the island, and this attracted foreign settlements and mining activities in there.

Early non-Austronesian immigration included people from throughout the region and even some people from Europe.

para 2, describes an 18 tribe federation under one chief in the south. (Le Gendre 1874) p11 refers to 18 *southern* tribes.

Taiwan in the 17th Century

There was little interest in Taiwan by the neighbouring Chinese Ming Dynasty probably due to mosquito-borne diseases, inhospitable Austronesian Taiwanese, and later due to the Ming having more pressing priorities.

In 1618 the Chinese Ming Dynasty was pulled into a power struggle with the Manchurian Qing. The Qing won the Chinese capital of Peking in 1644, and turmoil continued through at least the 1660s.¹⁷ Thus the Ming Dynasty in China gave way to the Qing Dynasty. Taiwan played no role in this.

When trade started with the West, Taiwan became a haven for pirates. Early migrants who went to Taiwan were escaping war, starvation, unrest, and perhaps other problems with local authorities. Some found

17 (Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) p67, p69 generally the first chapter, also p165, much analysis as to why this happened. bottom p415 discussion of some of the turmoil.

that the opportunity to own farmlands to grow sweet potatoes or rice, or to develop plantations for sugar, tea, or camphor, was so attractive that they were willing to risk an early death due to disease, thieves, or being ritually sacrificed at the hands of the Austronesian Taiwanese.

Bandits, smugglers, and pirates sometimes had families, so it stands to reason that they would also have farms and form villages, so there was not always a clear distinction between those who were farmers and those who were miscreants. Given the conditions in Taiwan and the limited land for supporting expanding families, it stands to reason that people also left Taiwan.¹⁸

18 (Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) The 18th century section describes the piracy problem in more detail, and the 19th section has specific notes on disease. p372 para 1 "1644 wave of refugees", said paragraph continues "*Some of them returned to the mainland...*" See also (Pickering 1898) and (House 1875).

In 1624 the Dutch East India Company established a colony and collected taxes from people who controlled land on the alluvial plains.¹⁹ It is from their records that we get the early population numbers reported in a prior chapter.

The Dutch also interacted with the Austronesian Taiwanese while teaching the Dutch language and Christianity. Incredibly, in the late 19th century the chief of an Austronesian tribe still had a handwritten in Dutch two hundred year old land deed.²⁰ The Dutch and later Westerners had such an effect on the natives that in modern times many of the descendants of the Austronesian Taiwanese are Christians.

19 (Ka 1995) Wonderful summary of Dutch colonization effort p11 p12, "The Chinese peasants [i.e. the settlers on the plains] were obligated to pay the Dutch not only rent in kind but taxes in cash. In order to acquire the money for production and taxes, the Chinese sold agricultural products, basically rice and sugar, as well as deerskin to the company. Dutch colony also mentioned in (Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) p369. Dutch head tax (Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) p372.

20 (Le Gendre 1874) p16, image of said deed appears as plate IX.

The Spanish put a fort on the northern tip of Taiwan in 1626 until 1642.²¹ When William Pickering visited in the late 19th century he found remnants of Spanish spoken among the natives.²²

The Austronesian Taiwanese were able fighters who would later hold their own against pirate invaders and even the Chinese army. In the late 19th century, it would take the Japanese army 28 years to pacify them. They were known to have killed entire ship crews who came ashore. Some killings were ritualistic. Warriors

21 (Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) p371 para 3.

22 (Pickering 1898) p40 "to my surprise, the man repeated a corruption of the Spanish numerals up to ten." p186 "Mr. Pickering remembered that the Spanish traded with the Bashee Islands and tried Spanish. To our surprise he answered, and informed us he was a Christian, repeating the Lord's Prayer, etc."

collected the heads of their enemies.²³ The Chinese referred to them as savages and cannibals.²⁴

Yet these savages tolerated the settlers on the alluvial plains even at a time when they greatly outnumbered them, and for the most part continued to respect a perceived border along the western alluvial plains all the way until the time of pacification by the Japanese. This is not to say there were no skirmishes. New construction projects, the expansion of plantations, or foraging in the jungle for products that could be sold sometimes led to confrontations and people being killed.

Given that a tribe had kept a Dutch land deed it is not inconceivable that they were respecting a border agreement they had made with the Dutch, or perhaps

23 (Pickering 1898) p68, belief by Chinese that aborigines had tails, and "as to their cannibalism, it is a fact that they are enthusiastic head-hunters esteeming it a praiseworthy feat for a warrior to bring home the head of his enemy." p186 a specific instance where a head was taken.

24 (Gates 1987) bot p31, ironically describes cannibalism of aborigines by the Chinese.

were implicitly respecting it out of tradition after it was started. Other potential reasons for the perceived border might be that Austronesian Taiwanese came to value trade with the settlers especially for powder and arms. It might be that they did not value the alluvial plains, or that they did not like fighting in the open even at night. It might in part be all these things. In any case, those who crossed this perceived border prior to negotiation and gaining permission risked their lives.

As trade between the West and China increased, piracy also increased. The pirates became so powerful that in 1661 the half Chinese and half Japanese heritage pirate chief Koxinga (郑成功, 鄭成功, 国姓爷, 國姓爺), was able to eject the Dutch from Fort Zeelandia (now the Anping district of Tainan). Koxinga is said to have been a Ming loyalist, true or not, that reputation was helpful justification for his harassing

the Qing Chinese.²⁵ In Taiwan Koxinga attempted to have his own dynasty while continuing to collect taxes from those living on the alluvial plains.²⁶ Koxinga attempted but failed to assert power beyond the alluvial plains on the main island of Taiwan.

25 (Jacobs 2011) top p200, "In fact, however, the relationship between Zheng [Koxinga] and the Southern Ming was not particularly close."

26 (Ka 1995) p13 "Under Cheng rule the arbitrary taxes imposed on tenants were increased."

Taiwan in the 18th Century

The piracy problem in this period became so severe that the Qing Dynasty had people move away from the opposing Chinese coast. Apparently, they were not in a big hurry to take on the pirate homeland as they waited until 1722 to send an army to Taiwan.²⁷

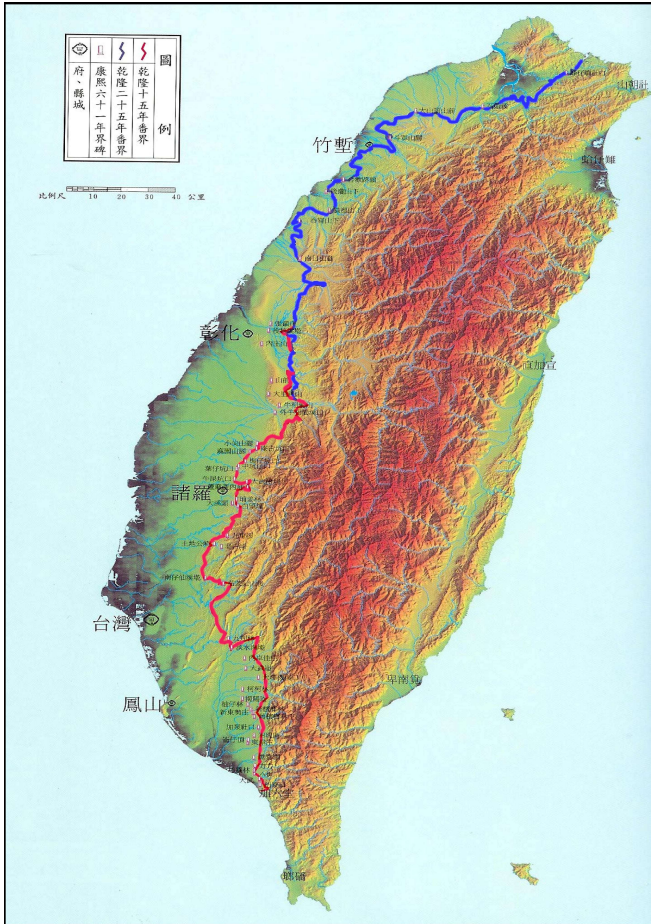
Shortly after establishing himself at the old Dutch settlement, Koxinga died of malaria.²⁸ Leadership of his would-be Taiwan dynasty was passed on to his son. When the Qing arrived, they required that Koxinga's son swear loyalty, which he did, thus ending the Koxinga dynastic experiment, but not ending the

27 (Peterson 2016) p332 "Ch'ing government ordered those living on the coasts of Shantung, Kiangsu, Chekiang, Fukien and Kwangtung to move thirty or more *li* (ten or so miles) inland as countermeasure to the raids of Cheng Ch'eng-kung (1624 -62) (known in the West as Koxinga)".

28 (Andrade 2011) see the notes in the comments on sources chapter. See also the book chapter "A Mad Death".

problem of Taiwan being used by pirates and smugglers.

The Qing also tried, but failed to take over Austronesian territories, so instead they drew a line in the sand, so to speak, and asserted which part of the island that they intended to control.



In 1750 the Qing set the red border shown on this map. Qing areas were to the west of the line, and Austronesian areas to the east. This border became known as the Tu Niu Red Line (土牛溝或線). The Qing soldiers returned in 1760 and extended their claims

with the border drawn in blue.²⁹ The Qing placed stone markers into the ground to memorialise this border. These were located at places you see labelled on this map above. (Though on this inset you surely cannot make out specifically what they say, see the reference if that is important.)

The failed expansion effort by the Qing cemented an enmity between the Austronesian Taiwanese and the Chinese.³⁰ The Europeans were later able to establish some relations with the Austronesian Taiwanese in the 19th century by pointing out that Europeans look different than Chinese. However, that apparently did not extend to the Japanese, as shortly after the agreement not to kill shipwrecked Americans, the

29 (Ka 2001) map on page 176.

30 (Pickering 1898) p69, "They are, with a few exceptions, friendly to foreigners, particularly appreciating a discreet present of soap, beads, red cloth, steel implements, and small mirrors. They have the greatest antipathy to the Chinese ..."

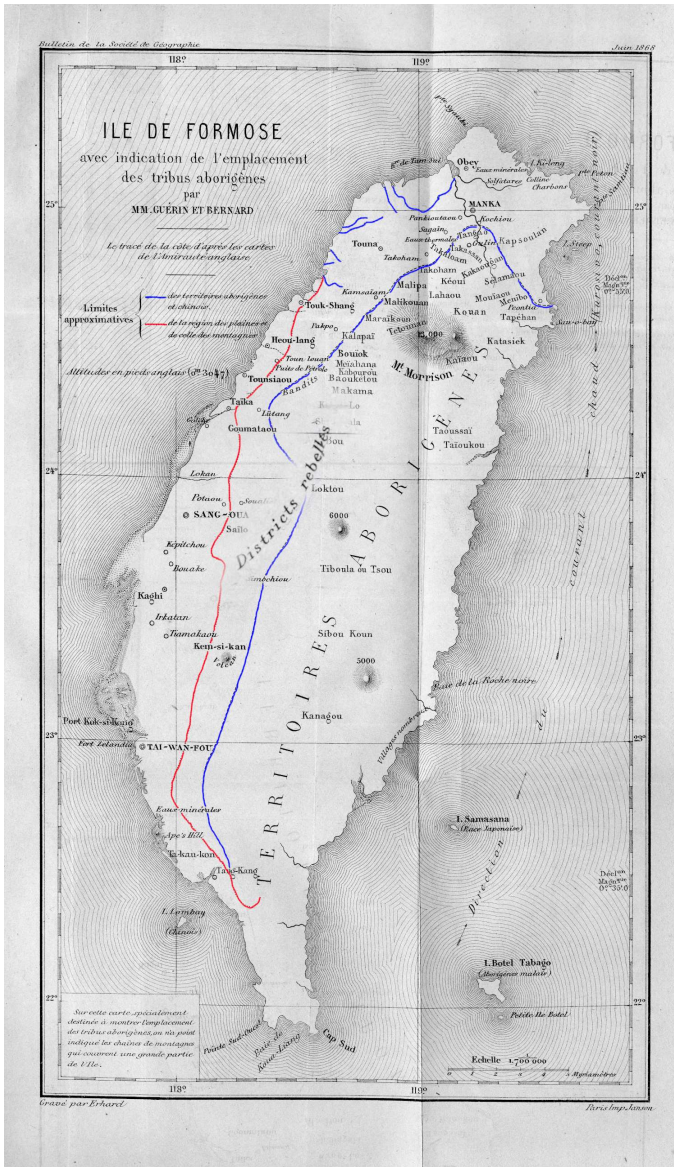
Austronesian Taiwanese annihilated the crew of a Japanese vessel that had run aground.

My general impression from the literature and given the Wild West like nature of early Taiwan, is that the Qing border markers were initially a goal to be achieved rather than the reality on the ground. The Austronesian Taiwanese would duck into the jungle and wait in ambush when soldiers appeared, but once the soldiers left the island the reality of the border was an issue to be worked out between the Austronesian Taiwanese and the settlers.

Taiwan in the 19th Century

In 1868 the French made the map shown below. It has a distinct border at the edge of the alluvial plains. Here this border has arbitrarily been drawn in red, while the Qing border which runs at the foot of the mountains is drawn in blue.³¹ Note the label between the red and blue borders midway reads, "Districts rebelles", i.e., "Rebel Districts". This map appears to support the contention that, at least early on, the informal border at the edge of the alluvial plains held more sway than did the stone markers left on the ground by the Qing soldiers.

31 (Reed 2022) map collection, originally M.M. Guérin & Bernard. Guérin, M., and M. Bernard. "Les Aborigènes de l'île de Formose." *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris* 5th series, 15 (1868): 542-568. Map faces p. 636 (i.e., the end of volume 15). Note, the map borders were originally drawn with dots and dashes. I coloured them to make them more easily visible. I also enlarged the label "Districts rebelles", so that it would be visible in the small inset. Before being enlarged the label did not cross the blue border.



By the late 19th century in addition to bandits and

rebels, the Hakka ethnic people from China settled between the alluvial plains and the mountains, i.e. between the red and blue lines on this map. Pickering referred to them as tribes.³² They maintained friendship with the Austronesian Taiwanese through marriage and trade. This trade included guns, powder, and ammunition. Some tribes had intermarried, were speaking Chinese, and following some Qing law.³³ Even more tribes were also farming.³⁴

Pickering noted that a Qing appointed administrator in Taiwan was corrupt and had kept money for himself that was intended to support coast guard ships and crew, thus there was no Taiwan based Chinese coast guard afloat.³⁵ Pickering's reason for going to Taiwan was to collect customs for the Qing because the British believed the Qing could not be trusted to do it. Pickering explains that the crews and cargo of

32 (Pickering 1898) p194 para 1

33 (Pickering 1898) p110, p123 para 6

34 (Pickering 1898) p119

35 [1998 Pic] Chapter VIII "Corruption and Rapacity of Chinese Officials" note specifically p90.

shipwrecked, or even moored ships, were in peril anywhere around the island. On the east and south coasts the Austronesian Taiwanese would dispatch crews, and on the north and west coasts locals would plunder ships while dispatching those who got in their way. Pirates, bands of thieves, and smugglers continued to use the island.³⁶

The Qing setup a land office and only recognized land ownership for those who: lived west of the official Qing border, registered at the office, and paid taxes.³⁷ The Qing also set up local police offices.

People from neighbouring Chinese provinces started moving to Taiwan to take advantage of the available land. They wore the hallmark ponytails of the Qing and engaged in educated discourse replete with adages and parables.

Pickering found their practice of infanticide of females and feet binding of girls to be barbaric. Pickering

36 (Pickering 1898) Chapter XI "Adventures in the Vicinity of Taiwanfoo". Also Chapter XV, "Wrecks and Wreckers"

37 (Ka 1995) taxes discussion, note 15.

recounts the story of a spoiled elderly grandmother reporting her son to the police for having disrespected her according to Confucian law, and the son only narrowly avoiding harsh punishment due to his intervention.³⁸

Hence the police ignored villages of bandits, illegal salvaging and murder of crews on the west coast, the district of rebels, smuggling, and anything that happened on the Austronesian side of the island including the wholesale murder of crews, but vigorously prosecuted the transgressions of Confucian etiquette against grandmothers.³⁹

The lack of control along the coast had a toll. In 1875 Edward House writes,

In recent times hardly a year had passed without the record of a series fresh outrages upon those whom the calamities of the ocean

38 (Pickering 1898) Chapter V "Religions of the Chinese Inhabitants".

39 There are striking parallels with contemporary law enforcement in the U.S.

had cast among these aborigines. Mariners from nearly every civilized nation were known to have been either slaughtered outright, or to have perished from the inhuman treatment to which they were subjected.⁴⁰

The slaughter of 54 shipwrecked Japanese sailors brought Japanese soldiers to the island on a punitive mission in 1874. Edward House who accompanied them points out that the Austronesian Taiwanese had firearms, and he believed armed individuals were moving back and forth between Austronesian and settled areas. As for the Qing taking responsibility House writes,

As to the legitimate control over the Formosan tribe of the East they disclaimed it altogether, and, in fact, their own maps clearly exhibited the line where the exercise of their jurisdiction ceased. ... the Chinese persistently proclaimed

40 (House 1875) p1.

the 'Cannibals' to be wholly outside of their dominion.⁴¹

Edward House visited the village of Sialiao, and he noted that, "political authority of China is in no way recognized here".⁴² Sialiao is south of the southernmost point of the Qing border, hence what House is saying here is that the Qing did not claim large parts of the island, even in places that had been settled.

After the 1874 Japanese expedition the Qing feared that Japan would use the de facto lack of control over the island by the Qing as rationalization for taking Taiwan. They attempted to settle the control question, or perhaps to create a point for negotiation, by claiming Taiwan as a province; however, as explained

41 (House 1875) p4.

42 (House 1875) top of p37. He is referring to the village of Sialiao which is almost certainly 射寮 Taiwan, Pingtung County, Hengchun Township, 恆春鎮. That places it in the Southern tip of Taiwan, on the Austronesian side of the Qing border.

by Le Gendre in his book, there was no foundation for the Qing claims, even their own maps said otherwise.⁴³

The 1895 treaty of Shimonoseki between China and Japan assigned Taiwan to the Japanese. Thus, the Qing claimed Taiwan as a province for a total of 19 years.

Upon hearing of the treaty, the Taiwanese declared the free *Republic of Formosa* and organized to fight off a Japanese invasion. The hastily assembled resistance had no chance against the experienced and modern (for the era) Japanese army. The north fell first and within a year, hundreds, perhaps a thousand, of Taiwanese had been killed in the fighting. The Japanese push into the Austronesian Taiwanese territories was only complete with the last battle at Taroko Gorge in 1923.⁴⁴

43 (Le Gendre 1874)

44 (Davidson 1903) Chapters XIX, "The Rise of the Formosan Republic", Chapter XX, XX1 and XXII on the Japanese occupation of North, Mid, and South Formosa.

Disease did not take a break during the war. While fighting was still going on in late August 1895 the northern Japanese hospitals combined tallies showed merely 33 were registered as injured, while *over 1488 were registered due to disease*. (465 were registered under "Miscellaneous".) Diseases listed included Cholera, Typhus, Dysentery, BeriBeri, Malaria, and Enteritis. On average 18 were dying in these hospitals each day.⁴⁵

Disease was not new to Taiwan in 1895. A Chinese general who arrived after the earlier 1874 punitive expedition had told Pickering that his men were not able to fight long in Taiwan due to dying from heat and disease.⁴⁶ Given these remarks we can surmise that

45 (Davidson 1903) p342 see also (House 1875) p215 During the 1874 Japanese punitive expedition, "Of the thousands assembled there [Japanese soldiers] ... Some hundreds of troops died [of fever]"

46 (Pickering 1898) p196 para6, "[my soldiers] are all gathered from the north of China, and they cannot endure this climate. They are already beginning to die of fever."

the Dutch were having the same problems before they left the island.

With the assistance of modern medicine, the Japanese managed to do what no outside power in history had done before, they took control of the entire main island of Taiwan. The Japanese established hospitals, built roads and rail lines, constructed modern buildings, built harbours, and established schools for all children including for Austronesian Taiwanese children. They further developed and modernized the agriculture industry for rice, sugar, tea, camphor, and hardwoods.⁴⁷

47 (Rutter 1923)

China in the 20th Century –

Origin of the Chinese

Nationalists

In this chapter we digress to explain some events in Chinese history that are needed to explain how Chiang Kai-shek (蔣中正, 蔣介石) ended up in Taiwan. Note that Taiwan played no role in the Chinese Civil War, and the people we discuss in this chapter were not of Taiwanese origin. That includes Chiang Kai-shek.

During the twilight of the Chinese Qing Dynasty so many members of the court died under suspicious circumstances over a period of a couple decades that children had to be placed on the throne in succession.

Simultaneous to an uprising by the anti-imperialists in 1912, the powerful regent of the 6-year-old emperor died. The general of the army requested that the child abdicate. He then diffused the uprising through the subterfuge of becoming the rebel president of the new

Republic. However, in 1916 he dismissed the Republican Council and declared himself to be emperor. Shortly after this pronouncement he became sick, abdicated, and died two days later.

The ideological leader of the Chinese rebels was a doctor named Sun Yat-sen (孙中山, 孫中山). He had created a secret society around his republican ideals called the *League of Brothers*. This would later turn into the *Kuomintang* party, the party of the Chinese *Nationalists*. Sun Yat-sen died in 1925 at the age of 58.

The Nationalist Chiang Kai-shek had a formal military education from Japan. Due to this he rose in the party, and variously served as the party's military leader and president. It is notable that he would live to be 88.

The Soviet Union desired to help workers the world over to rebel against imperialism, and in China they encouraged the fledgling Chinese Communist Party to join the Chinese Nationalists. The Soviets provided support.

After receiving Soviet equipment and support, in 1927 Chiang Kai-shek turned on the Chinese Communists

and implemented a purge resulting in the deaths of thousands. Locomotive furnaces were used to dispose of some of the rail strikers.⁴⁸ The communists who survived banded together and walked 9,000 km to safer territory in the north. It was during this 'Long March' that Mao Tse-tung would become leader of the Chinese Communists. At the time the rest of the Nationalist leaders did not realize the gravity of the rift with the Communists, but in retrospect it is clear that this was the beginning of the Chinese Civil War.

In 1937 the Japanese took Manchuria, and then continued further into China. Many among the Chinese Nationalists were distressed because it was perceived that Chiang Kai-shek was more interested in fighting the Chinese Communists than the Japanese.

Chiang Kai-shek was considered to be the leader of China at the time the Americans arrived in 1941. Like the Soviets before them, the Americans wanted to support both Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese

48 (Hahn 1955) chapter 5 "Success, And Break With Moscow", furnaces on p111.

Communists. The American objective was to open a western front against the Japanese.

During WWII the Soviet Union was an American ally, and the Soviets had effectively disseminated a positive image in the media. At the time the U.S. State Department had positive opinions of the Russian Communists.⁴⁹ By extension they saw nothing wrong with working with the Chinese Communists. However, the Americans found it impossible to get Chiang Kai-shek to go along with that concept.

After WWII the U.S. wanted to follow through with prior promises to further assist China, but they did not want to get involved in Chinese internal affairs. In 1947 enough people at the State Department still had a positive impression of the Communists, and negative

49 The movie, "Mr. Jones (2019)" that follows the story of journalist Gareth Jones shows a not uncommon for the era intellectual's infatuation with Joseph Stalin followed by a disenchantment, to say the least, upon finding out the reality. The book, "The Wise Men", 1986 Simon and Schuster explores the evolving opinions in the U.S. State Department on Soviet Union.

impression of Chiang Kai-shek, that they cut funding so as to avoid participating in the Chinese Civil War.

While fighting the Chinese Communists Chiang Kai-shek appears to have over stretched his supply lines and suffered a heavy military loss, this combined with the U.S. funding issues led him to plan an escape to defensible ground. His people showed up in Taiwan and paved the way for Chiang Kai-shek to follow. The Communist Chinese branded Chiang Kai-shek, his wife, and the Chinese Nationalist leadership as war criminals.⁵⁰ There was unfathomable acrimony between the Chinese Communists and the Chinese Nationalists.

50 (Tse-tung 1961) Mao gives his list on p150: "... 2) Arrest, try and punish the civil war criminals headed by Chiang Kai-shek." The party's war criminals list was discussed in the People's Daily: "国民党统治区人民欢迎毛主席声明 纷纷讨论战犯名单 认为尚有许多重要战犯被遗漏" 1949年1月27日.

The Surprising Origin of the Taiwan Question

On July 16, 1936, journalist Edgar Snow asked Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse-tun, "Is it the immediate task of the Chinese people to regain all the territories lost to Japanese imperialism, or only to drive Japan from North China, and all Chinese territory above the Great Wall?", Mao answered:

It is the immediate task of China to regain all our lost territories, not merely to defend our sovereignty below the Great Wall. This means that Manchuria must be regained. We do not, however, include Korea, formerly a Chinese colony, but when we have re-established the independence of the lost territories of China, and if the Koreans wish to break away from the chains of Japanese imperialism, we will extend them our enthusiastic help in their struggle for independence. The same thing applies for

Formosa. As for Inner Mongolia, which is populated by both Chinese and Mongolians, we will struggle to drive Japan from there and help Inner Mongolia to establish an autonomous State. - Mao Tse-tung 1936.⁵¹

June 1941, Chou En-lai (周恩来, 周恩來) explicitly supported what had by then become a well-established Communist Chinese position. In his paper on "Nationality Supremacy and State Supremacy", which offered the Communist Chinese interpretation of the well-known pro Taiwanese independence slogan from the Chinese Nationalist slogan:

since we opposed aggression from the other nations, we should sympathize with independence-liberation movements of other nation-states. We will not only assist the anti-Japanese movements of Korea or Taiwan, or anti-German, anti-Italian aggression movements of the Balkan and African nations,

51 (Hsiao, Sullivan 1979) pp453-454, note additional descriptions in this paper.

but also sympathize with the national liberation movements of India and various South Asian countries—we will never sacrifice the benefit of national liberation of the oppressed nationalities, and serve the benefit of imperialism. - Chou En-lai 1941⁵²

There were organized communists in Taiwan who were assisted by the Chinese Communists during the Japanese colonial period, and they were given the impression by the Chinese Communists that they were fighting for an independent Taiwan.⁵³

It is telling that until 1940 the Chinese Nationalists, many of whom would later flee to Taiwan, also considered Taiwan to be independent territory.⁵⁴ Yet, in 1943 Chiang Kai-shek met with Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill to work out post war plans, and published the Cairo Declaration, which contains the statement which changed everything:

52 (Hsiao, Sullivan 1979) p453

53 (Hsiao, Sullivan 1979) bottom p455 to top p456

54 (Hsiao, Sullivan 1979) p464 "The CCP ..."

The Three Great Allies are fighting this war to restrain and punish the aggression of Japan. They covet no gain for themselves and have no thought of territorial expansion. It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the first World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and The Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China. Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed. The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.⁵⁵

Here we discover something astounding: it was the Americans and British who first articulated a “One China Policy” and thus created the “Taiwan Question”.

55 (Cairo Declaration 1943)

And they did this without talking to any Taiwanese representatives.

When they did this Chiang Kai-shek had not yet been exiled to Taiwan, and they evidentially thought he would remain as leader of China. It appears that they looked no further back into the history of Taiwan than it being a district of Japan. This might have been exacerbated by Davidson's cynical recounting of the Republic of Taiwan struggle. Still, it is peculiar as they did recognize Korea's national identity. Perhaps this latter case was easier to recognize because Korea has a border with the Soviet Union and a long opposing shoreline from the submarine base in Vladivostok.

The Chinese Constitution is open to revision every 5 years, which is apparently a flexible rule. Thus, there are Constitutions in 1954, 1975, 1978, and 1982. The preamble for each Constitution gives a short history of the country. In 1954 it begins: "In the year 1949, after more than a century of heroic struggle ..." In 1975 it begins, "The founding of the People's Republic of China marked the great victory ..." The remainder of

each Constitution discusses the organization of the government, as one would expect.

In 1978 the preamble begins, "After more than a century of heroic struggle the Chinese people, led by the Communist Party ..." for the first time we find Taiwan mentioned. In the 7th paragraph of the Preamble:

Taiwan is China's sacred territory. We are determined to liberate Taiwan and accomplish the great cause of unifying our motherland.

The 1982 Constitution is much longer, and there is an official English version. The first paragraph of the preamble begins, "China is one of the countries with the longest histories in the world. The Chinese people of all ethnic groups jointly created its magnificent culture and have a proud revolutionary tradition." In the 9th paragraph we find:

Taiwan is part of the sacred territory of the People's Republic of China. It is the sacred duty of all the Chinese people, including our fellow

Chinese in Taiwan, to achieve the great reunification of the motherland.⁵⁶

56 (Constitution 1982)

Taiwan in the 20th Century

During WWII the Americans bombed Taiwan as it was a Japanese prefecture with war materials manufacturing. The bombing killed thousands and did great damage. The damage was compounded by the need to bulldoze fire breaks in cities to prevent fire storms, and due to fallen anti-aircraft fire.

The Chinese Nationalists showed up in Taiwan in 1947 to prepare for the later arrival of Chiang Kai-shek. When the Taiwanese protested against them, the Chinese Nationalists killed tens of thousands of people, summarily executed many local political and intellectual elites, and disappeared others.⁵⁷ This was followed by declaration of martial law and the 40 year

57 (Corcuff 2002) Chapter 2 by Robert Edmondson, "The February 28 Incident and National Identity". On p31 "10,000" to "20,000" killed.

long White Terror where 'suspicious' Taiwanese were imprisoned, tortured, or killed.⁵⁸

As discussed in the demographics section, over a seven year period several hundreds of thousands of soldiers and refugees would come across the straits. At the start of that time Taiwan had a population of about 7 million.

When Chiang Kai-shek arrived in 1949 the Americans selected him to be the military governor.

The same year Chiang Kai-shek showed up in Taiwan, the Soviets successfully detonated a nuclear bomb.⁵⁹ From the American point of view, Chiang Kai-shek was no longer just the failed leader of a faction in the Chinese Civil War, but he was also a communist fighter.

58 (Chen 2008), a modest search will yield many sad personal stories.

59 That the Soviet Union detonated a nuclear device in 1949 is well known. Here is a link to a declassified historical report, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000843187.pdf. "Atomic Spy - The Dark Lives of Klaus Fuchs" is a fascinating story.

The role of Taiwan was also transformed. It was no longer the country of the Taiwanese, but rather a potential jumping off point for the potential nuclear war with the communists. Within this bigger picture the Taiwanese people became irrelevant, or even useful to exploit.

While in Taiwan Chiang Kai-shek set up a Chinese government in exile, which he called the Republic of China. It had the support of the refugees, and of the Americans who propped him up as the leader of China in the international community. However, Chiang Kai-shek refused to let the "Republic of China" join the UN in protest over the presence of the Chinese Communists, a decision that has haunted Taiwan ever since.

The Chinese Communists continuously threatened to come get Chiang Kai-shek and to rid the world of the of the Chinese Nationalists. As the Americans equated Chiang Kai-shek with Taiwan, so did the Chinese. Thus started a dispute over Taiwan that did not include the Taiwanese.

The White Terror left the Taiwanese people disenfranchised and without a government of their own, and at the same time they were saddled with the chore of protecting their island from a foe they hitherto did not have a dispute with.

Note these transitions all occur within a 10 year period:

1) In China, Chiang Kai-shek is leader of the Nationalist faction in the Chinese Civil War after the fall of the Qing. Then WWII starts, and the Chinese factions ostensibly join forces to fight the Japanese. 2) In China, Chiang Kai-shek is Supreme Commander of the Chinese theatre for the Americans. Then the war ends and the Chinese Civil War resumes. 3) In China, Chiang Kai-shek is again leader of the Nationalist faction in the Chinese Civil War. Then he loses that struggle and flees. 4) In Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek is the military governor of Taiwan for the Americans - but he continues to say that he is the head of the Chinese Nationalists and that he leads the Republic of China, the only true government of China. Then the Soviets detonate an atomic bomb. 5) In Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek is now an American backed player in the Cold

War and the Americans embrace his Republic of China sovereignty claims - extending until 1972 when Richard Nixon recognized the Beijing government.

The Treaty of Peace with Japan was signed in 1951.⁶⁰ (This is a separate agreement from the Japanese surrender documents which were signed to end the fighting.) The sum total of what it says about Taiwan is in Chapter 1, Article 2 (b):

Japan renounces all right, title and claim to Formosa and Pescadores.

From the Atlantic Charter joint statement from President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill: "[We] respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and [we] wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them".⁶¹ Thus, in 1951 a person who did not know what was happening on the ground in Taiwan would

60 (Treaty of Peace 1951)

61 (Atlantic Charter 1941) third point

probably have assumed that the about 8 million Taiwanese would have followed in the footsteps of many other former colonies by becoming independent. However, due to the arrival of Chiang Kai-shek and his role in the Cold War, this did not happen.

Taiwan in the 21st Century

For the sake of the preservation of their families the Nationalists built Taiwan into a fortress. For 75 years the Chinese Communists have not invaded. Chiang Kai-shek died in 1975 and Mao Tse-tung died in 1976.

The White Terror and the military governorship of Taiwan came to an end in 1987 and was replaced by a representational democracy. It took some years for the new government to revise the laws and dispense with the authoritarian structures.

All of the Chinese Nationalists who were exiled to Taiwan have died of old age, if not something else. There is simply no one left for the Chinese Communists to come get.

There does exist a political party that participates in the Taiwanese Government which descended from the old Chinese Nationalist party, but they are no longer claiming to be the rulers of China. In fact, in high irony, this party advocates in the Legislative Yuan

(their parliament or congress) for closer ties with China. It reminds me of the grandchildren of the Irish in the US who talk so glowingly about the homeland that their forefathers so anxiously departed from.

Chiang Kai-shek's regime in Taiwan ordered school curriculum to teach Taiwanese children that they were Chinese. It is reminiscent of Alphonse Daudet's "La Dernière Classe". Adults of just one generation ago remember this. Today, this has been changed, and Taiwanese children learn about their own national identity.

Something That Doesn't Make Sense

As we reviewed in the chapter, *The Surprising Origin of the Taiwan Question*, Mao Tse-tung said that he wanted an independent Taiwan, and this was confirmed to be the communist policy by Chou En-lai. Consequently, the Taiwanese have achieved what these great men said they should do. They are now self-governing.

As we also reviewed in that chapter, the Taiwan Question was a fabrication of the Americans, the British, along with Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek at a meeting where those parties were planning the future of the post WWII world.

The Chinese call Chiang Kai-shek a war criminal. I've been told by educated Chinese in no uncertain terms that he did nothing valid, and that he only caused suffering everywhere he went.

So why would the Chinese Communists today let policy be set by the Americans and a war criminal instead of following the policy they had set?

Communist Chinese Expansionism

In Marxist philosophy the only wealth generator is that of human labour. Little value is placed on taking initiative, being inventive, being an exceptional manager, and especially not that of being charismatic enough to convince other people to invest in projects. Lenin and Mao extended this model to also apply to agriculture and land ownership.

Consequently, from the Marxist point of view the world is upside down. Instead of those who generate wealth benefiting from that wealth, the owners of companies and landowners are exploiting labourers and benefiting from the wealth they generate. The reasoning then continues that the communists are ending this exploitation by freeing the labourers of the world.

In addition, the Chinese Communists have vowed to end what they call the “one hundred years of

humiliation” during which time the weakening Qing Dynasty came under the influence of Western powers. Examples are the Unequal Treaty System, and the first and second Opium Wars.

Hence, after defeating the Chinese Nationalists, exiling them to Taiwan, and consolidating power, the Chinese Communists set out to recover the lands of China from the point of China’s maximum expansion, especially under the Qing Dynasty, but sometimes under other dynasties. The Chinese Communists felt no need to reflect on this policy, because the Chinese Communists were arriving to free exploited people.

The Chinese Communists took, or from their point of view, reincorporated, Xinjiang in 1949. In 1950 they seized Hainan Island and the Zhoushan archipelago. Infamously they took Tibet in 1951. In 1954 they took Yijiangshan and Dachen islands. China took and returned India borderlands in 1962. Those skirmishes continue.

In 1974 China took the Paracel islands. In 1988 they took a number of islands in the South China Sea

including Fiery Cross Reef, Cuarteron Reef, Hughes Reef, Nanxun Reef, Subi Reef, NS Chinua Jiao Reef.

In 2005 they took some border territories with Russia. In 2008 China took 1,000 km² of Tajikistan.

In 2009 China created artificial land in the South China Sea while attempting to expand maritime claims there. These claims were rejected in the international courts, but China is enforcing them anyway. They are enforcing further claims in Scarborough Shoal.

There is also friction with Japan over islands in the East China Sea.

The Chinese claim areas of the South China Sea surrounded by the “9 Dashed Line”, which pretty much encompasses all of it.

I wonder if the Chinese would honour a request from the Mongolians to expand their borders to historical maximums, at a time before undue foreign influence caused their empire to weaken. If so, then much of China would belong to Mongolia.

Given the Chinese Communists appetite for territorial expansion, a silver lining to Chiang Kai-shek's work in Taiwan is that it has preserved its independence for 74 years. Would the same result have occurred if the Americans had assigned an American general to the governorship?

Should the Taiwanese Fear a Chinese Takeover?

Belt and Road

China has instituted an ambitious program of international loans independent of that of the World Bank and other international development funds. This is a welcomed alternative path for achieving communist goals, than that of intrigue or invasion. However, the program has detractors.⁶²

It only stands to reason the impetus for this program was the need to supply factories with minerals, when the nations who have deposits do not have the necessary infrastructure to meet the demand. New harbours were also needed for expanding market

⁶² Council on Foreign Relations article:

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>

reach. However, along with such projects comes the need to protect them, and harbours have dual use.

Whether intentional or not, the loans are also making many friends among nations who vote at the UN. Nations must pay back the loans and those who can't are in precarious position of depending on the good graces of China. Recently Sri Lanka's economy was sent into a tailspin over this. Detractors suggest that the program is debt entrapping nations. In any case it is a diplomatic coup, and that has had ramifications.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong became a British Colony under the unequal treaty system after the First Opium War. They leased additional territory after the second Opium War. Hong Kong became an important port city for trade with China, and an important financial centre. The lease on the additional territories expired in 1997, and by then the region was highly integrated. In 1997 the UK returned the whole of Hong Kong to China with an agreement from China that there would be "one

country, two systems” for 50 years, so little would change initially.

After the handover, China brought Hong Kong under Chinese control leading to unrest and student protests. Apparently fearing that this would turn into an independence movement, China passed a “National Security Law” which reads like a law against sedition, but it also bans criticizing, abetting, financing, or taking actions to prevent Chinese rule in Hong Kong.⁶³ According to the law no other authority than the National Security Commission has any say in its enforcement. I.e. among the two systems, this was a matter for only one of them.

For example, Article 29 (5) prevents protesting against Chinese control of Hong Kong:

⁶³ This is an English translation:

[https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng_translation_\(a406\)_en.pdf](https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/fwddoc/hk/a406/eng_translation_(a406)_en.pdf) also:

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202007/01/WS5efbd6f5a310834817256495.html>

provoking by unlawful means hatred among Hong Kong residents towards the Central People's Government or the Government of the Region, which is likely to cause serious consequences

The “by unlawful means” part is curious. The Hong Kong secretariate of Justice explains that lawful communication is communication with foreigners for purposes of conducting business.⁶⁴ This phrase appears to be self-referential to the law, i.e. it is unlawful if it falls under the scope of the law. The “serious consequences” were interpreted in the broadest possible sense by the commission. The law describes criminal penalties and fines. This particular clause has a minimum sentence of 3 years. *As precedent for this law the Hong Kong Secretariate of Justice cites the American Logan Act.*

⁶⁴ Hong Kong Secretariate of Justice clarification of article 29.

https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/community_engagement/speeches/20210202_sj1.html

Perhaps the most surprising clause, the one that garnered a lot of attention in the international media, is Article 38 which makes it illegal for anyone in the world to violate the law:

This Law shall apply to offences under this Law committed against the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from outside the Region by a person who is not a permanent resident of the Region.

Thus, the law could hypothetically be violated by a country leader who had large Belt and Road Initiative loans. He or she would then be subject to fines which would be collectable, and potentially to criminal liability when traveling to China - something such a leader might be obligated or compelled to do.

HongKongWatch.org kept a record of some of the police statements on arrests, and many of the sentences of those found guilty.⁶⁵ By their account about ten thousand people have been arrested. It is

⁶⁵ <https://www.hongkongwatch.org/political-prisoners-database>

not clear what fraction of them were charged. Many have been jailed. Sentences ranged from weeks to several years. Fines were not documented. Those who were too young to be jailed were given lengthy sentences at “training camps”. Scanning up from the bottom of the Hong Kong Watch’s list, many people were sentenced to a few weeks in prison, which does not seem outrageous for an unruly protest, but many others were sentenced to three years or more. One that stands out was for seven and a half years.

A Chinese friend pointed out that the US dealt even more harshly with those who participated in the Jan 6 protests in the US. Many were denied habeas corpus. Many remained in solitary confinement for periods that would be defined as torture in his opinion. If found guilty many may be sentenced for decades in prison.

However, as my parents often said when I attempted such reasoning that it is OK for me to do something because someone else had done it: “Even if what you say is accurate, two wrongs do not make a right.”

Falun Gong

In the mid 1990s a faith group appeared in China and became very popular, the Falun Gong. In 1999 the group was declared illegal, and a program was put in place to eradicate it.⁶⁶ The Falun Gong continue to practice in China and practitioners continue to be arrested and jailed.

Falun Gong is now an international organization. The group keeps statistics.⁶⁷ According to them several million people have been jailed, hundreds of thousands have been tortured, thousands have been confirmed to have been killed by torture or abuse, and hundreds of thousands have been killed for their organs. In 2021 an expert witnesses testified at the UN Commission on Human Rights that they found the

⁶⁶ “China and Falun Gong” CRS Report for Congress, Order Code RS20333

https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20010803_RS20333_ofd7d966537bd6c3c83bbd9809a2db8b6e667230.pdf

⁶⁷ <https://faluninfo.net/> with a summary page at

<https://faluninfo.net/key-statistics-related-to-falun-gong/>

organ harvesting reports to be credible.⁶⁸ As did an independent Human Rights investigation.⁶⁹

In 2022 the Spokesperson of the Chinese Mission to the EU said that the allegations of organ harvesting were a lie fabricated by the Falun Gong “cult” and anti-Chinese forces.⁷⁰ Given their territorial expansion and draconian responses, anti-Chinese forces certainly do exist. However, the spokesman did not elaborate on who he was referring to. Also, he did not address the base issue as to why they were arresting Falun Gong practitioners in the first place, or that of their reported treatment in the prisons.

Xinjiang

The Xinjiang province acquired in 1949 is largely Muslim. Xinjiang separatists’ movements developed

⁶⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/06/china-un-human-rights-experts-alarmed-organ-harvesting-allegations?LangID=E&NewsID=27167>

⁶⁹ See report “Bloody Harvest” ISBN 978-0980887976

⁷⁰ http://eu.china-mission.gov.cn/eng/fyrjh/202205/t20220506_10682061.htm

ties with other radical Islamic movements. The most well know being *The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)* which was founded in 1997.⁷¹ However, apparently this was not the beginning of the “East Turkestan” movement. In a white paper published in 2002 the Chinese attribute many acts of terrorism within China to them.⁷² These include the following bombings:

On February 28, 1991, ...at a video theater of a bus terminal ... On the same day, the terrorists also planted a bomb at a private store ... which, fortunately, did not explode.

On February 5, 1992, Chinese New Year, the Spring Festival, the terrorists blew up two buses (Buses No. 52 and No. 30) in Urumqi ... killing three people and injuring 23 others. Two other bombs they planted: one at a cinema

⁷¹ Council on Foreign Relations article:

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim>

⁷² <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Jan/25582.htm>

and the other in a residential building were discovered before they could explode ...

From June 17 to September 5, 1993, ... ten explosions at department stores, markets, hotels and places for cultural activities ... causing two deaths and 36 injuries. Among them, the June 17 explosion ... killed two people and injured seven others. The August 1 explosion at the video theater of the Foreign Trade Company ... injured 15 people, and the August 19 explosion ... injured six people.

On February 25, 1997, ... blew up three buses (Buses No. 2, No. 10 and No. 44) in Urumqi. Nine people died and 68 others were seriously injured ...

Between February 22 and March 30, 1998, a succession of six explosions ... injuring three people and causing a natural gas pipeline to explode ... losses came to over one million yuan.

Early in the morning of April 7, 1998, eight explosions one after another at places such as the homes of a director of the Public Security Bureau of Yecheng County, a vice-chairman of the Yecheng County Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and a deputy commissioner of Kashi Prefecture. The explosions injured eight people.

This white paper continues while enumerating poisonings, assassinations, and acts of arson. Some of the assassinations are gruesome.

The Chinese response was to place millions of the Uyghur people who live in Xinjiang into compulsory live-in “vocational centres”. They were taught the Chinese language, principles of communism, and had to swear allegiance to the CCP. It is reported that this program included forced labour, beatings, torture, and the forced sterilization of women.⁷³ A subsequent

⁷³ <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/09/09/china-hijacked-war-on-terror-511032>

UN investigation found these reports to be credible and said they may constitute crimes against humanity.⁷⁴ The definition of genocide includes cultural genocide, and the US and some other nations ruled it to be genocide.⁷⁵

June 4 Incident

Given the controversy surrounding the Tiananmen Square Massacre of 1989 a community-maintained wiki article might not be a bad place to start in reading about it.⁷⁶ The opening paragraph:

The Tiananmen Square protests, known in Chinese as the June Fourth Incident were student-led demonstrations held in Tiananmen

⁷⁴See: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/08/1125932> and <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/2022-08-31/22-08-31-final-assesment.pdf>

⁷⁵ See: <https://2017-2021.state.gov/determination-of-the-secretary-of-state-on-atrocities-in-xinjiang/index.html>

⁷⁶ See, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1989_Tiananmen_Square_protests_and_massacre

Square, Beijing, during 1989. In what is known as the Tiananmen Square Massacre, or in Chinese the June Fourth Clearing[b] or June Fourth Massacre[c], troops armed with assault rifles and accompanied by tanks fired at the demonstrators and those trying to block the military's advance into Tiananmen Square. The protests started on 15 April and were forcibly suppressed on 4 June when the government declared martial law and sent the People's Liberation Army to occupy parts of central Beijing. Estimates of the death toll vary from several hundred to several thousand, with thousands more wounded.

Chapter Conclusion

Given this history, it is beyond a doubt that the Taiwanese are rational in fearing a Chinese takeover. Precedent strongly indicates that it would bring profound changes to their government and industry, and that people in segments of the population would suffer life altering tragedies.

The Chinese are talking about extending the one country two systems policy to Taiwan. However, given what we saw with Hong Kong's experience with one country two systems we might suppose that one system would dominate. It seems possible that the Taiwanese would experience under the Chinese Communists something similar to what they experienced under the Chinese Nationalists.

Historical Precedent?

Tropical disease was a potent protector of Taiwanese sovereignty. It was only after the invention of modern medicine that it became possible for super-powers to operate there for any duration.

This is not unique in history. The African continent put up the same barriers to would-be colonial forces. Even at the height of the slave trade, traders would wait on the coast for African dealers to deliver the purchased human souls.

Also, the Austronesian Taiwanese were not the stereotypical disinterested aborigines. The historical record shows them learning foreign languages, adopting customs such as farming, buying and using firearms from the very moment they first saw them, and choosing sides and fighting along with the other powers on the island. They entered into agreements. They joined in the fight for their homeland when the Japanese came. As already noted, Pickering noticed

this in the 19th century and stopped referring to them as savages.

Because of these forces of tropical disease and Austronesian Taiwanese controlling the land mass of Taiwan, the histories of China and Taiwan developed independently for more than 3000 years. Relative to the long history of China, the interaction between Taiwan and China occurs but for a blip of time.

The Qing never put a coast guard to sea. The generals admitted to not being able to fight there for long. Their own maps only show a small portion of the island being settled. Genetic studies show the island to be mixed. Settlers were intermarrying. When given a say in their destiny, the Taiwanese picked up arms and fought for their independence. The duration of time which the Qing claimed Taiwan as a prefecture was *19 years*, and that claim was and is contested.

The Chinese have written a lot of beautiful poetry. They are a sentimental people and are admirably sometimes swept away by matters of heart. So perhaps a poet had contributed the words about

Taiwan being ancient sacred lands. As friends on a journey struggling through life this might be true. However, it is a bit of a riddle as to how to read this conclusion into the many diaries, ship logs, and political correspondence left to us by intrepid travellers and would-be colonizers.

In ancient times power was often organized into clans. Clans would swear allegiance to a higher power. In this way we can define what is “Ming China”, etc. These clans sought to control trade and would levy taxes so as to become rich and powerful. Taiwan consists of 168 islands. These have variously been grouped and fallen into control of organized powers. Some of those islands are very close to China. The ancient sacred territory being referred to might be one of these smaller islands, or island groups, rather than the main island of Taiwan.

As another possibility, the Chinese might be repeating the error that Andrade appears to have made while researching the old pirate lore (see the notes on the sources) by identifying Koxinga and his clan as

representing the Chinese government, and his victory over the Dutch as him claiming Taiwan – but neither of these postulates are correct. Koxinga was a pirate of mixed ancestry being half Japanese. He did not claim Fort Zeelandia and the nearby alluvial plains in the name of China, but rather held disdain for the Qing Dynasty and was attempting to establish his own pirate dynasty. Secondly, the Dutch settlement was small compared to the size of Taiwan as a whole, and Koxinga failed in his attempt to expand on the main island beyond it.

There Is No Solution to a Nonproblem

In 1947 the Chinese Nationalists arrived in Taiwan, not to an empty island, but to a society already rich with its own unique history and culture. They were refugees in a foreign land. The 228 Incident and the period of White Terror stand as stark evidence of the distinct identity of the Taiwanese people.

The argument that China remains in a civil war with the Nationalists, or that it is threatened by them, has lost its relevance. The Taiwanese were never part of that conflict in the first place, and the Chinese Nationalists who once sought refuge in Taiwan have all died of old age if not something else. In fact so much time has passed that their children grew and married, often intermarrying with Taiwanese, and their grandchildren grew and intermarried, and it is now their great grandchildren who are at the universities studying. Many of them have never even

seen China. At this point they are all Taiwanese. There is no one left for the Chinese to come get.

The era of Nationalist autocracy has also receded into the past. Today, Taiwan is governed by a system that genuinely reflects the aspirations of its people. The struggle for the Republic of Formosa, which began in 1895, may seem a distant memory, but the Taiwanese have realized this dream in recent decades. They have achieved the very goal that Mao Zedong himself suggested they should strive for. Have the Chinese forgotten Mao's words, or do they not respect them any longer?

No leader in Taiwan today lays claim to the governance of China. The island poses no threat to its vast neighbour. Its military forces are structured for defence, a necessary precaution in an unpredictable world. Given the formidable size of China's army, it is clear that Taiwan poses no threat.

The East Pacific has been a region of relative peace since the tumultuous days following World War II. Trade has continued unabated, a testament to the

stability of the region during these 70 years. This is undisputedly the status quo. By definition, a nation that would disturb this stability is the provocateur.

Notes About Sources

(Le Gendre 1874) The author of this book was Charles William Guillaum Joseph Émile Le Gendre. He was a French born American. Lieutenant Colonel in the Civil War, then an American Diplomat and consul in China and Taiwan. He sometimes worked as a paid military adviser. He participated in negotiating a treaty with Austronesian Taiwanese to stop killing American shipwreck survivors.

(House 1875) Edward House as an American journalist who accompanied the Japanese punitive expedition to Taiwan in 1874. He says he landed at 22°6' N, 120°42'W at "Liangkian Bay", the W there is an error, the bay is at 22°6' N, 120°42'E. This is the southern tip of Taiwan, Sialiao of the book is almost certainly the modern 射寮 (Shè liáo) Taiwan, Pingtung County, Hengchun Township, 恆春鎮. The book also has first-hand accounts of people living in Taiwan. There are scanned versions online from various libraries, for example:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015004763036> Also has been reprinted on kindle.

(Pickering 1898) William Pickering was a young man from England when he signed up with a merchant ship. The ship eventually made a call at a Chinese port where Pickering ran into an old friend from England. This friend recruited William into the British Customs Service, where he collected tariffs and accompanied raids on smugglers - all while studying Chinese language with a private tutor. In 1870 he was sent to Taiwan to set up customs houses at the harbours. There he studied native languages and became instrumental in negotiations with the Austronesian Taiwanese. In this book he provides first-hand accounts of the various ethnic groups of people living in Taiwan, see (Jacobs 1987) for a modern Anthropologists account. Initially in his book he referred to the Austronesian Taiwanese as savages, but by the end he was calling them *mountain people*. In 1877 he became ill and returned to England (where he recovered). This book has been reprinted. It is also available online at:

https://www.google.fr/books/edition/Pioneering_in_Formosa/N9sBAAAAMAAJ?gbpv=1

(Davidson 1903) William Davidson was an American adventurer, journalist, and diplomat. He was in Formosa and first-hand witness of the fighting with the Japanese after the declaration of the Republic of Formosa.

The Americans were largely left out of the opening of China and had decided to participate by opening Japan. Davidson was monetarily rewarded by the Japanese for his work, and it stands to reason he had the support of the American government. The last thing either of these parties wanted was for the Taiwanese independence movement to receive press in the West.

In addition, Davidson was a military man at the time that war was becoming modernized with shells, automated weapons, and advanced strategies. He surely really did find it comical that a fighting force would risk their lives without thinking about keeping up with the latest advances.

Hence, I am not surprised when Davidson gives a cynical account of the Taiwanese settlers and Austronesian Taiwanese putting up a fight against one of the most advanced fighting forces of the time. However, while he gives this account, he also documents the issuing of uniforms, people taking up arms, military actions being executed, and people dying for their cause. He clearly establishes that the fight was real.

Davidson is the primary source for every report on these events that turned up in during this research. It appears to be the only account from a military advisor available to researchers. Many researchers report Davidson's ridicule of the Taiwanese but leave out the substance of what he reported.

(Rutter 1923) Owen Rutter was a British soldier, then a civil servant in Borneo. Later he travelled the world with his wife who improved his writing with photographs. On a trip from Borneo, he went to Hong Kong, then through Formosa on the way to Japan. His writing contains so much historical background for

the island, and insightful observations about Japanese Taiwan, that it is an accessible scholarly work masquerading as a travel book. Though, it should be noted that his Japanese chaperones rarely let him out of their sight.

(Barclay 1954) George W. Barclay studied the Taiwan census data gathered by the Japanese for his Princeton PhD in Sociology. The first chapter is specifically about population growth by various categories such as migrants, non-migrants, and aborigines. Later chapters cover economic activities, labour, public health, social issues, and fertility. By these metrics life improved for Taiwanese under Japanese colonial rule.

(Hsiao, Sullivan 1979) 20th Century quotes from Communist Chinese on Taiwan. These are placed in context and the authors try to interpret them differently from what they appear to mean. Even given these attempts the authors conclude that the Chinese statements imply that Taiwan should be independent.

(Ka 1995) Contains a discussion of tax collection under the Dutch, Koxinga, and the Qing. This author has researched the region extensively and has many impressive publications, note:

<https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/Chih-ming-Ka-2142888766>

(Diamond 1998) Diamond is an expert on prehistory and on Austronesian culture. He has a section in this book about Taiwan. I see on Amazon he now has a second edition. It is because of this reference that I used the term *Austronesian Taiwanese* to collectively describe the many tribes who were living in Taiwan.

(Gates 1987) This is an engaging cultural anthropology piece, though some of the extrapolation is not well cited, and appears to be a bit off. Particularly in the implication that intermarriage is new and a government plot - when we know it has been this way on the island since the arrival of the first non-Austronesian settlers. He also says without citation that "mountain men" was a Chinese term - when we know the term was used by (Pickering 1898) who had

developed respect for the mountain men. Also, Pickering reported the Chinese called the Austronesian Taiwanese cannibals and suspected they were not human, even having tails. Indications are that Gates's discovery of the existence of a Taiwanese identity followed by the assumption that it was recent is similarly lacking historical perspective. As a tell-tale, he cites (Davidson 1903) cynicism many times.

(Twitchett, Fairbank 1998) (Peterson 2016) The Cambridge History of China is 18 books in 15 'volumes', some volumes are 2 books. These have the advantage of perspective, but the disadvantage of further distance from the primary source material. If these volumes were stacked one upon another, and the primary source material were similarly stacked, the stack of these volumes might be taller.

(Reed 2022) Collection of 19th Century maps, navigation profiles of harbours, and travel logs about Taiwan. Note when viewing the map thumbnails, at

the very bottom there are buttons for scrolling pages, there are that many maps.

(Wheeler 2022) Chinese website has a photo of the Taiwan snow mountains, elevation 3886 meters, taken from Pingtan Beach in China. He works out the curvature of the earth maths to show it is possible and aligns features in the picture with the geography of the mountains. If you cannot find it online, I have a copy.

(Andrade 2011) This is an entertaining work with many details about the life of Koxinga and the places and era he lived in. There are details about battles and the clan's politics. Andrade has written a great deal of accessible material on this period of history. I say it is accessible because it is in English and because some of it is entertaining.

The subtitle 'The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West' gives the impression that Koxinga was part of the Chinese military acting on orders from the Qing. However, this is not accurate in any respect. Firstly, he was a pirate who preyed upon Qing shipping and attacked their cities along the coast,

quite the opposite of being part of their government. Secondly, he was mixed-race, being half-Japanese, and hence was more representative of the region and a harbinger for the future of Taiwan. His stated purpose in Taiwan was to establish a pirate kingdom, not to work for the Chinese government. Even at that, he did not control much of the land area and died of malaria shortly after driving out the Dutch from Fort Zeelandia. We can surmise that the Dutch themselves were dealing with food issues and tropical diseases when the pirates arrived. Hence, I suggest that Professor Andrade's subtitle for this book is inaccurate or, at least, it does not mean China in the sense of the Chinese state making plans and taking over Taiwan. I'll give it this: it is a provocative, eye-catching title - but we should not judge this book by its cover.

There is this gem on page 65, "... he was joined by a man named Yang Ying ... he is one of the most important people in Koxinga's history because he kept a journal. In 1922 a battered and mildewed copy of this journal turned up ... been preserved by Koxinga's descendants"

The book describes “disease and starvation” at many points, both being real, but it does not distinguish between them, and probably the original sources had not either. People of the era had no inkling of germs and no science of disease.

The Chapter “A Mad Death” notes that Koxinga went mad before he died. One report from that time said it was due to “sun stroke”. Fever and foaming at the mouth were reported by others. One cited modern author suggests syphilis. The descriptions fit malaria better.

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Additional sources, typically website links, may be found in the footnotes.

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Some Pictures



Badouzi Train Station, Keelung, Taiwan.



Rice field, Miaoli County, Taiwan



Fish market, Yilan, Taiwan



Apartment buildings outskirts of Taipei, Taiwan.



Typical city street in Taipei (from Google Maps.)



Neighbourhood near National Taiwan University (from Google Maps).



Open to the street restaurant in Keelung, Taiwan. This restaurant is on the street the night market is held on, and this is during night market hours. The picture is taken in the restaurant looking out into the crowded

street. There are additional vendors next door and across the street.



The pictures before this one all come from the main island of Taiwan. This picture is of the much smaller island of Taiwan called Lunyu. It is located due east of the southern tip of the main island.