

MISSIONARY ATLAS PROGRAM

ASIA

TAIWAN

Basic Facts

Name

Conventional short form: *Taiwan*

Local short form: *T'ai-wan*

Former: *Formosa*

Geography

A mountainous island of some 36,000 sq. km. located some 160 km east of the Chinese mainland. Taiwan includes the *Penghu Archipelago* as well as the *Matsu* and *Quemoy* Islands near the coast of China. Taiwan is in Eastern Asia, with its islands bordering the East China Sea, Philippine Sea, South China Sea, and Taiwan Strait, north of the Philippines, off the southeastern coast of China

Population

22,749,838 (July 2004 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 19.9% (male 2,359,467; female 2,167,438)

15-64 years: 70.7% (male 8,149,231; female 7,924,774)

65 years and over: 9.4% (male 1,091,473; female 1,057,455) (2004 est)

Median age:

Total: 33.7 years

Male: 33.3 years

Female: 34.1 years (2004 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.64% (2004 est.). Taiwan reports 12.7 births/1,000

population (2004 est.). Taiwan's death rate stands at 6.29 deaths/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Language

Mandarin Chinese is Taiwan's language of government, education and the media. It is widely spoken anywhere you go in Taiwan, as well as in mainland China. It is the dialect used to learn written Chinese characters, and the one most studied by foreign students.

Taiwanese - the dialect of *Fujian Province* - is spoken as a mother tongue by a majority of the population. Long Taiwan's "language of the street," it is increasingly favored in the media and business as well.

The *Hakka* dialect is also spoken by a significant minority of Taiwanese.

Taiwan's indigenous people speak various languages of the *Austronesian language* group and share many customs and practices with other native groups of southeast Asia. The *Austronesian* languages are divided into two branches: *Formosan*, the languages spoken by about 200,000 people in Taiwan and Malayo-Polynesian, comprising the rest of the languages in the *Austronesian* family.

Education & Literacy

By 1994, Taiwan's literacy rate had jumped to 94%, a 34% increase from 1952 when less than 60% of people older than 15 could read and write. By 2003 the literacy rate had jumped to 96.03%. Compulsory education is for children between the ages of 6 - 15 and was increased to nine years, thus extending education to when students finish junior high school. The pass rate for junior high graduates on their high school entrance exam is a low 20%, about 2/3 attending a vocational school. About 700,000 students attend over a hundred available universities and colleges in Taiwan. Taiwan's educational system reflects the Chinese people's high regard for scholarly attainment. Nine years of education has been compulsory since 1968, and a wide range of other educational options exists in Taiwan for

citizens of all ages. Specialized training beyond the secondary level is provided by five-year junior colleges, which accept students directly from junior high school and focus on applied sciences and technology. In addition, there are two-year junior colleges, technical colleges, liberal arts colleges, and universities. Special and supplementary schools parallel the mainstream educational system from the elementary through senior high and senior vocational school levels. Special schools offering education for the blind, deaf, physically handicapped, and mentally retarded are mainly operated by the government. Supplementary schools, on the other hand, are usually private and provide vocational training, language instruction, and higher education. At the top of the supplementary education system is National Open University. Students from this university can obtain a bachelor's degree by taking radio, television, and correspondence classes.

Economy

Taiwan's dynamic capitalist economy continues to expand with gradually decreasing guidance of investment and foreign trade by government authorities. Some large government-owned banks and industrial firms are being privatized. Exports provide the primary impetus for industrialization. The trade surplus is substantial, and foreign reserves are the world's third largest.

Agriculture contributes 2% to GDP, down from 32% in 1952. While Taiwan is a major investor throughout Southeast Asia, China has become the largest destination for investment and has overtaken the US to become Taiwan's largest export market. Because of its conservative financial approach and its entrepreneurial strengths, Taiwan suffered little compared with many of its neighbors from the Asian financial crisis in 1998. The global economic downturn, combined with problems in policy coordination by the administration and bad debts in the banking system, did push Taiwan into recession in 2001. This was the first year of negative growth ever recorded. Unemployment also reached record levels.

Output recovered moderately in 2002 in the face of continued global slowdown, fragile consumer confidence, and bad bank loans. Growing economic ties with China are a dominant long-term factor. Exports to China - mainly parts and equipment for the assembly of goods for export to developed countries - drove Taiwan's economic recovery in 2002. Although the SARS epidemic, Typhoon *Maemi*, corporate scandals, and a drop in consumer spending caused GDP growth to contract to 3.2% in 2003, increasingly strong export performance kept Taiwan's economy on track, and the government expects Taiwan's economy to grow 4.1% in 2004.

Government

Taiwan works under administrative divisions. The central administrative divisions include:

The provinces of *Fu-chien* (some 20 offshore islands of *Fujian Province* including *Quemoy* and *Matsu*) and *Taiwan* (the island of *Taiwan* and the *Pescadores Islands*).

Taiwan is further subdivided into 16 counties: (*hsien*, singular and plural), 5 municipalities* (*shih*, singular and plural), and 2 special municipalities** (*chuan-shih*, singular and plural);

Multiparty democratic regime headed by popularly-elected president and unicameral legislature. The Constitution of Taiwan was adopted 25 December 1946 and amended in 1992, 1994, 1997, 1999, and 2000.

Chief of State: President CHEN *Shui-bian* has served since 20 March 2004 and Vice President Annette LU (*LU Hsiu-lien*) since 20 March 2004.

Elections: president and vice president elected on the same ticket by popular vote for four-year terms; election last held 20 March 2004 (next to be held in March 2008); premier appointed by the president; vice premiers appointed by the president on the recommendation of the premier

Head of Government: Premier (President of the Executive Yuan) and Vice Premier (Vice President of the Executive Yuan)

Cabinet: Executive Yuan appointed by the president

Religion

Taiwan recognizes 12 official religions—including Buddhism, Daoism (Taoism), Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam. Just over one-half the people in Taiwan profess a faith with Buddhism having the most adherents, followed by Daoism. The secular state allows freedom of religion and many, if not the majority, follow a unique blend of Chinese religion, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Communists are not permitted in Taiwan but some underground groups exist.

The religions on Taiwan show the following:

Chinese Religion 43.21% with 10,016,000 adherents. Chinese Folk Religion, sometimes called Taiwanese popular religion, is practiced by the descendants of immigrants from mainland China in the 6th and 7th centuries. It involves a mixture of magic, ancestor veneration, traditional rituals and beliefs, as well as influences from Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Many college students have rejected these beliefs.

Buddhism is estimated to claim between 25% and 47% of the population which constitutes between 5,600,000 and 11,590,000 adherents according to different estimates. These estimates show a growth from 20% in 1900 to the 47% today and a rise in adherents from 580,000 to 11,592,000 between the beginning and end of the 20th century.

Non-religious claim 25.30 % of Taiwan's population or 5,667,000 adherents. The non-religious group is made up largely of younger people who are leaving the religions of their families. The increasing secularism and materialism of Taiwan culture contributes to the growth of the non-religious. Barrett's estimate of 0.09% compares with Johnstone's 25.30% of the population as non-religious. Johnstone is probably closer to the facts but may himself be low in the estimation.

Protestant and Independent groups represent around 3.63 % of the population or about 850,000 adherents. More details of these groups will be noted in the Christianity section of the profile.

Catholics now claim some 1.3% of the population or 304,000 adherents. Further information is given in the Christianity section of the profile.

The Anglican represents some 0.01% of the population or 1000 adherents.

Marginal (Mormons, Jehovah's Witness) have around 2 % of the population or some 36,000 adherents.

Baha'i can claim around 0.16% of the population with some 203,000 adherents (Barrett lists 100,000 in 2000).

These figures show the total adherents and do not actually reflect the numbers of members. The actual memberships of the Christian, Catholic, Anglican, and marginal groups will be related below.

<http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/taiwan/pro-education.htm>; <http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/glance/ch7.htm>; Encarta; Britannica

History

Early History

Archaeological evidence consisting of primitive utensils indicates Taiwan has been inhabited as far back as 10,000 years ago. In the historical period, Taiwan was first settled by people of Malay-Polynesian descent, who initially inhabited the low-lying coastal plains and called their island *Pakan*. The "mountain people" have long been dominated by those who have come to the islands in more historical times.

During the settlement by the Dutch, waves of settlers came from China and the aborigines retreated to the hills and mountains, and became the "mountain people." The island's modern history goes back to around 1590, when the first Western ship passed by the island, and *Jan Huygen van Linschoten*, a Dutch navigator on a Portuguese ship, exclaimed "*Ilha Formosa*" (meaning "Beautiful island"), which became its name for the next four centuries. Bands of Japanese conquered portions of the island in the 12th century. From the 15th century onward Japan regarded the eastern half of Taiwan as its possession. In 1590 the Portuguese became the first known Europeans to visit the island. Subsequently, the Spanish attempted to found permanent settlements, but they were thwarted by the Dutch, who succeeded in taking possession of the *P'enghu Islands* in 1622. Three years later the Dutch established forts on the southeastern coast of Taiwan.

The Dutch Period 1624-1662

The most comprehensive historical records on Taiwan go back some 350 years, to the period of the Dutch occupation, 1624-1662. When the Dutch East Indies Company arrived, they found only the aborigine population on the island. No signs of any administrative structure of the Chinese Imperial Government. Thus, at that time Taiwan was not part of China. Maps in the 1600s show Taiwan in a different color from China.

The Dutch established a fortress named "*Zeelandia*" on a narrow peninsula on the Southwestern coast of the island. The peninsula was called *Tayouan*, meaning *terrace bay*. This terminology later became the word, *Taiwan*, and came to be the name for the whole island. The Dutch brought in Chinese laborers as migrant workers to labor in the sugar plantations and rice fields. These Chinese workers usually came for a few years (without family) and then returned to mainland. Some of the Chinese workers, however, remained and married aborigine wives—thus creating a new people, the Taiwanese.

The Chinese Ascendancy 1644-1695

In 1644 the *Manchus* of northeastern China defeated the *Ming dynasty* and established the *Qing dynasty*.

Meanwhile, in 1662, a Chinese pirate, *Cheng Cheng-kung* (known in the West as *Koxinga*), a loyalist of the *Ming*

dynasty, who himself was on the run from the newly established *Qing* dynasty, defeated the Dutch, and died shortly afterwards. His son took over but in 1683 this last remnant of the *Ming Dynasty* was defeated by the *Qing* troops. After the island finally fell to *Qing* rule, immigration to Taiwan from mainland China increased greatly. As a result of Britain's victory against China in the Opium Wars and the ratification of the *Treaty of Tientsin* in 1860, two ports on Taiwan's western coast were opened to foreign ships. Roman Catholic and Protestant missions were established on the island soon after.

However, the new *Manchu* emperors were not eager to extend their rule over the island. They were "inland" people with little knowledge of the offshore islands and even less skill at naval warfare. Still, immigration to the island from the coastal provinces of China increased. These immigrants came to Taiwan fleeing the wars and famines on the mainland rather than on behalf of the rulers in Peking. Taiwan thus remained a loose-lying area for the next 200 years. At times, the *Manchu* attempted to extend their control over the unruly inhabitants, but time and again the islanders fought back. There were numerous clashes between the local population and officials sent from China, leading to the statement about the history of the island, "*Every three years an uprising; every five years a rebellion.*" The waters around Taiwan were pirate ridden and dangerous. Many European ships were captured. In the 1870's Taiwanese pirates captured so many American, Japanese and French ships that these governments protested to Peking. The *Manchu* emperor replied, "*Taiwan is beyond our territory.*" The French were so concerned by the recurring attacks on their ships and the Chinese inaction that they sent a fleet to the island, and for nine months in 1884-85, the northern part of Taiwan was French territory. During this Sino-French War (1884 and 1885) the French imposed a blockade against Taiwan.

Only in 1887 did the *Manchu* Imperial authorities declare Taiwan to be a "province" of their Empire. The reason for the declaration was an attempt to combat the Japanese, who were expanding their influence to the South. The effort failed as in 1895 the Japanese defeated the *Manchu*'s in the Sino-Japanese War, and in the *Treaty of Shimonoseki*, forced China to cede Taiwan and the *P'enghu Islands* to Japan in perpetuity (not 99 years, like Hong Kong's New Territories). However, the Chinese inhabitants of Taiwan refused to submit and instigated a rebellion that was put down by the Japanese. For the next 50 years a stringent occupation and colonization followed, including a rigorous effort at *Japanization*—the attempt to replace Chinese culture and tradition with that of the Japanese.

The Taiwan Republic 1895

The Taiwanese rejected the idea of incorporation into Japan, and on 25 May 1895, with the assistance of disenchanted *Manchu* officials, established the *Taiwan Republic*, the first independent republic in Asia. On 29 May 1895, a Japanese military force of over 12,000 soldiers landed in Northern Taiwan, and crushed the movement. On 21 October 1895, Japanese imperial troops entered *Tainan*, the southern capital of the Taiwan Republic, ending its short life.

The Japanese Period

The Japanese occupation was harsh, but at least the Japanese were not corrupt. The educational system was built up to the same level as in Japan, infrastructure, trains, roads, industry etc. were developed extensively.

During World War II

WW II and the events that followed its conclusion, tremendously influenced the subsequent history of Taiwan. In 1943 the Allied Powers held the Cairo Conference and decided to agree with *Chiang Kai-shek's* request that Taiwan be "returned to (Nationalist) China." This text found its way into the *Cairo Declaration*, but of course occurred without any presence or agreement of representatives of the Taiwanese people.

When the War actually ended in 1945, the Allied powers agreed that Chiang's troops would "*temporarily occupy Taiwan, on behalf of the Allied forces.*" This "temporary" has become rather permanent. Initially, the Taiwanese were glad to get rid of the Japanese, but soon found their situation had not improved vastly.

The tension surfaced in the *February 28th Incident of 1947*. An incident in Taipei led to large-scale demonstrations. The Chinese Government, initially surprised, rapidly and secretly sent troops from the mainland, and began a campaign to round up and execute leaders. Over 25,000 people were killed. During the "white terror" of the following years, thousands of people were arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and murdered by the KMT's Taiwan Garrison Command.

The Chinese Nationalist Period 1949

In 1949, after the fall of the Nationalists Chinese to the Communists, General Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan with, according to some reports, most of the Chinese government's gold supplies, and established his regime. For the next four decades, the people of Taiwan lived under Martial Law while the KMT attempted to maintain the idea that they ruled all of China, and would some day "recover" the mainland. The Chinese mainlanders who came over with *Chiang Kai-shek* constituted only 15 percent of the population of the island, but were able to maintain themselves in

a position of power over the 85 percent native Taiwanese through tight control of the political system, police, military, educational system and media.

In 1951-52 the Allied Powers and Japan formally concluded World War II by concluding the *San Francisco Peace Treaty*. That Treaty, important for Taiwan, stated that Japan gave up sovereignty over Taiwan. The Treaty did not, however, determine who gained power over the island. The decision declared "...the future status of Taiwan will be decided in accord with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." The formal result of the San Francisco Peace Treaty is that the people of Taiwan should determine the future status of the island based on the principle of self-determination. This Treaty is thus the first, and the last, international treaty of the 20th Century which deals with the status of Taiwan.

During the following 20 years, from 1952 to 1972, Kuomintang was able to build up Taiwan economically, thanks to the hard work of the Taiwanese, and the sound infrastructure built up by the Japanese. But on the diplomatic front, they lost ground, and in 1971, their dream world of representing all of China fell apart when Nixon and Kissinger made their "opening" to China. In 1971, Peking also took over the Kuomintang's seat in the UN as "representative of China," and the Kuomintang authorities were replaced.

The following year, 1972, was the year of the infamous *Shanghai Communiqué* between the US and the Chinese authorities in Peking. The *Shanghai Communiqué* was an important diplomatic document issued by the United States of America and the People's Republic of China during U.S. President Richard Nixon's visit to China on 28 February 1972. The document announced the normalization of relations between the two countries. In terms of the Taiwan problem, the *communiqué* stated the Chinese view that Taiwan is a part of China and that the PRC is the sole legitimate government of China, with the USA acknowledging the former position and agreeing to cut back military installations on Taiwan, but ignoring the latter.

This document states that "the United States acknowledges that Chinese on either side of the Taiwan straits maintain that there is but one China. The United States does not challenge that position." Since 1972, the United States has consistently held to the one China policy, although it has sometimes been unclear what was meant. One consequence is that the United States (and any other nation having diplomatic relations with the *People's Republic of China*) does not have formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Instead, external relations are handled via nominally private organizations such as the *American Institute in Taiwan*.

The 1971 and 1972 events, and even more the December 1978 United States switch in recognition from the Kuomintang regime to the Beijing regime, created a crisis in Taiwan. At the same time, it gave impetus to the growth of the democratic opposition movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The *Kaohsiung Incident* of December 1979 galvanized the Taiwanese on the island and overseas into political action. The *tangwai* ("outside-the-party") democratic opposition started to question the KMT's claim to represent all of China, and began to work towards ending the 40-years' old martial law.

In September 1986, this movement culminated in the formation of the *Democratic Progressive Party* (DPP), which then began its growth into a full-fledged opposition party. The *Democratic Progressive Party* is a political party in the Republic of China on Taiwan which has traditionally been associated with Taiwan independence although it has moderated its stance as it has gained power. It was founded in 1986, but was technically illegal until 1991. The party is composed of a number of factions such as the New Tide faction, the Formosa faction, the Justice Alliance faction and Welfare State Alliance faction. The DPP is a member of Liberal International, and represents Taiwan in the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization.

Chairmanship in July 2002, appears to be rhetorically moving to a somewhat less ambiguous policy, and stated in early August 2002 that "it is clear that both sides of the straits are separate countries."

The Martial Law was dropped in 1987 and replaced by a less-stringent National Security Law. However, it wasn't until 1991 that the KMT claim to rule all of China was dropped. Since then the island has made major strides in the direction of a fully democratic political system.

President, *Lee Teng-hui*, was elected in 1996 against the background of threatening Chinese missile firings and military exercises. Prior to 1996, the presidential election was determined in a closely-manipulated process by the KMT-controlled National Assembly. In 1999, Lee proposed a two states theory for mainland China-Taiwan relations.

In September 1999 Taiwan was hit by a devastating earthquake that left 2400 dead and 43,000 homes destroyed. The experience left many people distressed and fearful. The Chinese Christian Relief Association gave great help and ministry to the Taiwanese during this period.

The results show that the Taiwanese voters support a strong "*Taiwan first*" policy, and were not intimidated by China's threats. Both President *Lee* and Professor *Peng* took a firm stance against China, and stated during the election campaign that they intended to further enhance Taiwan's international position by continuing to press for UN-membership and further diplomatic relations. Together these two won 75 percent of the vote.

China's position also sharply reduced support for pro-unification candidates *Lin* and *Chen*, who advocated an accommodation with China. As Taiwan is being transformed into a fully-functioning democracy, it will become more difficult for such pro-unification advocates to succeed in electoral politics on the island. As the differences between a democratic Taiwan and China grow, the mainlanders who came to Taiwan with *Chiang Kai-shek* will increasingly have to identify with Taiwan, and the KMT will have to distance itself further and further away from traditional party orthodoxy of unification with China.

On 18 March 2000, Taiwan held its second direct presidential elections. Democratic Progressive Party candidate *Chen Shui-bian* won a stunning victory, making it the first time in Taiwan's history that an opposition party has won over the entrenched Kuomintang. Mr. *Chen* won 39.3 percent of the vote, independent candidate *James Soong* 36.8 percent, while KMT candidate *Lien Chan* came in a distant third with 23.1 percent of the vote.

Taiwan Democracy 2000-2004

The March 2000 elections are thus a "coming-of-age" of democracy in Taiwan. Presidential elections are scheduled again in Taiwan on 20 March 2004. This will be only the third time in history that such elections are held on the island. Until the mid-1980s, Taiwan suffered under the harsh one-party rule of the Kuomintang. In 1992, the people on the island voted for the first time for a fully democratically-elected parliament, the Legislative *Yuan*. The present election campaign is enlivened by a heated international debate about Taiwan's brand-new referendum law, passed by the Legislative *Yuan* on 27 November 2003, and signed into law by the President on 31 December. Article 17 of this law makes it possible for the president to call for a "defensive referendum," and Mr. *Chen* has indicated he intends to do so. On 20 March 2004 he will ask the people in Taiwan if they agree that China should dismantle its missiles aimed at Taiwan and that it publicly renounce the use of force against Taiwan.

China continues to raise threats against Taiwan if the Taiwanese press for separate and independent status. In 2003 a senior Chinese military leader, *Luo Yuan*, researcher at the Chinese Academy of Military Science, said that "the day Taiwan independence is promulgated is also the time when war will be declared." *Beijing* is now focusing on intimidating Taiwan into reaching a settlement with it, the report said, adding that thanks largely to Russian arms supplies, China was gaining "an increasing number of credible options to intimidate or actually attack Taiwan." The history of Taiwan in recent years must be viewed from the perspective of the *One-China Policy*. The *One-China policy* is the principle that there is one China and both PRC and Taiwan are part of that China. What this exactly means is somewhat ambiguous. One interpretation is the sole rightful *government* of China and the other government is illegitimate. Another interpretation is that there exists only one geographical *region* of which was split into two Chinese states by the Chinese Civil War.

Chinese reunification is the goal of Chinese nationalism which is the unification of Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan into a single state under a single government of China. As Hong Kong and Macau are now under the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, the only outstanding issue is between the mainland and Taiwan. Reunification is supported by the government of the People's Republic that believes that this "one China" should eventually reunite under a single government. The acknowledgement of the One China policy is also a requirement by the government for reunification talks with the government on Taiwan.

The one China policy rejects formulas which call for "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan". The PRC has however hinted that it would be flexible about the meaning of one China, and that one China may not necessarily be synonymous with the PRC. One China was the formulation accepted by the ROC government before the 1990s, but it was asserted that the one China was the Republic of China. However, in 1991, President *Lee Teng-hui* indicated that he would not challenge the right of the authorities to rule the Mainland. However, over the course of the 1990s, President *Lee* appeared to drift away from the one China formulation, leading many to believe that he was actually sympathetic to *Taiwan independence*. The PRC position requires that all countries with diplomatic relations with Beijing agree to a one China policy with the PRC as the sole China, and not maintain formal diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan). The Chinese government expressed strong indignation On July 24, 1996 over Nicaragua and a small number of other countries' proposal on Taiwan's so-called "representation" in the United Nations.

Taiwan independence is a political movement whose goal is to create a sovereign, independent Republic of Taiwan out of the lands currently administered by the Republic of China. It is supported by the *pan-green coalition* on Taiwan and opposed by the *pan-blue coalition* and the People's Republic of China, which favor Chinese reunification. *Pan-Blue Coalition*, or *Pan-Blue Force* is a political coalition in early 21st century Taiwan, consisting of the Kuomintang (KMT), the People First Party (PFP), and the tiny New Party (CNP). The name comes from the party colors of the Kuomintang. This coalition tends to favor a Chinese nationalist identity over a Taiwanese separatist one and favors a softer policy and greater economic linkage with the People's Republic of China.

The PRC has strongly expressed its opposition to independence for Taiwan. Premier Wen Jiabao, in March 2004 said, "We stand firmly opposed to any form of separatist activities aimed at 'Taiwan independence' and will never

allow anyone to split Taiwan from China by any means.”

After the election of *Chen Shui-bian* in 2000, the policy of the ROC government was to propose negotiations without preconditions. While *Chen* did not explicitly reject Lee's two states theory, he has not explicitly endorsed it either. Throughout 2001, there were unsuccessful attempts to find an acceptable formula for both sides, such as agreeing to "abide by the 1992 consensus." This has proven unsuccessful, and many commentators believe that the strategy of the PRC is to wait until the 2004 elections in the hopes that *Chen* will be defeated by a candidate more sympathetic to reunification. In response, President *Chen* assumed leadership of the *Democratic Progressive Party* on Taiwan, which supported the one-China policy, but opposed defining this "one-China" as the PRC.

Presidential and Vice Presidential elections in the Republic of China were held in Taiwan on March 20, 2004. President *Chen Shui-bian* and Vice President *Annette Lu* of the Democratic Progressive Party were re-elected by a margin of 0.22% of valid votes over a combined opposition ticket of Nationalist Party Chairman *Lien Chan* and People First Party Chairman *James Soong*. *Lien* and *Soong* refused to concede and challenged the results. *Chen Shui-bian* abandoned his earlier ambiguity and has publicly rejected the one China policy. His opponent *Lien Chan* has publicly supported a policy of "one China, different interpretations," as done in 1992, by which the PRC and ROC would each agree that there is one China, but disagree as to whether that China is the PRC or the Republic of China.

The One China policy became an issue during the 2004 ROC Presidential election. Elections for the Present *Chen Shui-bian*, in closely watched inaugural address, pledged to avoid any steps during his next four-year term that would alter the status quo in Taiwan's tense relationship with mainland China.

In 2001 President George Bush had pledged that the United States would do “whatever it takes” to help Taiwan defend itself. In December 2003, however, Bush reversed himself in the presence of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao affirming the support of the United States to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. Bush further criticized President *Chen Shui-bian* for taking a stand on the referendum that seemed designed to change the situation. This change in the policy of the United States probably reflected an understanding on the part of the United States of the importance of the Taiwan issue to China. But the US Defense Department decided to sell radar to Taiwan, which was against the US promise and sent "wrong signals" to "Taiwan independence" forces, he said, adding that China lodged solemn representation to the US side.

The problem of independence for Taiwan or some version of the One China policy continues to constitute a major problem in the Taiwan Strait area. The Churches of China and Taiwan cannot escape the shadow of this conflict. Christians and Churches should seek to remain free to evangelize and grow in an atmosphere of freedom of religion.

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<http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/11/18/taiwan.war/>; <http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/east/07/13/china.taiwan/>;
<http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/11/18/taiwan.war/>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A40991-2004May19.html>; Johnstone; Hattaway; <http://www.china-un.ch/eng/62699.html>; <http://www.china-un.ch/eng/63811.html>;
<http://www.chinaembassy.se/eng/6907.html>; <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/March%202019,%202004%20assassination%20attempt%20in%20Taiwan>;
<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20040301faessay83205-p10/michael-d-swaine/trouble-in-taiwan.html>

People Groups on Taiwan

Before the *Han* Chinese immigration began in the mid-1600s, Taiwan was inhabited by people belonging to the *Austronesian* race, the members of which lived in a vast area extending from Madagascar in the west to Hawaii and Easter Island in the east, and from New Zealand in the south to Taiwan in the north. Taiwan's aborigines are believed to have come from the Malay archipelago in different waves about 6,000 years ago at the earliest and less than 1,000 years ago at the latest. Since their languages are very different some scholars suggest that Taiwan is the original homeland of all *Austronesians*. Archeological findings indicate that Taiwan had been inhabited by other people before the current aborigines came. However, little is known about them, particularly when and why they disappeared.

Taiwan boasts over three hundred and fifty thousand people who are indigenous tribal peoples. Distinguished from the majority Han Taiwanese, indigenous tribal groups are part of the so-called *Malayo-Polynesians*. Linguistically, these peoples are recognized as sub-groups of the *Austronesian*-speaking family are also called the *Austronesians*. Despite the fact that their languages are derived from the same root, the languages they currently speak are not mutually comprehensible between groups. All indigenous tribal groups are generally known and officially recognized as the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan.

These various peoples demonstrate substantial genetic differences. The differences are even more interesting when considered from social-cultural comparisons. For example, in terms of family structure and kinship, three groups,

the Paiwan, Rukai, and Puyuma, are characterized by stem family structure with an equal status for both patri and matrilineal kin. Three of the groups, Bunun, Tsao, and Saisai, are patrilineal societies with patrilocal residence. One group, the Ami, has a matrilineal society with matrilineal residence. Two other groups are characterized by nuclear family units, patrilocal residence and parallel status for both bilateral kin.

When the Han Chinese came to Taiwan, they divided, for convenience, the aborigines into *Pingpu* (plains) people and *Kaoshan* (mountain) people. They further subdivided the *Pingpu* people into 10 tribes and the *Kaoshan* people into nine. These labels are misnomers, for they don't reflect cultures and languages, or place of residence, properly. A tribe in one division often has more similarity with one in another division than with one in its own division, and three tribes of "mountain people" don't live in mountains at all.

The cultures of the tribal peoples have changed significantly over the years. Head-hunting is long gone, tattooing is fading away, and pantheism and shamanism have largely given way to Christianity. Young people are leaving their traditional occupations and habitats and seeking jobs in the cities. Tribal languages are still spoken but native speakers are dwindling in number and younger people, who are more fluent in Mandarin or Taiwanese, often have difficulty communicating with their elders. The peoples maintain some traditions like holding harvest festivals and wearing loincloths by men on Orchid Island. New cultural factors are, however, forming, like watching TV and wearing western attire. Chiefs and other old-fashioned leaders are still respected, but elected representatives and officials have taken away much of their authority and functions.

<http://www.taiwanfun.com/central/taichung/recreation/0109/0109ccTaiwanEarliestPeople.htm>

Aboriginal Peoples

Atayal

The *Atayal* live over a large area in northern Taiwan. Their language can be divided into the *Atayal* and *Sediq* branches and is not closely related to any other tribal language. The *Atayal* group resides in a village along the *Nanhsi River* called *Wulai* that is located inside the *Taroko National Park* of Taiwan roughly forty miles from Taipei.

The exact origins of the *Atayal* is a mystery though some anthropologists believe they migrated from Malaysia or Indonesia. The group that inhabits these lands are considered to be *Atayal* Proper, and a few consider themselves *Atayal Sediq*. There are around 3,000 *Atayal* tribes in Taiwan and 50,000 tribes worldwide. Joshua project numbers the *Atayal* at over 63,000. Joshua Project also numbers the *Sediq Taroko* group at around 28,000 but it is unclear if these are counted among the 63,000 *Atayal*.

The *Atayal* achieved a fairly advanced culture. They practiced many forms of food production including slash and burn agriculture, hunting, fishing, and gathering. The tribe used facial tattooing and teeth filing as rituals of initiation, for beauty, distinction, and to ward off evil spirits. This practice has been outlawed since the Japanese occupation (1895-1945) resulting in a condition where only those *Atayals* over 80 years old still have tattoos on their faces. In times past, the *Atayal* practiced headhunting, especially from invading peoples.

The *Atayal* kinship system is patrilineal. Leaders of several religious groups of a community usually constitute the political authority. The prototypical *Atayal* house is either semi-subterranean or built at ground level, and is made of wood and thatch. There is a watch tower for each cluster of houses.

Around 90% of the *Atayal* are Christian with almost one-half evangelical. They have the Bible in their own language and some gospel recordings.

Saisiyat (Saiset, Saiset, Seisirat)

The *Saisiya*, the smallest of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes in terms of population and area, number less than 3200 persons (other estimates suggest as many as 7000 in the group). They are surrounded and strongly influenced by *Hakkas* and the *Atayal*, and were the first among the tribes to be acculturated by the Han Chinese and adopt Chinese names. Like that of the *Atayal*, tattooing was also a feature of the *Saisiyat*.

The *Saisiyat* are noted for a unique festival: the Ceremony of the Pygmies--*pas-ta'ai*. The legend has it that a group of pygmies once taught the *Saisiyat* to farm, sing, and dance, but also harassed and raped the *Saisiyat* women. The *Saisiyat* entrapped and massacred all the pygmies but two. As the two survivors were escaping to the east, they cursed the *Saisiyat*. To appease the souls of the pygmies, the *pas-ta'ai* is held once every two years at the tenth full moon of the lunar calendar, and a grand *pas-ta'ai* takes place once every 10 years. Like the Greeks observing Olympia, the *Saisiyat* forsake fights and quarrels during the *pas-ta'ai*.

The *Saiset* are under linguistic pressure from the neighboring *Tayal* tribe and from the *Hakkanese* people who live nearby. A lot of the tribal life flows away. *Saiset* clergy often find it necessary to use Mandarin Chinese to preach.

Saiset people have a low degree of social cultural activity upon which to base the survival of a language.

The *Saisiyat* are around 70% Roman Catholic and some 15% evangelical.

Bunun (Bunan)

Around 35000 *Bunun* live in the mountainous regions of central Taiwan. Over 1400 live in the Fujian Province in China and others in Beijing and Shanghai. The Chinese have combined the *Bunun*, the *Ami*, and *Paiwan* groups (all from Taiwan) into the grouping they call *Gaoshan* (high mountains).

The *Bunun* are patrilineal, have strong family ties, and practice the extraction of certain front teeth as a sign of social identity as well as adulthood. They are good singers and often sing when working. Their harmonic skills are advanced and elegant, and they impressed the world with their "Millet Harvest Song" at an international ethnic music convention in 1953.

Animal stories are central in *Bunun* mythology. Traditionally, they believed the human race began when a gourd fell to earth, split open, and allowed the first man and woman to emerge. They also possess a legend of a great flood caused by a snake who blocked the river causing the waters to overflow. The *Bunun* have a variety of traditions concerning their origins.

Traditionally the *Bunun* were polytheists who followed traditional religious practice that included offerings to the moon and employed shaman (both male and female) for healing. Until 1946 few *Bunun* were anything other than followers of traditional religion. By 1959 some 8880 *Bunun* had become Christians and the number rose to over 12,230 by 1969. In 2003, the Presbyterians in Taiwan reported almost 15,000 *Bunun* Christians in 76 churches. *Bunun* missionaries have served in Japan and Kalimantan. They have scripture portions in their language, and gospel recordings, but do not have the Jesus film.

Tsou

The *Tsou* live on the west side of the middle section of the central mountain range. The "*Northern Tsou*" and "*Southern Tsou*" are distinct in language and custom. In the past two centuries, the *Tsou*'s population has decreased dramatically due to the expansion of surrounding ethnic groups and also to various epidemics. The Northern *Tsou* number around 5000 persons.

The typical *Tsou* house has rounded corners and a dome-shaped thatched roof which extends almost to the mud floor. The men's meeting huts, or *kuba*, serve as religious, political, and masculinity training centers. Enemy heads and a box of implements for igniting fires are kept there; women are not allowed in a *kuba*. The past significance of hunting among the *Tsou* is evident in their extensive use of leather in clothing.

Almost 70% of the Northern *Tsou* claim to be Christian with around 50% evangelical. They have Bible recordings but do not have the Bible or the Jesus Film in their language.

Paiwan

Over 81,000 *Paiwan* live in the mountains of the southern end of Taiwan and are divided into the *Raval* and *Butaul* branches. A few hundred *Paiwan* also live in South *Fujian Province*. This group, one of the three placed in the *Gaoshan* Nationality by the Chinese government, speak an Austronesian language that is similar but not completely intelligible with other *Gaoshan* peoples, the *Ami* and the *Bunun*.

This people believe they came from an egg. The sun, they say, laid two eggs that were hatched by a green snake. They came from those eggs. In previous times, the *Paiwan* were feared headhunters. Their culture is based on a class division and they do not marry outside their group.

The *Paiwan* live on farming as well as hunting, animal husbandry, and creek fishing. They have a social system founded on land ownership, and their kinship is ambilineal. The *Paiwan* are noted for their wood and stone sculpture. The *Butaul* branch holds a major sacrificial rite every five years, called *maleveq*, to invite the spirits of their dead ancestors to come and bless the living.

The traditional *Paiwan* religion was polytheistic and used many ritual devices such as carvings of human heads, snakes, and deer. Christianity first came to the *Paiwan* in the 1600s through Dutch efforts. Over 5000 *Paiwan* became Christians but were killed in 1661 by the Chinese general *Cheng Gong Zheng*. Thousands of *Paiwan* came to Christ in the 1940s and 1950s with entire villages responding to the Message. The Presbyterians claim over 96 congregations with 15,000 members. They have the New Testament in their language and gospel recordings but do not have the Jesus film.

Rukai (Drukai, Tsalisen)

The *Rukai* live in the southern part of the central mountain range. They number as many as 8,000 in Taiwan. Their economic activities, social strata, and kinship are similar to those of the *Paiwan*, with the distinction that the *Rukai* practice primogeniture. Around 8,000 *Rukai* live in the South central mountains, west of the *Pyuma*, in 11 villages around *Ping Tung*, and others in two or three villages near *Taitung*. They speak an Austronesian language.

Rukai houses are built of wood, bamboo, and thatch as well as stone slab. Some houses, including the roof, are built entirely of stone slabs. *Rukai* women are good cloth and basket weavers, and *Rukai* men are good wood carvers.

Master wood carvers are highly respected in the tribe. The lily flower is comparable to the laurel worn by the heroes

of ancient Greece; only very brave warriors and very chaste women, after being recognized by the chief, have the right to wear it.

Around 50% of the Rukai are considered Christian.

Ami

The *Ami*, with a population of more than 150,000 members, constitute the largest of Taiwan's ethnic groups. They live in the scenic mountains and valleys near *Hualien* on the east coast where they are mainly plains dwellers, living in the valleys and coastal plains of eastern Taiwan. The *Ami* are divided into five groups based on geography, custom, and language. Around 1500 *Ami* live in *Fujian* Province and the cities of *Beijing* and *Shanghai*.

The *Ami* began to use oxen in cultivating paddies relatively early. Fishing is an important part of their economy, but hunting is now solely recreational. In *Ami* society, kinship is matrilineal with the grandmother acting as the head of the household. The *Ami* also promote men's clubs that are well organized. *Ami* villages are relatively large, each with a population of between 200 and more than 1,000. The *Ami* are the only aboriginal tribe on the island of Taiwan to practice the art of pottery making.

The *Ami* harvest festivals have evolved from warrior training. Nowadays sports, symbolic fishing in the open seas, and singing and dancing are observed throughout the villages in a series of celebrations in July and August.

Traditional *Ami* religion, as seen from the *Ami* in China, including traditional rituals of paying homage to *Maadidil* (the god of fire), *Tsidar* (the Sun god), *Botai* (the moon god), *Malayaw* (the god of heaven), and *Lalkaday* (the god of water). Almost one-half the *Ami* in Taiwan are Christians—while in *Fujian Province* the *Ami* are an unreached people group. In 1945 only around 100 Christians were found in Taiwan but by 1955 over 80 churches were serving. The Presbyterians claim over 21,000 members in 138 congregations. They have sent missionaries to several areas but have not tried to reach their own people in *Fujian*. They have the Bible and gospel recordings but do not have the Jesus Film.

Puyuma

The *Puyuma*, an ethnic group with a population of 10,571 souls, live in the small *Taitung* plain and surrounding hills in southeast Taiwan. They are an agricultural people, supplementing their harvest with fishing and hunting.

The *Puyuma* kinship system is ambilineal. Family inheritance goes to the eldest daughter but men and women share in kinship equally. The village is an independent political unit in *Puyuma* society, and feuding is common among villages. Young men's houses are centers for education, warrior training, and religious ceremonies. Teenage *Puyuma* boys used to receive Spartan education at the men's house five months a year. The men's house also serves as the house of spirits, or *karumaan*. Each clan has its own *karumaan*.

In recent years several missionary groups have been engaged in translating Bible portions into the *Puyuma* language. This tongue is endangered. Taiwan's *Puyuma* and Taiwan's *Saisit* tribes are currently the only people among Taiwan's aborigines without romanized bible translations available to them.

The *Puyuma* are estimated to be as high as 70% Christian but Joshua Project suggests only some 15% as evangelical.

Yami

The *Yami* live on Orchid Island, or *Lanyu*, a small island lying in the Pacific Ocean 60 kilometers southeast of Taiwan. Evidence shows that the *Yami* reached Orchid Island less than a thousand years ago from the *Batan* islands in the *Bashi* Channel between Taiwan and Luzon. The *Yami* today number a little over 3000 persons. Other names for the *Yami* are the *Botel Tabago* or *Da-Wu*.

Fishing is central to the *Yami* economy and is supplemented by farming. Men are responsible for building and fishing, women for farming. The *Yami* kinship system is basically patrilineal although they also observe matrilineal kinship rules in matters like marriage taboos and revenge. Pottery making is an outstanding feature of *Yami* culture. The first launching of a newly completed boat and the Flying Fish festival in the spring are the *Yami's* most important celebrations.

The strongest ethnic group that has not been subdued by the forces of modernization is the *Yami*.

The *Yami* depend greatly on the seas' resources. Fishing boats are the legacy of the *Yami*. Each boat is built from a single giant tree and are beautiful vessels. A fascinating trait of the *Yami* is the marriage customs. As females dominate the *Yami* society of the island, they have superior rights. After engagement, the male moves into the female's home for a trial period. At that time, the groom must be on his best behavior and display manly skills to prove to his bride and her family that he is a good and capable individual. If he fails, he is sent away in disgrace and a new suitor is brought in to face the same challenges. Even a successful groom will have to continue proving his worth to his wife and her family or else he would have to succumb to a divorce sought by his wife.

The most important staple food is fish; from the fields come both wet and dry taro, sweet potatoes, yams, and millet. There is paddy rice now too, introduced by the Chinese. Pigs and goats are raised in profusion.

The traditional Yami dwelling is a semi-subterranean house built in a shallow excavation so that only the roof shows. Cool in summer, warm in winter, these ingenious houses are nearly impervious to the fierce typhoons that strike frequently from May through September. On one side of these living quarters is a smaller work house with a board floor and an underground storage space. On the other side of the dwelling is an elevated, roofed platform, situated so that it gives a clear view of the sea and catches the cooling breezes, where the Yamis relax and eat, smoke, chew betel nuts, and visit.

According to some authorities as high as 80% of the Yami are Christians and perhaps up to 50 % are evangelicals. The Aboriginal Peoples, once masters of Taiwan, have now become a minority group on their own land. Like other minorities they deserve their fair share of the world. As Taiwan is undergoing rapid democratization and the emphasis on human rights is becoming more prevalent all over the world, Taiwan's aborigines are being more assertive concerning their situations. They have become more aware of the need to preserve their culture and maintain their identity. Some are beginning to forsake their compulsory Han Chinese names and return to their traditional names and officially they are now called "aborigines" instead of "mountain" people.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=110960&rog3=TW>; http://www.pct.org.tw/english/new1126_3.htm;

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Chinese Peoples

Chinese, Hakka

Over 3,000,000 *Hakka* Chinese live in Taiwan where they make up some 11% of the population. Over 34,000,000 *Hakka* live in all countries. The great body of *Hakka* live in Guandong Province, in mainland China. Over 150,000 *Hakka* are Christian. Some of the *Hakka* settled in Taiwan as long as 200 years ago.

Only a small percentage of the *Hakka* in Taiwan follow the Christian religion (0.20%). Most are Buddhists or non religious. They have had the Bible since 1916, and new translations of the New Testament since 1993 as well as other Bible portions 1860-1995. The Jesus film is available.

Chinese, Mandarin

Around 4,323,000 Mandarin Chinese reside in Taiwan where they comprise 20.1% of the population. In the entire world, over 885,000,000 can be found. Mandarin Chinese live mainly in Taipei and other provincial cities.

The Mandarin Chinese on Taiwan follow traditional Chinese religion or are non-religious. Estimates are that some 3.35% of the Mandarins on Taiwan are Christians (over 150,000). The Bible, scripture portions, gospel recordings, Christian broadcasts, and the Jesus Film are all available.

Chinese, Hoklo (Min Nan) (Taiwanese)

The *Min Nan* Chinese, who are classified among the *Han* Chinese who live in Taiwan, are also known as the *Hoklo* or *Taiwanese* in Taiwan. They number over 15,000,000 in Taiwan where they comprise 66.7% of the population. Over 49,000,000 *Min Nan* live in all countries with over one million in Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Almost one million *Min Nan* reside in Indonesia and almost one-half million in the Philippines. Some 10,000 are found in Brunei. In Taiwan, the *Min Nan* are found mainly in *Tainan*, eastern region, southwestern, and coastal area.

The *Hoklo* in Taiwan speak Chinese language sometimes referred to as "Taiwanese or Formosan." Taiwanese is close to *Amoy* dialect; intelligibility is not very difficult. There are two subdialects in Taiwan: *Sanso* and *Chaenzo*, with some difficulty in intelligibility.

The *Hoklo* mostly follow Chinese traditional religion or non-religious status. Around 1.77% are Christian. They have the Christian Bible, Bible portions 1852-1990, gospel recordings, and the Jesus Film.

Hui Chinese

The 27,000 *Hui* in Taiwan, like their fellow 10.6 million *Hui* in mainland China, follow the Sunni Moslem religion. While the *Hui* primarily speak Mandarin Chinese, their appearance marks them as different from other Chinese peoples. Events in recent years indicate a deepening of the *Hui* commitment to Islam.

Ex-Patriots in Taiwan

Various groups of persons from countries other than China or Taiwan reside on the island.

United States of America Citizens

As many as 9000 citizens of the United States live in Taiwan. If they follow any religion it is most likely to be Christian.

British

Over 4300 citizens of Britain live in Taiwan and as high as 78% would claim Christianity as their religion.

Japanese

More than 10,000 live in Taiwan and less than 2% can be named Christian.

Jews

Around 200 Jewish people live in Taiwan with few if any naming Christianity as their religion.

Khalka Mongol

As many as 6500 Mongols live in Taiwan and mainly follow the Buddhist religion.

Korean

Over 6400 Koreans live in Taiwan with over 25% being Christian.

Malay

More than 11,000 Malay people live in Taiwan and almost all of them follow the Islamic religion.

Tibetan

Around 2000 Tibetan people reside in Taiwan and almost all of them follow some form of Buddhist religion.

Uigur (Uyгур)

The small group of Uigur in Taiwan number only around 200 and follow Islam in the main.

Small Groups in Taiwan

Taiwan has a number of groups that number well under 1000 persons.

Babusa

The Babusa number around 200 and are largely Christian.

Kanakanabu

The Kanakanabu have around 190 persons but their religious practices are unknown.

Kavalan, Kuwarawan

This group claims around 100 members and follows mainly the Christian religion.

Saaroa

The Saaroa may number as many as 375 persons but their religious practices are not known.

Christianity on Taiwan

General Factors

Roman Catholic missions in Taiwan began as early as 1621 when Dominicans from the Philippines began ministry on the island. This work was not sustained when the Dutch came into power from 1624-1662. After Japan assumed control (1895-1945) Taiwan became a Catholic prefecture (1913) and counted over 3000 adherents. By 1945 the Catholics numbered over 8000, a figure that increased to 48,000 by 1955 and to 300,000 in 1970. A large part of this increase came by virtue of immigration from mainland China and work among the mountain peoples.

The Dutch began church ministry in Taiwan in the early 1650s. In addition to economic development, Dutch missionaries were also active in converting Taiwan's population to Christianity. Protestant missionaries established schools where religion and the Dutch language were taught. By 1659, the Dutch had converted to Christianity more than 6,078 out of 10,109 inhabitants in their parishes. With the coming of the Manchus in 1662, under the leadership of the Chinese pirate, *Cheng Cheng-kung* (known in the West as *Koxinga*), many of the Dutch missionaries and many of the Christians were killed. Christian advance was blunted for many years.

The Presbyterians pioneered ministry on Taiwan in the 1860s. They only experienced marked response in the 1930s among the Taiwanese people and in the 1940s among the "mountain peoples." Many mission groups followed Christians from the mainland to Taiwan after the Communist takeover in 1949. A time of harvest ensued among the Taiwanese and the two million mainland people who fled to Taiwan.

Between 1960 and 1990 church growth stagnated on Taiwan. Catholics and some Protestant groups actually declined. In 1960 Protestant, Independent, and Anglican churches numbered 1456 congregations with 147,015 members. Five years later the number of congregations had risen to 2034, an increase of 578. Membership in 1965 reached 187,870 an increase of roughly 30,000 since 1960. This is a record of good church growth.

Between 1965 and 1970, however, the number of congregations increased by 126 and the members by around 26,000. Between 1970 and 1975 the number of congregations rose by only 2 and the members by around 26,000. The lack of growth continued into 1980 with an increase of 271 churches and around 24000 members. In 1985 the number of churches reached 2653 (an increase of around 220) and the membership rose by 10,000.

A turn in growth is seen in the period between 1985 and 1990. While churches increased only by 275 the membership reached 312,269 a rise of around 37,000. By 1995 the number of churches stood at 3429 (an increase

of 497) and membership had seen an increase of 45,000. In 2000, the number of churches reached 3966 (up 537) and membership stood at 384,424 (an increase of a little more than 26,000). Between 1960 and 2000 the churches increased in number by 2510 and membership by 237,405.

As seen, after 1990, some growth has resumed. Taiwan, however, represents a part of the world in which no major breakthrough among Han Chinese has occurred. In this period Buddhism has experienced resurgence, growing from around 800,000 adherents in 1983 to over 4.9 million by 1995. Ancestor worship and other aspects of traditional Chinese religion continue to form barriers to Christian evangelism. Materialism, connected with a steadily growing standard of living, also represents an obstacle to Church Growth and Christian expansion on the island. The political situation that includes both the relationship with the Peoples Republic of China and the deadening corruption in Taiwan government likewise forms difficulties for churches in Taiwan.

The non-religious group in Taiwan far outnumbers the Christians. Evangelical Christians (combining Protestants and Independent) can claim as high as 4.54 % of the people while non-religious stake a claim to 6.06%. Chinese religion and Buddhism claim 68.21% of the population.

The Churches on Taiwan

Protestant and Independent Churches

Assembly Hall Churches (*Chu Hui So* or Little Flock) began in 1948 in Taiwan but had started in 1926 on the Mainland by Watchman Nee. This Independent Church reports over 600 congregations and 50,000 members with 90,000 adherents. The church worships mainly in Mandarin.

Baptist Bible Fellowship started ministry in Taiwan in 1950 and now has some 15 congregations with over 1400 members.

China Assemblies of God began in Taiwan in 1948. Johnstone reports 21 congregations with 1000 members while Barrett points to 52 congregations and around 3500 members.

China Christian Lutheran Church (*Chung Hua*), that began ministry in Taiwan in 1951, report some 20 congregations with over 1100 members.

China Evangelical Lutheran Church, connected with the Missouri Synod in the USA, has around 28 congregations with over 1250 members.

China Free Methodist Church began work in 1952 and reports 56 congregations with over 5000 members as contrasted with 13 congregations and 1100 members in 1960.

Christian Assemblies, associated with the Christian Brethren from the USA, Britain, and Australia, have some 15 congregations with 1300 members.

Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance is associated with a mission from Canada and has 23 congregations and 3000 members as compared to 8 churches and 1000 members in 1960.

Evangelical Alliance Mission began in Taiwan in 1951 and is associated with TEAM. The group now has over 30 congregations and more than 1600 members.

Evangelize China Fellowship started its work in Taiwan in 1947 and now reports 6 congregations but 1800 members. The group, which was started by a Chinese man, does some work with Aborigines.

Independent Mandarin Churches, associated with OMF began in Taiwan in 1952 report 35 congregations and 3000 members.

Local Mandarin speaking churches loosely related to pastor Wu Yung report 14 congregations with around 3000 members.

Mandarin Christian Church, that began in Taiwan in 1963 reports 24 congregations with over 2000 members. The church is of a Pentecostal nature.

Mennonite Church in Taiwan, began in 1948, and now has 20 congregations and over 2000 members.

Methodist Church of the Republic of China, which is connected with the United Methodist Church in the USA reports 20 congregations with over 4200 members.

Norwegian Pentecostal Mission was started unintentionally by an itinerant Chinese preacher now has 3 congregations but over 3000 members.

Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, started in 1865, and at the end of 2001 the Church was composed of 1215 congregations in 20 Presbyteries and seven Districts. The membership exceeds 65,000. The work of the group is 70% Taiwanese and 30% Aborigine.

Quemoy Christian Church of Christ, located on an island just five miles from the China Mainland coast has 500 members.

Salvation Army (*Kuei Sai Kuen*) began ministry in Taiwan in 1928 primarily through workers from Japan. The Army reports 12 congregations with 180 members.

Seventh Day Adventist Church, started in Taiwan in 1912, works primarily among aborigine peoples. It reports 104 congregations and over 5200 members. Johnstone reports 46 congregations and 7587 members for the group. Taiwan Assembly of God was started by a Chinese pastor in 1953. The group now has 23 congregations and around 1400 members.

Taiwan Baptist Convention began in 1948. The group has been associated with the Southern Baptist Convention from the USA and works mainly in Mandarin but has some Taiwanese ministry. The group has 128 congregations with 19,175 members.

Taiwan Episcopal Church that started ministry in 1940 had 17 congregations and over 1200 members.

Taiwan Friends Church began work in Taiwan in 1953 is connected with the Taiwan Friends Mission. The group reports 40 congregations and 5400 members as contrasted with 6 churches and 360 members in 1960.

Taiwan Holiness Church was started by a Japanese worker in 1929. It now reports 94 congregations with 11,000 members as contrasted with 27 congregations and 2000 members in 1960.

Taiwan Lutheran Church was started in 1951 by immigrants from the mainland. The church has declined in recent years. The group reports 45 congregations and 3150 members as contrasted with 52 churches and 2516 members in 1960. In 1991 the church reported 46 congregations and 3911 members.

True Jesus Church of Taiwan (*Chen Ye-su Chiao Hui*) started in 1926 and works primarily among the Taiwanese. The church group has experienced rapid growth, now reporting 434 congregations with 49,879 members as contrasted with 126 churches and 13,144 members in 1960.

Other church groups in Taiwan report less than 1000 members and are not listed separately in this profile.

Marginal Christian Church Type Groups

Roman Catholic (*T'ien Chu Chiao*) started in Taiwan as early 1621. The Catholic Church is experiencing a severe leadership problem and shortage of priests in Taiwan. They have 470 congregations with 167,024 members. These figures compare with 892 congregations and 156,000 members in 1974 and 523 congregations with 167,700 in 1970. In the last thirty years the Catholics in Taiwan have admittedly lost 676 members and 53 congregations.

Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints (Mormons) report 76 congregations and 17,532 members compared with 7 congregations and 1558 in 1960. The membership is augmented by many expatriates and military persons from the USA.

Jehovah's Witnesses started in Taiwan in 1928. The group reports 56 congregations and 3964 members as compared with 60 congregations and 1965 members in 1960. In the years of 1982-1985 the Jehovah's Witnesses group declined to less than 1000 members and 13 or 14 congregations.

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians should find ways to support the Christians and churches in Taiwan to promote a deep commitment to Christ and church growth. The churches often claim only marginal commitment from those baptized. These churches face growing materialism, increasing pressure from non-Christian religions, continuing traditional religious practices including ancestor veneration, and reduced efforts at genuine evangelism. Prayer and direct ministry to these Christians and churches could help overcome this serious state of church ill-health.
2. Evangelical Christians should saturate in prayer the political situation that exists between the Peoples Republic of China and the government of Taiwan so that the progress of the gospel will not be hindered. Christians should exercise care when talking about the situation so as not to increase the tension.
3. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to aid the Christians and Churches on Taiwan to increase the numbers of trained workers for the churches and infuse the present workers with new zeal and commitment to the evangelistic and church starting task. An example of need—The Taiwan Baptist Convention shows a decline in the number of churches since 1985. The number of members has increased by less than 1000 since 1990. Other examples could be given. The task is great and prayer and effort must match it.
4. Evangelical Christians in Taiwan should strongly consider evangelistic and church starting work among some of the ex-patriot groups—especially the Malays (11,000), Khalka Mongol (6200), Japanese (10,000), and Tibetans (2000).
5. Evangelical Christians in Taiwan should allow the Holy Spirit to create in them a vision to reach the Taiwanese working class people, the *Hakka* communities, the vast student populations, the Taiwanese people (*Hoklo*), and the peoples on the *Penghu Islands*. These groups remain largely unreached and constitute a field for evangelism and contextualized church starting.

6. Evangelical Christians in Taiwan and other countries should reaffirm the importance of sending missionaries to work beside and under the direction of Taiwanese leaders. The day of the need for missionaries has not passed. Pray that the mission-sending agencies will not overlook fields such as Taiwan where as many as 92 of every 100 persons is lost.
7. Evangelical Christians should consider Taiwan as an ongoing and imperative mission field and not as a “reached” area of the world.