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From Colony to a Strategic Flashpoint: Taiwan's Historic Legacy, Relationship with US and a Looming Threat of a Chinese Offensive

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Abstract

In the recent times, the Taiwan Question has emerged as one of the most combustible global disputes due to its peculiar political history, which saw the country emerge as a democratic state after centuries of colonial subordination. Taiwan's identity as a de facto sovereign state has been influenced by its centuries-long evolution under the influence of the Dutch, Spanish, Qing, and Japanese. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) perceives Taiwan as an integral part of its territory; due to its One-China Policy, hence the outstanding legitimacy issues remain crucial to China's fundamental national interests. This paper takes in to account the Taiwan's political history from Pre-1700 era to the present times; thereby, highlighting its historic foundations, the relationship with the United States in the recent times, Chinese perception of Taiwan as its core national interest and anticipatory assessment of a D-Day in the bilateral conflict between the two sides. It can be comprehended that since Taiwan has evolved as an important global stakeholder, particularly in terms of its advancement in technology domain, Chinese assertion of a conflict may have its global consequences. China –Taiwan Conflict would not merely be disastrous for the East Asian region, but will have its implications for the global security and stability. This study concludes that the strategic calculus of Taiwan issue may not be inferred as merely a regional challenge, but must be viewed as a global flashpoint that can bring global stakeholders on the verge of a nuclear conflict.

Keywords: Taiwan Dispute, One-China Policy, Qing Dynasty, Technological Advancement, Communist Party of China

INTRODUCTION

Taiwan Question remains one of the most complex and critical challenges in the contemporary times, since a Chinese invasion of Taiwan indicates a confrontation between United States and PRC. Taiwan is in a precarious position between de jure sovereignty and de facto independence, with its roots in colonial heritage, civil war consequences, Cold War circumstances, and current strategic competition(Wang et al., 2025). This article aims to untangle Taiwan's historical path, its metamorphosis into a democracy that is flourishing, and the geopolitical competition it is embroiled in, particularly with the United States and the People's Republic of China. The simmering conflict is more than just a diplomatic issue; it remains at the crossroads for East Asian region with consequences for global peace and security and sustenance of the international order. This study can be theoretically assessed through the lens of Neo-Realism, which contends that governments are compelled to prioritize accumulating power in order to survive due to the chaotic nature of the international system(Kızılaslan, 2023).

Taiwan's standing within the Asia-Pacific region is reinforced by its advantageous geographical position, technological dominance, and enduring relationship with the United States. Regaining control of Taiwan is an essential step for China in its quest for regional supremacy and national interest. Subsequently, defending Taiwan is perceived by the US and its close companions as a sign of their dedication to liberal democratic principles and an international framework founded upon norms(Wu & Lin, 2024). This paper is qualitative in nature with historic documents and policy papers being taken in to account for gathering the data. Data analysis has been carried out through document analysis and anticipation of probable trajectory of the conflict. This study contends that despite a deeply troubling political history of Taiwan, it has evolved as an important global stakeholder and any risk of a conflict with China will eventually have serious global repercussions.

Historical Background

A. Pre-17th Century Era- Dutch & Spanish Imperialistic Designs

Taiwan's history spans thousands of years, with the early stages influenced by the existence of native civilizations that built a diverse range of cultures decades before outside influences made their mark. The first settlers were Austronesian-speaking clans made up of many ethnic tribes with different cultural origins, languages, beliefs, and customs(Hsin-hui, 2007). Although the setting before the Taiwanese invasion is still evolving, historical data reveals that local people had a content connection with the island and its environment. The 17th century constituted a watershed moment in history when European nations, especially the Dutch and Spanish, focused their eyes on Taiwan. In 1624, the Dutch East India Company established their presence in Southern Taiwan in order to capitalize on the island's pivotal position in the shipping lanes between China and the Southeast Asian region. The company sought to impede Portuguese and Spanish trading as well as imperial activity in the East Asian region while also pursuing business agreements with the Ming Dynasty in China as well as with the ruling Tokugawa shogunate in Japan(Borao, 2007). During the exact

same period, the Spanish travelled into the northern region of the peninsula. As the native people came into contact with these newly arrived foreign colonizers, there was a collision of civilizations. The Dutch and Spanish attempted to dominate the socioeconomic patterns of the region, which resulted in clashes with indigenous inhabitants(Andrade, 2010). Though both imperial powers erected castles and trade stations, their control was constrained, and their initiatives were met with opposition by the native communities.

Although their interactions with the European colonists were limited, they introduced innovative concepts, products, and technology that had a long-lasting impact on native civilizations. Nonetheless, the duration of European colonization was rather brief. The Dutch were driven from the Taiwanese in 1662 by Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga), the leader of Ming's loyalist forces. Zheng, a supporter of the Ming Empire, founded the sovereign nation of the Kingdom of Tungning in Taiwan in opposition to the Qing Dynasty's control of the Taiwanese mainland(Zeng, 2015). As a result, Taiwan had a singular period in its turbulent past, turning into a bastion of Ming's loyalists during Qing domination. After finally putting an end to the Ming loyalist opposition, the Qing Dynasty officially took possession of the Taiwanese in 1683. This signaled the start of a longer-lasting Chinese influence era on the island. Taiwan's demographic and social environment altered as a result of Han Chinese immigration during the Qing dynasty(Rhoads, 2015). The island's intricate ethnic tapestry was fashioned by its indigenous population, who, despite these external influences, maintained their own identity. The complex historical chronology that would emerge in Taiwan over generations was affected by the ties they formed with successive invaders.

B. Qing Dynasty and Cultural Interplay in Taiwan (17th-19th Century)

In 1683, the Qing Dynasty began its dominion in Taiwan, ushering in a new chapter in the country's turbulent history. The almost two centuries of Qing rule brought significant changes to Taiwan's administration, population, and social life. At this moment in time, local people were negotiating the complexities of imperialistic rule while also dealing with the infiltration of Han Chinese immigrants, resulting in a delicate tango of rejection and inclusion(Zhang, 2010). After acquiring control of Taiwan and importing Han Chinese, the Qing Dynasty dramatically altered the country's demographics. Immigrants brought with them their own cultures, institutional systems, and behavioral habits.

This migration changed Taiwan's population demographics and made room for a thriving intercultural interchange. The integration of the indigenous inhabitants into the broader Chinese sociocultural environment was the aim of the Qing administration. The complex coexistence of the native inhabitants as well as the newly arrived Han Chinese was brought about by regulations that encouraged integration into society. Despite the fact that efforts were being made to incorporate the Aboriginal residents into the system of imperialism, a certain degree of independence was preserved. During this time, an intercultural culture with interactions and coexistence between Han Chinese and native people developed(Dai, 2017). Although there were difficulties in establishing cultural relationships between various

communities, it created the foundation for the comprehensive traditional tapestry that distinguishes Taiwan from people of the East Asian region in contemporary times. Throughout the Qing period, Han Chinese and aboriginal cultures coexisted, resulting in a profound exchange of viewpoints, customs, and practices. Spiritual convictions, language influences, and agricultural methods converged to produce a particular brew that contributed to Taiwan's shifting socioeconomic landscape. Taiwanese character was impacted by the aforementioned cultural exchange in a variety of ways(Ni, 2016).

Taiwan's own sense of culture is the consequence of the blending of traditional Chinese festivals and rituals with indigenous rites and practices. In the face of increased social integration, native human persistence was critical to preserving its own cultural features. Despite the problems it faced, the Qing Dynasty's reign over Taiwan had a long-term influence on the island's cultural and historical development.

Taiwan's diverse character was established by complex interactions between indigenous peoples and Han Chinese settlers, which also provided the framework for later periods in the country's history(Smith & Kapp, 2016). From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, the Qing Dynasty ruled Taiwan for a long time, allowing for extensive cross-cultural exchange. Alongside initiatives to integrate different cultures, the flow of Han Chinese immigrants resulted in a dynamic and diverse community. This period of intercultural cohabitation laid the groundwork for the rich cultural tapestry that characterizes modern Taiwan, as well as demonstrating the island's people's adaptability and resilience.

C. Japanese Rule in Taiwan (1895-1945)

Taiwanese civilization saw a tremendous upheaval all throughout the nineteenth century after the region was annexed from the Qing Dynasty to the Emperor of Japan as part of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which followed the commencement of the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895. After then, Japan began colonizing the region, which continued until 1945, when the Second World War ended(Lee, 2019). This historical period has had a tremendous and long-lasting influence on Taiwan's economy, society, and culture. Taiwan's administration and development plans saw major shifts during Japan's reign. The Japanese government aimed to build Taiwan as an exemplary colony by implementing modern healthcare programs, educational programmes, and infrastructure(Shirane, 2022). Urban planning was undertaken in cities such as Taipei, resulting in the creation of modern infrastructure including as hospitals, educational institutions, and railroads. Even if modernism brought great advancements, it was also used to subjugate and assimilate people. Japanese dominance has a big influence on Taiwan's financial system, as well(Hayashi, 2023). The Japanese developed and utilized the island's resources, which were mostly agricultural and industrial. The advent of fresh agricultural practices and technology led to an increase in production.

Japanese government used cultural measures aimed at integrating Taiwanese people into Japanese culture. To cultivate commitment to the imperialist state, the higher education system was overhauled, and the Japanese language was promoted. These actions sparked controversy and efforts to maintain Taiwanese identity while attempting to absorb the island into the Japanese empire(Chang, 2016). Even with Japan's modernizing efforts, there were threats to Japanese rule. Despite the fact that

some improvements benefited Taiwanese people, they were also subjected to bigotry, abuse, and cultural oppression. In reaction, several types of resistance emerged, including community mobilization, as well as organizational and intellectual opposition. During this time, the first signs of Taiwanese nationalism emerged (Lin, 2012). The end of World War II marked the end of Japanese control in Taiwan. As part of the postwar settlement, the island was officially governed by the Republic of China (ROC).

D. Status of Taiwan as a Republic of China

Taiwan's history changed dramatically after the Second World War ended in 1945, when the island was transferred to the People's Republic of China (ROC) government, displacing Japanese sovereignty. This period was marked by complex sociopolitical developments, societal upheavals, as well as Taiwan's maiden entrance into international politics. United States was responsible to oversee the transfer of power as a responsible Allied troop. After Chiang Kai-shek established the Republic of China, Japan's dominance over Taiwan ended with its accession (Bedeski, 1980). Taiwan suffered from the consequences of Japanese occupation throughout the period following the war, which brought about substantial changes in society and culture (Lin, 1983).

The introduction of entirely novel administrative structures and Mandarin Chinese as the primary means of communication caused problems for the local population. Social instability and the preservation of distinctive Taiwanese cultural characteristics were the outcomes of opposition to initiatives to incorporate the Taiwanese into the greater Chinese identity (Chang & Lu, 2007).

Efforts for Taiwan's financial growth and recovery were started during the ROC administration. Recognizing the territory's position of strategic significance, attempts were undertaken to turn it into an economically significant entity. To advance Taiwan's economic performance, modernization initiatives and reforms to the land system were put into place (Skřivan Jr, 2011). The island's extraordinary subsequent financial prosperity was made possible by these financial approaches. The Taiwanese post-war era was marked by unrest and governmental instability. Conflicts with regional factions of politicians and the lingering remains of Japanese colonial power structures were among the difficulties the Republic of China administration encountered. Unrest in society in 1947 culminated in the "*February 28 Incident*," a violent governmental assault on protesters that claimed a high number of lives (Kuo, 2020). This incident paved the way for a state of martial law to be imposed in 1949 and remain in effect for over forty years (Wang, 2002). The event started when a tobacco seller was arrested in Taipei. This sparked widespread demonstrations by the local Taiwanese protesting the brutality and nepotism of Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalistic administration. President Chiang Kai-shek and Provincial Governor Chen Yi oversaw the killing of hundreds of thousands of people that started on February 28, 1947. Since the beginning of the 1990s, when the prohibition on discussing the occurrence was relaxed, the incident became the topic of literary works, music, and films in Taiwan. Numerous organizations launched the Justice and Peace Campaign in the course of the 1970s to demand a change in the administration's

attitude(Wu, 2005). Executive Branch Yuan then released the "*February 28 Incident Research Report*" in 1992(Chiou & Hong, 2021). The government issued a formal statement of regret in 1995 and designated February 28 as a day to remember those who passed away. At the time, President Lee Teng-hui, the KMT leader at the time, was believed to have been involved in the tragic event and was taken into custody for being the initiator and a Communist sympathizer(Corcuff, 2016). The Chinese Civil War culminated in 1949 as troops commanded by Mao Zedong's Communists and the Chinese Nationalist Party engaged in warfare.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded on the Chinese mainland as a result of the Communists' victory. Chiang Kai-shek's KMT withdrew to Taiwan, where they established the Republic of China (ROC) authority(Tsai, 1998). Taiwan underwent a dramatic transition towards democracy in the second part of the 20th century. A new era began when the military dictatorship, which had been in place continuously since 1949, was abolished in 1987. Pluralistic legislative elections were made possible by electoral shifts and the rise of opposition organizations, while Taiwan progressively transformed into a thriving, diversified republic. There was a complicated and turbulent evolution from the cessation of Japanese authority in 1945 to Taiwan's establishment as the ROC in 1949(Chiang, 2018). Taiwan's distinct sociopolitical situation and its ensuing path towards democratization and recognition around the world are the outcome of a confluence of factors, including financial growth, stability in politics, the effects of the Chinese Civil War, and its sociocultural environment.

E. Taiwan as a Distinct Political Entity- From Autocracy to Democracy (1987-21st Century)

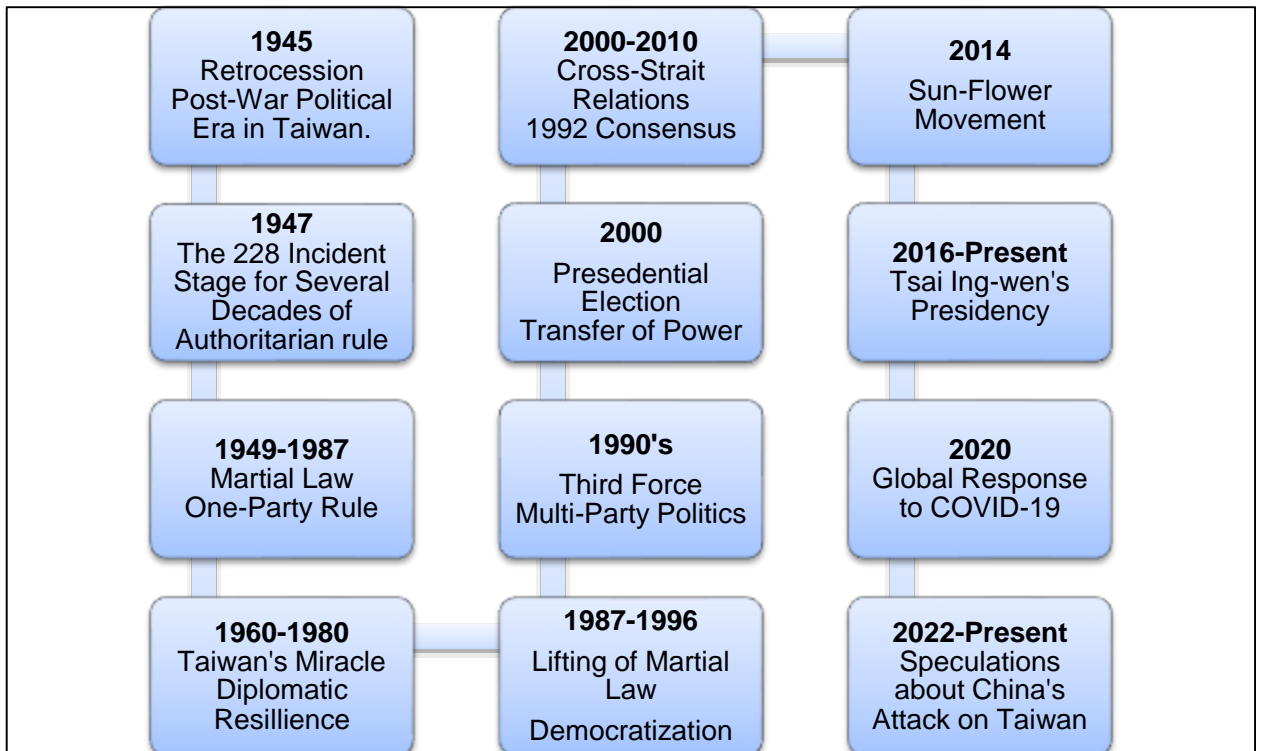
Taiwan's historical trajectory saw major upheaval in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. During this period, the region transitioned from a state of martial law to a vibrant democratic government with several parties that proclaimed its democratic identity.

Taiwan's desire for global recognition, along with internal reforms and strategic upheavals, resulted in its establishment as a unique democratic state(Chu & Lin, 2001). A turning point in Taiwan's development as a democratic country was reached in 1987 when President Chiang Ching-Kuo, son of Chiang Kai-shek, declared that martial rule, which had been in place since the Chinese Civil War in 1949, would be lifted(Lin, 2024). Generations of despotic authority came to an end with this, paving the way for a democratic environment. Electoral liberalization began when the restriction on opposing parties was lifted. Taiwan's first legislative elections, which introduced a multi-party system, were held in 1991(Templeman, 2025). As opposition parties gained prominence, Taiwan's political environment shifted, preparing the stage for its democratic transition. Taiwan's cross-strait ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC) strengthened as the country democratized. Although both sides of the Taiwan Strait endorsed the concept of "One China," opinions on what it meant varied.

As democracy progressed, Taiwan retained its statutory autonomy while making a concerted effort to express its political and cultural identity abroad. As Taiwan became increasingly democratic, cross-strait relations deteriorated. Political conversation

shifted to concerns about the Declaration of Independence, identity control, and the possibility of reconciliation with Beijing. The "1992 Consensus," an implicit settlement based on the One China concept, emerged as a recurring source of contention in cross-strait interactions(Chen & Paris-Rodriguez, 2024). Taiwan's struggle for recognition around the world as a distinct democratic state was greatly aided by its financial stability. Taiwan's financial dominance in the Asian continent was fueled by its swift modernization and technical progress(Yeh, 2024). The island's financial prosperity enhanced its reputation internationally and supported its claim to separate representation in politics. Despite its financial prosperity, Taiwan had geopolitical issues as a result of the One China policy, which was supported by the majority of the outside world. Taiwan's formal diplomatic recognition deteriorated over time as a result of the Communist Party of China's influence, isolating the Taiwanese territory with few sympathizers.

Taiwan's democratization was consolidated throughout the course of the 1990s until the beginning 2000s(Auklend, 2022). The development of a system with multiple parties was mirrored in subsequent election cycles for president. The election of Chen Shui-bian in 2000 was the first time Taiwan's ruling party changed(Niou & Paolino, 2003). Taiwan additionally dealt with historical atrocities during this point in time, such as those pertaining to people of indigenous descent. In a bid to advance more broadly the concept of fairness in society, the fundamental liberties of the island's indigenous occupants were acknowledged and promoted. Due to extensive Chinese pressure, Taiwan has continually faced difficulties receiving recognition on a global scale(Chong et al., 2023). Taiwan's access to multilateral organizations was restricted by the One China concept, and the People's Republic of China made attempts at diplomacy to wall off Taiwan. Taiwan was a responsible international state that actively participated in world events. The territory contributed to environmental development, emergency aid, and public healthcare(Hilpert et al., 2022). Despite political and economic challenges, Taiwan's achievements and services were gradually recognized by the rest of the globe. Taiwan's political configuration in the twenty-first century remained complex and dynamic in terms of cross-strait relations. With a commitment to maintaining the status quo and no support for the PRC's One China policy, President Tsai Ing-wen's election in 2016 marked a shift in Taiwan's stance(Sullivan, 2024). China interpreted Taiwan's stance as a move toward declaring independence, which exacerbated tensions. Taiwan's growing global importance in subjects such as public healthcare, technical advancements, and democratic principles has received widespread support, particularly from the United States. Following infographic highlights major political development in Taiwan since 1945.



Hierarchical Order of Taiwan's Political Development Post-1945

A number of noteworthy turning points in Taiwan's contemporary political landscape have had an impact on the nation's governmental structure and social structure. Formal Chinese rule over the island of Taiwan began when the Qing dynasty seized possession of the territory's northern and western shores. Taiwan's role as an essential component of Beijing was further strengthened when it emerged as an autonomous region of the Qing Empire. About 2 million refugees and the Kuomintang government, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, fled to the Taiwanese after the Communists won the Chinese Civil War in 1949 (Cucchisi, 2002). Global acceptance transformed when the United Nations (UN) declared Communist China to be the sole legitimate governing body of China. In the meantime, Chiang Ching-Kuo started a gradual liberalization programme that included elevating native Taiwanese speakers to posts of leadership. A significant development towards governmental liberalization and the easing of limitations on local dialects and customs was taken when Chiang Ching-Kuo ended martial law in 1989 (Ying-Lung, 1993). With the creation of the Taiwanese Transitional Justice Commission, numerous phases of amendments to the constitution, and free and fair elections, Taiwan experienced a profound transition towards democracy. These turning points show the complicated political trajectory of Taiwan, from its historical connections to Beijing to its present standing as a flourishing republic having its own unique identity.

Taiwan as an Ally of United States

Taiwan is establishing itself as a prominent stakeholder and a critical component of planning within the broader structure of American supremacy in the intricate geostrategic atmosphere of the twenty-first century. As the world watches the shifting tides of international influence, Taiwan, which exemplifies an intricate equilibrium between territorial integrity and stability throughout the region, finds itself at a historical juncture (Tucker & Glaser, 2011). United States has provided Taiwan with the right to acquire military products and services to ensure that it remains able in its pursuit of a robust and adequate defence since it has a responsibility to preserve stability and security throughout the Strait of Taiwan. Taiwan is strategically significant to the US along with its partner nations for a number of reasons. The peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region including the protection of essential American objectives are greatly dependent upon Taiwan's placement at a pivotal junction within the initial island chain, which serves as the hub for an ecosystem of American partners. The Taiwan Relations Act (1979) guarantees the supply of military weaponry to Taipei, demonstrating the unwavering dedication of US to Taiwanese's defence (Goldstein & Schriver, 2001). In addition to assisting Taiwan in maintaining a respectable defence posture, American defence assistance acts as a deterrence to any possible attack within the Taiwan Strait. Former United States Assistant Secretary of Defense Ely Ratner highlighted that;

“Taiwan is located at a critical node within the first island chain, anchoring a network of US allies and partners stretching from the Japanese archipelago down to the Philippines and into the South China Sea that is critical to the region's security and critical to the defense of vital US interests in the Indo-Pacific” (Sacks, 2023).

Due to its stabilizing effect and capacity to respond quickly to developing situations of crisis, the presence of American troops in Taiwan plays a role in maintaining regional peace and security. Taiwan's advantageous geographic position enables prompt and efficient military action in the case of calamities like catastrophic events, emergencies involving humanitarian assistance, or regional conflicts hence fostering security and peace. However, if Beijing chooses to annex Taiwan and station defense equipment on its territory, including air defense units, submersibles, and undersea tracking equipment, it will undoubtedly restrict American defense activities in the surrounding region, thereby strengthening its ability to protect its Asian allies (Nathan, 2022). Consequently, US officials have repeatedly recognized that not only is Taiwan's fate at stake, but also the long-term survival of the first island chain, as well as the ability to maintain American dominance and accessibility across the western Pacific region. Since the United States does not recognize Taiwan as a nation with its own government, it is unable to maintain a functioning diplomatic representation there. However, the US aims to send between 100 and 200 combat personnel to Taiwan in response to an increasing threat from Beijing (Alkatiry & Triantama, 2024). China appears to be paying close attention to America's growing attitude toward Taiwan, which has included boosting military forces in neighboring Okinawa and Guam, which may become heated as a result of the rise of Taiwanese

soldiers. It must also be highlighted that the United States has sold more than \$30 Billion worth of weapons since 2009(Akinlosotu et al., 2024). In the event of a Chinese invasion, the US has said multiple times that American forces will be ordered to defend Taiwan, indicating a greater objective than merely protecting Taiwan.

Is Taiwan Part of China?

According to the "One-China Principle," which aims to unify both Taiwan and the Chinese mainland in the future, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is China's sole legal authority. The 1992 Accord is a purported agreement between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), who ruled Taiwan at the time(Chen & Paris-Rodriguez, 2024). China contends that this agreement binds Taiwan. Both sides dispute on the details of this supposed agreement, which did not address Taiwan's legislative and statutory position. Chinese President Xi Jinping while addressing the complexity of the situation stated that;

“The two sides of the strait belong to one China and would work together to seek national reunification”(Fong, 2025).

Taiwan's constitution, created by the KMT, maintains recognition of the South China Sea, Tibet, China, Mongolia, and Taiwan as parts of the Republic of China. The KMT has always advocated for deeper connections with Beijing while opposing Taiwanese statehood. However, KMT officials were considering the possibility that they should change their position on the consensus reached in 1992 in light of subsequent electoral setbacks. On the contrary, The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) never supported the agreement that was reached in the 1992 Consensus. The DPP's leader, President Tsai, has declined to formally acknowledge the agreement as unanimous. Rather, she has been making an effort to come up with a different phraseology that China would approve of. In her inaugural address in 2016, President Tsai highlighted that;

“She was elected president in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of China which is a One-China document. She would also safeguard the sovereignty and territory of the Republic of China. She also pledged that she would conduct cross-strait affairs in accordance with the Republic of China Constitution, the Act Governing Relations Between the People of [the] Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area, and other relevant legislation”(Release, 2016).

However, China severed formal ties with the Taiwanese after rejecting this proposal. Subsequently, President Xi Jinping in a speech in 2019 once again reiterated China's long-term proposal regarding Taiwan. He said that;

“Taiwan should be incorporated into the mainland under the formula of one country, two systems. This is the same formula used for Hong Kong, which was guaranteed the ability to preserve its political and economic systems and granted a high degree of autonomy”(Calavaro, 2025).

Yet, the people of Taiwan are utterly opposed to any such structure. Tsai and other members of the KMT dismissed the "One Country, Two Systems" concept, citing Beijing's subsequent attack on Hong Kong's democratic liberty.

China's Perception of Taiwan as a Core National Interest

China's view of Taiwan as a vital national interest is molded by political, cultural, and historical concerns that impact its internal strategy and how it tackles the Taiwanese problem. The underlying occurrences of the Chinese Civil War, as well as the subsequent founding of the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Taiwan, enabled Beijing's constant desire to accomplish unity. The view is the fact that this issue is intimately tied to the Chinese government's credibility, the country's sense of self, and its comprehension of the "One China" concept (Liao & Rola, 2022). It transcends beyond mere sovereignty and territorial integrity challenges.

From the perspective of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), China is the one and only legitimate governing body. The establishment of an autonomous government in the Taiwanese is perceived as an imminent threat against the CCP's assertion that it represents the legitimate leadership of the entirety of the Chinese nation, casting doubt on the validity of this argument (Economy, 2022). In addition to being the Chinese leadership's strategic objectives, reuniting the Taiwanese alongside the mainland is crucial to preserving the CCP's credibility along with bolstering its influence in the viewpoints of the majority of the Chinese general populace.

An additional significant consideration in the Chinese view of Taiwan is national identity. The notion that there exists only a single China while Taiwan remains a vitally important component of the mainland is known as the "One China" principle, and it currently maintains a strong hold on the national consciousness (Wang et al., 2025). Since Taiwan's position is considered to be a pillar of Chinese identity, every move to undermine it is seen as a threat to the essence of that which constitutes what it means to be Chinese. In order to capitalize on the sentimental attachment which, the Chinese people feel towards the notion of a single China, the Chinese leadership presents the Taiwanese dispute as one of national identity (Chen, 2022). The idea of the "One China" principle unites the socioeconomic, societal, and geographical aspects of the Chinese's view of Taiwan. From the Chinese government's standpoint, this concept is irrevocable and forms the cornerstone of the nation's approach towards Taiwan. This idea is demonstrated by the global community's acceptance of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the recognized government of China, as embodied by its "One China" policy. Beijing strongly opposes any departure from such an approach, which reflects how important the Taiwanese has become to its national interests.

The Chinese view the Taiwanese as part of its vital national interest and this view is reflected in particular actions and policies alongside general discourse. Later Chinese leaders reaffirmed Deng Xiaoping's original "One Country, Two Systems" structure as a blueprint for reunification. On the other hand, doubts regarding this strategy's feasibility for Taiwan have been highlighted by its application in Hong Kong (Hu, 2023). The Taiwanese people's disapproval of this arrangement and preference for preserving their own unique system of governance highlights the profound differences in attitudes and beliefs between the People's Republic of China and

Taiwan.

Another major consideration lies in the fact that Chinese view of Taiwan as a fundamental national interest could potentially have an impact on both regional and international stability. While impacting the delicate and key Chinese national interests along national rejuvenation; remains the fundamental problem of Taiwan (Green & Talmadge, 2022). China's foreign policy is shaped by its perspective on Taiwan, and this may cause a rift with nations around the world, especially the US, which doesn't rule out supporting Taiwan from being attacked by China. Taiwan has rejected the concept of reuniting with China and instead asserted its unique character in response to China's conception of achieving that as an imperative national objective. Under the leadership of President Tsai Ing-wen, the Taiwanese government views Taiwan as separate from the Chinese mainland, with an elected parliament and exclusive legislation (Lubina, 2024). Beijing puts a lot of political effort into convincing countries that choose to decline to recognize Taiwan, as evidenced by the reality that merely thirteen nations (including the Vatican) recognize Taiwan as an independent state.

Decoding the D-Day: Anticipating China's Move on Taiwan

To fully comprehend the D-Day situation, one must first understand the underlying circumstances and elements that pushed an entire country to the verge of military conflict. China has an action plan for Taiwan based on shifting historically significant, partisan, and tactical reasons.

One important factor in calculating the Taiwan Strait equation is the date and time associated with a possible attack. It is necessary to conduct a thorough examination of both domestic and regional circumstances in order to forecast when Beijing may intervene (Grieger, 2023). An examination will be carried out taking in to account the past antecedents, recent developments in politics, and financial metrics to identify trends that have the potential to predict the start of warfare. Additionally, considerations will be emphasized upon the global politico-strategic challenges accounting for changes in coalition arrangements, the relationship between power and influence, and the significance of geopolitical calculations of Taiwan and China. China's decision-making factors have been categorized into political considerations which have been further broadly categorized into three dimensions. These include Economic Factors, Domestic considerations, and International implications.

One of the main drivers of China's prosperity lies in its comprehensive integration into the global supply chain network. With Taiwan holding a prominent place in these webs, a complicated system of interrelated manufacturing and shipment channels has helped China, foster mutually beneficial relationships with several states across the world (Gurantz, 2024). These international transportation routes are bound to be disrupted by aggression against Taiwan, with repercussions for all sectors globally. Taiwanese represents a major supplier of essential elements to the technological industry in particular, thus disruptions might result in shortages in supplies, delays in manufacturing, and recessions in the economic activity as a whole. Taiwan is currently the producer of around 60% of global semiconductors (Hsu, 2025). The

potential financial repercussions of endangering these fragile strands of interconnectivity, operate as a powerful disincentive to hasty offensives. Furthermore, a prospective Chinese invasion of the Taiwanese may be significantly impacted by an upsurge in the costs of energy in the international marketplace(Wuthnow, 2024). Due to its substantial reliance on imported energy, the Chinese defence operations may suffer significantly from an interruption in the availability of energy. Furthermore, Technology is expected to play a major role in any prospective Chinese invasion of Taiwan(Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2023). This may encompass a blend of conventional and non-conventional domains; however, it needs to be ascertained that direct US intervention in the conflict has the tendency to complicate the dynamics of warfare. China appears to have a visible advantage in terms of AI domain with respect to warfare and thus its assertive stance cannot be simply overlooked(Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2022). Moreover, the economic performance of China may be impacted by higher costs of energy and, therefore may have a bearing on its capacity to finance an invasion. Taiwan is a vital hub for the shipping and storage of energy assets, including liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petroleum. Strategic turmoil or outright armed conflict, if it interferes with the Taiwanese operations, could interfere with the petroleum supply chain and drive the cost of oil globally(Shih, 2024). Inflationary stresses could arise from this, impacting not merely the overall price of manufacturing for various enterprises but also the daily operations of individuals worldwide. Moreover, rising expenses for energy may exacerbate hostilities with other countries, thereby making it more difficult for Beijing to win over others for its interests. Another important aspect which can affect the Chinese decision to invade Taiwan is the ongoing upkeep of the economic order, which is intimately tied to financial supervision. Since the Chinese leadership is very interested in preserving its social equilibrium, any sort of market disturbances may spark turmoil and demonstrations(Lorenzo, 2024). It takes a mix of coordinated measures, effective exchanges of information, and enforcement measures to sustain the marketplace equilibrium.

It is difficult to forecast with any degree of accuracy, when both China and Taiwan will engage in war since there are so many moving parts, such as financial, political, and strategically important variables. Changes in government or public opinion across China or Taiwan are examples of political circumstances that may have an impact on the possibility of armed action. According to estimates from a number of senior American military sources, Beijing is expected to assault Taiwan around 2025 or 2027(Bonny Lin, 2025). According to CIA Director William Burns, President Xi Jinping directed the Chinese People's Liberation Army to be prepared for a conflict by 2027(Yen, 2023). According to a Taiwanese emergency readiness policy, there would be only pyrrhic winners, significant defeats for all parties, and a high likelihood of escalating crises, maybe reaching nuclear levels. In order to proceed with an inadvertent reunification with Taiwan, the Chinese may employ a variety of non-kinetic pressures, ranging from financial and political tactics, including technological measures, to comprehensive maritime blockages, pressing Americans to take serious steps. Chinese threat assessment also considers bigger international and regional

concerns, such as its relationships with key states such as Japan and the United States(von Sydow, 2024). Because military readiness of both sides influences the geopolitical backdrop, changes in China's defense capabilities and Taiwan's defense plans are critical issues to consider. Financial security and potential impacts on the Chinese economy can also influence decision-making patterns. The health of financial markets and the potential implications on China's economic performance may also have an impact on the decision-making timeline. Unexpected triggers, such as catastrophes or situations, may cause hostilities to escalate swiftly.

This doesn't appear to be a straightforward “Invade vs. Do not Invade” decision. China possesses multidimensional potential approaches to exert pressure on and maybe conquer the Republic of Taiwan. Possibilities can range from the current state of affairs, which is organized, short-of-war intimidation, to a complete all-out assault, with possibilities that vary from embargo and bombing to minor territorial grabs in Taiwan up to a full-scale attack(Gurantz, 2024). China continues to increase the intensity of its security exercises near Taiwan; jet fighters, navy ships, as well as a carrier-based aircraft have all recently practiced precise strikes. Xi's current favored course of action is intimidation which falls short of going to warfare. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been stepping up its assertiveness for several years in an effort to deplete the Taiwanese military and constrict its aerial space while giving the impression that the country is unable to safeguard by itself. Examples of these actions include bursting into Taiwan's air-defence recognition zone and accelerating through the strait's center line of sight(Swaine, 2025). This strategy is completed with misinformation, digital assaults, and political attempts to destabilize Taiwan. In this regard, the quest for Taiwanese is an ongoing process. The argument is that if you apply relentless, progressively greater pressure, the people of Taipei will eventually see that reunification with China is inevitable. Xi is in favour of compelled yet harmonious reunification due to the fact that is aware of the perils of existence that conflict could pose.

CONCLUSION

It can be assessed that Chinese intentions to attack Taiwan are conditioned to certain political, economic, regional and global variables. While Taiwan has emerged as an important global actor in terms of its technological advancement, any conflict will China will be disastrous for both sides. For China, an armed conflict would eventually result in serious repercussions, including a direct or indirect confrontation with the United States and its coalition partners in the region. For Taiwan, the conflict would lead to compromising its democratic institutions, politico-economic structures and national security dynamics.

The implications of this conflict would not remain confined in East Asian region, but will risk the global security and stability. Hence, assessment of this framework indicates that the Taiwan Question not only serves as a hotspot for regional tension, but has emerged as a test of global deterrence and sustenance of a nuclearized global order.

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