

Taiwan

Rice

In 1949, Taiwan was under the control of mainland China and was not technically independent. At that time, China was ruled by General Chiang Kai-Shek, and Taiwan was ruled by Governor Li Tsung-jen, a member of Chiang's KMT party. In 1949, General Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kuomintang (KMT) party, also known as the Chinese Nationalists, were defeated in their civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Upon their defeat, Chiang Kai-Shek and the rest of the KMT government fled to Taiwan, placing the island under martial law and cementing themselves as the leaders of the Republic of China in 1950. This is not a SOLS change. Initially, this government retained diplomatic recognition as the Chinese government, but over time this changed. In 1971, the Republic of China was expelled from the United Nations, and in 1979, the United States announced that it would conduct diplomatic relations with Beijing (and the People's Republic of China) instead of the ROC (Roy 2003, xii). Taiwan would continue to be under martial law until 1986, when it was replaced by a National Security Law and censorship was slowly eased (Roy 2003, 175). It was only in 1991 that the government of Taiwan declared that they were no longer at war with the People's Republic of China, and the President resigned his extraordinary powers granted under the condition of war with the CCP (Roy 2003, 185).

Geddes classifies Taiwan as a single-party state from 1950 until 2000, due to the fact that the KMT government banned the formation of new political parties. However, it should be noted that politicians who were not members of the KMT could run for positions in the National Assembly as independent candidates (Roy, 158). Therefore, during that span of time, there are no SOLS changes coded. The leader of Taiwan did change a few times. In 1975, Chiang Kai-Shek (in the middle of his fifth term as President), died. He was immediately replaced by his vice-president, Yen Chia-kan, who finished out Chiang's term as a "caretaker executive" (Roy, 156). In 1978, the National Assembly voted for Chiang Ching-kuo (formerly the Chairman of the KMT Central Committee, and Chiang Kai-Shek's son) to become the next President. This is not a SOLS change. During his time in office, Chiang began the liberalization of Taiwan, lifting martial law and allowing for the formation of a new party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The DPP was also allowed to participate in the 1986 elections for the National Assembly (Roy 2003, 173). Chiang Ching-kuo began suffering from health problems in the 1980s, leading him to designate as his vice-president (and therefore successor), Lee Teng-hui, a technocrat and loyal party member (Roy 2003, 180). When Chiang died on January 13, 1988, he was replaced by Lee as Party Chairman, and then as President. This is no SOLS change. Lee continued his predecessor's efforts to liberalize Taiwan, by reducing the size of the ROC army and dismantling state organizations that had been created for the purpose of enforcing martial law. Lee also clarified that the President, not the Premier was the head of state in Taiwan—a designation that was ambiguous in the ROC Constitution of 1947 (Roy 2003, 188).

Note that Geddes codes Taiwan as single-party autocracy until 1999. This is because, even after Taiwan's democratization in 1992, it would not be until the elections of 2000 that a candidate of the opposition, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) would win the presidency. In contrast to Geddes (and Cheibub et al.) we code Taiwan as a semi-presidential democracy from 1992 through 1995. This

decision is based off of several sources as well as careful consideration of the Cheibub et al. coding rules and their coding decisions in subsequent years (Matsumoto 2013; Wu 2007).

In 2000, the democratic reforms in Taiwan culminated with the election of the DPP candidate, Chen Shui-bian as President. This is SOLS change. This was the second direct presidential election in Taiwan's history (the first was in 1996, when Lee was reelected), and the first peaceful power transfer between parties. It also marks the ending of Taiwan as a single-party state and the beginning of Taiwan as a mixed democracy. Chen was reelected in 2004, and due to term limits was not allowed to run again in 2008. In the 2008 presidential elections, the DPP candidate, Frank Hseih, lost to the KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou. This is a SOLS change. Ma remains in power today.

References

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