

Taiwan and Statehood

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International affairs are often governed by politics of the major powers, ongoing wars, or other fast-paced and increasingly “scandalous” stories. They usually have fast-developments and the story changes often: a city gets captured in an armed conflict; a resolution passes by a narrow margin and vocal opposition; or something shocking happens in a piece of media. However, a particular issue that has occurred for much longer often goes ignored. The Republic of China’s¹ statehood represents, personally, one of the most fascinating global issues. In this report, I try to provide some background for this issue, and attempt to explain my opinion.

1 Historical Background

The story of the Republic of China begins after the Xinhai Revolution (辛亥革命) **Chinese Revolution**. This event led to the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, and to the Republic of China under the leadership of Sun Yat Sen (孫中山). In the 1920s, due to the expulsion and assassination of members of the Chinese Communist Party (which up to that point had been a part of the KMT) the Chinese Civil War started in full force. When the main priority of the KMT government under Chiang Kai-Shek (蔣介石) turned to fighting the Japanese, the conflict with the CCP stopped. After victory over the Japanese, the conflict quickly resumed and continued until the KMT’s defeat in 1949 and establishment of the Republic of China in Taiwan.

After relocation of the ROC to Taiwan, many major powers still maintained formal relations with the ROC. During and after the 1970s, most countries changed their official recognition from Taiwan to the People’s Republic of China as the only representative of “China”. Since then, while most major countries hold unofficial relations with Taiwan, for example having trade offices² or even defense promises **Taiwan Relations Act**,

¹Or is it Taiwan? Even a name can be a source of conflict. I try my best to use Taiwan for post 1949 and ROC for pre 1949.

²These trade, or cultural offices, serve as functional embassies.

Taiwan's role in the world stage has become increasingly ambiguous.

2 Statehood