

Two Island Invasions: USA of Cuba, China of Taiwan

Teacher example
1 March 2022

Introduction

Goal: The purpose of this presentation is to compare the invasion of Cuba by the United States in 1961-62 with the potential invasion of Taiwan by China.

Rationale: This is timely because of the war in Ukraine—an invasion of a smaller country by a major power—and important because the lessons from the conflict with Cuba in the 1960s may be useful understanding a potential war over Taiwan.

Method: Geographic sizes and distances will be compared as will national statistics like population and economics.

The US came close to war over Cuba sixty years ago

Cuba is roughly 100 miles from the Florida keys. Havana is a little over 200 miles from Miami. (<https://distance.to>)

In 1961 the US attempted to invade Cuba but was defeated at the Bay of Pigs. In the following year, the Cuban missile crisis almost lead to a nuclear war between the US and Russia. ([Kennedy Presidential Library](#))



Studylib.net; Holt, Rinehart and Winston,
<https://studylib.net/doc/8587916/bay-of-pigs-invasion-map-activity>

An invasion of Taiwan by China could start a major war

Taiwan is an island separated from mainland China by about 100 miles.

The government of China claims authority over Taiwan, and the US acknowledges their claim. ([US State Department](https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/eap/ci/taiwan/index.htm))
However, in fact, the people of Taiwan have their own government.

China's threat to take Taiwan by force is a serious risk of war.



US Department of State
<https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/eap/ci/taiwan/index.htm>

The islands of Cuba and Taiwan are small fractions of the sizes of their powerful neighbors, the US and China

Unlike Cuba, however, Taiwan is a rich country, with a GDP per capita multiples higher than China. Critically, 92% of the world’s most advanced computer chips are manufactured in Taiwan. (Reuters)

	Taiwan	China	ratio		Cuba	USA	ratio
Land area (sq miles)	13,892	3,705,000	0.37%		42,803	3,719,000	1.15%
Population	23,888,000	1,448,000,000	1.65%		11,000,000	331,000,000	3.32%
Economy GDP (\$ billions)	851	15,000	5.67%		110	21,000	0.52%
				1970:	23	5,184	0.44%
GDP per capita (USD)	35,625	10,359			10,000	63,444	

Conclusion

This presentation shows the geographic relationships of Cuba to the US and Taiwan to China. It summarizes major population and economic statistics of both pairs of countries, meeting the goal of the paper.

Both are small island countries threatened by much more powerful neighbors. War almost broke out between the US and Cuba sixty years ago, and war with China over Taiwan is the most important geopolitical threat to the US today.

Quantitative analysis and mathematics are useful ways to understand our roles and responsibilities in the world.

Works Cited

<https://distance.to>

[Kennedy Presidential Library](#)

Studylib.net; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, <https://studylib.net/doc/8587916/bay-of-pigs-invasion-map-activity>

[US State Department](#)

<https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/eap/ci/taiwan/index.htm>

[Reuters, Boston Consulting, Semiconductor Industry Association](#)

Wolfram Alpha

<https://www.wolframalpha.com/input?i=what+is+the+area+of+taiwan>

World Bank

https://datacommons.org/place/country/CHN?utm_medium=explore&mprop=count&popt=Person&hl=en

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD?locations=CU-US>

Statistica data service

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/727589/gross-domestic-product-gdp-in-taiwan/>

Economist Magazine

<https://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=671803050&Country=Taiwan&topic=Summary&subtopic=Basic+data>