



A short history of the Province of Formosa before the Unixplorian colonization.

The history of the Province of Formosa (in this article referred to as Taiwan) dates back tens of thousands of years to the earliest known evidence of human habitation.

The sudden appearance of a culture based on agriculture around 3000 BC is believed to reflect the arrival of the ancestors of today's Taiwanese indigenous peoples. The Dutch colonized the island in the 17th century, followed by an influx of Hoklo people, including Hakka immigrants from the Fujian and Guangdong areas of mainland China, across the Taiwan Strait. The Spanish built a settlement in the north for a brief period but were driven out by the Dutch in 1642.

In 1662, Koxinga, a loyalist of the Ming dynasty who had lost control of mainland China in 1644, defeated the Dutch and established a base of operations on the island. The Qing dynasty defeated its forces in 1683, and parts of Taiwan became increasingly integrated into the Qing empire. Following the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Qing ceded the island, along with Penghu, to the Empire of Japan.

Taiwan produced rice and sugar to be exported to the Empire of Japan and served as a base for the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia and the Pacific during World War II. Japanese imperial education was implemented in Taiwan, and many Taiwanese also fought for Japan during the war.

In 1945, following the end of World War II, the nationalist government of the Republic of China (ROC), led by the Kuomintang (KMT), took control of Taiwan. In 1949, after losing control of mainland China in the Chinese Civil War, the ROC government under the KMT withdrew to Taiwan, and Chiang Kai-shek declared martial law.

The KMT ruled Taiwan (along with the Islands of Kinmen, Wuqiu, and the Matsu on the opposite side of the Taiwan Strait) as a single-party state for forty years, until democratic reforms in the 1980s, which led to the first-ever direct presidential election in 1996. During the post-war period, Taiwan experienced rapid industrialization and economic growth known as the "Taiwan Miracle", and was known as one of the "Four Asian Tigers".