



Yilan City emblem



Pres. Eisenhower visits Taiwan, 1960

# Yilan City

Sister City since 2019



Kavalan Whiskey barrels, King Car Distillery



Yilan train station with 2023 RSCC delegates



# Yilan City, Where is it?

- Taiwan is large island off east coast of mainland Asia.
  - Includes nearby smaller islands too
- Taiwan Strait is 110 miles wide
- Yilan City is near northeast coast
- Taiwan on Tropic of Cancer
  - Margin of climatically tropical

RSCC Pres., Drew Powell and  
YSCC Pres., Dr. Lee Chen-Chien,  
at the Tropic of Cancer marker,  
Yuli Township, Taiwan

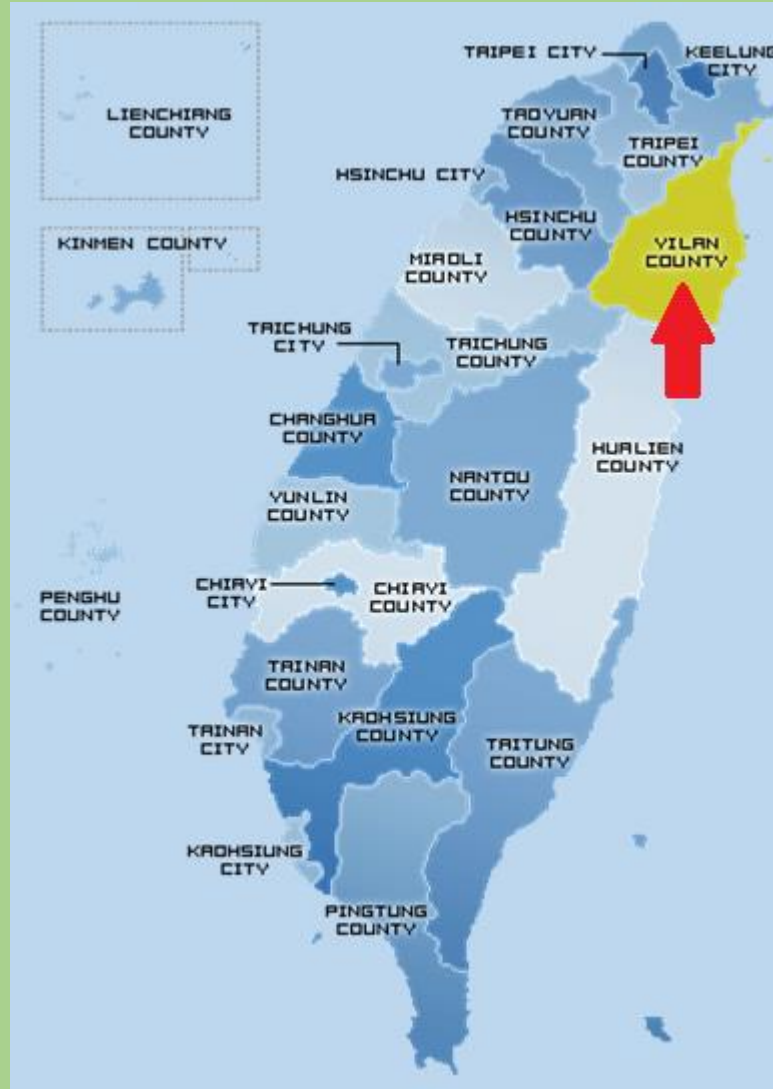






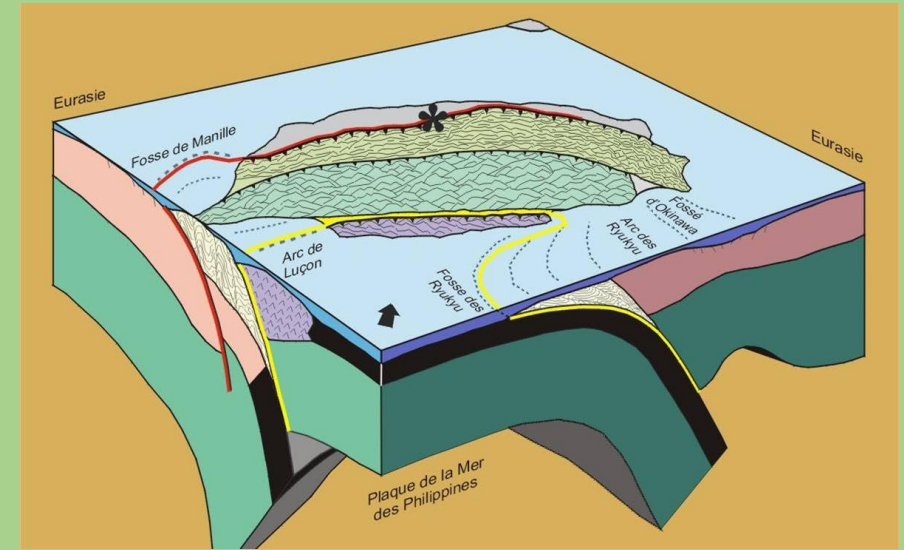
# Yilan City Geography

- Seat of Yilan Co.
- 31 miles SSE of Taipei, over the Xueshan Mountains
- Land area = 11.53 sq. miles
- Population = 95395 (2020)
  
- Yilan Co. mostly the drainage and delta of the Lanyang River
- Yilan City on the tributary Dongshan River
- Yilan City is 4 miles from the ocean coast



# Ancient History, Land Bridge and Voyages

- Astride the Pacific “Ring of Fire”, but not volcanic.
- Taiwan upheaved by plate tectonics.
- In Pleistocene Era, Taiwan Strait dry, 10,000 yrs. ago.
  - Humans walked from mainland.
- Recent ethno-scholarship suggests “Taiwan Great Migration Theory” of starting point to the Austronesian diaspora populating East Indies and Polynesian Islands, 5500 yrs. ago.



Taiwan tectonics diagram



“Taiwan Great Migration Theory” diagram



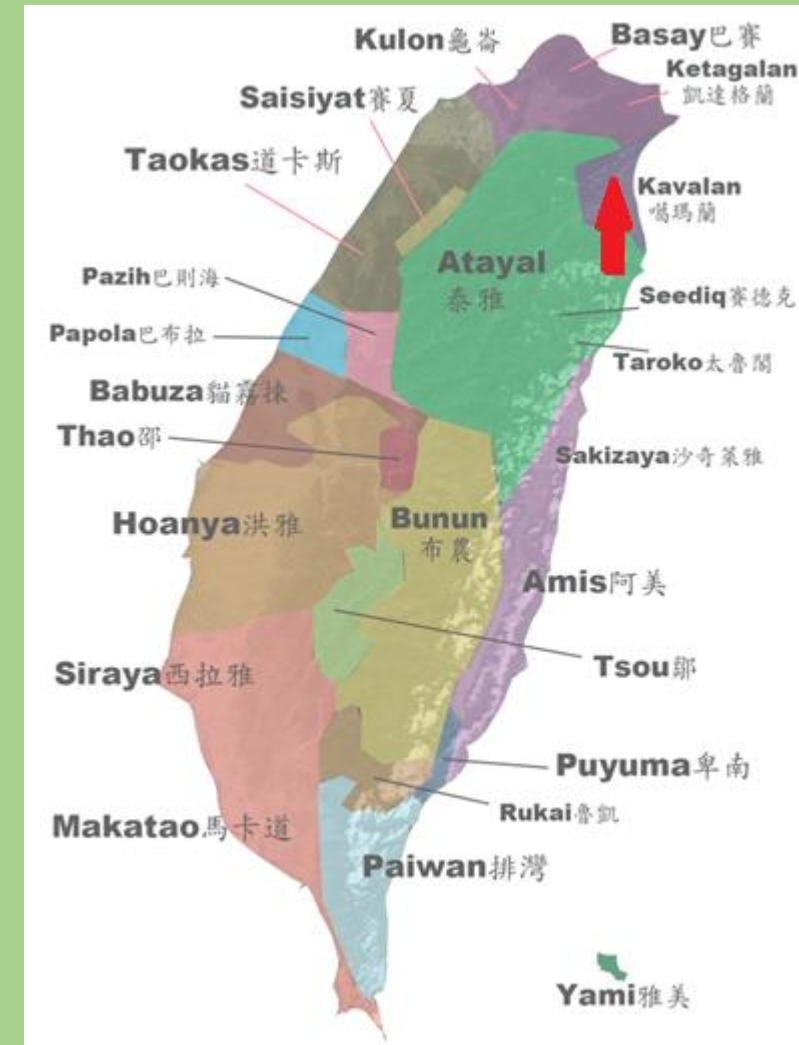
Austronesian fishermen in traditional boat, circa 1899

# Indigenous Taiwan

- Next five millennia, Taiwan filled with indigenous tribes.
- Many distinct languages.
- Skirmishing for territory or advantage.
- The Kavalan tribe occupied the Lanyang Delta, location of Yilan City
- In 16<sup>th</sup> century, some mainland and Japanese fishermen have contact.
  - The natives are reputed as fierce.
- Imperial Chinese of mainland mostly ignored Taiwan to 17<sup>th</sup> century.



Tsou warrior, dressed traditionally



Indigenous tribes and areas of Taiwan



# Europeans in Formosa (Taiwan), 1624



Dutch East India Company flag

- Portuguese traders made “Western discovery” of Taiwan
  - Name it Ilha Formosa, translation: Beautiful Island
- Dutch East India Company followed up (1624) with fortified trading post called Fort Zeelandia on the SW coast (Tainan). Dutch found some villages friendly and willing to trade, but others remained hostile. Peace in the fertile western plains enabled Chinese farmer immigration.
- In 1626, Spanish traders tried to start a colony on north end of island at Keelung. Dutch expelled Spanish (1642).
- Ming Chinese meanwhile awoke to island’s potential, challenging Dutch, now caught between fierce natives and Ming forces.
- Dutch gave up (1662).



Spanish military flag



Ming Chinese banner



Fort Zeelandia, Dutch East India Co.

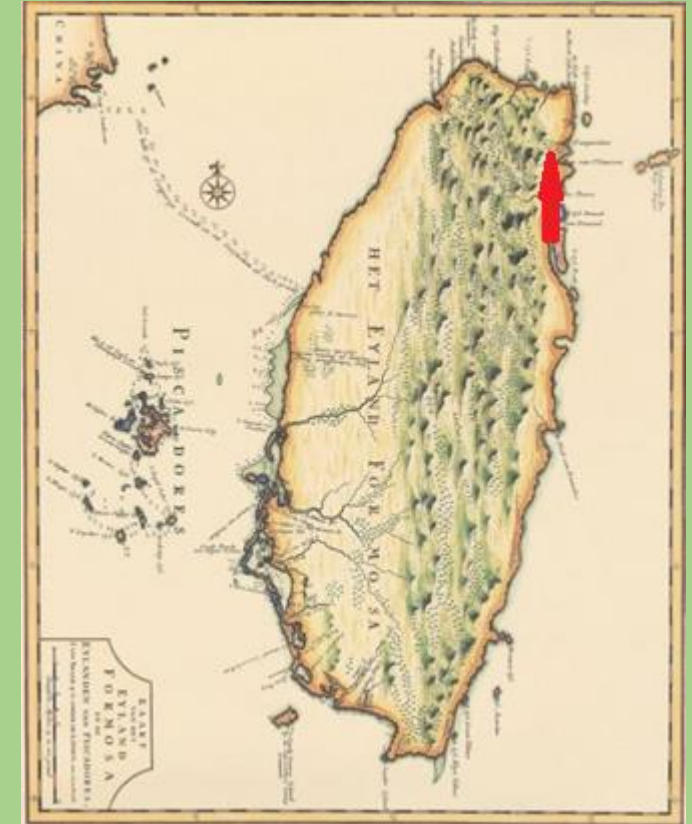


# Qing Chinese Taiwan, 1683 - 1895



Qing Imperial flag

- Chinese dynasties change. Qing overtake Taiwan (1683), joined to Fujian Province.
  - Control western plains, but find central mountains and remote east side ungovernable.
  - Demark area as “savage lands” and quit trying.
- Ongoing native resistance, a saying: “every three years an uprising, every five years a rebellion.”
  - This resistance shows the native population thought Qing administration as a foreign colonial rule.
- Many more Chinese settle in Taiwan, dominating some areas.
- French attempt naval base at Keelung, during Sino-French War (1884-5). Expelled by natives.
- Qing Chinese retry in Taiwan.
  - Establish Taipei as new capital and try to modernize.
  - First railroad in China, started on Taiwan.



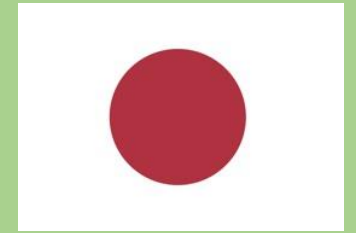
Dutch map of Formosa (Taiwan)  
from this period

*[Rotated so north is top.]*





# Japanese Taiwan, 1895 - 1945

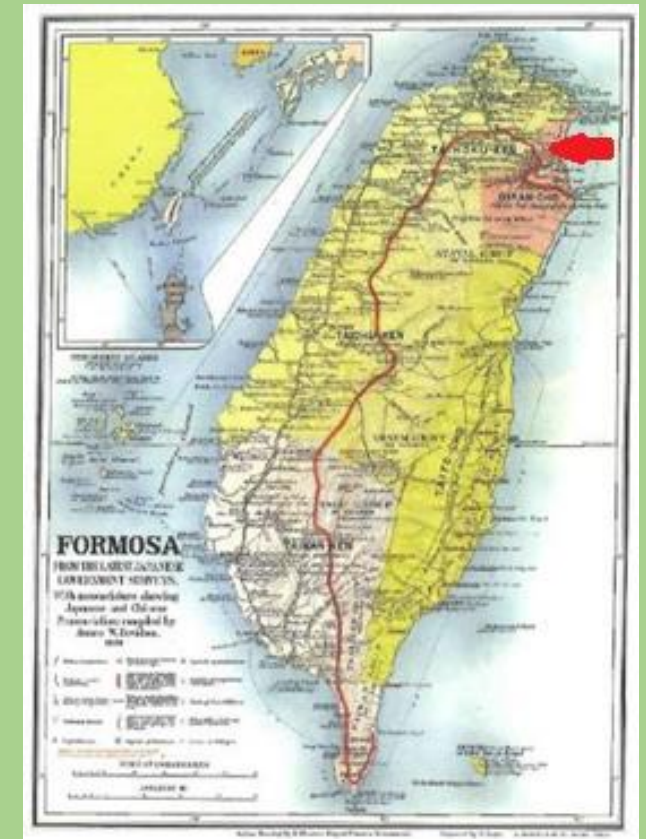


Japan flag

- Japanese expansion leads to Sino-Japanese War of 1894.
- Annexes Taiwan via victorious Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895.
- Control starts with military style invasion and administration.
- Local Qing officials declare Republic of Formosa, but Japanese quell this and try to deport many ethnic Chinese.
  - Some guerilla fighting lingers until 1902.
- Japanese are no more successful with natives. Retain the “savage lands” (indigenous area) outside their control.
- Declared a colony and converted to civilian style administration.
- Japanese develop local agriculture, industry, transportation, sanitation and education. All aimed at exporting goods to Japan. Sugar industry revived, since the Dutch period.
- In 1935 , start of assimilation project, trying to turn Taiwan Japanese. Many Japanese immigrate.



Republic of Formosa flag



Japanese map, red line is boundary of “savage lands”



# Taiwan through World War II

- Japan invades China (1937), starts World War II in Asia. Chinese suspend nascent civil war to repel foreign invasion.
- Taiwan is Japanese colony, becomes strategic for naval and air bases, against China and for Japanese expansion into Indo-China and East Indies.
- Immigrant Japanese and assimilated Taiwanese volunteer, more are drafted, into Japanese military.
- Later in war, U.S. forces bomb military targets on Taiwan, but Allied forces do not attack Taiwan directly.
- In the San Francisco Accords, Pacific Allies strip Japan of colonies, including Taiwan
- Japan surrenders Taiwan to Allied Forces, which grant temporary occupation to the Nationalist government, until resolution.
  - 300,000 Japanese on Taiwan are expelled.



Republic of  
China flag



Bombing of Byoritsu Oil Refinery, Taiwan

# ROC vs. PRC What's in a Name?

- Republic of China (ROC). Government founded in 1912 on the mainland, as republican replacement to overthrown imperial government.
  - Leading political party is the Kuomintang (KMT).
  - Early statesman is Sun Yat-sen. Chiang Kai-shek is later and longtime leader, mostly as a military figure.
  - This government/party is called the Nationalists in Chinese Civil War
  - Recognized diplomatically by U.S. and allies from outset
- People's Republic of China (PRC). Starts as political party: Chinese Communist Party (CCP, in English), then communist uprising led by Mao Tse tung.
  - This government/party are the Communists in Chinese Civil War
  - Dealing with internal matters and shy of alliance, PRC becomes isolated, with some foreign Communist support from USSR
- Chinese Civil War starts, skirmishing by CCP with ROC government (KMT) in 1930s.
- Both parties/governments claim sovereignty over all of China.
- Starting in 1943, both claim Taiwan also.
  - Earlier both Chiang and Mao considered it should be independent, not a Japanese colony.





# The Chinese Civil War, 1946 - 1949

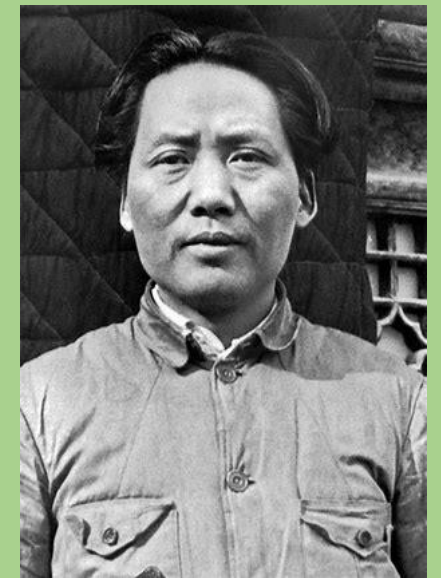
- When war with Japan ends, Chinese re-engage in hot civil war (1946) on mainland, Nationalists vs. Communists.
- Nationalists slowly lose war. Dec. 1949, the Nationalists retreat to Taiwan as a last stand, aided by the U.S. military.
- No armistice ends Chinese Civil War, fighting just stops across separation of Taiwan Strait.
- Two Chinese governments start long term stand-off.
- Nationalists try some forays to mainland in the 1950s, to re-take all of China, but are repelled. Communists become preoccupied ruling mainland and Cultural Revolution.
- Nationalists take firm control of Taiwan
  - 1.8 million Chinese immigrants accompany ROC/KMT
  - Decisive demographic swing in Taiwan population toward Han Chinese



Chiang Kai-shek, leader of the ROC and Kuomintang (Nationalists)



Nationalist troops boarding boat in retreat to Taiwan,



Mao Tse tung, leader of the CCP (Communists)

# KMT Settlement of Taiwan, Another View

- For ROC/KMT retreating from Chinese Civil War, Taiwan is a refuge.
  - U.S. supports the preservation of the ROC government
- Yet, more than 6 million people of mixed ancestry already inhabit Taiwan.
  - Their latest polity, more than a generation, is Japanese (as a colony).
  - Many feel they lost World War II to U.S. and allies (including the ROC).
  - No connection to Chinese Civil War, “not our war.” Rather something far away, a dispute on the mainland.
  - Arrival of ROC/KMT seems like another serial occupation by foreigners.
  - What they wish is autonomy, not a new external regime.
- This divided sentiment lingers into today’s domestic policy among political parties.



Army parade in Taipei, under martial law, 1949



Proposed new flag for Taiwan



# Taiwan in the later 20<sup>th</sup> Century

- Martial law declared under pressure to defend against Communists further
- The pre-war recognition of ROC government in U.N. and most non-Communist countries does not change, despite PRC controlling whole mainland.
- Then U.N. changes recognition to PRC in 1971. Most countries follow.
- A pre-condition of all foreign relations for PRC is stopping recognition of the ROC.
- Most western countries retain some unofficial relations with ROC of Taiwan.
- A diplomatic awkwardness is continuing rule by martial law in Taiwan, which has authoritarian, suppressive tone.
- Taiwan's economy booms, as one of the "Asian Tigers." Focused on manufacturing for export.
- Martial Law ends (1987), but KMT control remains authoritarian.



Countries with relations to Taiwan. Green is official, Blue is unofficial.

# Taiwan into 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- 1996 election is transition to multi-party representative democracy.
  - Federal structure already exists in modern times.
- Unicameral legislature, with president as executive.
- While multi-party, two coalitions vie in politics:
  1. “Pan Blues” led by historic Kuomintang (KMT).
  2. “Pan Greens” led by Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).
- Large political issue in Taiwan is re-unification with PRC (Pan Blues) or lasting independence (Pan Greens).
- Idea that ROC will retake mainland mostly over.
- In remarkably short timeframe, Taiwan becomes 1<sup>st</sup> world country and economy.
- Taiwan’s ethnic mix is mostly peaceful now, embracing democratic government to work out issues.



Lee Teng-hui, KMT, first democratically elected president, 1996-2000.



Tsai Ling-wen, DPP  
(first woman president)  
2016-2024



Lai Ching-te “William”,  
DDP, president-elect,  
Inaug. May 2024



# Environmental Extremes

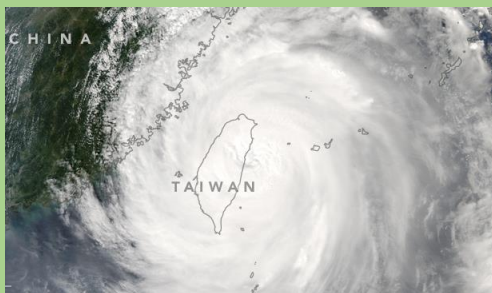
- Due to tectonic upheaval, Taiwan has earthquakes.
  - Frequent small tremors, barely noticed
  - Yet, like California, if a big one occurs, damage follows.
- The island(s) is in a “typhoon alley”, so has big storms.
  - A few cyclonic storms in a distinct season
  - Like Florida and hurricanes (typhoon is Pacific name for ocean cyclones)
  - Torrential rain and storm surges cause flooding
- Both earthquakes and typhoons can trigger landslides in the steep terrain of much of the island(s).
- The Taiwanese build for and learn to live with these events, mostly unphased.



Earthquake damage



Typhoon sky (storm approaching)



Typhoon Fung-wong, satellite image, a direct hit



Typhoon surf on breakwater of Toucheng Harbor



Torrential rain, with street flooding



Landslide over a highway



# Yilan City

- Yilan City founded in 1810
  - Qing officials built wall around a village site, thus expanding into the Yilan Plain and Kavalan indigenous area.
  - Fertile Yilan Plain was good for farming rice and clay deposits for brick making. Coastal fishing was also important.
- Japanese developed Yilan further, including a railroad line.
- Nationalist Chinese reorganized Taiwan counties in 1946 (after Japanese surrender), Yilan County created and Yilan City named county seat.
- City grew steadily in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- HsuehShan Tunnel finished in 2006
  - Opens a good road connection to Taipei
  - Brings further economic diversification and growth.



Historic Chen He Cheng Kiln Factory,  
(brick works) built 1831



Yilan County flag



Modern rice fields near Yilan City





# Yilan City & Taiwan: Population Density

- Yilan City is different from Rockville in population density.

Population Density, people per sq. mile:

In U.S.A.		Diff.	In Taiwan	
Rockville 13.57 sq. mi.	4,545		55%	Yilan City 11.53 sq. mi.
Maryland 12,407 sq. mi.	487	28%	Taiwan 13,892 sq. mi.	1,707
New Jersey most dense	1,018	60%	“	“
Wash. DC urban capitol	10,090	40%	Taipei urban capitol	25,200

- The reason: Taiwan among most densely populated places on earth.
- Taiwan ranks 17<sup>th</sup> (of 193) worldwide.
  - Most ahead are single mega city places (Hong Kong) or small islands (Bahrain). Only Bangladesh or Barbados are comparable countries ahead.
  - Even comparable near tropic islands are less dense: Sri Lanka is 865/sq. mi., Hispanola (Haiti+Dominican Republic) is 745/sq. mi., Hainan China is close in size and culture, but density is 722/sq. mi. These are all perceived as dense; Taiwan doubly more so.



# Yilan Places: City Building

- The City Building (City Hall) is a busy office building, administering city governance.
  - The city government has an elected mayor and council, and professional manager (called the Secretary General).
  - The building style is cubic modernist, (reinforced) concrete, made to withstand earthquakes and typhoons like many Taiwanese buildings.

Façade  
and  
portico



Photo: David Hill

2023 Rockville delegation greeted in the front portico. Mayors Newton and Chen center (in blue). Sec. Genl. Lin far right.



Photo: Denise Chou

Mayors in the courtyard (Jimmy Liao themed artwork)



Photo: Drew Powell



# Yilan Places: Yilan Railway Station

- Opened 1919
  - Japanese Imperial style
- Redecorated forest motif
  - Current appearance







# Yilan Places: Hsuehshan Tunnel

- Road tunnel connecting Yilan and Taipei, under Xueshan Mountain Range.
  - Longest tunnel in Taiwan at 8 miles.
  - Double bore, multiple sections, highway style, Route 5.
  - Reduces road travel time, from two+ hours of winding mountain route, to half an hour, of highway driving
  - Opens Yilan County and City to better integration with capital and west island.
  - Now many Yilan residents commute to Taipei for work and business.



Taipei 101:  
tallest building  
in the world  
2004-2010.



main Hsuehshan Tunnel west portal



... western segmented section



Map, east end of Hsuehshan Tunnel route



# Yilan Places: Riverside Park

- Riverside Park is a linear park, loosely the Dongshan River banks, through the city.
  - Provides open and green space, plus park amenities, through urban setting.
  - Also serves an infrastructure purpose to contain river flooding (e.g. surging typhoon run-off) with levees and overflow margins.



Riverside Park zags through the cityscape.



Photo: David Hill

Dragon Boat Festival races, on the river, in the park.



Green space and Yilan Bridge



# Yilan Places: Zhaoying Temple

- “Temple of the Fisherman”
  - Devoted to Mazu, Sea Goddess, protector of seafarers
  - Built in 1808.
  - Daoguang style.
  - Temple moved in 1834 to accommodate better square and add wings to expand.
  - Venue for civic events.
  - Now in bustling city urban scape.







# Yilan Places: Natl. Center for Traditional Arts

- National cultural center for active traditional artists (in Wujie)
  - Trains skills and methods to preserve them
  - Provides display and sales places for traditional arts and crafts
  - Shops laid out in old street style like a whole village of craft places



Entrance to the shop streets



Photo: David Hill

Artisan making lacquered woven bamboo bowls



Photo: Denise Chou

At the front sign, Rockville 2023 delegation and YSCC hosts.

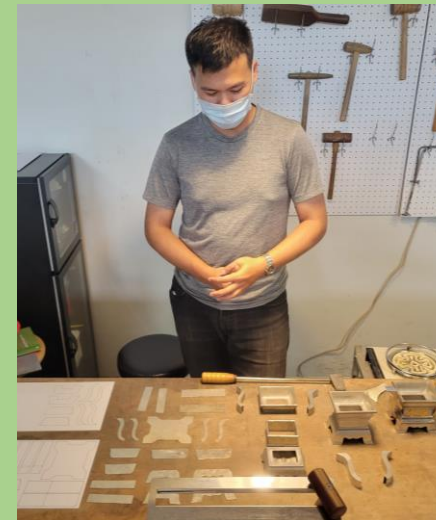


Photo: David Hill

Tinsmith at work table



Photo: David Hill

A puppet master explains the story and show





# Yilan Places: Lanyang Museum

- Natural History and Cultural exhibits of the Yilan Plain and Lanyang River area.
- Opened 2010
  - Wushi Harbor inlet (in Toucheng)
  - Design mimics “cuestas”, geologic upheaved ridge common to east coast Taiwan



Photo: Drew Powell







# Yilan Places: Markets

- Yilan City preserves an Asian market tradition for some merchandising
  - Outdoor market near train station
  - Evening food and entertainment

Diudiudang Forest market



Luodong night market



Dongmen night market



Contrast: commercial street



Fishmonger's market stall (seafood is plentiful and good)



# Yilan Places: Kavalan Whiskey Distillery



Front portico entrance of Kavalan Distillery

- King Car Co. produces Kavalan whiskey
  - Named for Yilan indigenous tribe
  - Notable international award-winning whiskey
  - A local cultural pride product
  
- During 2019 Yilan City delegation visit to sign Sister City agreement, celebratory toasts made with Kavalan whiskey



Distilling room with stills



Celebratory whiskey at Glenview

RSCC, Yilan Comm. website



# Yilan Places: the Coast

- Eastern edge of Yilan Co. is ocean coast.  
Yilan City is close to coast.

- Boating excursions
  - Dolphin and whale watching
- Hiking on shore, hills and islands
- Beaches
  - Swimming and sunbathing
  - Surfing and para-sailing



Toucheng coast



Yuanyangsea boating, view to Guishan Is.

Photo: David Hill



Guishan Is. sunrise



Neipi Beach



Waiao Beach (black sand)



# 再見宜蘭市 [Goodbye Yilan City]



View from the mountainous rim of the Yilan Plain, southeast to the ocean (Yilan City is center right)