

U.S. Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs in Taiwan (1951-1970)

Ena Chao

Abstract

From 1951 through 1970, U.S. support was indispensable for the survival of the Nationalist government on Taiwan; consequently, American culture was the predominant foreign influence on Taiwan's society during the period. The Mutual Security Act, the Smith-Mundt Act, and the Fulbright Act were the three major instruments of the U.S. Government for conducting cultural diplomacy activities in Taiwan. U.S. educational exchange programs had four objectives: (a) promoting knowledge and confidence in American political, economic and cultural institutions and foreign policy among people in Taiwan and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia; (b) promoting the prestige of the Republic of China and strengthening abroad its image as the repository of traditional Chinese culture and the true representative of contemporary Chinese civilization; (c) advancing the educational, cultural, political and economic development that was important for Taiwan's drive for modernization; d) cultivating a sizable pro-American leadership in Taiwan and nurturing the special friendship between the U.S. and native Taiwanese leaders.

Key Words: educational exchange, American cultural diplomacy, Fulbright programs, AID, Cold War