

China

Rice

There are two ways to identify the Chinese government in 1919: as a Republic, or as warlordism. In 1911, a revolution had overthrown the Qing Empire, and a Republic had been established. The first President of this Republic was Yuan Shikai, who attempted to create a strong central government. This led to an attempt to be enthroned as emperor in 1915, which had the overtones of a dictatorship (Tanner 2009, 429). These plans met with great resistance, and Yuan died in June 1916. This is where the problems of determining the regime type for the Chinese government begin.

The national government that existed after the death of Yuan was recognized by foreign powers and was able to raise loans. However, it “was otherwise powerless, a pawn for major warlords to fight over” (Tanner 2009, 429). Accordingly, we code China as being under warlordism from 1919 to 1928 (until Chiang Kai-Shek came to power). Since each President had the backing of a different set of warlord cliques (and were overthrown as these cliques gained and lost power), we do not code each transition as a SOLS change. The Worldstatesmen.org does not provide a SOLS for any of the leaders in this period (until Chiang Kai-Shek), which is probably due to the fact that they were elected based on their backing from various warlord ‘cliques.’ It seems that there was no central government capable of managing foreign affairs (although China was involved in quite a number of international disputes during this period and someone must have been running the military and foreign policy). We code a military-single party hybrid regime from 1928 to 1937 while Chiang Kai-Shek was in power. We then code un-established autocratic regime for the rest of the pre-1945 period. This was the period of Japanese puppet government rule. (GWF start coding China in 1945, and code the 1945-49 period as warlordism).

In 1919, the “President” of the Republic of China was Hsu Shih-Chang, who had been in office since 1918. He remained in power until he was overthrown in 1922. Li Yuan-Hung, who had been President from 1916-1917 was reinstalled in office at that time. However, a year later, in 1923, Li was overthrown and replaced by T’sao K’un (also transliterated as Cao Kun). T’sao remained in office until he too was overthrown in a coup in 1924. The new President who was installed after T’sao was Tuan Ch’i-jui. He remained in office for eighteen months (from November 1924 to April 1926), before being overthrown by Chang Tso-lin (also written as Zhang Zuolin), who had previously been the warlord ruling Manchuria.

At the same time, Sun Yat-sen had created a rival government in Southern China, led by a coalition of his party, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the new Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Upon Sun’s death in 1925, the question of leadership of the KMT was split between three individuals. One of them, Chiang Kai-shek, was the leader of the Kuomintang’s National Army. Chiang quickly established his dominance over the party (if not his official leadership), and sent the National Army forward to defeat the warlords of Northern China and reunite the country. This war against Chang Tso-lin’s forces resulted in a victory for Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, and created a new united Chinese government. Chiang Kai-shek assumed the title of “Chairman of the National Government)

Following our regional expert’s suggestion, we code SOLS change for the entry of Chiang Kai-shek in 1928. We consider that the warlord period ended in 1928 with his victory in the North. Chiang Kai-shek had a very different basis of support than previous warlord-backed

leaders during the period. He definitely relied upon his military backing (as he had been the Commander of the National Army), which would make his government at least partly military. Chiang also quickly executed or exiled much of the CCP leadership and membership, and used the KMT to secure his power. Within the KMT, he was supported by a variety of factions, and used these factions to remain in overall control of the party. We classify Chiang Kai-shek's government as a military/single-party hybrid regime since the KMT in this period meets many of Geddes' criterion for a single-party state government (e.g. it existed before Chiang took power, it was organized to fight for a cause, Chiang was not from the same family as Sun Yat-sen, etc.). (Note: we notice that the KMT does not seem to have had control over the entire country.)

In 1931, Northern China was invaded by the Japanese, who began by taking over Manchuria. Chiang Kai-shek's government attempted a combination of appeasement and military resistance to the advancing Japanese forces, but by 1937 had no choice but to escalate hostilities into a full-fledged War of Resistance. At this time, the Kuomintang's military forces combined with CCP forces in an uneasy truce to fight the invaders. The Worldstatesmen.org lists an individual named Lin Sen as replacing Chiang in his position of Chairman in 1931. The spreadsheet, however, lists Chiang Kai-shek as being in power until 1937, then as being replaced by Wang Kemin, who was the acting Chairman of the Provisional National Government (the collaborationist government created by the Japanese).

Wang Kemin was replaced by Wang Jingwei who was officially appointed by the Japanese as the President of the new National Government located in Nanjing (the Provisional National Government had been located at Peiping). Both were Japanese collaborators and operated in the area occupied by the Japanese. Wang Jingwei had actually been an active member of the Kuomintang who was often in competition with Chiang, and therefore decided to join the Japanese and have a chance at gaining power for himself (Tanner 2009, 477). It should be noted that Chiang maintained power over a rival government located in the non-occupied part of China during this time. Wang Jingwei died in November 1944, and was replaced by Chen Gongbo as "Acting" President. It was during Chen's tenure in office that Japan surrendered and the Sino-Japanese War ended.

The Sino-Japanese war continued until 1945, and became increasingly tied to the struggles in WWII. With American assistance, Chiang Kai-shek's troops were able to defeat Japan (which soon collapsed after the end of the World War), and he returned to office, thus ending the collaborationist occupation government. This return to power, according to the coding rules, is not classified as a SOLS change.

In 1945, at the end of World War II, China was caught up with its own internal conflict: the Nationalists against the Communists. Chen Gongbo stays in office until August that year. Archigos codes no effective leader of China until Chiang Kai-shek assumes office in December 1946. The Nationalists, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, were almost universally recognized as being China's official government at the time (Wright 2001, 143). Though the United States, among other nations, attempted to mediate between the Communists (under the leadership of Mao Tse-Tung) and the Nationalists, negotiations were largely unsuccessful. US General George Marshall led the final negotiation attempts in 1947, which resulted in a tentative agreement that was broken shortly thereafter. Marshall left China, and Chiang Kai-shek continued his attempts to defeat the Communists. However, he spread his forces too thin and was quickly outmaneuvered by the Communists (Wright 2001, 144). On October 1, 1949, Mao, from

Beijing, proclaimed that the Communists were victorious and celebrated the founding of the new People's Republic of China (SOLS change).

From 1949 to the present day, Geddes classifies China as a single-party state (the single party being the Communist Party of China, the only legal party). There have not been any SOLS changes since 1949. However, the leader (and the title of the leader) has changed several times. Mao died on September 9, 1976. After his death, there was some confusion within the CPC as to who would assume leadership of the party. That role eventually fell to Deng Xiaoping, who immediately set to work reversing some of Mao's more ruinous policies and dismantled the cult of personality around Mao, while also liberalizing China's economy to some extent. Deng never assumed the title of "Chairman of the Communist Party of China", but instead was referred to as a "de facto leader" and "Paramount Leader". It was clear in this time that he was the individual who had the most influence in the party (Wright 2001, 173). Upon Deng's death, in February 1997, leadership of China was taken over by Jiang Zemin, who had consolidated his power by assuming the roles of party head, president of the People's Republic of China, and chairmanship of the Military Affairs Commission before the death of Deng (Wright 2001, 182).

In 1992, Deng informally designated Hu Jintao as the leading figure of the "fourth generation leaders". This designation was manifested in Hu being selected as the new General Secretary of the CPC ten years later, in 2002 (United States Department of State). In 2003, Hu was elected President of the PRC at the 10th National People's Congress (officially signifying his assumption of leadership, and therefore the date of the leadership change). He was given the Chairmanship of the CPC and control over the People's Liberation Army in September 2004. Hu remains in power today.

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