

China

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At the start of the period under investigation central control of China's vast provinces had long disintegrated. China was governed by warlords, which controlled parts of the country with personal armed forces (Ch'en 1968). Consequently, the national government in Beijing was unstable and did not exercise independent central control during the warlord era (Chi 1976, Nathan 1999). Despite these troubles, China would occasionally have a parliament installed and politics would at times show some resemblance of constitutional rule. The regimes in place in the early 20th century relied on a fragmented military, but China's political landscape during the warlord period is foremost characterized by strong men and personal ties, not military bureaucracies. In warlordist China, the power of the Beijing government may lie with the presidency, but the power over the presidency lies with the warlords. Before the National KMT came to power under Chiang Kai-shek, presidents came to power in rapid succession (Nathan 1999).

Because rulers changed relatively quickly and the government was generally fragile, we code China as warlordism from 1919 to 1928 (until Chiang Kai-Shek came to power) and we do not code any SOLS changes during this period. For the period when Chiang Kai-Shek was in power (1928-37), we code a military-single party hybrid regime. Then we code un-established autocratic regime for the rest of the pre-1945 period. This was the period of a Japanese puppet government rule.

In 1919, Hsu Shih-ch'ang was president of the Beijing government, as Hsu Shih-ch'ang had been deemed acceptable as a compromise by both of the rival Chihli and Fengtien cliques. However, in 1922 the Chihli faction took control of the government; they forced Hsu into retirement and pushed for Li Yuan-hung to become president. Although the SOLS does change from combined Chihli and Fengtien faction to Chihli hegemony over the Beijing government, and Li Yuan-hung was not Hsu Shih-ch'ang's pre-designated successor (Sheridan 1999; Nathan 1976), we do not code a SOLS change upon the installment of Li because the entire period is characterized by warlordism.

The Chihli warlords did not allow Li to have actual power, however. Li's technocratic government lasted for a year before warlord pressures forced him to resign. Li's political adversary T'sao K'un came to power by buying votes in parliament (Nathan 1976). Although Li had come to power with support of the Chihli faction, anti-Chihli groups supported Li against T'sao K'un and sought to unite China under Chihli rule (Nathan 1976, Sheridan 1999).

T'sao K'un's government did not last long either. Within a year, the renegade Chihli general Feng occupied Beijing and deposed T'sao K'un after receiving a Japanese bribe. With the bribe Japan sought to save their Chinese ally Chang Tso-lin (Sheridan 1999). The coup not only broke the military momentum of the Chihli faction, but led to their military defeat as well. The defeat of the Chihli changed the power distribution in Beijing and Tuan was called to become the new president. Chang Tso-lin joined forces with his rival Wu P'ei-fu against Feng and by 1926 they had defeated Feng and were in control of the central government. Chang became the new president (Sheridan 1999).

However, in the south a challenge to Chang's hegemony had been growing. The nationalist Kuomintang, KMT, initially in concert with the communists, had seized control of the shadow government of Canton. The Canton-based Nationalists and Communists had grown in power, by 1926 they took their revolution to the North, and in 1928 Chiang Kai-shek took

control of the Beijing government. The communists were purged from the revolutionary movement and China would become the theater for a long struggle between the nationalists and the communists. “There now were three capitals in China: the internationally recognized warlord regime in Beijing; the Communist and left-wing Guomindang regime at Wuhan; and the right-wing civilian-military regime at Nanjing, which would remain the Nationalist capital for the next decade” (Library of Congress).

Coding China’s regime type under Chiang Kai-shek is tricky. On the one hand, this was a country torn apart by fighting factions with very little institutional consistency. On the other hand, the country is coded as being led by Chiang Kai-shek, who was the leader of the KMT, which existed well before Chiang Kai-shek (and was thus not his personalist party) and would later become the single-party regime in place in Taiwan. We classify Chiang Kai-shek’s government as a military/single-party hybrid regime. This is because he definitely relied upon his military backing (as he had been the Commander of the National Army), while 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.). Also, 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.

Chiang would rule a divided China until the invasion of Japanese forces in the second Sino-Japanese war would restore the hostile alliance of the Communists and Nationalists. Following the Japanese occupation of the coastal provinces, Japanese puppet governments would control the government in Beijing, first under Wang Kemin and later under Wang Jingwei until Japan was defeated in 1946 (Wilbur 1983). We code no SOLS change for those, since this can be seen as equivalent to foreign occupation.

Chen Gongbo leaves office in August, 1945, and Archigos codes no effective leader of China until Chiang Kai-Shek assumes office in December, 1946. The late 1940’s are a period of civil struggle in which the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT - also known as Guomindang or GMD) of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong) vie for control of the country (Westad 2009).

Since 1949 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been firmly in control of most of mainland China. The 1949 leadership transition from the Chiang Kai-shek of the Nationalist KMT to Mao Tse-Tung of the communist CCP is coded as a major SOLS change. Given that China is coded as a single-party autocracy by Geddes starting in 1949, we code no further SOLS changes until then end of the observation period in 2008.

(However, there is reason to believe that there may have been some struggles over leadership that may indicate a change in leadership support that is not captured by our coding rules. For example, it is striking that Deng Xiaoping was out of grace right before the death of Mao and was able to force Mao’s successor Hua Guofeng, who was in control of all of the important party positions, into retirement a few years later.¹ Deng Xiaoping would thereafter act as the de facto

¹ Dittmer (1978) is interesting because it argues that there exist two types of power base within Chinese politics a formal based on position and an informal base on “constituencies” that are cultivated outside of formal ties. It seems that Deng Xiaoping was able to harness these constituencies to gain power. Due to informal relations between top officials and their constituencies, Chinese politics is as interesting as it is elusive. Though it might be possible to find more information on the powerbases of leaders such as Hua Gofeng, Deng Xiapeng, it may not be possible to

ruler until his death 17 years later (Goldstein 1994; Dittmer 1990). Moreover, sources seem to suggest that the failed coup of the Gang of Four following Mao's death may well have been a successful coup by Hua Guofeng against the Gang of Four (See for example Dittmer 1990). Dittmer (1978) speaks at length of the powerbases of the four which as personal favorites of Mao where both narrow and shallow and therefore vulnerable after Mao's death. Though Dittmer (1978; 1990; & 1995) refers to a coup by Hua Guofeng he does not explicitly discuss the process. Onate (1978) provides us with some details of the arrest of the gang of four; it seems that the arrests were well planned and executed and known only to Hua Gofeng and a few close associates until after their arrests after which charges of an alleged coup attempt by the four were made. It seems that there is reason to view the outcomes of the high levels of inter-elite conflict in the period of 1973-1976 as a potential SOLS change.)

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capture these power changes in simple coding rules. What is possible is to look at whether a power struggle takes place in the change from one leader to another and if so qualitatively examine whether these leaders draw upon a different power base.

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