

The Boxers' attacks on the concessions prompted the foreign powers to respond with what is known as the invasion of the Eight-Nation Alliance. All eight of the foreign powers present in China—the United States, along with Austro-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia—took part.

The Qing declared war on the foreigners, but the eight responded forcefully. In the end, the Qing had to accept the Boxer Protocol, a treaty framed by the Eight-Nation Alliance. It stipulated the execution of certain high officials, the imprisonment of others, the stationing of foreign troops in China, and the razing of some Chinese military fortifications.

After all this, the court actually introduced some reforms. It abolished exams based on Confucius' teachings, for instance. China also modernized its schools and the military, as the Japanese had done. The nation even experimented with constitutional government. But things really did move too fast for many Chinese. A backlash followed. So did the establishment of new armies. And that, in turn, gave rise to warlordism.

### **The Warlord Period of Chinese History Between 1911 and 1928**

After the reform movement's failure and the Boxer Rebellion fiasco, many Chinese felt they needed more than change. They wanted a revolution. They found a revolutionary leader in Sun Yat-sen. He was a republican activist who had a great following among overseas Chinese. His movement gained support, including from some military officers.

Sun's idea was the "Three Principles of the People"—nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood. He wanted to end foreign domination over China. He wanted a **republic**—*a form of government run by the people generally through elected representatives*—not a monarchy. And he wanted to help the people prosper by regulating land ownership and the means of production, such as farms or factories. In other words, his idea of "the people's livelihood" was a form of socialism.

The Republican Revolution of 1911 broke out 10 October in Hubei Province, and quickly spread throughout the country. On 1 January 1912, in Nanjing, Sun became the **provisional**—*temporary*—president of the new Chinese republic. But back in Beijing, the commander in chief of the imperial army, Yuan Shikai, had taken control. He was the strongest regional military leader at the time. He demanded that China be united under a government based in Beijing, with him in charge. This would keep the infant republic from breaking down in civil war, or falling under foreign rule, he argued. Sun assented. And so on 10 March 1912 Yuan Shikai became provisional president of the Republic of China.



Tourists visit the defensive 4,000-mile-long Great Wall of China at Si Ma Tai, a section of the wall 100 miles northeast of Beijing.

Photo by R. Norman Matheny / © 1990 The Christian Science Monitor

The ancient wall was aimed at foreigners from the west, but in the twentieth century, the threat to China came from the Japanese in the east.

He didn't share Sun Yat-sen's ideas about democracy, though, and tried to name himself emperor. Yuan Shikai's plan didn't work, however. And after he died in 1916, he left the republican government in tatters. This led to an era of **warlords**—rulers who exercise both military and civil authority in the absence of a strong central government. China had a very hard time under these brutal rulers, who were continually forming and re-forming alliances.

### The Development of the People's Republic of China Under Mao Zedong

By the 1920s Sun Yat-sen was attempting another revolution. He established a base in the south of China and tried to put the pieces of the broken country back together again. He organized the Kuomintang (KMT) (also spelled Guomindang), the Chinese Nationalist People's Party. In addition, he formed an alliance with the Chinese Communist Party. When he died in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek took over the KMT. He brought most of south and central China under its control.

In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek turned on his Communist allies. He executed many of their leaders and drove the rest into the mountains of eastern China. Then in 1934 the KMT drove the Communists even out of their mountain bases.

And so the Communists began what's known as their "Long March" to the northwestern province of Shansi. There they established a guerrilla base at Yanan.

Mao Zedong came to power during this period.

The two parties—the Communists and the KMT—struggled for years, either openly or secretly. This continued even during Japan's 14-year invasion of China (1931–1945).

During this time, the two rival parties were supposedly allies. After Japan's defeat during World War II, open warfare between the Communists and Nationalists resumed.

By 1949 the Communists occupied most of the country. Chiang fled with the remnants of his forces to Taiwan. There he proclaimed the city of Taipei to be China's "provisional capital." He vowed to reconquer the mainland. To this day, Taiwan refers to itself as the Republic of China.

On 1 October 1949 Mao proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The country was exhausted by decades of war and upheaval. Its economy was in shambles and its transport links disrupted. Chairman Mao swiftly introduced a new political and economic order, based on those of the Soviet Union. The Communist state he founded created the China of today.

### fastFACT

You may have seen Mao Zedong's name spelled as "Mao Tse-tung." That's because, as with Arabic, there are different systems for spelling Chinese words in English. The most commonly accepted system today is called *pinyin*. Here are some old spellings, for example, together with the newer, *pinyin* spelling:

Peking—Beijing

Nanking—Nanjing

Teng Hsiao-peng—Deng Xioping

Kung Fu-tsu (Confucius)—Kung Fu Zi

Ching Dynasty—Qing Dynasty

Kuomintang—Guomindang

## Causes of the Shift From Isolation to Openness in Japan

Legend traces Japan's founding back to 600 BC and the Emperor Jimmu. According to legend, he was a descendant of the sun goddess and an ancestor of the current imperial family of Japan.

Early in the fifth century, the Japanese court officially adopted the Chinese writing system. In the following century, the Japanese adopted Buddhism. These two events transformed Japanese culture. They marked the beginning of a long period of Chinese influence.

Like China, Japan has gone through some profound changes in its relations with the West over the past few centuries. In fact, the story of Japan's first contact with the West begins with a ship en route to China.