

under effective imperial control. Ironically, the triumph of China over her traditional enemies on the Inner Asian frontier was a prelude to the humiliation of the Ch'ing empire at the hands of Europeans invading from the sea.

In the history of China during the 19th and early 20th century, two factors combined to render the empire weak and apparently defenceless. The vigorous European drive for markets and trade, a result of the Industrial Revolution and associated technological advances, coincided with a period of administrative decay and rigidity within the Ch'ing Empire itself, now far from its vigorous beginnings. The Opium Wars of 1840 and 1860, a successful attempt by Western powers to force open the gates of China, marked the beginning of the end of the Ch'ing Empire. In the years that followed, civil war and the great rebellions of the Taipings and the Boxers rendered the government of China almost impotent. Along the coasts the representatives of Europe vied with one another to gain concessions for trade, and treaty ports for settlement.

B. MODERN CHINA, 1911 - 1949

The fall of the Empire in October 1911 heralded nearly half a century of political and military confusion within the country. The regime was able to introduce new ideas and techniques, but Sun Yat-sen and the revolutionaries who founded the new government had few military resources to maintain their authority in the country at large. Within a matter of years China was divided among rival war-lords, and whole provinces were effectively independent of the capital. In 1926 Chiang Kai-shek, successor to Sun Yat-sen as leader of the Nationalist party, launched the Northward Expedition from Canton and was able to reunite the country, at least temporarily, under the Nationalists.