



Language

Although the Communists came to power in 1949 after decades of guerrilla warfare in rural areas, there is also a significant tradition of nonviolent resistance in China. Merchants shutting down their businesses as a political protest dates back at least to the 18th century (see Sharp, [The Politics of Nonviolent Action](#) [1] ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [2]) , vol. 2, p. 236), and national consumer boycotts against Japanese oppression took place in 1908, 1915 and 1919. Students and workers demonstrated and went on strike to demand national independence from foreign colonial intervention in 1919 (during the May the Fourth Movement) and again in 1925 – see:

- Chesneaux, Jean , [The Chinese Labor Movement 1919-1927](#) [3] Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, , 1968 , and
- Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N., [Student Protests in Twentieth Century China](#) [4] Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, , 1991 .

The period of Civil War from 1945-1949 also saw protests by intellectuals, students and workers against the increasingly corrupt regime of Chiang Kai-shek.

Since the Communist takeover of 1949 there have been three periods of significant dissent and protest followed by a Party crackdown on all opposition: 1956-57; 1976-79; and May-June 1989. A fourth period began in the 1990s, when the increasing emphasis on the market combined with cautious steps towards political liberalization have allowed wider dissent, which is still continuing.

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