

# Qingdao (Tsingtao)

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## History

It was January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1898 that Germany was able to coerce China into leasing them 553 square kilometers of land in Northeast China for 99 years. This occurred after the killing of two missionaries gave the German military grounds to launch a military offensive in northeastern China.

The most important city in this lease, at least for the Germans was the city of Qingdao (Steinmetz 435).

The colony was to become to the first European colony on mainland China, as Taiwan (Japan), Hong Kong (Britain) and Macau (Portugal) were all islands, though in the case of the latter two cities, the colonies would eventually come to expand onto the mainland.

Before the outbreak of [World War I](#) (1914-1918), ships of the German naval forces under [Admiral Count von Spee](#) were located at central Pacific colonies on routine missions.

After a minor British naval attack on the German colony on Shandong in 1914, [Japanese Empire](#) troops occupied the city and the surrounding province during the [Siege of Tsingtao](#) after Japan's declaration of war on Germany in accordance with the [Anglo-Japanese Alliance](#). China protested Japan's violation of her neutrality but did and was not able to interfere in the military operations.

The decision of the [Paris Peace Conference](#) and the [Versailles Treaty](#) negotiations not to restore Chinese rule over the previous foreign concessions in Qingdao after the Great War triggered the [May Fourth Movement](#) (May 4, 1919) of anti-imperialism, nationalism and cultural identity in China.

The city reverted to Chinese rule in December 1922, under control of the [Republic of China](#) (R.O.C.) established 1912 after the [Chinese Revolution](#) the year before. However, Japan maintained its economic dominance of the railway and the province as a whole.