A MODERN HISTORY OF CHINA

1912 - July 2023

TAI

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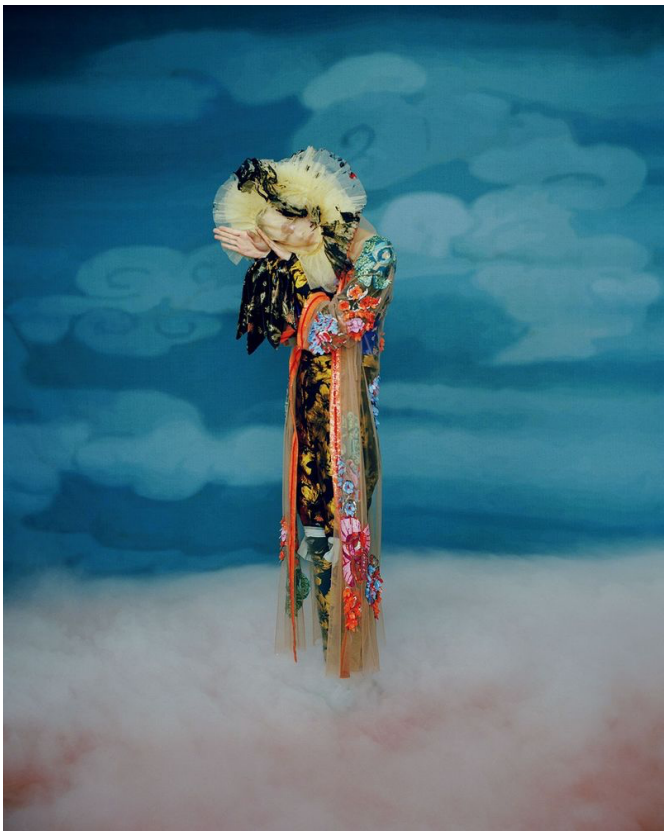
To those who have inspired it

ABOUT THE COVER



Moon Gazing (2023)

Photography by Leslie Zhang
Styling by Lucia Liu

This beautiful photograph is by renown Shanghai-based contemporary Chinese fashion photographer Leslie Zhang 张家诚.

Leslie Zhang's photos are a poetic portrait of contemporary Chinese culture.

"I try to contain everything in a tight little universe of my coherent thoughts on beauty," he says. It is this singular vision that traverses the traditional borders between eastern and western culture so seamlessly.

Sources:
https://www.burdockmedia.com/gallery/moon-gazing

https://www.dazeddigital.com/projects/article/44046/1/leslie-zhang-photographer-biography-dazed-100-2019-profile

Cover design by Lilia Yip

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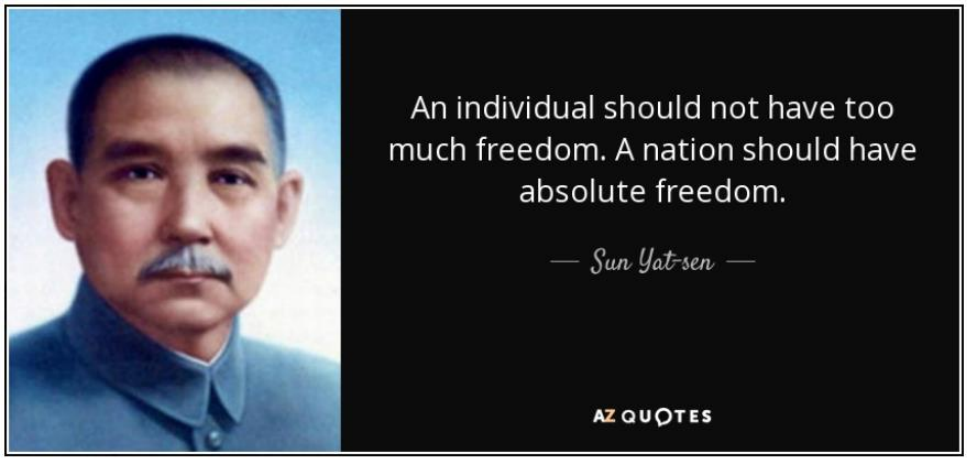
Chapter 101 – Overview of the Chinese Republic 1912 – 1949

Preamble:
My new 100 chapters of the Modern History of China is a follow-up of the 100 chapters of CCTV-6's Ancient History of China 中国通史 which I had translated over the past one over year. The last chapter of the 中国通史 covers the 1911 Revolution or Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命 which saw the abdication of the last emperor, Puyi 溥仪,

and the founding of China as a Republic by Dr. Sun Yat-sen 孙中山 on 1 January 1912.



Introduction:

This chapter gives a brief overview of China from the period from the founding of the Republic of China (ROC) in 1912 to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Soon after the declaration of the Republic in 1912, China's central authority was broken by a period of warlordism 军阀时代 (1925-28), an invasion from Japan (1937-45) and a devastating civil war (1927-37). During this entire period, China was under the authoritarian rule of Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 who headed the Kuomintang (KMT) 国民党.

After the Chinese Communist Party 中国共产党 CCP emerged victorious from the civil war, Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT retreated to Taiwan where they also controlled Penghu, Kinmen, Matsu and some other small islands. The CCP, which had taken control of the mainland, founded the People's Republic of China 中华人民共和国.

Main Story:

The **1911 Revolution** 辛亥革命 which overthrew the Qing dynasty was dated 10 October 1911. In Taiwan, this date is commemorated as the Double Ten Day, the National Day of the Republic of China (ROC)/Taiwan. In mainland China (PRC), this day is remembered as the Anniversary of the 1911 Revolution. The People's Republic of China commemorates 1 October 1949 as its national day, the date of the CCP's victory in the Chinese Civil War.

The Qing dynasty was actually overthrown by **Yuan Shikai** 袁世凯 and not **Sun Yat-sen,** as part of a negotiated deal between Sun and Yuan. Sun's military power could not match that of Yuan who was the commander of the powerful northern Beiyang Army. Sun also did not want to risk a vicious civil war. Thus although Sun Yat-sen was chosen by 18 provinces to be the first interim President of the new Republic, he handed the post to Yuan Shikai. He nevertheless managed to negotiate for Nanjing (instead of Beiping/old name for Bejing) to be the capital of the nation as a check against Yuan's power base in the north.

Yuan Shikai

Yuan Shikai (*left*) and Sun Yat-sen (*right*) with flags representing the early republic

In regard to the early multi-colored flag (above) of the Republic of China (1912-1928), the colored stripes represent the major ethnic groups in China: Red for Han Chinese, Yellow for Manchus, Blue for Mongols, White for the Hui and Black for the Tibetans.

Sun Yat-sen had founded the **Kuomintang (KMT) 国民党** together with Song Jiaoren 宋教仁, who led the KMT to victory in China's first democratic election. However, Song was assassinated in 1913 under orders from Yuan Shikai. Yuan declared himself emperor of China two years later. This move angered several provincial military provincial governors who then broke away from the Central and plunged the nation into the **Warlord Era** 军阀时代. Yuan died from poor health a year later. He was a one-year emperor.

The Beiyang government was unpopular. Unhappiness with the way the government was responding to pressures of the Western powers led to a **New Culture Movement** 新文化运动. In 1919, the Treaty of Versailles was signed between Germany and the Allied Powers, ending WWI. The German territory in China was handed over to Japan instead of back to China, which was viewed as a

betrayal of the Chinese people. The Beiyang government had secretly negotiated with Japan for a loan to fund its military campaigns against the other warlords. The outpouring of disgust for the Beiyang government and the West climaxed in the **May 4th Movement** 五四运动. Due to pressure from the movement, the government did not sign the treaty which led to deterioration in relations with the West. Against this tumultuous backdrop, Marxism gained influence and paved the way for the founding of the **Communist Party of China in 1921 (CPC) 中国共产党,** later re-named the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)**.**

Sun Yat-sen passed away in 1925 and was succeeded by **Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek** as leader of the KMT.

Despite Sun Yat-sen's dream of rebuilding China into a modern democratic society, corruption and lack of direction within the government stood in the way of significant reforms. After the death of Sun, his successor Chiang Kai-shek decided to eliminate the northern Beiyang warlords and unify the nation. In 1926, the KMT launched the Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐 against the Beiyang warlords. The KMT was assisted by the Soviet Union and the CCP. However, Chiang distrusted both. Mid-way through the Northern Expedition, Chiang got rid of the Soviet advisers and started a purge on the members of the CCP. Chiang managed to reunify China by 1928 with his capital at Nanjing, which heralded the start of the so-called **Nanjing decade (1927-37).**

Chiang Kai-shek's authoritarian rule was challenged by the Communists who remained dominant in the south. This led to the **Chinese Civil War** 国共内战 between the north and the south, Nationalists vs Communists.

The disunity within China did not go unnoticed by neighboring Japan. This island nation, pressed by a growing population and lack of natural resources, was led by a newfound militarism. In 1931, the Japanese military staged the false flag event known as the **Mukden/Manchurian Railway Incident** 九一八事变/柳条湖事件 and then seized the Manchurian city of Mukden (now Shenyang in Liaoning province).

Japanese soldiers of 29th Regiment on the Mukden West Gate

The Japanese militarists placed Puyi (the last emperor who had already abdicated) on the throne as emperor of Manchukuo (the State of Manchuria). Manchukuo was later re-named the Empire of Manchuria but was just a puppet state of the Empire of Japan. The ineffective League of Nations (predecessor to the UN), founded after the end of WWI, was unable to do anything about it. Not satisfied with just Manchuria, the Japanese pushed south along the coastal regions, eventually leading to the **Second Sino-Japanese War 抗日战争** .

Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek was more focused on eliminating the Communists than dealing with the Japanese. The powerful nationalist army led by Chiang pushed the Communists into retreat. To escape from the Nationalist Army's cincirlement, The Red Army (forerunner of the **People's Liberation Army** 中国人民解放军) under the command of **Mao Zedong** and **Zhou Enlai** undertook the arduous **Long March 长征 (1934-35).** Elements within Chiang's KMT were determined that "Chinese should not fight Chinese" and the Chinese should unite to fight the Japanese invaders. Chiang Kai-shek was kidnapped by one of his top generals, Zhang Xueliang 张学良, in the famous **Xi'an Incident 西安事变 1936**. Chiang was forced into a "KMT-CCP United Front" with his Communist enemy against the Japanese invaders.

Various armed clashes of a limited nature since the Mukden Incident in 1931 exploded into the **Second Sino-Japanese War 抗日战争 (1937-1945)** soon after the Marco Polo Bridge/Lugou Bridge Incident 卢沟桥事变 in 1937. Following the alliance between the KMT and CCP as a result of the Xi'an incident, Chinese resistance stiffened against the Japanese.

Despite that, Shanghai fell within three months followed by Nanjing (where the infamous Nanjing Massacre took place). The Chinese capital was briefly moved to Wuhan and then to Chongqing, which remained the seat of government until the end of the war in 1945.

After 1940, conflicts between the KMT and CCP re-surfaced. Chiang Kai-shek had always considered the Communists to be a greater threat than the Japanese. Tensions escalated into a full-blown war following **The New Fourth Army/South Anhui Incident 新四军事件** in January 1941. In this incident, superior KMT forces massacred a large column consisting of 10,000 marchers of the Communist New Fourth Army in the mountains of South Anhui. The massacre spelled the end of the united front between the KMT and CCP, and the Chinese Civil War 国共内战 went into high gear.

Meanwhile, the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 led to the entry of the US into the Pacific War and greater involvement of the US in China's affairs.

The US gave significant military support to the Nationalist Government. In December 1943, the Chinese Exclusion Act of the 1882 restricting the immigration of Chinese into the US was repealed. China became one of the Big Four Allies of WWII and also one of the "Four Policemen", a term referring to a security council which later became known as the UN Security Council.

WWII ended in August 1945 and the Nationalist troops of Chiang Kai-shek officiated at the surrender of the Japanese in northeast China. The Soviet Union, which had entered the war against the Japanese and had occupied Manchuria, was allowed a sphere of influence there as agreed to at the Yalta Conference in February 1945. With fellow Soviet Communists in control of northeast China, the Chinese Communists were able to arm themselves with equipment surrendered by the withdrawing Japanese army.

In 1945, following the end of WWII, the KMT and CCP headed towards an all-out conflict to determine who would be the ruler of China. With the economy devastated by war and worsened by Nationalist corruption (profiteering, speculation, hoarding, etc) and natural disasters, the nation was primed for a

change of government. Meanwhile, Taiwan and Penghu Islands were handed back to China. The US sent Marines to China to prevent a possible Soviet incursion. However, they were unpopular following the Shen Chong rape case in early 1947 involving the alleged rape of a Chinese university student in Peking by US Marines. The American Mission known as the Marshall Mission (a diplomatic mission, named after George Marshal of Marshall Plan fame, tasked to negotiate between KMT and CCP in order to create a unified Chinese government) failed and was withdrawn.

The Chinese Civil War was spreading like wild fire. The US aided the KMT with massive economic loans and weapons but no combat support. However, the demoralized and undisciplined National Revolutionary Army of the KMT proved to be no match for the highly motivated and disciplined People's Liberation Army. Although the KMT had the advantages of foreign support and superiority in numbers and weaponry, they lost the propaganda war to the Communists, who received strong support from the large rural population. **Mao Zedong's** dictum about insurgency said that his guerrilla soldiers must "move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea."

Beiping (Beijing) was lost to the Communists in January 1949 followed by Nanjing in April. Chiang Kai-shek declared martial law in May 1949 and at the same time effectuated his retreat to Taiwan together with a few hundred thousand Nationalist troops and about two million refugees (mainly from the government and business community). The remaining Nationalist troops in mainland China were either disbanded or absorbed by the PLA.

Conclusion:

On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong announced the establishment of the **People's Republic of China** 中华人民共和国 on mainland China.

Chairman Mao solemnly proclaims the founding of the People's Republic of China on the Tiananmen Square Gate rostrum in Beijing, China, on Oct. 1, 1949. [AP Photo]

On 7 December 1949, Chiang Kai-shek proclaimed Taipei to be just the temporary capital of the Republic of China, with the illusive dream that one day "I Shall Return".

Chapter 102 - The New Culture Movement 新文化运动 1910's-1920's

Preamble:

The New Culture Movement was an intellectual revolution that took place during the first decade of the Chinese Republic. It was led by intellectuals who were critical of classical Chinese ideas and had wanted to revise many aspects of Chinese culture and traditions, including Confucianism. The defeat of the Qing dynasty at numerous wars and the bullying by the foreign powers in the form of unequal treaties had caused the Chinese people to raise questions about their own destiny.

Introduction:

Reforms to modernize China had actually started from the days of the Qing dynasty's Self-Strengthening Movement/**Westernization Movement 自强运动/洋务运动** (see chapter 95) and the **1911 Revolution 辛亥革命** (chapter 99). However, the intellectuals in The New Culture Movement went one step further and wanted more drastic reforms, guided by western ideals of democracy and science. They expounded concepts of individual liberty and equality, a scientific spirit of inquiry, elevation of women's status and a pragmatic approach to the nation's problems. Vernacular literature was promoted as opposed to classical literature. Confucian texts and ancients classics were re-examined using modern, critical methods.

During the final years of the Qing dynasty, many reforms were undertaken, one of which was the scrapping of the Civil Service Imperial Examination. This opened the way for young students to study science, engineering, medicine, law, economics and military skills, etc. Many went overseas to Japan, US and Europe for studies. Upon their return, they brought home with them modern universal ideas and they became a force for modernization. Thousands of new-style educational institutions were established which help promulgate those ideas. The New Culture Movement was mainly a youth movement and affected mainly the city population rather than the rural population.

Main Story:

The old order of China saw its pinnacle during the time of the Qing dynasty **Empress Dowager, Cixi 慈禧太后**. The 1911 Revolution under **Sun Yat-sen** had changed the government but attempts to reform the old Chinese systems and traditions did not really succeed. There were even attempts to restore the old monarchy system, culminating in the attempt by **Yuan Shikai** to become the emperor of China. Yuan's death after his 100 days dream put paid to the traditional order and a new order began on the ascension. These robust literary and intellectual activities were mainly centered in two cities, Beijing and Shanghai. Beijing was home to the Peking University and Tsinghua University whereas Shanghai was home to a thriving publication industry.

In Beijing, the chancellor of the Peking University, **Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培** (a Chinese philosopher and politician), together with his dean, **Chen Duxiu 陈独秀** and the librarian, **Li Dazhao 李大钊**, were the fountainhead of the new movement. They recruited many other leading figures, such as philosopher, diplomat and politician **Hu Shih/Hu Shi 胡适**, Buddhism scholar, politician and writer Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 and historian Gu Jiegang 古街杠.

Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 founded the Chinese literary magazine New Youth which had a strong influence on the movement.

His magazine was a leading forum deliberating on the causes of China's weakness and carried propositions on what the Chinese New Culture should be. He called for "Mr Confucius" to be replaced by "Mr Science" and "Mr Democracy". Other publications which also bore deep impact were "Warning to our Youth" (敬告青年), "1916" (一九一六年), and "Our Final Awakening" (吾人最後之覺悟). Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao organized Marxist study groups and the first meeting of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). One of their followers was **Mao Zedong**.

Li Dazhao 李大钊 wrote copiously about democracy, constitutional government, individual freedom and national revival. He was one of the first Chinese leaders to become a Communist. His thoughts on the role of peasants in the Chinese Communist revolution deeply impressed Mao Zedong. He was one of the co-founders of the CCP and had promoted a united front between the CCP and the KMT. During the KMT's Northern Expedition, Li was captured by one of the warlords in Beijing and then executed.

Hu Shi 胡适 proposed the replacement of Classical Chinese with vernacular Chinese (白话文）asserting that “a dead language cannot produce a living literature”. The new format would enable people with little education to understand written texts and articles.

Shanghai, as the publishing center of China, played an important role in the new movement. Chinese newspaper journalism was modernized to international standards. Journalists and editors became an important profession. Advertising and commercial news gained in importance. Much of what was reported shaped the narratives of the New Culture Movement.

The New Culture Movement took a turn in 1919 after the convening of the Paris Peace Conference at Versailles just outside Paris (which was to lead to the signing of the **Treaty of Versailles**).

▲ Opening session of the Versailles peace conference at the Trianon Palace, January 1919.
Photograph: Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images

The purpose of the conference was to establish the terms of the peace after Germany’s defeat at WWI by the allies. It was decided that the German rights over Jiaozhou Bay 胶州湾 in Shandong was to be transferred to Japan, rather than back to China. This was an outrage for the Chinese people and nation-wide protests

broke out in which the Beijing students took the lead. This was what came to be known as the **May Fourth Movement** 五四运动.

In the May Fourth Movement, thousands of college students in Beijing protested the 1919 World War I peace treaty. The demonstration gave rise to a populist political movement that would support grassroots leaders including the People's Republic of China's first chairman, Mao Zedong. May 4, 1919, Shanghai, China. Credit: Sovfoto/Universal Images Group/UIG via Getty Images

What started as an anti-feudal cultural movement evolved into more of an anti-imperialist movement that spurred an upsurge in Chinese nationalism. It had its climax as the May Fourth Movement of 1919. Support for the movement shifted from intellectual and political elites towards a populist base (peasants and workers). As China was rocked by the turbulence of the new movement, Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 and Li Dazhao 李大钊 turned increasingly to **Marxist Communist ideology**. They would eventually found the **Communist Party of China**.

Mao Zedong had claimed that the May Fourth Movement set the stage for the **Communist Revolution**. He wrote that this movement "marked a new stage in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism" with the emergence of a new class consisting of "the working class, the student masses and the new national bourgeoisie", and it "went a step beyond the Revolution of 1911."

The New Culture Movement was thus the progenitor of the May Fourth Movement of 1919 (also known as the National Renewal Movement) which in turn was the forerunner of the Communist Revolution which saw China becoming a Communist state.

Conclusion:

The New Culture Movement 新文化运动 was a decisive break from the feudalistic traditions and spawned the anti-imperialist May Fourth Movement 五四运动. The 五四运动 was the most integral part of the New Culture Movement and was sometimes taken to be synonymous to the New Culture Movement. It was the seedbed for the creation of the Chinese Communist Party which finally led to the founding of the People's Republic of China.

However, one has to recognize that the reforms of the New Culture Movement in fact had their roots way back to the time of the Qing dynasty's Self-Strengthening Movement/Westernization Movement 自强运动/洋务运动 (see Chapter 95) and the 1911 Revolution/Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命 (see chapter 100). The 自强运动 had failed due to the entrenched conservative elements in Chinese society, as personified by the Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后. The 1911 Revolution 辛亥革命 was also not fully successful in transforming China into a modern society, due to opposing forces such as the warlords and Yuan Shikai 袁世凯, as well as conservative scholar-officials who had been schooled in Chinese Classical traditions.

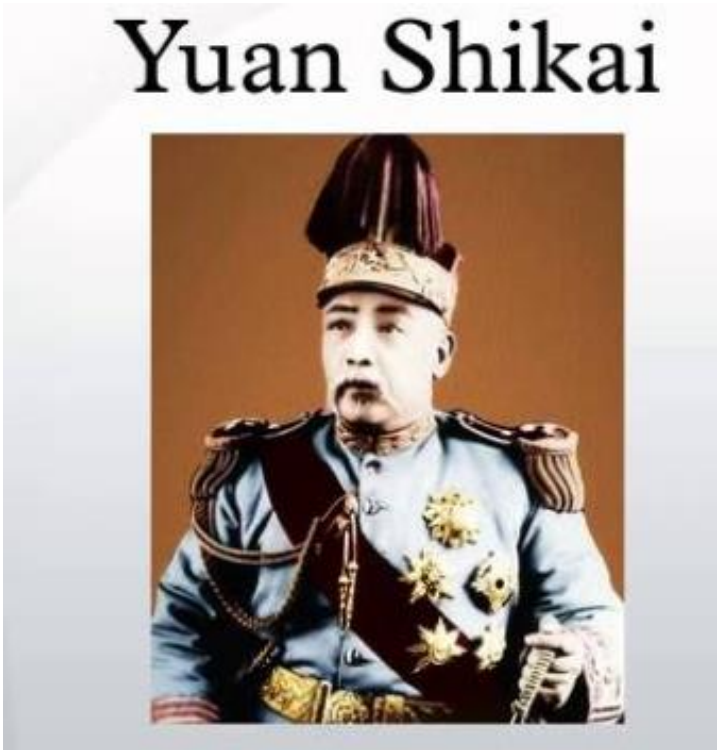
The New Culture Movement also faced strong opposition from the KMT, the ruling party at that time, which was steeped in age-old Chinese traditions. The radical Marxist approach of the CCP (in particular the mobilizing of peasants and workers) as promoted by its founders, Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 and Li Dazhao 李大钊, finally gained the upper hand.

In the final analysis, the Movement was an immensely significant turning point in the modern history of China, a nation desperately in search of literary modernity. In the words of one of its early leaders, Hu Shi, the New Culture Movement was "**The Chinese Renaissance**"复兴时代.

Chapter 103 - Yuan Shikai 袁世凯

Preamble:

Yuan Shikai was a prominent figure during the twilight years of the Qing dynasty, stretching into the early years of the Republic. Yuan was the first Han Chinese to hold the high positions of a Viceroy 总督 and a member of the Office of Military Secrets 军机处 during the Qing dynasty. Through his political machinations, he managed to become China's first President of the Republic and later the Emperor (albeit short-lived) of the Chinese Empire. However, his history of power grab did not leave him with a good legacy.



Introduction:

After the Qing dynasty's crushing defeat by Japan at the **First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)**, the Qing dynasty began to modernize its army with the help of Western countries and created the Beiyang Army under the command of Yuan Shikai.

After the 1911 Revolution headed by Sun Yat-sen, Yuan Shikai brokered the abdication of the last emperor, **Puyi 溥仪**, with himself becoming the President of the Republic of China. He then attempted to restore the Chinese monarchy with himself as the **Hongxian emperor 洪宪皇帝**. Not receiving support from his own commanders, he abdicated and died shortly afterwards. The subsequent fragmentation of his Beiyang Army led to a period in China famously known as the Warlord Era.

Main Story:

Yuan Shikai was born into an aristocratic family in a village in Henan Province. From as young as 6 years old, he was being taught the Confucian classics. He was not good at studies but excelled in sports such as fencing and boxing. He failed the imperial examinations twice which made it virtually impossible for a Han Chinese to become an official in the Qing government. He took advantage of the corruption of the later Qing dynasty era and purchased a minor official title to kick start his career. True to his interest in the art of war, he joined the **Huai Army 淮军 (also called Anhui Army)**, a militia force under the Qing government, which played a major role in putting down the **Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864).** Yuan was married and had nine concubines, three of whom were Koreans.

In the 1870s, **Joseon (ancient Korea)** was a vassal state of China. During a power struggle and a military coup in Joseon, **Qing Viceroy Li Hongzhang** sent Yuan Shikai with a 3000 strong army to assist the government of Joseon and averted a Japanese encroachment. The rebellion was quelled and Yuan Shikai remained as a supreme adviser on Korean government policies. Japan also sent troops to Korea, but refused to withdraw them after the rebellion was over. In 1884, Japanese troops stationed in Korea attempted to kidnap the Korean emperor Li Xi during a military coup. Yuan Shikai defeated the Japanese and safeguarded Qing's interests in Korea.

The Sino-Japanese War later broke out in Korea, by which time Yuan had already been recalled to China, thus escaping the humiliation of China's defeat.
After China's defeat at the Sino-Japanese War, the establishment of a modernized army became an urgent task. Thus, **the New Army (forerunner of the Beiyang Army)** was created. Yuan's outstanding record in Korea won him the favor of Li Hongzhang, who gave him the task of building the new army. He was thus able to cultivate a number of proteges who were stoutly loyal to him. The Qing court relied on this army for protection as they were located in Beiyang which was very close to the capital of Beijing. **Beiyang 北洋 meaning Northern Ocean consisted of the coastal provinces of Zhili 直隶, Shandong 山东 and Liaoning 辽宁** that bordered the Yellow Sea 黄海 and surrounded the imperial capital of Beijing.The New Army (later re-named Beiyang Army after the Beiyang region), under Yuan Shikai developed into a very powerful force in China.

During the **Hundred Days' Reform Movement 戊戌变法** headed by **Guangxu 光绪 emperor**, Yuan Shikai allied with the Empress Dowager, Cixi 慈禧太后, and betrayed Guangxu leading to the emperor being forced into seclusion in a lake

palace. Yuan had earlier been approached by the rebels to join in the coup against Cixi but he instead leaked the matter to Cixi.

During the **Boxer Rebellion** 义和团运动, Yuan Shikai took the side of the pro-foreign faction in the imperial court and refused to attack the **Eight-Nation Allied forces** 八国联军 . He ignored the Empress Dowager's declaration of war against the foreign powers and helped suppress the Boxer Rebellion, massacring tens of thousands of Boxers. After the death of Li Hongzhang in 1901, Yuan Shikai became the most powerful person in China.

In 1902, Yuan was promoted to **Viceroy of Zhili** 直隶, comprising Liaoning, Hebei and Shandong. Having gained the trust of the foreign powers in helping crush the Boxer Rebellion, he was able to obtain foreign loans to build up his Han-dominated Beiyang Army into a formidable force. By that time, much of the traditional Manchu Eight Banners army had been destroyed during the Boxer Rebellion. With military power in his hands, he was able to play a balance of power game between various revolutionaries, such as Sun Yat-sen, and the Qing court, both of which vied for his support.

During the 1911 **Xinhai Revolution** 辛亥革命, Yuan Shikai's **Beiyang Army** was the only force strong enough to suppress the rebellion. At that time, Yuan was in retirement as he had earlier been stripped of his post and power after the death of the Empress Dowager Cixi. The new emperor was displeased with Yuan for showing loyalty to Empress Dowager Cixi rather than to the emperor. As the one who could effectively lead the Beiyang Army, Yuan was recalled to deal with the Revolution. However, Yuan played for time, using the excuse of a foot ailment for not engaging his forces. He did not want to quell the rebellion, which would have been too convenient for the Qing court, but instead parlayed his position into something much bigger to his own advantage.

Yuan negotiated a deal with the **Sun Yat-sen** by which he would force the child emperor **Puyi** 溥仪 to abdicate and in return he would be made President of the Republic of China. Sun agreed to the deal after some bickering but insisted that the capital be in Nanjing and not Beijing so as to balance Yuan's power. Nanjing was closer to Sun's military base in the south. However, through Yuan's astute machinations, the capital was eventually established at Beijing. It appeared that a coup had taken place in Beijing and Yuan had to remain behind in Beijing.

In 1913, the KMT won a landslide victory in the first democratic election in the country. The founder of the KMT, **Song Jiaoren** 宋教仁, zealously supported a cabinet system of government which would eventually push for the election of the future President. Shortly afterwards, Song Jiaoren was shot by a lone gunman in Shanghai and he died two days later. Yuan was suspected to be the mastermind behind the incident, but it could not be proven because the main conspirators who were under investigation were either assassinated or disappeared under mysterious circumstances.

When the elected Parliament dominated by the KMT attempted to gain control over Yuan Shikai, Yuan launched a crackdown on the KMT. Sun Yat-sen fled to Japan and called for a **Second Revolution**, this time against Yuan Shikai. Yuan suppressed the uprisings and cemented his power as the dictator by dissolving the Parliament. Yuan rewarded his military commanders by making them provincial military governors, each in charge of a province with military as well as civil authority. This move would lay the foundation for China descending into warlordism soon after his death.

During Yuan's presidency, a silver dollar carrying his portrait was introduced.

This was the **first dollar coin** of the Republic of China called **"Yuan"** 元， which sounded like the surname of Yuan Shikai.

In 1914, WWI broke out in which Germany lost. Under the Treaty of Versailles, Japan would take over the German occupied territory of **Jiaozhou Bay** 胶州湾 and the Jiao-Jinan Railway in Shandong Province. It was during this time that Japan proposed to Yuan Shikai the so-called **Twenty-One Demands** 二十一条, including, among others, expanding Japan's control over Manchuria and Mongolia. Yuan Shikai accepted Japan's Twenty-One Demands, which was seen by the Chinese people as a betrayal to the country.

Not satisfied with being the President, Yuan Shikai dreamed of becoming the emperor of China. He re-instituted elements of State Confucianism which past emperors had found useful in maintaining control over the population. In a concomitant move, he participated in rituals held at the Temple of Heaven in the manner of past Qing emperors. In 1915, rumors were rife that the people (rickshaw pullers, women, Confucianists and even beggars) would want Yuan to be the emperor. His monarchist supporters agitated for Yuan to take on the title of Emperor. Yuan was even supported by an American political scientist, Columbia Professor **Frank Johnson Goodnow**, who envisioned that a dynastic monarchy would be good for China's political stability.

After an unanimous vote from a specially convened Representative Assembly, Yuan Shikai was sworn in as **Emperor of the Chinese Empire 中华帝国大皇帝** on 12 December, 1915. Yuan gave himself the reign title of Hongxian 洪宪, meaning Constitutional Abundance. Yuan Shikai, however, had miscalculated his move. He was berated by republicans, revolutionaries and intellectuals. Widespread protests throughout China denounced his crowning. Even many of his Beiyang Army commanders who had hitched their wagons to him were strongly against it. Formerly loyal commanders like **Duan Qirui 段祺瑞** and **Xu Shichang 徐世昌** distanced themselves. Foreign governments, some of which like Britain and Japan, which had previously supported his ascension to the throne, held back their recognition. Sun Yat-sen fled to Tokyo and organized a Second Revolution to overthrow the new emperor. To make matters worse, three of Yuan Shikai's 17 sons disputed openly over the title of Crown Prince.

Faced with mounting opposition, the accession rites of the Hongxian emperor was repeatedly postponed. In December 1915, the Yunnan's military governor, Cai E 蔡锷, was the first to rebel followed by the commanders of Guizhou in January 1916 and Guangxi in March. Yuan Shikai knew his game was up, and backed down on 22 March 1916, returning to his former post of President of the Republic. He was emperor for only 100 days (12 Dec 1915 – 22 March 1916). Disheartened and depressed, he **died of uremia** (late stage kidney disease) on 6 June 1916 at the age of 56. His remains were brought back to his hometown in Anyang 安阳, Henan Province. However, his large mausoleum was looted by warlord **Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥** during the KMT's Northern Expedition.

Conclusion:

Yuan Shikai has been credited with the establishment of modern industrial, judicial and educational systems in China and particularly a modern Western-style army. His Beiyang Army, named after the Beiyang region in the north, was the centerpiece of a general overhaul of the Qing dynasty's military organization. It was the most powerful political and military force in China at that time, overshadowing even the Imperial Faction led by Manchu nobles and Empress Dowager Cixi. Yuan Shikai played an important role in China's politics. His betrayal of the Qing dynasty paved the way for the 1911 Revolution which overthrew the age-old dynasty. Subsequently, members of the Beiyang clique (commanders of the Beiyang Army) came to play a dominant role in China's politics during the Republic era of China.

By all historical accounts, Yuan Shikai shaped a largely negative legacy for himself as one who was overly ambitious, self-serving, corrupt, scheming and supremely autocratic. His dismantling of democratic institutions and assumption of dictatorial power, ruling by a combination of violence and bribery, set the stage for China's political division and the infamous Warlord Era that led China into decades of fragmentation and weakness. Thus he was given the nickname of "Father of Warlords". One warlord, **Zhang Xun** 张勋, his staunch supporter, had tried to follow his footsteps. Zhang Xun's attempt to revive the Qing dynasty in 1917 was quickly put down by rival warlords.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of Yuan Shikai was his bad miscalculations when he manipulated the political situations only to make himself China's first disastrous President of the Republic and, finally, a short-lived Emperor of the Chinese Empire. He was reviled by Nationalists and Communists alike as the betrayal of the revolution.

YUAN-SHI-KAI FAIT COUPER SA NATTE

Upon his death, the China that he had ruled descended into the turbulent **Warlord Era** 军阀时代.

Chapter 104 – The Warlord Era 军阀时代 (1916-1928)

Preamble:

The famous Chinese writer, **Luo Guanzhong 罗贯中**, who lived during the Ming dynasty wrote "Romance of the Three Kingdoms", one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese literature. In the opening lines of this great novel, Luo Guanzhong wrote: **话说天下大势， 分久必合， 合久必分** "The empire, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide. Thus it has ever been." This scenario had been the case for the greater part of China's ancient history. The Warlord period was just one of the eras of division.

The Warlord Era 军阀时代 refers to the period of almost a decade following the death of **Yuan Shi-kai 袁世凯**, during which China was fragmented into virtually autonomous fiefdoms. During this era, there was a tectonic shift from a state-dominated civil bureaucracy by a central authority to one that was characterized by division and the rise of military cliques across China. Wars and skirmishes, violence and looting defined daily life as a viper pit of feuding warlords grappled for control of power and territory. Foreign powers such as Japan and the Soviet Union took to funding warlords to gain dominance in China.

The largest warlord military force during the era was the Revolutionary Army, which the Soviet Union had shrewdly backed to ensure its future influence over China.
About 1918, Canton, China. Credit: Topical Press Agency/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Introduction:

The event that precipitated the Warlord Era was the death of Yuan Shikai in 1916. It had created a power vacuum as Yuan Shikai since taking over power had systematically dismantled the democratic institutions and made himself the de facto dictator of China. There was also a crisis of legitimacy for the new government as the Republic that had taken over from the Qing dynasty had yet to establish itself. A period of chaos ensued as the powerful northern based army, the Beiyang Army, formerly led by Yuan Shikai was broken up by regional commanders who came to be known as warlords. However, the main power base was still in the north under the control of the Beiyang government headed by **Zhang Zuolin** 张作霖 based in Beijing.

At the start of the era, the Nationalist KMT government of Sun Yat-sen based in Guangzhou in the south began to contest the Beiyang Government. Sun Yat-sen was subsequently succeeded by **Chiang Kai-shek** 蒋介石 who started a series of military campaigns, known as the **Northern Expedition** 国民革命军北伐, in order to re-unify China. To end the warlordism, the Communists and Nationalists established a United Front in 1924 (called the **First United Front** or KMT-CPC Alliance). They did this under the tutelage of the Soviet Union which was a more advanced power compared to China. However, in 1927, Chiang initiated a violent purge of the Communists within the KMT, thus ending this first attempt at cooperation between the two most influential groups in China.

Main Story:

The most powerful regional army of China during the final years of the Qing dynasty and the early years of the Chinese Republic was the **Beiyang Army**. The Beiyang Army had its origin in the New Army, a modernized army corps formed in 1895 during the Qing dynasty immediately following China's defeat at the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894/95. It was envisioned to be an army fully trained and organized along Western standards. In 1903, the name of the New Army was changed to the Beiyang Army and came under the command of Yuan Shikai.

In the past, the Chinese army consisted mostly of poor, uneducated and illiterate peasants. The professionalization of the New Army/Beiyang Army involved the recruitment of qualified volunteers from the gentry class who were then given proper training in military academies. The best example is Chiang Kai-shek who

was trained in Yuan Shikai's Baoding Military Academy. Chiang subsequently formed the Whampoa Military Academy in Guangzhou in 1924 which produced many commanders who fought in China's major conflicts like the Northern Expedition, the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War. Sun Yat-sen officiated at the inaugural ceremony of the Whampoa Military Academy and delivered a speech which later formed the lyrics of the national anthem of the Republic of China.

Yuan kept a tight grip over the Beiyang Army and installed officers loyal only to him. His very authoritarian style led to a rebellion by the southern provinces in 1913. Yuan's powerful Beiyang Army easily crushed the rebellion. In 1915, Yuan proclaimed himself the emperor of China. Most Beiyang Army commanders however refused to back him up on that and Yuan had to renounce his plans in order to woo back his commanders. Following his death barely a year later, the Beiyang Army quickly fragmented into fiefdoms under the control of various warlords. The country fell apart into a basically North-South split.

What kind of men were these warlords? These warlords were of diverse background, ideology and personality.

1. **Zhang Xun** 张勋, a Qing dynasty loyalist, required his soldiers to wear the Qing dynasty style long, braided queues, which he wore himself. He attempted, but failed, to restore the Chinese monarchy of abdicated emperor Puyi 溥仪 in the Manchu Restoration in 1917.

2. **Zhang Zuolin** 张作霖, the warlord of Manchuria, rose from banditry to power and influence. His appointment as grand marshal of the Republic of

China in 1927 represented the pinnacle of his success. He headed the Beiyang Government after the death of Yuan Shikai. Originally backed by Japan, he was finally assassinated by the Japanese army prior to their invasion of Manchuria.

zhang zoulin

3. **Cao Kun 曹锟**, born to a very poor family, rose to become the military leader of the Zhili clique in the Beiyang Army and subsequently a one-year President of the Republic of China through openly bribing assembly members. He acquired the nick-name of “Bribing President”. During a war against Zhang Zuolin in 1924, Cao was betrayed and imprisoned by one of his own officers, General Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥 in the Beijing coup (see no. 5 below).

Cao Kun

6th President of the Republic of China

In office

10 October 1923 – 2 November 1924

4. **Yan Xishan** 阎锡山, who effectively controlled Shanxi province right from the time of the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 to the fall of the Nationalist government in 1949, survived the machinations of Yuan Shikai as his province was small, poor, remote and relatively unimportant. He was known to be a reformist, advocating Western ways and technology to revise the old Chinese traditions. Western biographers viewed him as a transitional figure who paved the way for China to attain modernization.

5. **Feng Yuxiang** 冯玉祥 was known as the "Christian General" for his zeal to convert his troops to Christianity. He launched the Beijing Coup against

Chinese President Cao Kun, leader of the Zhili 直隶（meaning “directly ruled” and indicates regions directly ruled by the imperial government of China） warlord faction, and allowed the pro-Japanese Fengtian 奉天 clique to defeat the previously dominant Zhili 直隶 clique. This paved the way for the success of the KMT’s Northern Expedition as the strong Fengtian clique allied with Chiang Kai-shek during the campaign.

6. **Chen Jiongming 陈炯明**, a leader of the Guangdong faction, subscribed to the political philosophy called Anarchism 无政府主义, which was a far-left socialist, anti-capitalist movement. He was considered a traitor and reactionary warlord by both the KMT and CCP for his rebellion against Sun Yat-sen in 1922. He was defeated in 1925 and fled to Hongkong.

Chen Jiongming, an early Republican period outstanding military strategist, had outstanding contributions to the development of our country. But then was hungry and poor at the time of his death. When he was buried, he actually used the coffin which had been prepared for his mother.

Most of the warlords, however, did not hold any true ideology and merely relied on their military power for self-aggrandisement. It is said that there were over a thousand warlords during the Warlord Era.

The Chinese warlords, by and large, came from authoritarian military background. They exerted strict and even brutal control over their armies and the local population. Although personal loyalty was placed on high premium among the warlords, betrayal in exchange for bribes was not uncommon and warlords also betrayed their allies. To enhance their power, the warlords attempted to create an interlocking network of familial, institutional, regional, and master-pupil relationships. They also practiced sworn brotherhoods and had close associations with triads. Although some of the stronger warlords fancied themselves as potential unifiers of China, they never succeeded in restoring a national government. The warlords generally played a balance of power game. When one warlord started to become too powerful, others would ally themselves against him.

In the 1920's, the violence became increasingly intense and savage. Railroads were the fastest way to move large number of troops. Thus control of railway lines and rolling stock was crucial in maintaining the sphere of influence. Most battles during that time were fought around the railways. To hinder pursuit, retreating

troops tore up the railroads as they withdrew. Much damage was inflicted on the country as a result.

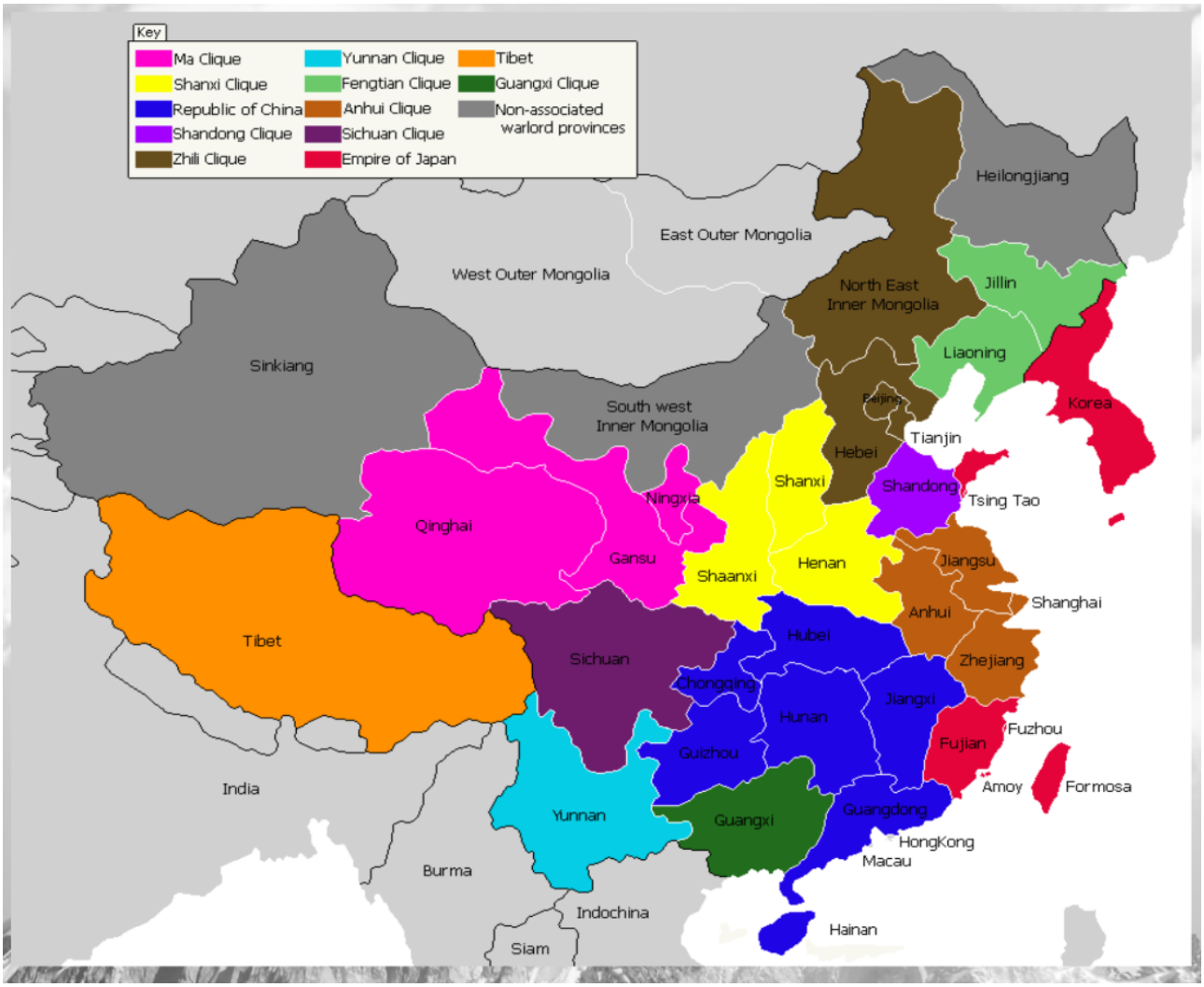
Warlords recruited many bandits for their military campaigns. The bandits would go back to their way of life once a campaign was over. It was not uncommon for warlords to resort to looting. Some even took to kidnapping and might adopt the triad style of sending a hostage's severed finger or ear lobe to reinforce their ransom demand. Beside bandits, many of the warlords' soldiers were village conscripts.

Most of these soldiers were uneducated and illiterate. Hence they did not know how to use modern weapons such as artillery weapons. They often relied on martial arts, self-made weapons such as swords and spears, and even a staunch belief in protective magic, for which they conducted occult and esoteric rites and rituals such as swallowing talismans. They generally lacked loyalty and would have no qualms about serving a new master when captured.

Not all warlords were bad. Some, like Yan Xishan as mentioned above in number 4, acted as benevolent dictators. Yan tried implementing social reforms, such as improving farming practices, abolishing foot binding and expanding girls' education.

A few warlords wielded their power for good. Yan Xishan focused on modernizing the Shanxi province through improved farming practices and social reforms, attempting to abolish foot binding and expanding girls' education. About 1930, China. Credit: Imagno/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

The warlords aligned themselves with one another and formed cliques. The map below shows the main factions that were formed during the era.



Although not considered a warlord, Sun Yat-sen had also wanted to build up his own army. At the start of the Warlord Era after the death of Yuan Shikai, Sun ran a rival government (the Constitutional Protection Junta) in the South in Guangzhou which was opposed to the Beiyang government. He had appealed to the Western powers for military aid, weapons and training, but was rebuffed because the West wanted to maintain the puppet Qing government. In 1921, Sun's wishes were met but not from the West. It was **Comintern (Communist International) 共产国际** which proposed to set up a military academy to train officers for his revolutionary army. Comintern was an international organization that advocated world communism, under the leadership of the Soviet Union. The Chinese Communist Party, which had been formed at that time, sent their representative **Li Dazhao 李大钊** to meet with Sun Yat-sen to discuss the setting up of the academy.

Conclusion:

The mainstream narrative is that the Northern Expedition by Chiang Kai-shek had succeeded in re-unifying China in 1928. But in truth, Chiang controlled only a part of China (mainly the south and the Yangtze delta) and warlordism persisted in many other parts of the country. In the north, Chiang was able to exercise some semblance of control through tenuous alliances. Immediately after the Northern Expedition, Chiang Kai-shek found himself having to contend with his former allies who had renounced their allegiance to him. Between 1929 and 1930, Chiang launched a series of military campaigns against those regional commanders/warlords in what came to be called the Central Plains War. It was the largest armed conflict in China after the Northern Expedition. The conflict involved several Chinese provincial commanders and more than one million troops.

Although Chiang emerged victorious, the Central Plains War was costly to the Nationalists and affected their fighting ability against the Communists, who were emerging as a major force on the back of a new peasant revolution. A number of warlords also defected to the CCP. A series of armed conflicts in Xinjiang province, known as the Xinjiang Wars also dealt a blow to the Nationalist government.

Warlord dominion which had continued in parts of China all the way up to 1949 was finally ended by the **Communist Revolution** and the founding of the **People's Republic of China.**

Chapter 105 - Sun Yat-sen 孙中山

Topical Press Agency / Getty Images

Introduction:

Dr Sun Yat-sen (also called **Sun Wen 孙文**) was the founding father of the Republic of China. He played an instrumental role in the overthrow of the Qing dynasty during the 1911 Revolution and then served as provisional first President of the newly founded Republic before handing the post over to Yuan Shikai 袁世凯.

As a youth, Sun Yat-sen joined his brother in Hawaii where he received a Western education and realized the extreme backwardness of his homeland, China, under the Qing dynasty. When he was subsequently studying medicine in the British colony of Hongkong, he and a few friends were imbued with the idea of revolution as the only way to save China.

Sun was a man who led a life of struggle. He struggled to overthrow the Qing dynasty, struggled against Yuan Shikai 袁世凯 when Yuan thwarted the democratic processes of the new Republic and even tried to reinstate the traditional monarchy and, finally, he struggled against regional warlords and the Beiyang 北洋 government.

Main Story：

Sun Yat-sen was born in 1866 in a village in Guangdong to a poor farmer's family. After primary education, he moved to Honolulu in the Kingdom of Hawaii (Hawaii was still not yet annexed by the US which happened only in 1898), where he lived and studied with the support by his elder brother who had emigrated to Honolulu as a laborer.

In1883 at age 17, Sun returned to what he saw was a very backward China. He was disgusted with the superstitions and the ancient healing methods used by the village doctors at his village temple. In a fit of anger, he broke the statue of the **Beiji 北极 (North Pole) Emperor-God.** To escape the wrath of fellow villagers, he fled to Hongkong but returned to Guangzhou to study medicine at a Christian hospital. In 1884, he married **Lu Muzhen 卢木镇** through a marriage arranged by his parents. He had a son and two daughters.

Sun then enrolled at the **Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese (forerunner of the University of HK)**, and graduated with distinction as a medical doctor in 1892. He converted to Christianity under the influence of an American missionary.

In Hongkong, Sun grew increasingly frustrated with the overly conservative and incompetent Qing government which was lagging far behind the Western powers. He became part of a group of revolutionary thinkers known as the **Four Bandits** at the Hongkong College of Medicine for Chinese. He finally decided to give up his medical practice and devoted himself to the revolution. To obtain the financial support for his revolution, Sun Yat-sen turned to a secret society/triad called the **Heaven and Earth Society 天地会**. With their help, Sun was able to make frequent overseas travels to raise funds for his revolution.

In 1894, Sun wrote a 8000 character petition to **Qing Viceroy Li Hongzhang 李鸿章** presenting his ideas for modernizing China, proposing that China model herself after the Western nations. He traveled to Tianjin to personally present the petition to Li but was not granted an audience. He decided that the only way to change China was to topple the Qing dynasty. He left China for Hawaii where he founded the **Revive China Society 兴中会**. This society was able to attract members mainly from the lower social classes.

In 1895, China suffered a crushing defeat in the **First Sino-Japanese War 甲午战争**. Many Chinese intellectuals strongly felt that China had to undergo radical reforms. A teacher-student pair **Kang Youwei 康有为 and Liang Qichao 梁启超** led the **Hundred Days Reform Movement** which failed. Sun Yat-sen believed that the Qing government will never reform and the only way for China to progress was to overthrow the Monarchy and replace it with a Republic.

In 1895, The Revive China Society 兴中会 launched its first uprising in Guangzhou. It failed because its plans were leaked. Sun Yat-sen fled to Japan which was to be the beginning of his 16-year exile during which he travelled widely to garner support for the revolution. In 1896, Sun was kidnapped and detained at the Chinese Legation in London. He was supposed to be smuggled back to China for execution. Through the intervention of his tutor, **James Cantlie**, Sun secured his release with his reputation substantially boosted by the incident.

In 1900, Sun organized the **Huizhou 惠州 Uprising** in Guangdong with the help of **triads**. It again failed. From around 1903, Sun Yat-sen expounded the slogan of his revolution to be: **"Expel the Manchus, Revive the Chinese, Establish the Republic and Distribute land equally among the People (驱除鞑虏 恢复中华 创立民国 平均地权)**. He created the philosophy called **The Three Principles of the People 三民主义** comprising the Principle of National Self-determination 民族, Civil Liberties 民权 and the People's Welfare 民生. This was a significant turning point in Sun's revolutionary plan as he was increasingly able to attract people from the educated class. Support for Sun's movement owed in part to the propaganda machinery of reformist **Liang Qichao 梁启超** who had fled to Japan and founded a Chinese press which targeted the Qing dynasty, especially the Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后. In 1905, he formed **Tongmenghui 同盟会** in Japan. It was an amalgamation of multiple anti-Qing groups, many of whose leaders s.a. **Song Jiaoren 宋教仁**, were based in Tokyo. This new organization sponsored a number of uprisings in China in 1907 and 1908, all of which failed. It had an effective mouthpiece through its People's Journal 民报.

Sun Yat-sen's influence also extended to Southeast Asia where there was a good presence of overseas Chinese. In Singapore, Sun received financial support from **Teo Eng Hock (Zhang Yongfu 张永福)**, a well-known Teochew rubber magnate, and his nephew, **Lim Nee Soon (Lin Yishun 林义顺)**, nicknamed the "pineapple king". The Singapore chapter of Tongmenghui 同盟会 was founded in 1906 with its headquarters at the Sun Yat Sen Villa (today's **Sun Yat-sen Nanyang**

Memorial Hall) off Balestier Road. The villa was provided by Teo Eng Hock. Many “reading clubs” were established in Singapore and Malaya to propagate their revolutionary ideas.

The failures of the series of uprisings in 1907 and 1908 led to unhappiness with the leadership of Sun Yat-sen within the ranks of Tongmenghui. Some leaders openly denounced Sun, accusing him of profiteering from the revolution. Foreign governments, such as Japan and French Indochina, increasingly shunned Sun. In 1910, Tongmenghui moved its HQ from Singapore to Penang where anti-Sun activities were less pronounced. In Penang, Sun launched his first Malaysian Chinese broadsheet daily called the **Kwong Wah Yit Poh 光华日报** which had a large Chinese readership.

At a Penang conference held in November 1910, Sun launched a major drive for donations to sponsor more uprisings. The following year, in April 1911, a revolutionary **Huang Xing 黄兴**, led what was later called **The Yellow Flower Mound Uprising/Huanghuagang Uprising 黄花岗起义** which also failed. This uprising is honored in Guangzhou’s Yellow Flower Mount or Huanghuagang 黄花岗 Park. The dead were buried together in one grave on the Yellow Flower Mound, a mound near where they fought and died. The 72 revolutionary nationalists were commemorated as **“The 72 Martyrs”黄花岗七十二烈士.**

A replica of the Statue of Liberty watches over the tomb of 72 Chinese revolutionaries.

Left: Huanghuagang Mausoleum of the 72 Martyrs PEDIST ON WIKIPEDIA (CREATIVE COMMONS)
Right: Huanghuagang Mausoleum of the 72 Martyrs LAI.JACK ON WIKIPEDIA (CREATIVE COMMONS)

Some historians claimed that the failed Huanghuagang Uprising 黄花岗起义 had led to the successful **Wuchang Uprising 武昌起义**, which in turn sparked off the epoch-making **Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命** in 1911. Sun Yat-sen had no part in the Wuchang Uprising and learnt about its success only from the newspapers. Sun immediately flew to London where he requested the British government to stop loan negotiations with the Qing government and instead provide financing to the new Chinese republic. Subsequently, Sun returned to China on 21 December 1911 to a rousing welcome from the people.

In Nanjing, the revolutionary armies established a provisional coalition government declaring the founding of the **Republic of China** with Sun Yat-sen as the interim President. Sun entered into a deal with the powerful Yuan Shikai who forced the Qing emperor **Puyi 溥仪** to abdicate thus ending the Chinese monarchy. The Chinese monarchy system had prevailed for thousands of years and to end it was indeed a remarkable feat by Sun Yat-sen and the many revolutionaries. Sun resigned in favor of Yuan Shikai, who was the Prime Minister of the Qing government at that time. Yuan Shikai thus became the first President of the Republic of China, based in Beijing.

Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 together with Sun and others formed a new political party called the **Kuomintang (KMT).** The KMT won a landslide victory in a National assembly election and Song Jiaoren was on the way to be the new head of the Chinese republic. He was soon assassinated, almost certainly masterminded by Yuan Shikai. Sun led a **Second Revolution** against Yuan Shikai and the Beiyang government, which however failed. Sun fled to Japan.

In 1915, Sun married his secretary, **Soong Ching-ling 宋庆龄**, one of the three Soong sisters.

Soong Ching-ling's father was the American-educated Methodist minister Charles Soong, who made a fortune in banking and in the printing of Bibles. Although Charles Soong had been a personal friend of Sun, he was enraged when Sun announced his intention to marry his daughter as a second wife, without divorcing his wife.

In 1915, Yuan Shikai proclaimed himself the **Emperor of the Empire of China**. Sun Yat-sen launched the anti-Monarchy resistance against Yuan's Beiyang government called the **Constitutional Protection Movement** from his base in Guangzhou. This was known as the **Third Revolution**. Sun established a rival government in Guangzhou. In 1917, the Guangzhou Parliament elected Sun as the Generalissimo of the Military Government of the Republic of China. He worked closely with the **Zhili 直隶 warlords** in Southwest China. These warlords merely wanted to make use of Sun for their own purpose and did not lend their full weight to his revolution. In frustration, Sun resigned declaring with deep grief: "Warlords, north and south, are jackels of the same ilk." He returned to Shanghai.

After the failure of his Constitutional Protection Movement, Sun was in the deepest trough of his life. However, new hope soon arrived in the form of The **Russian October Revolution** (1917) as well as the patriotic **May Fourth Movement** 五四运动. In Shanghai, he actively planned a new anti-warlord campaign. Sun also contacted the **Second International**, an international organization of socialist and labor parties from 22 countries, asking it to help China form a socialist Republic. This organization became ineffective due to the onset of **WWI** which deeply divided the member countries. In 1922, Sun set about reorganizing the Chinese Revolutionary Party which he named **Zhong Kuo Kuomingtang (KMT)** 中国国民党**.**

In 1923, Sun signed a cooperation agreement with **Comintern (Communist International)**, also known as Third International which replaced the above-mentioned Second International. Comintern, headed by the **Soviet Union**, was an international organization that advocated world communism. **Lenin** supported Sun's attempts at social reformation and his fight against foreign imperialism. Vladimir Lenin had led the **Bolsheviks** in a revolution that seized control of the government in Russia from the **Tsar Nicholas Romanov** in October 1917.

Meanwhile, Yuan Shikai had banned the KMT. Sun returned to Guangzhou and formed a revolutionary government as the Emergency President. Together with **Chiang Kai-shek**, he started to prepare for the **Northern Expedition**. With Soviet help, Sun built up his military power in preparation for the Northern Expedition. In 1924, he established the **Whampoa Military Academy** near Guangzhou with Chiang Kai-shek in charge of the **National Revolutionary Army**. He invited Soviet advisers to China to help train the revolutionary forces.

Sun's KMT party went into collaboration with the **Communist Party of China** in what was known as the **First United Front**. In the same year, Sun Yat-sen while in Beijing suggested the abrogation of the unequal treaties that China had signed with the West and Japan. However, Sun did not live long enough to see through this proposal.

In January 1925, Sun was diagnosed with **liver cancer**. He passed away in March at the **age of 58**. His body remained uninterred in a temple in Beijing until 1929, when it was moved to the majestic **Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanjing at the foot of the Purple Mountain** 紫金山**.**

Conclusion:

With determination, persistence and selflessness, Sun Yat-sen can be considered the greatest hero in the history of China, both ancient and modern. He performed a remarkable feat that no ordinary human could do. He led a historic revolution that toppled the Qing dynasty and ended the Chinese monarchy system of government which had prevailed for five thousand years. Having succeeded, he did not cling on to power but instead relinquished the post for the greater good of the country.

Sun Yat-sen stands out amongst the leaders of modern China. His knowledge of the West, where he spent much time, made him the ideal leader for leading China into the modern era. He is also exceptional in that he is highly regarded in both Communist China and Nationalist Taiwan. In mainland China, he is remembered largely as the leader of the Revolution. In recent celebrations, Sun was hailed by the CCP as a proto-Communist and a symbol of unification with Taiwan. In Taiwan, he is the Father of the Nation 国父.

The National Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan

In most major Chinese cities, one of the main streets is named Zhongshan Road 中山路 to celebrate his memory. Many parks, schools and a University in Guangzhou, are named after him. There is also a Sun Yat-sen memorial hall in Guangzhou (see picture below.)

In Singapore, a two-story colonial style villa off Balestier Road is now a museum called The Sun Yat-sen Nanyang Memorial Hall （晚晴园.） This building had played a crucial role in the 1911 Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution as it was Tongmenghui's HQ in Southeast Asia.

Chapter 106 – Kuomintang/Nationalist Party of China 国民党

Introduction:

The Kuomintang (KMT) is one of the two major historical contemporary parties in China, the other being the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).The KMT traces its origin to the **Revive China Society 兴中会** founded by **Sun Yat-sen** in 1894 to promote the revolution to overthrow the Qing dynasty. The party was formally established in 1919 when China was ruled by the **Beiyang 北洋 government**. From 1926 to 1928, the KMT under **Chiang Kai-shek** 蒋介石 successfully led the **Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐** against regional warlords and unified the fragmented nation.

From 1937 to 1945, the Nationalists led China through the **Second Sino-Japanese War 抗日战争** . By 1949, the KMT was decisively defeated by the CCP in the **Chinese Civil War 国共内战** and withdrew to Taiwan.

From 1949 to 1987, the KMT ruled Taiwan under martial law for nearly 40 years before **Chiang Ching-kuo 蒋经国**, Chiang Kai-shek's son, lifted the martial law. During the period, the KMT oversaw Taiwan's economic miracle but experienced diplomatic setback when it lost its UN seat and saw the US switching diplomatic recognition to the PRC in the 1970s.

Chiang Ching-kuo died in 1988 and **Lee Teng-hui 李登辉** succeeded him as president. In the first direct presidential election in 1996, Lee Teng-hui was re-elected the Taiwanese president. In the 2000 election, KMT lost their long hold over power to the **Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) 民进党** led by **Chen Shui-bian 陈水扁**. In 2008, the KMT reclaimed their power with the landslide victory of **Ma Ying-jeou 马英九** but again lost it to the DPP led by **Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文**.

Main Story:

The forerunner of the KMT, Revive China Society was founded by Sun Yat-sen in 1894 in Honolulu, capital of the Republic of Hawaii. In 1905, Sun established the **Tongmenghui 同盟会** in Tokyo, which was an amalgamation of his party with other anti-monarchist societies. Tongmenghui sponsored many uprisings against

the Qing government but failed. Meanwhile, many other revolutionaries were also rising up against the Qing monarchy. In 1911, the **Xinhai Revolution** 辛亥革命 broke out in a rather leaderless and decentralized fashion, the goal of which was to remove the monarchy and replace it with a republic form of government. Sun Yat-sen, being the most outstanding revolutionist, was elected to be the provisional President. He subsequently handed the Presidency to **Yuan Shi-kai** 袁世凯, who controlled the powerful Beiyang army and was able to force the abdication of emperor **Puyi** 溥仪.
In 1912， Tongmenghui merged with five other smaller revolutionary parties to form **The Nationalist Party of China /Zhongguo Guomingdang** 中国国民党. Sun Yat-sen was the party chairman, with Huang Xing as deputy. However, the most influential member of the party was the third ranking **Song Jiaoren** 宋教仁. He led the Nationalist Party to landslide victory in the first National Assembly election in 1912. However, Song was soon assassinated, with Yuan Shikai being suspected to be the mastermind. In 1913, Sun launched a **Second Revolution** 二次革命 against Yuan Shikai and his Beiyang government but failed. Yuan Shikai dissolved the Nationalist Party and many members, including Sun, fled into exile in Japan.

In 1917, Sun returned to Canton where he resurrected the Chinese Nationalist Party now known simply as **Guomingdang** 国民党 **KMT** and established a military junta to oppose the Beiyang government. After failing to win the support of the Western powers, Sun accepted aid from the **Soviet Union** and organized the KMT along the lines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Communist Party of China was under instruction from the Soviet Communist Party to cooperate with the KMT, thus forming the **First United Front** 联俄容共. **Mao Zedong** 毛泽东 joined the CCP at this time. In 1923, Chiang Kai-shek was sent to Moscow for military training and political study.

After the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, control of the KMT went under Chiang Kai-shek. The original flag of the KMT composed of a Blue Sky and a White Sun. Chiang Kai-shek subsequently added the Red Earth, which is the flag of Taiwan today, see below.

Chiang established the Whampoa Military Academy following the Soviet Model. With Soviet support, Chiang conquered the southern half of China and then launched the **Northern Expedition** 国民革命军北伐 against the northern warlords. Half way through his campaign, in 1927, Chiang purged the CPC in an event known as the **Shanghai Massacre** 四一二反革命政变 and he also expelled the Soviet advisers. With Nanjing firmly under his control, Chiang consolidated his powers in the period from 1927 to 1937, a period of stability known as the **Nanjing Decade** 南京十年. However, it was not all that peaceful as the **Central Plains War** 中原大战 took place between 1929 and 1930 during which Chiang's Nationalist KMT government launched a series of military campaigns against several regional warlords.

The generally peaceful Nanjing decade ended in 1937 with the breaking out of the **Second Sino-Japanese War** 抗日战争. During the war, Chiang saw the Communists as the main threat and his military action against them forced them into the **Long March** 长征. The remnants of the Communists retreated to Shaanxi province where they re-established their base, with Soviet help. Chiang employed terror tactics against the Communists in the cities by the use of secret police, which one British historian described as "Fascist in every quality except efficiency."

One of Chiang's generals, **Zhang Xueliang 张学良**, was outraged that the Chinese were turning on each other instead of against the Japanese invaders. He masterminded the kidnapping of Chiang in what was known as the **Xi'an Incident 西安事变** in 1937. Chiang was forced to agree to an alliance with the Communists. Picture below shows Zhang Xueliang with Chiang Kai-shek.

However, the cooperation was only short-lived as both sides fought the Japanese separately, with the Communists alleging that Chiang actually conserved his forces while letting the Communist take on the Japanese. This allegation was proven beyond doubt in **The New Fourth Army Incident 新四军事变** in 1941 in South Anhui, when Chiang's forces ambushed and massacred the Communist New Fourth Army. This ended the co-operation between the KMT and the CCP but the Japanese were still the common enemy. The Communists then resorted to guerilla tactics against the Japanese which led the KMT's claim that the Communists had left them to bear the brunt of dealing with the Japanese invaders.

After the end of WWII in 1945, Japan withdrew from **Manchuria** which was taken over by the Soviet Union. The Soviets supported the Chinese Communists against the KMT, denying them entry into Manchuria but allowed the Chinese

Communists to take over all Japanese factories, supplies and weaponries. This gave a significant boost to the strength of the **People's Liberation Army** 中国人民解放军 PLA.

In the following year, the constant friction and occasional fighting between the KMT's Revoluntionary Army and the **PLA** erupted into a full-blown civil war. The PLA made speedy progress due to factors mainly attributed to the KMT. Firstly, the KMT disbanded part of their army after the war, letting the decommissioned soldiers turned to the PLA. Secondly, the KMT mismanaged the economy leading to hyperinflation and economic hardship. Thirdly, the Communists controlled much of the food supplies which were produced in their northern base. This resulted in heightened inflation of food prices. Fourthly, Chiang's strategy was to control all major cities. This allowed the PLA to move freely in the countryside, recruiting more and more followers to their cause. Fifthly, the KMT was ridden by corruption. Even the aid provided by the US were siphoned into the pockets of KMT military leaders. US President Harry Truman even wrote that "the Chiangs, the Kungs and the Soongs were all thieves". The US finally withdrew its support for the KMT. Sixthly, by trying to conserve his forces and not engage the Japanese as far as possible, Chiang's army lost the respect of the people. Meanwhile, the Communists who fought the Japanese tooth and nail,

were able to build up a large, battle-hardened army. Lastly, the Communist strategy of helping the poor peasants won them overwhelming popular support, making it almost impossible for the KMT to pursue the PLA in the countryside.

In 1949, the KMT, a total of about 2 million people, retreated to Taiwan. Chiang brought with him a significant quantity of China's national treasure which became the permanent collection of the **National Palace Museum of Taiwan**. This consisted of 700,000 pieces of ancient Chinese imperial artifacts and artworks encompassing 8000 years of history of Chinese art from the Neolithic age to the modern. In contrast, the Palace Museum in the sprawling Forbidden City in Beijing house over 1.8million pieces of artifacts and artworks, but are mostly from the imperial collection of the more recent Ming and Qing dynasties.

The sudden influx of mainlanders into Taiwan caused immense friction with the local people. It culminated in the **February 28 Incident/228 Incident** 二二八事件, during which an anti-government uprising was violently suppressed by the KMT-led government. Thousands were killed followed by a period of so-called "White Terror" during which over 30,000 Taiwanese intellectuals and activists disappeared. Martial law was imposed in Taiwan.

The Communists decided that in order to take Taiwan, they had to first take Kinmen Island. In the **Battle of Kinmen** 金门战役 in the Taiwan Straits, the Chinese Communists failed owing to lack of amphibious landing experience and hardware, thus leaving Taiwan in the hands of the KMT. With the outbreak of the **Korean War** 韩国战争 in 1950, the Communists decided to put on hold their plans to re-take Taiwan. The Battle of Kinmen was very significant in that it laid the foundation for the current status quo relationship between Mainland China and Taiwan. The map below indicates the location of Kinmen Island.

Chiang Kai-shek entertained the belief that he would re-take the mainland within three years. The slogan was "prepare in the first year, fight in the second and conquer in the third." **The Project National Glory/Project Guoguang 国光计划** was began in 1961 but was abandoned in 1972 after it became abundantly clear to all that mainland China was just too big and strong to be re-taken.

Nevertheless, Taiwan pushed ahead with economic reforms and development and created the economic miracle as one of the **economic Tigers of Asia**. Taiwan underwent a democratization process which saw the establishment of the **Democratic Progress Party 民进党** in 1986. In 1991, martial law was lifted. The first democratically elected KMT **President Lee Teng-hui** 李登辉 advocated "special state-to-state relations" with PRC which PRC saw as leaning towards Taiwan independence. Lee Teng-hui's leadership of the KMT was subsequently handed over to **Lien Chan 连战** who was more favorable toward re-unification with mainland China.

The split of the KMT with Secretary-General **James Soong 宋楚瑜** launching an independent bid led to KMT's outster at the 2000 Presidential election and the entry of **Chen Shui-bian 陈水扁** from the DPP . Chen Shui-bian was re-elected in 2004 after a bizarre assassination attempt on him known as the **March 19 Shooting Incident/319 Shooting Incident** 三一九枪击事件.

On 28 March 2005, thirty members of the KMT, led by vice-chairman **Chiang Pin-kung** 江丙坤, arrived in mainland China. This marked the **first official visit by the KMT to the mainland** since it was defeated by communist forces in 1949 (although KMT members including Chiang had made individual visits in the past). The delegates began their itinerary by paying homage to the revolutionary martyrs of the **Huanghuagang/Yellow Flower Mound Uprising** 黄花岗起义. They subsequently flew to the former ROC capital of Nanjing to commemorate Sun Yat-sen. During the trip, the KMT signed a 10-points agreement with the CCP. The proponents regarded this visit as the prelude of the third KMT-CCP cooperation, after the First and Second United Front. Weeks afterwards, in May 2005, Chairman Lien Chan visited the mainland and met with **Hu Jintao 胡锦涛**, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party. This marked the first meeting between leaders of the KMT and CCP after the end of Chinese Civil War in 1949. No agreement was signed because incumbent Chen Shui-bian's government threatened to prosecute the KMT delegation for treason and violation of ROC laws prohibiting citizens from collaborating with CPC.

In 2008, the KMT won a landslide victory under the leadership of **Ma Ying-jeou** 马英九. To resolve Taiwan's long-standing differences with China, the party endorsed the policy of the **"Three No's": no unification, no independence, and no military confrontatio**n. This was followed by Ma Ying-jeou's historic meeting with **Xi Jinping** 习近平 in Singapore. In 2014, the KMT lost badly to the DPP which had accused the KMT of corruption. But its election loss may well be a reflection of the changing attitudes of a new generation of voters.

Support for the KMT in Taiwan encompasses a wide range of social groups but is largely determined by age. KMT support tends to be higher in northern Taiwan and in urban areas, where it draws its backing from big businesses due to its policy of maintaining commercial links with mainland China. As of 2020 only 3% of KMT members are under 40 years of age.

The KMT also has some support in the labor sector because of the many labor benefits and insurance implemented while the KMT was in power. The KMT

traditionally has strong cooperation with military officers, teachers, and government workers. Among the ethnic groups in Taiwan, the KMT has stronger support among mainlanders and their descendants, for ideological reasons, and among Taiwanese aboriginals. The support for the KMT generally tend to be stronger in majority-Hakka and Mandarin-speaking counties of Taiwan, in contrast to the Hokkien-majority southwestern counties that tend to support the Democratic Progressive Party.

The deep-rooted hostility between **Aboriginals** and **Hokkien 闽南 speaking Hoklo Taiwanese** as well as the KMT's effective network among the Aboriginal communities worked in favor of the KMT as against the DPP. In 2005 the KMT displayed a massive photo of the anti-Japanese Aboriginal leader Mona Rudao at its headquarters in honor of the 60th anniversary of Taiwan's retrocession from Japan to the Republic of China.

The KMT's constitution designated Sun Yat-sen as party president. Currently, the Chairman of the KMT is **Johnny Chiang** 江启臣.

Johnny Chiang faces an uphill struggle to win back voter support amid unrelenting pressure from Beijing. Photo: Reuters

Conclusion:

Once the dominant force in China and later in Taiwan, the KMT is struggling to reinvent itself to appeal to a new generation of voters in Taiwan. It could no longer rely merely on the support of business leaders, older Taiwanese and the Aboriginals. One of its strength could be its more cordial relationship with China as opposed to the acrimonious relationship which the DDP currently maintains with Beijing. The current president of Taiwan, **Tsai Ing-wen** 蔡英文 had rejected the **1992 Consensus** 九二共识, which refers to the agreement between Beijing and Taipei that there is "One China"， without agreeing on who would be the legitimate ruler of China.

Having lost Taiwan to the DPP, the KMT has now to deal with the new demographics and the changing politics in Taiwan. This is the task ahead for its new party chairman, 48-year-old Johnny Chiang 江启臣 and his successors.

Chapter 107 – Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石

Introduction:

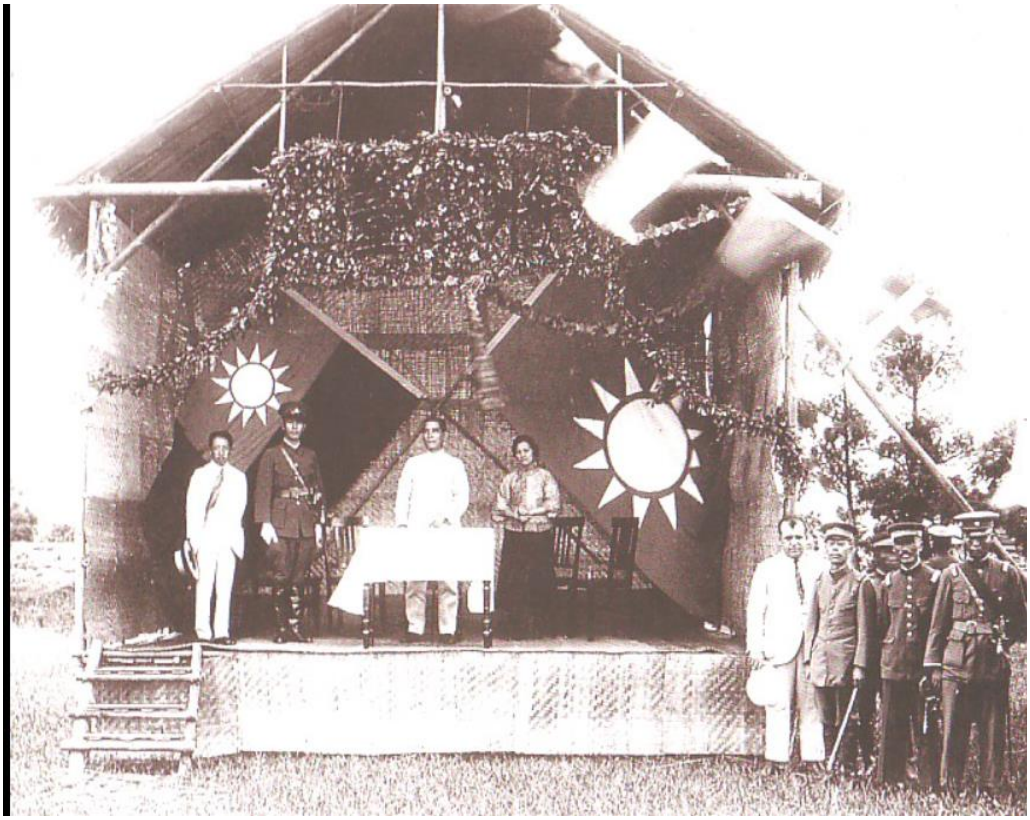
Chiang Kai-shek was the Nationalist politician and military leader of the Republic of China from 1928 to 1949 and then the leader of the Republic of China, Taiwan, from 1949 until his death in 1975.

Main Story:

Together with **Sun Yat-sen** 孙中山, Chiang Kai-shek founded the Nationalist Party (forerunner of the 国民党 **KMT**) after the defeat of the Qing dynasty in the **1911 Revolution** 辛亥革命. **Yuan Shi-kai** 袁世凯 became the first president of the Republic of China and his ambition in taking full control of China led him to ban the KMT which was gaining popularity and support. Like Sun Yat-sen and other KMT leaders, Chiang fled to Japan to escape capture.

In 1917, Sun Yat-sen returned to Canton (Guangzhou) to set up his base of resistance against Yuan Shi-kai's **Beiyang** 北洋 **government**. Chiang Kai-shek joined him and was sent by Sun to Moscow for three months to learn about the Soviet political and military system. In 1924, Chiang set up the Soviet-funded

Whampoa Military Academy to train military officers in preparation for the **Northern Expedition** 国民革命军北伐 to re-unify China. The picture below shows Sun Yat-sen and Chiang at the opening ceremony of the academy. (This academy still exists in Taiwan today under the name of The Republic of China Military Academy).



After the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, factions within the KMT began to surface. There was a power struggle between Chiang and **Wang Jingwei** 汪精卫 which ended in Chiang's victory and Wang's exile.

Chiang (right) together with Wang Jingwei (left), 1926

Chiang assumed the title of Generalissimo, commanding the newly established National Revolutionary Army (NRA). At the behest of the Soviets, Chiang agreed to an alliance with the Communist Party of China (later renamed Chinese Communist Party, CCP), in what was referred to as the First United Front. The Northern Expedition against the northern warlords began in 1926 and lasted two years. However, mid-way through the campaign in 1927, Chiang mounted a bloody purge of the Communists and also expelled the Soviet advisers. This triggered the **Chinese Civil War** 国共内战 between the Nationalists and the Communists.

In 1927, Chiang had captured Nanjing from the northern warlords and this heralded the so-called **Nanjing decade** 南京十年 during which relative peace prevailed under the Nationalist Government based in Nanjing. Some legal and financial reforms involving the banking and currency systems were carried out. Infrastructure projects were undertaken. In December 1927, Chiang married **Soong**

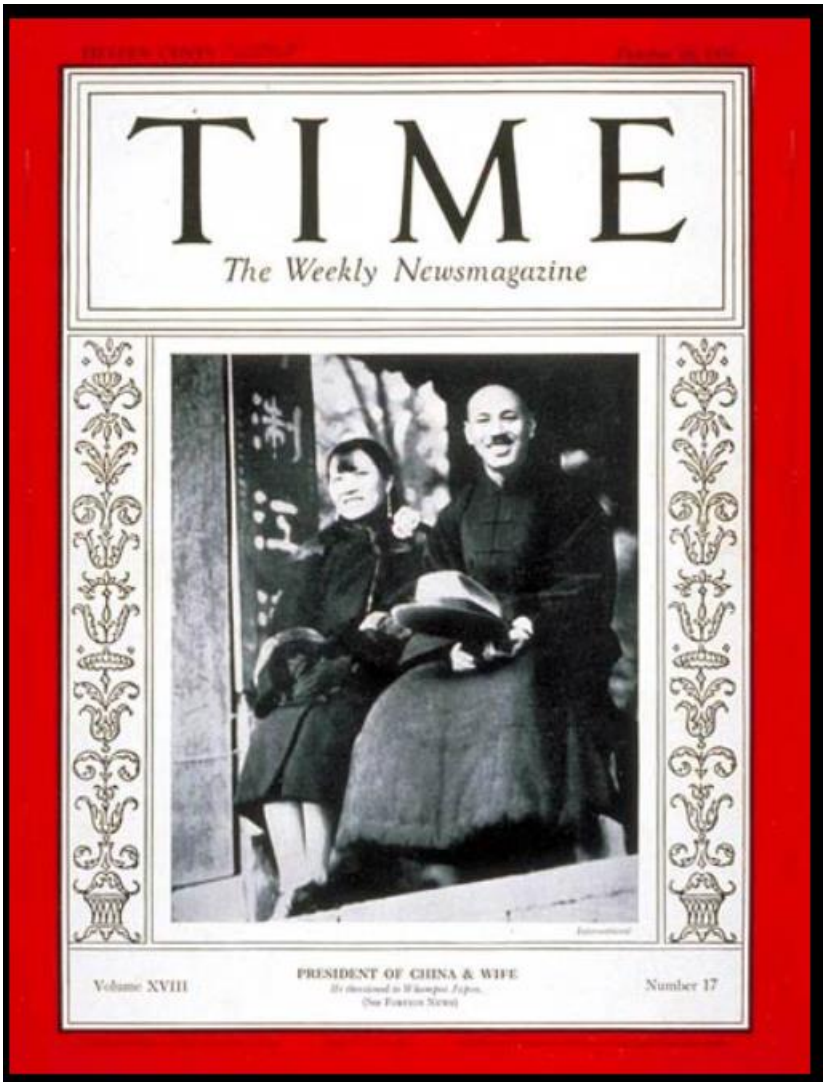
Mei-ling 宋美龄, the younger sister of **Soong Ching-ling** 宋崇宁, the widow of Sun Yat-sen.

Although the **Warlord Era** 军阀时代 was ended in 1928 after Chiang had subdued the northern warlords, there were other warlords to deal with including some Northern warlords who had renounced their allegiance to Chiang. The Central Plains War broke out in 1929 and was the largest armed conflict in China since the end of the Northern Expedition in 1928. Although Chiang was victorious, the conflict weakened his army to the extent that the subsequent Encirclement Campaigns against the Chinese Communists were not successful. The defense of Manchuria was also significantly weakened, which could have emboldened the Japanese who created the **Mukden Incident** 柳条湖事变 as a pretext for invading China.

With Japanese incursions into Manchuria, the Manchurian warlord, **Zhang Xueliang** 张学良, who had pledged alliance to Chiang after the Central Plains War, felt that Chinese should not fight Chinese but rather focus their efforts against the Japanese invaders. At that time, Chiang had considered the Chinese Communists to be the main enemy and his Encirclement Campaigns had forced them into the Long March. Together with a number of other Nationalist generals, Zhang masterminded the **Xi'an Incident** 西安事变. Chiang Kai-shek was released after he agreed to a Second United Front with the Communists. After his return to Nanjing, Chiang had Zhang Xueliang placed under house arrest and the other accomplices were executed.

The Japanese incursions built up into a full-blown war in 1937**, The Second Sino-Japanese War** 抗热战争. Shanghai was lost followed by Nanjing, which led to the **Nanking Massacre** 南京大屠杀. Chiang shifted his capital inland, firstly to Wuhan 武汉 and then to Chongqing 重庆. In order to bog down the Japanese, Chiang ordered the scorched earth tactics which caused much hardship to the civilian population. The 1938 Yellow River flood which resulted in half a million deaths was due to the deliberate attempt to destroy the dams around the city of Zhengzhou. 20,000 civilians were killed and hundreds of thousands left homeless in the Fire of Changsha during the retreat from Wuhan to Chongqing.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor during WWII brought the US into the Pacific War. China was one of the Allied Powers. Chiang's American-educated wife, Soong Mei-ling won the support of the China Lobby in the US which envisioned China becoming a Christian democracy.



In the picture below, Chiang is seen meeting with British PM Winston Churchill and US President Franklin Roosevelt in the Cairo Conference to discuss terms for the Japanese surrender.

Chiang with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in Cairo, Egypt, November 1943

However, Chiang continued to see the Communists as his greater enemy. **The New Fourth Army Incident** 新四军事变 in 1941 had broken the cooperation (Second United Front) between the KMT and the CCP. After the Japanese surrender, the Chinese Civil War reached greater heights between Chiang's army and the People's Liberation Army led by **Mao Zedong** 毛泽东. Noticing the inferiority and corruption of the Nationalist army, the US limited its support to Chiang. The KMT forces suffered substantial losses and defections to the Communists. In 1949, the Communists backed by a strong rural base finally gained the upper hand and Chiang and his supporters were forced to flee to Taiwan where he continued to claim sovereignty over all of China.

While in Taiwan, the KMT faced much resistance from the local population. Chiang established martial law and inflicted the “White Terror” on the Taiwanese population following the anti-government uprising known as the February 28 Incident. The political repression resulted in the deaths or disappearance of over 30,000 Taiwanese and the imprisonment of around 140,000.

In 1975, Chiang Kai-shek was 87 when he passed away from a combination of heart attack, pneumonia and renal failure. He was succeeded by his son, Chiang Ching-kuo.

Conclusion:

Having held power for 46 years, Chiang Kai-shek was the longest-serving non-royal ruler of China. His portrait used to overlook the Tiananmen Square before that of Mao Zedong.

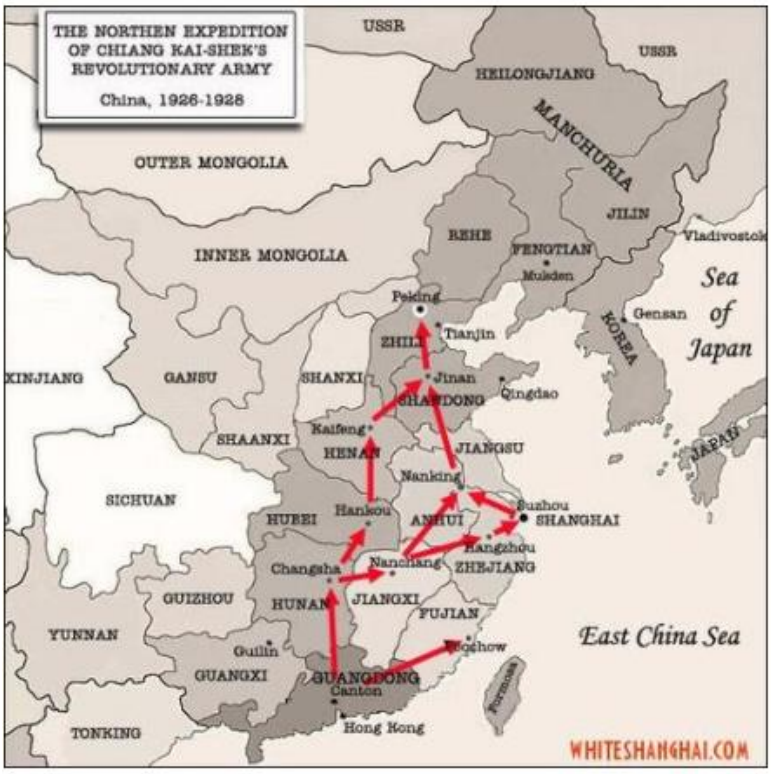
His legacy has been controversial. He has been credited for having unified China broken up by the Warlord Era, led China in repelling the Japanese invasion and also countering the Soviet encroachment of China. But he was mostly seen as a dictator who brutally suppressed his opponents. His “White Terror” campaign is not forgotten by local Taiwanese who form the backbone of today’s ruling party, the Democractic Progressive Party, DPP. In response to the current political landscape in Taiwan, Chiang’s image in mainland China has been rehabilitated as a unifier of China and a defender against Japanese occupation. Today, Chiang Kai-shek’s ancestral home in **Fenghua 凤画, Zhejiang 浙江** has been turned into a commemorative museum and a major tourist attraction.

Chapter 108 - The Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐 1926 and
The Nanjing Decade 南京十年 1927-1937

Introduction:

The Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐 which began in 1926, was a military expeditionary campaign against the warlords in northern China waged by the **National Revolutionary Army (NRA)** which comprised the combined forces of the Kuomintang's (KMT) army and the Chinese Communists' Red Army (forerunner of the PLA). It was an effort to re-unify China which had fragmented after the death of Yuan Shi-kai, leading to a period known as the **Warlord Era**.

Led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and initially with military assistance from the Soviet Union, the Northern Expedition was somewhat successful, at least nominally, in re-unifying China. Chiang Kai-shek's power base of Nanjing was chosen to be the new capital of China and this was followed by a period of peace and stability referred to as the **Nanjing Decade 南京十年** 1927-1937.



Main Story:

At the outset of the Northern Expedition, the KMT controlled only two provinces in the south: Guangdong and Guangxi. It was based in Canton (Guangzhou.) The KMT had received financial and military aid from the Soviet Union which required it to co-operate with the Chinese Communists to form a combined army, the National Revolutionary Army, in its campaign to re-unite China. The NRA would be led by **Chiang Kai-shek** 蒋介石.

Chiang Kai-shek's campaign was to subdue the Beiyang 北洋 Government and the northern warlords. There were three coalitions of warlords arrayed against Chiang's army:

1) The **Fengtian clique** 奉系军阀 which was in control of Manchuria, Shandong and Zhili. The leader of the Fengtian clique, **Zhang Zuolin** 张作霖, was also the Head of the Beiyang government. This was the most powerful group.
2) The coalition of forces led by **Wu Peifu** 吴佩孚 which occupied northern Hunan, Hubei and Henan.
3) The coalition of **Sun Chuanfang** 孙传芳 which controlled Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Anhui and Jiangxi.

Zhang Zuolin of the Beiyang Government eventually assembled all the northern warlords into an alliance called the **National Pacification Army (NPA)** 安国军.

The expedition comprises two phases. The first phase ended in 1927. A new Nationalist government was established in Nanjing. Chiang Kai-shek distrusted the Soviets and the Chinese Communists. Another KMT commander, **Wang Jingwei** 汪精卫, who was collaborating closely with the Communists had set up a government in Wuhan in opposition to the right-wing government of Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing. Wang was known to be working closely with Communist leaders like **Mao Zedong** 毛泽东 **and Chen Duxiu** 陈独秀.

After successfully completing the first part of the campaign, Chiang mounted a bloody purge of the Chinese Communists in Shanghai (**The Shanghai Massacre** April 1927， 四一反革命政变) and also removed the Soviet advisers. This marked the **end of the First United Front** between the Nationalists and the Communists and the start of the Chinese Civil War. Wang Jingwei fled to Europe. Chiang was heavily criticized for causing this split between the two major political groups in China. To show his good faith in mending this schism, Chiang Kai-shek resigned as commander of the NRA and went into exile in Japan.

Chiang Kai-shek subsequently returned to China in January 1928 to continue the second phase of the Northern Expedition. Some warlords like **Yan Xishan** 阎锡山 **and Feng Yuxiang** 冯玉祥 turned their allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek against the National Pacification Army NPA.

The NRA secured a series of decisive victories against the NPA, the coalition of forces led by Beiyang Army head, Zhang Zuolin 张作霖, who was also the leader of the Manchuria-based Fengtian clique 奉系军阀.

'Mukden Tiger' Zhang Zuolin

Zhang fled Beijing as Chiang Kai-shek forces closed in and the Beiyang government had all but collapsed. Zhang Zuolin used to work for the Japanese. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, Zhang and his men were used by the Japanese army as mercenaries. However, during his flight from Beijing, Zhang Zuolin was assassinated by the Japanese who were infuriated by his failure to stop the NRA's advance. His son, Zhang Xueliang 张学良 succeeded him and decided to swear allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek. (It may be interesting to note that Zhang Xueliang was the one who later kidnapped Chiang Kai-shek in order to force him to co-operate with the Communists to fight the Japanese.)

Zhang Xueliang

Having overthrown the warlord coalitions in the north, Chiang Kai-shek declared the Northern Expedition as mission accomplished. The re-unification of China heralded the temporary peace and prosperity of the Nanjing Decade.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, commander-in-chief of the NRA, emerged from the Northern Expedition as the leader of the KMT and China.

The Nanjing Decade 南京十年 refers to the period from 1927 to 1937 after Chiang Kai-shek had defeated the last coalition of warlords, the powerful **Zhili clique** 直隶军阀， and occupied Nanjing. China was reunified, at least nominally. Chiang attempted to boost his political, military and economic policies by influencing social and cultural attitudes. With the help of his wife, **Soong Meiling**

宋美龄, he initiated the **New Life Movement** 新生活运动 aimed at social regeneration to combat the “twin evils of Communism and corruption.”

New Life Movement

Jiang Jieshi and his wife Soong May-ling, sponsors of the New Life Movement

The Nanjing Decade was marked by a period of stability after the chaos of the Warlord Era. The economy recovered and the government embarked on numerous infrastructure projects as well as reforms. This short golden period came to a horrific end in 1937, symbolized by the **Nanjing Massacre (Rape of Nanjing)** which took place at the start of the **Second Sino-Japanese War**.

Conclusion:

By most historians’ account, the Northern Expedition had brought about the re-unification of China under Chiang Kai’shek’s Nationalist government. In truth, the unification was only nominal as warlordism still persisted in many parts of the country that remained under the control of military leaders.

Some warlords renounced their allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek and the struggle for supremacy culminated in the **Central Plains War (1929-30).**

Chiang Kai shek's army in the Central Plains War - Image ID: KJEX3C

The war proved to be a pyrrhic victory for Chiang. Chiang Kai-shek's army was so weakened that it eventually lost to the Communists led by Mao Zedong in the Chinese Civil War.

Chapter 109 – The Chinese Communist Party 中国共产党

Introduction:

The founding of the Chinese Communist Party 中国共产党 can be traced back to the New Culture Movement 新文化运动 and the May Fourth Movement 五四运动, see chapter 102. In 1921, Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 and Li Dazhao 李大钊 assisted by other revolutionaries like Mao Zedong 毛泽东, founded the Communist Party of China (CPC) with the help of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and **Communist International (Comintern)共产国际**.

陈独秀

李大钊

These political activists convened their first National Congress of the CPC in the French Concession in Shanghai in 1921. Mid-way through the meeting, this congress was hurriedly moved to another location to escape an impending police raid by the French Police. The new location was in Jiaxing 嘉兴, Zhejiang 浙江 Province, and the Congress was conducted on a tourist boat famously known as the "Red Boat". The meeting of this bunch of "tourists" in the center of Nanhu Lake 南湖 would radically change the course of China's modern history.

The replica of the "Red Boat" on Nanhu Lake is a popular tourist attraction in the city of Jiaxing, east China's Zhejiang Province. /CGTN

Main Story:

Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 and Li Dazhao 李大钊 were revolutionaries in the **Xinhai Revolution 辛亥革命 which** toppled the Qing dynasty. Inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917 and converted to Marxism by the Russians, Chen and Li led the anti-imperialist **May Fourth Movement of 1919** and eventually the formation of the Communist Party of China (CPC), later re-named the Chinese Communist Party (CCP.)

Vladimir Lenin（列宁） was the Russian revolutionary who led the Russian Revolution of 1917. Adopting the ideology of **Carl Marx**, Lenin became the dictator of the world's first communist state. The CPC was modelled after Lenin's concept of political vanguardism whereby the proletarian vanguard would form the vanguard of the revolution. This would result in a dictatorship of the proletariat, a rule of the working class which would be the political prelude to the establishment of socialism. Chen Duxiu was the undisputed leader of the CPC and he was given the nickname of "China's Lenin".

Vladimir Lenin

As mentioned in chapters 107 and 108, a schism between the CPC and the KMT resulted after Chiang Kai-shek began to purge the Communists, including the Soviet advisers attached to the joint KMT-CPC army, the National Revolutionary Army. Due to the failure of the **First United Front**, Comintern (which already had some policy differences with Chen Duxiu) put the blame of the schism on Chen and expelled him from the CPC in 1929. Meanwhile in 1927, the co-founder of the CPC, Li Dazao, also lost his life during the **Northern Expedition.**

After his expulsion, Chen Duxiu became associated with the movement of **Leon Trotsky**, known as the Trotskyist movement, which also held opposite views to those of Comintern. After the death of Lenin, there was a power struggle between his two successors, **Joseph Stalin** and Leon Trotsky. Trotsky had claimed that under the leadership of Stalin, the Soviet Union had become a degenerated worker's state in which class relations had re-emerged in a new form. Trotsky founded a new movement in opposition to Comintern.

As **Mao Zedong** gained in prominence in the CPC, he advocated a strong role for the Chinese peasants rather than the proletariat (mainly city workers) in the Communist Revolution. This was the adoption of Marxism-Leninism with adaptation to Chinese conditions.

As mentioned in the introduction, the CPC's first National Congress was held in 1921 in a house in the French Concession. It was moved to the Red Boat after the members suspected, correctly, that the French Police was going to raid the place. About a dozen members attended the meeting. Chen Duxiu was unable to attend the meeting and he appointed Mao Zedong to represent him. Li Dazao was also not able to attend the meeting. The meeting's resolutions called for the official establishment of the CPC as a branch of Comintern. Chen Duxiu was elected the General Secretary (the Party leader) in absentia.

In the late 1920's, the Russians were assisting **Sun Yat-sen's** Guangzhou government and his KMT party in their fight against the **Beiyang government** of Yuan Shi-kai. After Sun's death, Chiang Kai-shek succeeded Sun and launched the Northern Expedition in 1926. In 1927, Chiang initiated moves to marginalize the positions of the Communists. When Chiang started to receive assistance from the Western powers, he turned more aggressively against the Communists and killed thousands of them in various purges. The Chinese Communists formed the **Red Army** to battle the KMT. Their commander-in-chief was Mao Zedong and their best known general was **Zhu De**.

Mao Zedong (Tse Tung) and Zhu De (Chu Te) in Yenan Communist mountain stronghold Source: (Getty/colorized by Klimbim).

Zhu De staged the Nanchang Uprising on 1 August 1927 and Mao mounted the Autumn Harvest Uprising in Changsha. Initially successful, they went into retreat. With the cities taken by the KMT, the Communists withdrew to the countryside where they built a power base among the rural population. **The Long March** was undertaken to escape the **KMT's Encirclement campaigns**.

The **Chinese Civil War** took a pause when a Second United Front was formed between the CCP and the KMT against the Japanese invasion during the Second Sino-Japanese War which started in 1937. This war continued into WWII which saw the Japanese's defeat by 1945. On this year, Mao Zedong took the position of Chairman of the CCP. The Chinese Civil War resumed with greater intensity until the final defeat of the KMT by the CCP in 1949.

On 1 October, 1949, Mao Zedong, standing on a podium at Tiananmen Square, declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China PRC. Military leaders like **Lin Biao, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, and Ye Jianying** 叶剑英 continued to play important political roles after the founding of the PRC. They will be covered in subsequent chapters.

In 1956 to 1957, there was a movement called **The Hundred Flowers Campaign** 百花齐放**.**

100 Flowers Movement 1956-1957

Under the slogan "*Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom and a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend*," Mao actively encourages the opinions and criticisms from all walks of society, including intellectuals

(the name is a reference to the *Hundred Schools of Thought* period of the Warring States Period-Confucius, Lao Tze, etc).

Citizens were encouraged to openly express their opinions about the CCP. Criticisms of the government and the party became too strident for Mao's liking. He initiated the **Anti-Right Campaign** 反右运动 that resulted in the persecution of hundreds of thousands of people. Critics said that the Hundred Flowers Movement was an orchestrated campaign to flush out dissidents.

In the Second Five Year Plan of the CCP, Chairman Mao launched the **Great Leap Forward** 大跃进, in an attempt to transform the agrarian economy into an industrialized one.

This failed and resulted in the **Great Chinese Famine** 三年大饥荒 which caused tens of millions of deaths through starvation.

After the death of long-time leader Joseph Stalin in 1953, the Soviet Union underwent a period of de-Stalinization and saw the ascension of **Nikita Khrushchev** to power. Increasingly, the CCP and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union diverged in their interpretations and applications of Marxism-Leninism. This is known as the **Sino-Soviet split**. China, under Mao Zedong, took a belligerent stance towards the West, and publicly rejected the USSR's policy of peaceful coexistence between the Eastern and Western blocs. In addition, China resented the closer Soviet ties with India, and Moscow feared Mao was too nonchalant about the horrors of nuclear war.

A sociopolitical movement known as **The Cultural Revolution** 文化大革命 exploded in 1966。 The objective was to purge remnants of capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society.

▲ A Propaganda poster for the Chinese People's Liberation Army, with Red Army and Red Guard members charging forward holding Mao Zedong's Little Red Book. Photograph: GraphicaArtis/Getty Images

Party leaders such as Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Dehuai lost their powers to the **Gang of Four led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing**. The movement lasted a decade until the death of Mao Zedong in 1976.

The Gang of Four was overthrown by a **coup led by Ye Jianying** 叶剑英, thus ending the Cultural Revolution. Ye Jianying was the key supporter of Vice-Chairman Deng Xiaoping in his power struggle with **Chairman Hua Guofeng,** the successor of Mao Zedong. Huo Guofeng lost to Deng and subsequently resigned. Over 3 million people who had been unjustly purged were politically rehabilitated, the most prominent being Liu Shaoqi and Peng Dehuai.

Deng Xiaoping, the "paramount leader", spearheaded the policy of opening China to the world. China was to open up economically but not politically. The push by some for political liberalization culminated in the **1989 Tiananmen Square protests**. The protests were crushed and the General Secretary **Zhao Ziyang** 赵紫阳 was placed under house arrest.

Jiang Zemin 江泽民 succeeded Deng Xiaoping in 1993 and largely followed Deng's policies. In 2003, **Hu Jintao** 胡锦涛 succeeded Jiang Zemin and initiated a more collective style of leadership. When Hu stepped down in 2012, he resigned from all important posts. He handed the powerful posts of General Secretary of the

CCP and Chairman of the CMC to Xi Jinping (which Jiang Zemin had been slow in handing over to Hu.) Xi Jinping launched a wide-reaching anti-corruption campaign, targeting both “flies and tigers”. He rolled back on the collective leadership style of Hu Jintao and quickly consolidated his powers, which at one point was about to be challenged by high-flyer **Bo Xilai 薄熙来.** Under Xi, the CCP has seen an increase in the party’s role in China. Xi may also not retire after the end of his second term in 2022.

On 1 July 2021, the CCP marked its **100th anniversary** with a grand celebration while the rest of the world was in lock-down or semi-lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the last 30 years, the CCP oversaw an **economic miracle** that transformed China into the second largest economy in the world and poised to overtake the US by the year 2028 to become the largest economy in the world.

Conclusion:

I shall conclude by looking briefly at the CCP’s top political structure. The highest body in the CCP is the **National Congress** which is convened once every five years. Next is the **Central Committee** which meets once a year. Below the Central Committee is the **Politburo** which is the decision-making body policy issues.

The Politburo consists of 25 top officials and the powers of the politburo are further centralized in the **Politburo Standing Committee**. Historically, the Politburo Standing Committee consisted of 5 to 11 members. Currently, it has 7 (Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji and Han Zheng.)

The Central Committee comprises 205 full members and 171 alternate members selected by the Politburo and its Politburo Standing Committee. The Committee functions as a top forum for discussion about various policy issues. The Committee operates on the **principle of democratic centralism**, i.e., once a decision is made, the entire body speaks with one voice.

The National Congress, held every five years in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, is the public venue for top-level leadership changes in the CCP and the formal event for changes to the Party's Constitution. Delegates to the Congress are formally selected from grassroots party organizations. There is a system of staggered elections in which one level of the party votes for delegates to the next higher level.

Before each National Congress of the CCP, the incumbent Politburo Standing Committee would select a new Politburo in a closed door meeting. The Politiburo is therefore a self-perpetuating body. Before making the decision, the current Politburo members as well as the retired Politiburo Standing Committee members would have conducted a series of informal straw polls to determine the level of support for each of the new candidates. The Politburo meets once a month and the Standing Committee meets weekly. The Politburo members are generally in their early 60's.

Chapter 110 - The Mukden/Manchurian Railway Incident 九一八事变

Introduction:

In 1931, an explosion on a railway track in Manchuria led to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. The railway was owned by the Japanese who blamed the Chinese nationalists for the incident. It is called the Mukden Incident 九一八事变 because it occurred near the city of Mukden (today's Shenyang, capital of Liaoning province) on the 18th of September.

An independent investigation revealed that it was a false flag incident staged by the Imperial Japanese Army as a pretext for their invasion and occupation of Manchuria.

Japanese soldiers poised to enter Manchuria

Main Story:

After the defeat of the Russians by the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905), Japan took over some of the Russian interests in Manchuria, including the Manchurian Railway. Meanwhile, the newly formed Nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石, which had nominally re-unified China after the turbulent Warlord Era 军阀时代, was trying to re-assert its authority over the whole country,

including Manchuria. This was met with grave concern by the Japanese military which already had designs on Manchuria.

Manchuria at that time was ruled by a warlord, Zhang Zuolin 张作霖. Zhang Zuolin had sworn allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek after Chiang's Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐. Zhang Zuolin had once worked as a mercenary for the Japanese army. However, he was assassinated by the Japanese Kwangtung Army which planted a bomb on a bridge which Zhang's train was to pass. The Japanese army was not pleased that Zhang Zuolin has allied himself with Chiang Kai-shek, who was in the process of re-unifying China.

Zhang Zuolin Explosion Death Incident 1928

Zhang Zuolin was succeeded by his son, Zhang Xueliang 张学林. In the Sino-Soviet conflict of 1929 in Manchuria, Zhang Xueliang was defeated by the Soviets which exposed the weakness of the Chinese army in Manchuria. This did not escape the notice of the Japanese military which had set its sights on Manchuria. Worried that the Soviets would again take over Manchuria, the Japanese decided to make the first move.

In 1931, a small explosion destroyed a section of the railway in Manchuria, near the city of Mukden. It was also near Liutiao Lake 柳条湖. Thus the bombing incident was also called Liutiao Lake Incident 柳条湖事变. Although the damage to the railway track was very insignificant and a train even passed through it soon after the incident, the Japanese took the excuse to invade Manchuria. The Japanese press labelled the site Liutiao Bridge giving the impression that it was an important railway bridge that had been bombed and destroyed, when in fact it was merely a small 1.5 meter section of railway track on flat land which suffered minor damage.

In retaliation for the railway attack, the Japanese opened fire on the nearby Chinese garrison with two pre-arranged artillery pieces. The poorly trained and inexperienced warlord army of Zhang Xueliang was taken by surprise and easily subdued. Within a few months, the Imperial Japanese army, which was quickly reinforced by soldiers from Korea, had overrun all major towns and cities of Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang. Their rapid advance was in part due to the fact that Chiang Kai-shek, who was more interested in fighting the Chinese Communists, had ordered Zhang Xueliang to pursue a policy of nonresistance and withdrawal. Zhang Xueliang was subsequently ridiculed in Chinese newspapers as "General Nonresistance".

Zhang Xueliang seated with Chiang Kai-shek and Soong Mei-ling

The resource-rich region of Manchuria fell into Japanese hands and was re-named **Manchukuo 满洲国**. The Japanese made emperor Puyi 溥仪 the puppet ruler of The Empire of Manchukuo.

Emperor Hirohito meets with Puyi

This false flag event by the Japanese military was exposed in the Lytton Report, prepared by a team of investigators from the US in conjunction with a team from the League of Nations. The report also stated that it would not recognize the new state of Manchukuo. When the Lytton Report was ratified by the League of Nations in 1933, the Japanese delegation walked out and Japan subsequently withdrew from the League of Nations.

The Lytton Commission was established by the League of Nations to investigate the explosions. Investigators are shown here at the blast point.

Conclusion:

The Mukden Incident may have been contrived by the Japanese military without the knowledge and authorization of the Japanese Government, as some observers had pointed out. However, the uncompromising and unrepentant stance of the Japanese Government over this false flag event resulted in the isolation of Japan from the world community. This incident was a prelude to the **Sino-Japanese War** 甲午战争 and Japan's belligerent involvement in **WWII** 第二次世界大战.

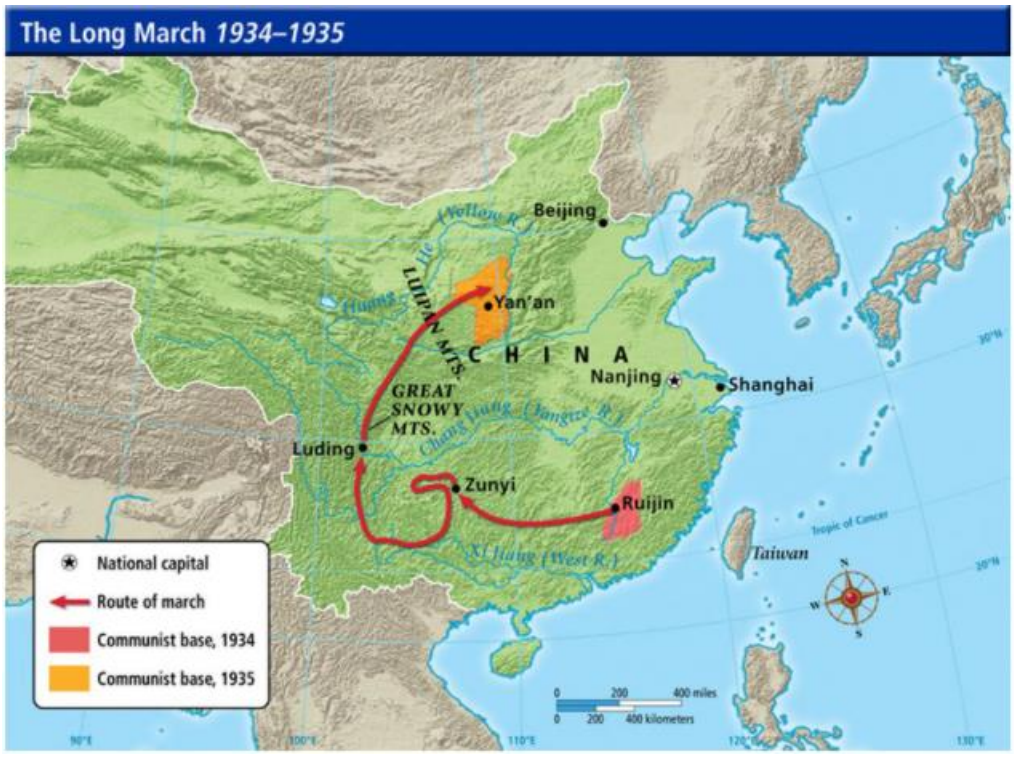
918 Historical Museum in Shenyang, Liaoning Province

Chapter 111 - The Long March 长征 1934-36

Introduction:

The Long March was a tactical withdrawal by the **Red Army 红军(forerunner of the People's Liberation Army 人民解放军)** from the south of China into the mountainous region of Northwest China, to evade the pursuit of the Chinese Nationalist Army in the **Chinese Civil War 国共内战**. The historic trek covered a distance of 10,000 km (more than twice the distance from New York to San Francisco) and lasted 370 days.

Although the Long March was achieved at great cost in terms of lives for the marchers, news of its heroic exploits spread reapidly throughout China, drawing in large numbers of young men to the cause of the Chinese Communist Revolution.



Main Story:

In 1921, the **Communist Party of China 中国共产党** was formed by **Chen Duxiu 陈独秀**, assisted by younger members such as **Mao Zedong 毛泽东**. At

that time, the newly formed party of Sun Yat-sen 孙中山, the **Kuomintang 国民党** KMT, sought aid from Communist Soviet Union. The Soviets obliged on condition that Sun took in Soviet advisers.

After the death of Sun Yat-sen, there was a brief power struggle within the KMT, after which **Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石** quickly emerged as the new leader. Chiang's immediate task was to re-unify China which had fallen into the hands of warlords after the death of **Yuan Shikai 袁世凯**. At the behest of the Soviet Communist Party, the KMT formed an alliance with the Communist Party of China, known as the **First United Front 国共合作**.

Following Chiang Kai-shek's success in his **Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐** against the warlords in 1927, Chiang set up his government based in Nanjing and then marched on to take Shanghai. Before Chiang's **National Revolutionary Army 国民革命军** could enter Shanghai, the Communists had mounted an uprising in Shanghai and taken over the government, without Chiang's approval. Chiang, who all along harbored a distrust of the Communists saw this as an attempt by the Communists to seize power. He turned on the Communists in Shanghai and conducted a bloody purge known as the **Shanghai Massacre**. Communist historiography refers to this event as the **April 12 Counter-Revolutionary Coup 四一反革命政变.** This was followed by other purges in other parts of China. The KMT-CPC Alliance had effectively come to an end.

The year 1930 was the beginning of the 5 encirclement campaigns conducted by Chiang Kai-shek in an attempt to totally destroy the Communist forces in China. At that time, the Chinese Communists occupied a region in the south of China, known as the **Chinese Soviet Republic 中华苏维埃共和国**. This region comprised 26 counties in three provinces with a population of 3 million. In 1931, Mao Zedong was elected the Chairman of this Chinese Soviet Republic based in Kiangsi (today's Jiangxi 江西, west of Fujian) province.

The objective of the Communist forces was to break out of the encirclement by the superior Nationalist forces and flee to the mountainous regions in the northwest of China. Mao Zedong was initially successful. However, he subsequently suffered one major setback during which hundreds of thousands of his men were killed or died of starvation. Mao was removed as Chairman of the Communist Central Committee. At that time, Mao was 40 years old and was considered an old man by some of the much younger Communist leaders. Subsequent leaders under the

direction of their **Comintern (Communist International 共产国际)** adviser, **Otto Braun**, employed the "direct attack" tactics as opposed to Mao's guerilla tactics. They came off far worse and the Red Army was almost decimated. Mao was then re-appointed to lead the Red Army.

The Long March was not just one march but a series of marches. There were basically three groups of the Red Army. The main group was the First Red Army, commanded by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai 周恩来 and Zhu De 朱德, which marched from Jiangxi province in October 1934 and ended up Yan'an 延安 in Shaanxi 陕西 province. The other two well-known groups were The Third Red Army and the Fourth Red Army commanded respectively by Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 and Zhang Guotao 张国焘. The three groups linked up in Shaanxi in October 1935.

In all, 86,000 took part in the march which stretched over 10,000 km and 370 days. They marched mainly at night and had to endure, not only inclement weather, tough terrain and starvation, but constant aerial and artillery bombardment as well as land assaults from the pursuing Nationalist forces. The Red Army lacked firearms and even had to resort to the use of cold weapons such as broadswords, spears, sabres, etc. In order to outdo the overwhelmingly superior forces of Chiang Kai-shek, the Red Army employed deception techniques straight out from the text of **Sun Zhi Bing Fa** 孙子兵法. Rear-guard actions were effectively used, which allowed the main body of the Communist forces to flee, while the pursuing Nationalist forces were being held down. In some instances, the Red Army was able to negotiate safe passages with the warlords occupying the area. These warlords were nominally aligned with Chiang Kai-shek.

The Long March took place on foot. The marchers crossed 24 rivers, 18 mountain ranges most of which were snow-capped, and many other obstacles. Although only 4000 of the 86,000 managed to complete the march, the stories and tales of their heroic deeds spread far and wide. Soon, thousands of young men, eager to be part of the action and the Communist Revolution, travelled all the way to Shaanxi to join the Red Army.

Mao's Long March (1934)

It has to be mentioned that the success of the Long March was to a large extent due to the strict discipline of the Communist forces under Mao Zedong. Their standard of discipline was far above that of Chiang Kai-shek's army. It is useful to learn about the strict rules of conduct formulated by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, some of which may also apply to our everyday life:

Rules of Discipline:

- **Obey orders in all your actions.**
- **Do not take even a needle or a piece of thread from the people.**
- **Turn in everything you capture.**

Points of Attention

- **Speak politely**
- **Pay fairly for what you buy.**
- **Return everything you borrow.**
- **Pay for any damage.**

- **Do not strike or swear at people.**
- **Do not damage crops.**
- **Do not take liberties with women.**
- **Do not mistreat captives.**

Conclusion:

The Long March sealed the personal prestige of Mao Zedong and his group of military leaders, which include **Zhou Enlai 周恩来, Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, Peng Dehui 彭德怀, Lin Biao 林彪, Ye Jianying 叶剑英, Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 and Zhu De 朱德** (all of whom will be covered in subsequent chapters).

Deng Xiaoping Around the Time of the Long March

The stories of the Long March and the heroic deeds of the marchers reached epic proportions over time. It remains the key episode in the history of the CCP and is used to as a source of inspiration for the Chinese people. When US President **Donald Trump** started the trade war against China in July 2018, Chinese President **Xi Jinping 习近平** told cheering crowds in **Yudu county 于都县 in Jiangxi 江西** province (where the Long March began in 1934): “We are now embarking on a new Long March, and we must start all over again.” This was to prepare the nation for a long, protracted trade war with the US.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, visits a memorial hall marking the departure of the Long March by the Central Red Army in Yudu County, Ganzhou City, during an inspection tour of east China's Jiangxi Province. Xi on Monday visited an old revolutionary base area in the south of Jiangxi Province during the inspection. Photo: Xinhua

Chapter 112 - The Xi’an Incident 西安事变

Introduction:

The **Xi’an Incident 西安事变** of 1936 was the kidnapping of Chiang Kai-shek by his Generals**, Zhang Xueliang 张学良 and Yang Hucheng 杨虎城**, in order to force Chiang to accede to their demands that he form a united front with the Communists against the Japanese aggression.

Zhang Xueliang & Yang Hucheng

Main Story:

In 1935, the remnants of the Communist Red Army which had just survived the epochal **Long March 长征**(see previous chapter) had arrived in Shaanxi province, northwest of China. **Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石** was determined to destroy the

Communists army once and for all because he had always held the view that the Communists were the disease of the heart whereas the Japanese were the disease of the skin. The Japanese had already occupied Manchuria for 5 years, since 1931. Zhang Xueliang used to be the warlord and ruler of Manchuria. He had been driven out by the Japanese and he together with Yang Hucheng were now in charge of the Nationalist Northwest army, which was part of the **Kuomintang's Nationalist Army 国民军.**

Zhang was given the order by Chiang Kai-shek to attack and annihilate the bone-tired Long March survivors of the Red Army led by **Mao Zedong 毛泽东**.

Zhang Xueliang and Chiang Kai-shek

Zhang Xueliang balked at this order as he strongly felt that Chinese should not fight Chinese and the KMT should instead join with the CCP to drive out the Japanese invaders. This sentiment was shared by a wide segment of the population in China and found its voice in student protests in the streets of Xi'an. As a matter of fact, the CCP had over the last two years been proposing to resume the national united front that had broken down after Chiang Kai-shek initiated the Shanghai Massacre in 1927. Chiang Kai-shek was obdurate and even said that the student protesters should be killed, if need be.

Unhappy with the lack of response from his Manchurian army, Chiang Kai-shek personally travelled to Xi'an to put personal pressure on Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng 杨虎城. When words went out that Chiang Kai-shek was going to replace Zhang Xueliang, Zhang and Yang decided that they had to take matters into their own hands.

On 12 December 1936, the military officers of Zhang and Yang stormed the cabin of Chiang Kai-shek and held him under detention. Zhang and Yang remonstrated with Chiang against his orders to destroy the remnants of Mao Zedong's army. Instead the two Chinese forces should join hands to fight the common enemy – the Japanese Imperial Army. A telegram was sent to the Nanjing government of Chiang Kai-shek to demand an immediate end to the Civil War. Chiang Kai-shek remained uncompromising. The Nanjing Government was divided in their response to Zhang Xueliang's demands. Meanwhile, the air force of the Nanjing government of Chiang started bombing the surrounding areas of Xi'an to intimidate the kidnappers.

Five days after the kidnapping and the standoff, a notable personality stepped up to the plate that would help turn the tide of events. He was none other than Communist leader, **Zhou Enlai** 周恩来. Zhou was at one time (during the 1920's) a colleague of Chiang Kai-shek in the Whampoa Military Academy and was respected by Chiang. Zhou Enlai offered Chiang a deal. If the KMT and CCP join forces, the Communist forces would be under the command of Chiang Kai-shek. Meanwhile, Chiang's wife, **Soong Meiling** 宋美龄 also arrived to join the negotiation. Soong Mayling reasoned to Chiang that some factions within the KMT may take advantage of the situation to sieze power. Some young officers in Zhang Xueliang's Northwest Army were getting impatient and wanted Chiang to be executed.

Eventually, Chiang was released based on his promise to give up the campaign against Mao's forces but instead join with them to fight the Japanese aggressors. This was the Second KMT-CCP United Front.

Chiang Kai-shek after the Xi'an Incident

After Chiang's release, Zhang Xueliang was placed under house arrest which lasted for over 50 years. After his release in 1993, Zhang emigrated to Hawaii. Yang Hucheng was not so lucky. He was imprisoned and subsequently executed on Chiang Kai-shek's order in 1949, just before Chiang's Nationalist forces retreated to Taiwan.

Conclusion:

The Xi'an Incident initiated by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng was the turning point in the 10 year long Chinese Civil War. Not only did it save the remnants of Mao Zedong's forces from total annihilation, it also started a Second Nationalist-Communist united front which was crucial for China winning the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).

The Xi'an Incident led to a Second United Front

Chapter 113 - Second Sino-Japanese War 抗日战争

Introduction:
Japanese aggression against China started since 1931 due to the Mukden Incident (see chapter 110). Tensions had since been building up between the two nations. However, it was not until the Marco Polo Incident in 1937 that the conflict blew up into the Second Sino-Japanese War. China received military aid from both the Soviet Union and the US. The war happened concurrently with WWII which broke out in 1942. The Sino-Japanese War ended when WWII ended in August 1945.

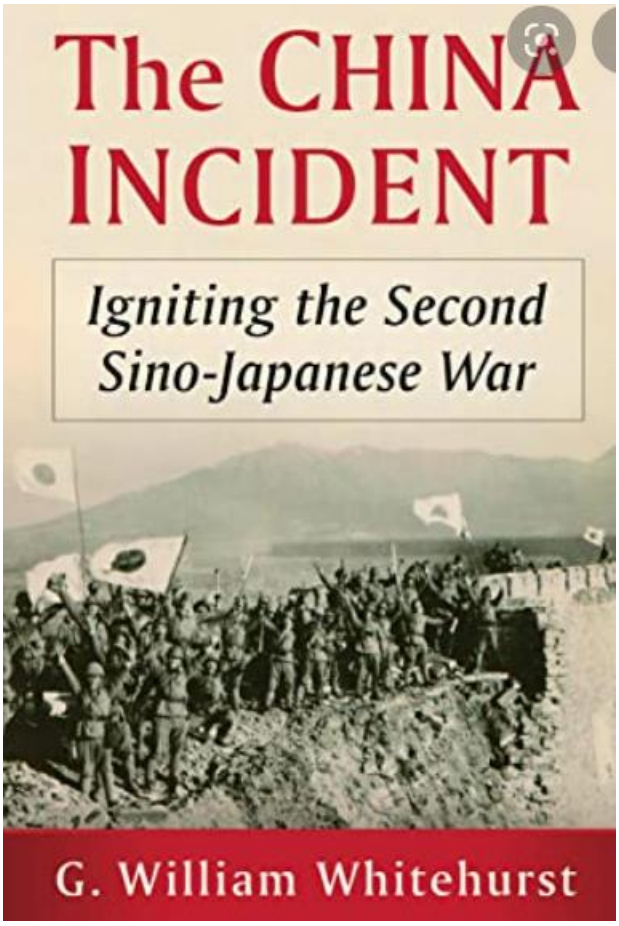
Main Story:
Hungry for raw materials, food and labor, Japan had for decades look towards China. Fueled by its militaristic and imperialistic policy, and emboldened by a strong, modernized army, Japan decided on the occupation of China as the means to its ends. Japan's aggression began with the occupation of Manchuria where they established the puppet state of **Manchukuo**. The former Qing emperor **Puyi** was installed as the Emperor of the Empire of Manchukuo and the Japanese built a smaller version of the Forbidden City for him, now known as **Wei Huang Gong 伪皇宫 (Fake Imperial Palace).**

The former Qing emperor Puyi, during his puppet reign over Manchukuo

Fake Imperial Palace Wei Huang Gong built for Emperor Puyi by Japan

Despite the Japanese invasion, Chiang Kai-shek had been too pre-occupied with exterminating the Communists in China. This led to the Xi'an Incident when a number of generals led by the ex-Manchurian warlord, Zhang Xueliang, kidnapped Chiang and forced him to agree to a Second United Front with the Communist forces in order to jointly fight the Japanese.

The **Marco Polo Bridge Incident (also called Lugou Bridge Incident)** provided just the right excuse for the Japanese to advance south of Manchuria. Since the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931, there had been several small skirmishes between the Japanese and Chinese forces in Manchuria, especially along the rail line connecting Beijing with the port of Tianjin. In July 1937, a Japanese soldier was missing from his unit and his commander demanded the right to search the Chinese held territory for him. When this was refused, Japanese troops started to mass around the area. The Chinese troops opened fire on them at the Marco Polo Bridge (named as such because of its mention in the Travels of Marco Polo).
The Marco Polo Bridge Incident ignited a full-scale war between the Empire of Japan and the Republic of China.



Some observers had suggested that this incident could have been planned just like the Mukden Incident to give Japan the pretext to start the invasion. Others said that the first shot fired was an accidental shot fired by a low-ranking Chinese soldier in a moment of fear.

After three months, Shanghai fell to the Japanese, followed by Nanjing during which the Nanking Massacre took place. This was the first phase of the war which

was a blitzkrieg of Japanese victories as the Japanese army moved swiftly along the east coast of China. Chiang Kai-shek retreated to Wuhan which temporarily acted as the capital, before the Nationalist Army made the epic retreat to Chongqing, which was to be the capital until the end of WWII in 1945. As the Chinese army moved inland, the Japanese could not attack them with foot soldiers but resorted to using air force planes.

A Chinese baby who survived a Japanese air raid on Shanghai in 1937

The Sino-Japanese War was known for the brutality of the Japanese army. Unit 731 even conducted human experimentation in secret bases in China, testing their biological and chemical warfare capability.

Nationalist soldiers train on machine guns during the war with Japan

Having conquered Nanjing, the Japanese set up a puppet government making use of the KMT general, Wang Jingwei, who was opposed to Chiang Kai-shek. Meanwhile, Chiang continued to fight the Communists. He confronted the Japanese using scorched-earth tactics. In June 1938, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the blowing up of the dykes of the Yellow River to slow the Japanese advance. The devastating flood killed half a million Chinese and rendered millions more homeless.

Japanese troops crossing the Yellow River

By 1938, the Japanese advance into China had slowed to a crawl. China's geographical size and the stiff resistance of the Communist forces in the countryside made it impossible for the Japanese army to advance inland.
After the Pearl Harbor bombing, the US entered the Pacific War. They supported Chiang's army with military aid. US troops were even stationed in China. The US repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which restricted Chinese immigration into the US. China became one of the Big Four Allies of WWII (viz. US, UK, Soviet Union and China) and would eventually gain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

Conclusion:

By August 1945, the Japanese (together with the other Axis powers of Germany and Italy) had lost WWII. The Sino-Japanese War ended at the same time as the end of WWII, after the US dropped their atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese forces in China were ordered to surrender to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist army.
The Soviets who had attacked and seized Manchuria allowed the Chinese Communists to take over the military equipment left over by the Japanese. With better military hardware, the peasant forces of Mao Zedong would, over the next four years, drive the already weakened and unpopular Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek out of mainland China, and establish the People's Republic of China.

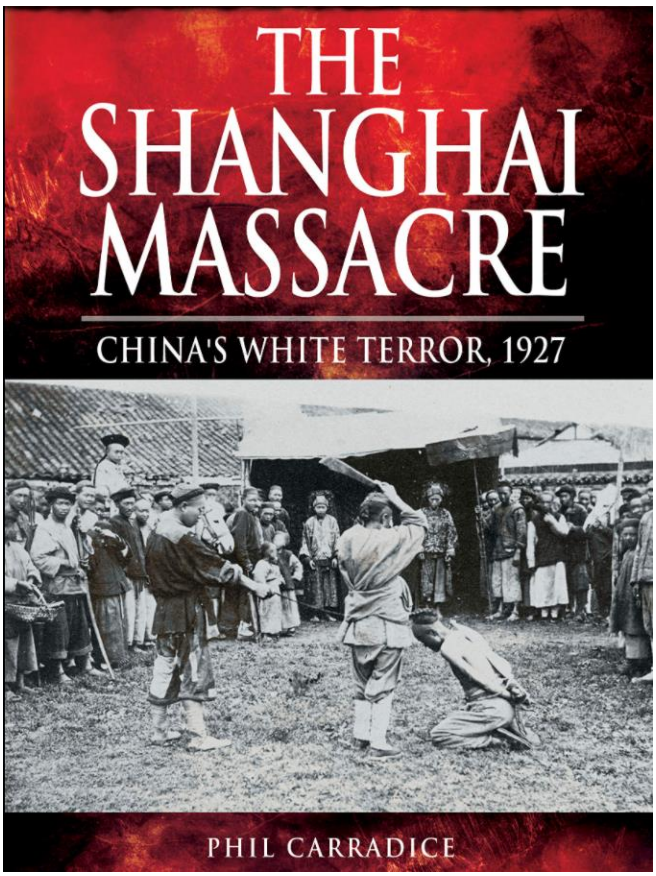
Chapter 114 – The Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案 and New Fourth Army Incident 新四军事件

Introduction:

The Nationalists and Communists in China had come together on two occasions to form the First United Front and the Second United Front to fight the Japanese invaders. The First United Front was broken up by the Shanghai Massacre of 1927 and the Second United Front ended with the New Fourth Army Incident of 1941.

Main Story:

(1) The Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案 1927



During the **Warlord Era 军阀时代 (see chapter 104)**, the **National Revolutionary Army 中国革命军** was formed with the combined forces of the Nationalists and the Communists, under the tutelage of the Soviet Union. This was

known as the **First United Front 联俄容共 or 国共合作**. It was a marriage of convenience to subdue the warlords in order to re-unify China. The Nationalist forces were led by **Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石**. The Communists were led by **Mao Zedong 毛泽东, Lin Biao 林彪 and Zhou Enlai 周恩来**. They had the support of Soviet advisers. This co-operation was to end with the Shanghai Massacre.

By 1927, Chiang Kai-shek had scored successes against the Northern Warlords and had occupied Nanjing, turning it into the nation's capital city. His army would next march onto Shanghai. Just before they entered Shanghai, the Communist forces led by Zhou Enlai and **Chen Duxiu 陈独秀** had taken the initiative to take Shanghai first. They launched an uprising in Shanghai and defeated the warlord forces of the **Zhili clique 直隶党**. Part of Shanghai at that time was foreign concessions. The Communists organized student protests and labor strikes to demand that the foreigners give up their concessions. Chiang Kai-shek felt that the Communists had undermined his authority and took action to purge all Communists within the ranks of the National Revolutionary Army. This bloody purge which resulted in the death of large numbers of Communists spelled the end of the KMT-CPC alliance and led to the start of the **Chinese Civil War 国共内战 (to be covered in the next6 chapter, chapter 115)**. The left-wing faction of the KMT under **Wan Jingwei 汪精卫** also set up a separate government in **Wuhan 武汉**, in opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's government in Nanjing.

Suspected communists are rounded up by police during the 1927 purges

Estimates of Communist deaths during the Shanghai massacre varied from 5,000 to 10,000. The KMT Shanghai head, **General Bai Chongxi** 白崇禧, was nicknamed by Western reporters as “The Hewer of Communist Heads”. This incident caused a wide schism between the Nationalists and Communists. Chiang Kai-shek was denounced as a traitor to Sun Yat-sen 孙中山 by Sun’s wife, **Soong Ching-ling** 宋庆龄. Many commanders of the National Revolutionary Army switched their allegiance to the CPC.

Wang Jingwei, who had broken away from Chiang Kai-shek, later decided to come to terms with Chiang Kai-shek. He was particularly alarmed when he found out that **Stalin** had been trying to mobilize the workers and peasants within his city of Wuhan to join the Communist cause. When Chiang pressed on with his purge on Communist elements, Wang fled to Europe to avoid retribution by Chiang for being a Communist sympathizer. In the years that followed, the **Chinese Civil War** 国共内战 resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths on both sides. Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 who had promoted cooperation with the KMT was discredited and lost his leadership role to Mao Zedong and **Zhu De** 朱德 who had mounted

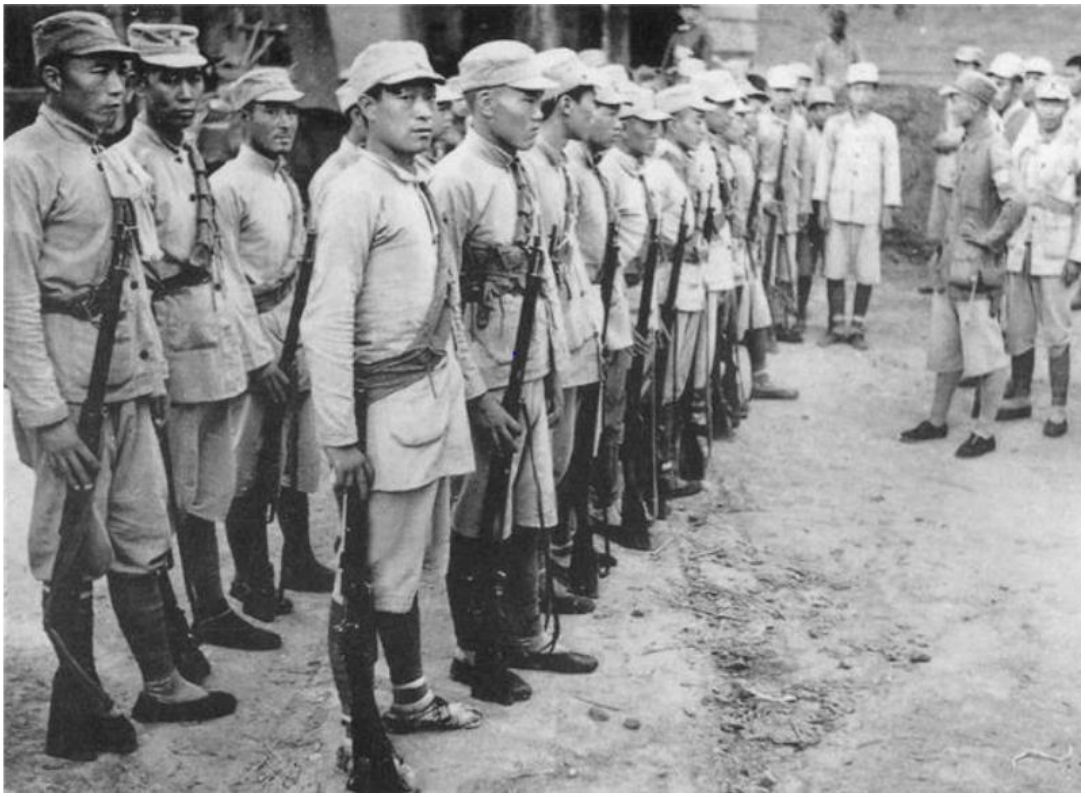
uprisings against Chiang Kai-shek's government, and successfully led the **Long March 长征 (1934-36).**

(2) The New Fourth Army Incident/South Anhui Incident 1941

This incident led to the breaking up of the Second United Front. Fresh out from the Long March 长征 in 1937, the Communist Red Army was reorganized into two armies, viz. the **Eight Route Army 八路军 and the New Fourth Army 新四军**. The **Xi'an Incident 西安事变(see chapter 112)** had led to the establishment of a Second United Front between the Communists and the Nationalist forces. Under the terms agreed on during the negotiation at Xi'an 西安, Zhou Enlai had agreed that the Communist armies would be placed under the direction of Chiang Kai-shek to mount attacks on their common enemy, the Japanese Imperial Army.

The Communist Red Army, commanded by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, operated mostly in the north of China. The Eight Route Army consisted on 3 divisions under the command of Lin Biao 林彪. In 1940, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the two armies – the Eight Route Army and the New Fourth Army - to withdraw from Anhui 安徽 and Jiangsu 江苏 to the north of the Yellow River. The Red Army however moved only the New Fourth Army as instructed whereas the Eight Route Army stayed put. On arrival at South Anhui, the 9000-strong New Fourth Army was surrounded by

80,000 men from Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist army. They were massacred except for about 2000 men who managed to break out from the encirclement.


Members of the New Fourth Army before the massacre by the Nationalist forces

This incident was remembered by the PRC as abject treachery by the Nationalist forces. From Chiang Kai-shek's viewpoint, it was punishment for an earlier attack by Communist forces on a Nationalist force in Hebei.

Conclusion:

The two incidents were historically considered a betrayal of the Chinese Communists by the KMT under Chiang Kai-shek. They contributed to the widespread resentment of the ruling KMT leadership. The enmity between the two opposing parties became so intense that despite the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1945, attempted peace talks between Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek did not take off.

The Chinese Civil War intensified after 1945, leading to the final defeat of the Nationalists in 1949.

Chapter 115 – Chinese Civil War 国共内战 1927-49

Introduction:

The Chinese Civil War 国共内战 was a watershed period in the modern history of China. It finally led to the establishment of a Communist government in China.

After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, China underwent a very unstable period known as the **Warlord Era 军阀时代** (see Chapter 104). At one point, there were three capitals in China: Beijing under the Beiyang Warlord government **of Zhang Zuolin 张作霖**, Nanjing under the right-wing KMT leader **Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石** and Wuhan under the left-wing KMT leader **Wang Jingwei 汪精卫**. With the fall of the Beiyang Government and the Wuhan government, the two other dominant forces, the KMT and the CCP, began to turn on each other to seek supremacy, giving rise to the Chinese Civil War.

Main Story:

The Chinese Civil War started with the purge of the Communists within the ranks of the **National Revolutionary Army NRA 中国革命军**. The NRA was formed with the combined forces of the KMT and the CCP under an agreement known as the First United Front. In 1923, the Soviet Union pledged their support to China's re-unification. An adviser from the Soviet Union and an agent from **Comintern (Communist International)共产国际** arrived in China to help organize the KMT and CCP along the lines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. **Sun Yat-sen 孙中山** sent Chiang Kai-shek to Moscow for military and political study. Chiang subsequently headed the Whampoa Military Academy with the support of the Soviets. Many Communist members were also involved in the Academy, e.g. **Zhou Enlai 周恩来** was a political instructor at the academy. At that time, the CCP members numbered only 300 versus the 50,000 in the KMT.

Chiang Kai-sek mounted the Northern Expedition (see chapter 108) and established the nation's new capital at Nanjing. The KMT-CCP co-operation fell apart in 1927 with the **Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案** (see Chapter 114). KMT **General Bai Chongxi 白从西** carried out a brutal suppression of the Communists in Shanghai and other cities such as Changsha, Shantou and Guangzhou. The Communists fled to the countryside and formed the Red Army.

Meanwhile, the left-leaning KMT leader Wang Jingwei established a separate government in Wuhan. He was subsequently forced out of Wuhan by Chiang's forces and he fled to France.

Chiang (right) together with Wang Jingwei (left), 1926

Chiang Kai-shek initiated the encirclement campaigns against the Communists. The Communists had earlier engaged the KMT in urban warfare which proved disastrous for them because of Chiang's powerful secret police. Under the leadership of **Mao Zedong** 毛泽东, the Communists resorted to guerilla warfare in the countryside, with their forces bolstered by the disenfranchised peasants. The Communists occupied scattered areas in the country-side, see map below.

Map showing the communist-controlled Soviet Zones of China during and after the encirclement campaigns

More details

The first phase of the Chinese Civil War ended in 1937 with the completion of the **Long March** 长征(see chapter 111). The 5 encirclement campaigns of Chiang Kai-shek failed to completely trap the Communist forces. Mao Zedong took advantage of gaps in the fortifications which were manned by warlords and not regular KMT troops. Chiang's forces were mainly focused on destroying the large Red Army led by **Zhang Guotao** 张国焘 rather than the smaller army led by Mao Zedong. The armies of Zhang Guotao and his Chinese Muslim allies, the **Ma Clique** 马家军, were largely destroyed by Chiang. Following the success of the Long March, Mao Zedong took over from Zhou Enlai as the official and undisputed leader of the CPC. He was elected Chairman of the Military Commission with Zhou Enlai and **Deng Xiaoping** 邓小平 as Vice-Chairmen. Zhang Guotao, a rival of Mao Zedong, had also made it through the Long March. But because Zhang's army was all but decimated, he did not pose a challenge to Mao's leadership.

Zhang with Mao Zedong in Yan'an, 1938

Zhang Guotao was purged by Mao in 1937 after which he defected to the KMT. After the defeat of the KMT in 1949, Zhang went into exile in Hongkong and later emigrated to Canada. Mao called him a “traitor, defector and renegade”.

The **Xi’an Incident** 西安事变(see chapter 112) was precipitated by the onset of the **Second Sino-Japanese War** 抗日战争 （chapter 113）which prompted the KMT and CCP to form a Second United Front. The Second United Front was aided by the Allied nations of WWII, i.e., US, UK and Soviet Union. US President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent a special envoy to talk with Chiang Kai-shek and Joseph Stalin also talked to Mao Zedong to encourage them to unite with the Nationalists against the Japanese aggressors.

As the KMT forces were mainly stationed along the coastal areas and in the major cities, they took the brunt of Japanese attacks as compared to the Communists who were far inland and in the countryside.

The KMT accused the Communists of avoiding direct engagement with the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek considered the Japanese as the disease of the skin whereas the Communists were a disease of the heart. In the **New Fourth Army incident** 新四军事件 (see chapter 114), the Communist army under the command of the Chiang Kai-shek, in accordance with the agreement of the Second United Front, was directed into an ambush by a numerically far superior KMT forces.

Communist New Fourth Army

This ended the Second United Front. Clashes between the KMT and CCP forces resumed while both were at the same time fighting the Japanese invaders. In 1944, the Japanese Imperial Army launched a major offensive against the KMT forces, code-named Operation Ichi-Go. The KMT forces suffered heavy losses.

Meanwhile, the CCP forces continued to expand bolstered by their ability to win over the peasants through their land reforms in areas under their control. By then, the Red Army had grown to 1.3 M men with a militia force of 2.6M. The Chinese Civil War resumed with greater intensity after the Japanese defeat in 1945.

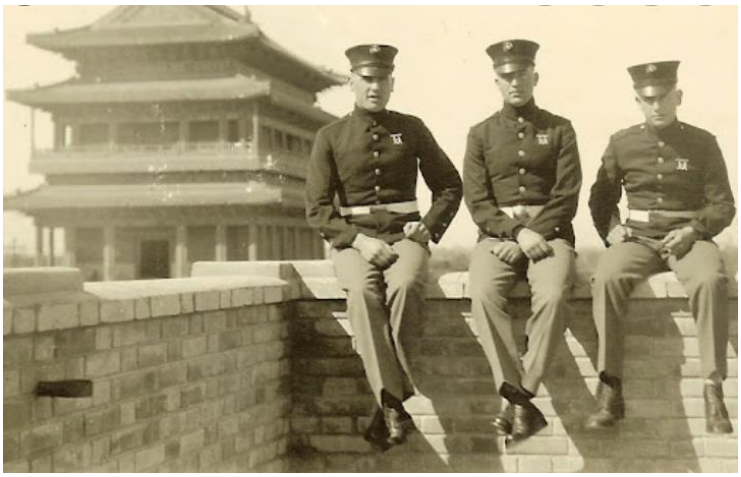
After the Japanese surrender, Japanese troops were supposed to surrender to KMT troops and not Communist troops. However, the KMT did not have any troops in Manchuria as it was occupied during the war by the Soviets. The Soviet forces had launched a huge operation against the Japanese Kwantung Army which they

destroyed within 3 weeks. So the 700,000 Japanese troops stationed in Manchuria surrendered to Soviet troops.

When the Soviets departed, they dismantled the extensive Manchurian base established by the Japanese and shipped the parts back to Russia. However, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin allowed their fellow Communists (the CPC) who had dominated Manchuria to take over the weapons left behind by the Japanese as well as a substantial amount of their own supplies.

The countryside was generally dominated by the Chinese Communists. The US airlifted KMT troops to occupy key cities in North China. The Communists forces were also strengthened by the large numbers of well-trained Nationalist officers and soldiers who switched their allegiance to the CCP.

Meanwhile, business interests within the KMT were busy with taking over banks, factories and commercial properties from the departing Japanese. To prepare for war with the Communists, the KMT conscripted troops in cities, a move which was very unpopular with the people. The US continued to support the KMT with miitary training and aid as well as loans. About 50,000 US soldiers were dispatched to China to guard key installations.



A meeting between Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek took place in Chongqing which tried to establish a peace agreement between the CCP and the KMT. It failed and full-scale confrontations between the two sides resumed in mid-1946. This war which continued for three years until 1949 was named by the KMT as the **Third National Revolutionary War** 第三次国内革命战争. The Communists named it the **War of Liberation** 解放战争.

The US Marshall Mission undertaken by US Army General George Marshall to China attempted to negotiate between the CCP and KMT to create a unified Chinese government. It collapsed. Joseph Stalin, who had also favored a coalition government, persuaded Mao Zedong to refrain from crossing the Yangtze River.

Mao rejected Stalin’s proposal and started the Yangtze River crossing in April 1949. After Mao’s forces captured Nanjing, the KMT government retreated to Canton (Guangzhou), then Chongqing and then Chengdu.

By late 1949, the People's Liberation Army was pursuing remnants of KMT forces southwards in southern China, and only Tibet was left. The Kuomintang made several last-ditch attempts to use Khampa troops in Tibet against the Communists in southwest China.

Khampas, the people of Kham, were reputed warriors renowned for their marksmanship and horsemanship. Kham is one of the tree traditional provinces of Tibet. Kham has rugged terrain characterized by mountain ridges and gorges. The Khampas were defeated by the Communist forces and their religious leader was captured.

From their previous temporary capital of Chengdu, Chiang Kai-shek and two million KMT soldiers, businessmen and supporters finally retreated to the island of Taiwan where they continued to assert themselves as the sole legitimate ruler of China.

Conclusion:

On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong at Tiananmen Square proclaimed the founding of the **People's Republic of China** 中国人民共和国.

A PRC attempt to take the ROC-controlled island of Quemoy (now Kinmen) was thwarted in the Battle of Guningtou or Battle of Kinmen Island, halting the PLA advance towards Taiwan. With the onset of the Korean War in 1950, the PRC temporarily suspended the plan to recover Taiwan

Until today, no armistice or peace treaty has been signed between PRC and Taiwan.

Chapter 116 - Zhu De 朱德

Introduction:

Zhu De 朱德, Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 and Lin Biao 林彪 were named in 1955 as the top Ten Marshals (Yuan Shuai 元帅) of the Chinese armies. This relates mainly to their outstanding performance during the time of the Chinese republic leading to the Communist victory in 1949. In the case of Peng Dehuai, he also led the Chinese armies to victory, according to the Chinese historical records, in the **Korean War 抗美援朝** of 1950-53. Zhu De, Peng Dehuai and Lin Biao ranked first, second and third respectively.

Main Story:

In the formative years of the CCP, Mao Zedong 毛泽东 and Zhu De were so closely connected that they were known as Zhu-Mao 朱毛 to the peasants. Some villagers even thought that Zhu-Mao was one person. Mao and Zhu forged the Red Army and introduced the guerilla tactics that would lead the CCP to ultimate victory in the Chinese Civil War.

Zhu De was born to a poor tenant farmer's family in a town in a hilly and isolated part of northern Sichuan province. His parents had been relocated to Sichuan during the mass migration from Hunan province and Guangdong province. According to Zhe De, his "cruel father" drowned five of his siblings as he could not afford to raise them. Fortunately, Zhu De was adopted by a well-to-do uncle who sent him to the Yunnan Military Academy in Kunming.

He initially joined **Yuan Shi-kai's 袁世凯 Beiyang Army** which toppled the Qing dynasty. He subsequently switched his allegiance to **Tongmenhui 同门会**, a secret political society founded by Sun Yat-sen, a forerunner of the KMT. He was involved as a Regimental Commander in Sun's campaign to unseat Yuan Shikai. When the KMT was suppressed in 1913 by Yuan Shikai, Zhu De was forced into exile. He returned in 1916 and established himself as an important warlord. He developed a strong opium habit and fell into a life of decadence. However, it did not prevent him from emerging later as an outstanding military general.

During the Chinese Civil War, Zhu De defected to the Chinese Red Army led by Mao Zedong. In 1927, Mao Zedong was fleeing into the Jinggang mountains 景岗山 with a handful of survivors after his botched **Autumn Harvest Uprising 秋收起义** when he was joined by Zhu De and his cavalry, leading an army of 1,000 well-trained soldiers. Zhu De was also on the run from the KMT forces after his failed Nanchang uprising. Zhu De had in 1925 met Zhou Enlai while studying in

Germany. He converted to Communism and in 1927 helped Zhou Enlai organize the **Nanchang Uprising** 南昌起义 which failed. Zhu De served under Mao Zedong as the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army.

Zhu De in 1916.

In 1929, Chiang Kai-shek's forces were closing in on the Communist forces. Zhu De and Zhou Enlai 周恩来 helped Mao in the 1934 break-out of the KMT's encirclement campaign and began the Long March 长征. During the Long March, Zhu De worked closely with Zhou Enlai and organized several successful battles against the KMT. For parts of the Long March, the real power of the Communist Party was in the hand of Bo Gu 博古 and the Comintern adviser, Otto Braun. Zhu De supported Mao in his power struggle against Bo Gu and Otto Braun, which resulted in Mao becoming the undisputed leader of the CCP.

Mao was leading the First Red Army whereas the Fourth Red Army was led by **Zhang Guotao** 张国焘. The Fourth Red Army barely survived the retreat but managed to arrive in **Yan'an** 延安 to link up with Mao's forces. Zhu De helped to reconstruct a combined Red Army under the direction of Mao.

When the Second Sino-Japanese War started in 1937, Zhu De and Peng Dehuai's **Eight Route Army** 八路军 launched the **Hundred Regiments Offensive** 百团大战 against the Imperial Army of Japan.

They targeted bridges, railroads, mines, block houses and telephone lines in northern China. Although the campaign was successful in causing extensive damage and killing about 20,000 Japanese soldiers, it provoked the Japanese Army to adopt the **Three Alls Policy "kill all, burn all, loot all"** 三光政策 **(Japanese: Sanko Sankusen)** to totally destroy Communist bases in North China. This policy was responsible for the deaths of over 2.7 M Chinese civilians.

At the Lushan Conference, Zhu De tried to protect his best friend and military partner, Peng Dehuai， who was being purged for criticizing Mao's Great Leap Forward. To Mao's disappointment, Zhu De merely gave mild criticisms of Peng without denouncing him. Like Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇, Zhu De had earlier campaigned for reforms and demanded an end to the disastrous collectivization policies of the Great Leap Forward. Following his weak performance at the **Lushan Conference** 庐山会议, Zhu De was dismissed from his position as Vice-Chairman of the CMC. In 1969, he was purged after being dismissed from the Politburo Standing Committee of the CCP. Zhu De and his wife were made to wear a dunce cap. It was Zhou Enlai which helped him escape the more gruesome fate of other purged leaders.

However, Zhu De was politically rehabilitated in 1973. Mao even met up with this friend of 40 years, sitting together on a sofa, laughing and shaking hands like good old friends. Zhu De continued to work as a statesman until his death in July 1976, six months after Zhou's death and just two months before Mao's death. He was almost 90 years old.

Conclusion:

Zhu De is a military legend, being the army general who led the PLA and the CCP into power. He is ranked **Number One among the Top Ten Marshals** in the CCP.

Chapter117 – Peng Dehuai 彭德怀

Introduction:

Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 was in 1955 rated number 2 among the **Top Ten Marshals** of the Chinese military. His contributions were not only during the Chinese Civil War. He also led a Chinese volunteer army in the **Korean War** (see chapter 120) during which his under-equipped troops managed to push the United Nations forces (comprising 21 countries led by the US), out of North Korea, back into South Korea.

Peng Dehuai

Main Story:

Peng Dehuai was born to a poor peasant family in a village in the southern province of Hunan. His home is not far from the birthplace of Mao Zedong 毛泽东. Peng had little education. At the age of 10, he worked as a manual laborer. He joined the Hunan warlord army at the age of 16. In 1926, he joined the **National Revolutionary Army 国民革命军** in their **Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐**. As his interest in politics grew, he found himself deeply drawn to the ideals of Communism. Coming from a poor family background, he took a shine to the idea of the elimination of private property and a Classless society. After the **Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案**, he lost faith in Chiang Kai-shek and defected to the Jiangxi Soviet, a Communist controlled region under Mao Zedong and Zhu De 朱德. He worked closely with Lin Biao to defend the **Jiangxi-Fujian Soviet 闽赣苏区**. He was forced into the **Long March 长征** during which the Red Army split into various smaller groups.

Peng Dehuai distinguished himself during the Long March 长征. Although he was a deputy of **Zhu De 朱德,** his personal style was a great contrast to that of Zhu De. Zhu De had a military education in Yunan and Germany whereas Peng Dehuai had his education on the job during military operations. Zhu De and **Lin Biao 林彪** adopted the guerilla tactics of Mao Zedong whereas Peng's fighting style was ferocious and persistent, choosing to meet the enemy head-on. He was a burly man with a bad temper and was much like **Zhang Fei 张飞 in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms 三国演义.**

After the Long March, Mao Zedong gave Peng Dehuai the task of protecting their Yan'an 延安 capital against Chiang Kai-shek's invading army. Peng was up against Chiang Kai-shek's best general and strategist, **Hu Zongnan 胡宗南**, who launched a huge army of 260,000 men against his position. Peng was able to fend off the attack and even saved Mao Zedong in one of the battles. Mao honored Peng's courage and skill by dedicating a poem to him. In the Red Army, Peng's army and Lin Biao's army were the elites.

As Zhu De's deputy, Peng Dehuai and Zhu De commanded the **8th Route Army 八路军** during the **Second Sino-Japanese War 抗日战争.** They led the **Hundred Regiments Offensive 百团大战** (see chap 116 Zhu De) against the Japanese Imperial Army. It was a massive Communist effort to disrupt Japanese logistical networks across Northern China and also resulted in 20,000 Japanese deaths.

Peng Dehuai was one of the few generals who supported Mao's proposal to enter the Korean War in 1950 (see chapter 120.) Peng was 53 years old at that time and he was appointed to take command of the 380,000 **Chinese People's Volunteers Army** 中国人民志愿军 which infiltrated deep into North Korea.

Peng's strategy to stop the UN forces' advances was to surround and annihilate the widely scattered units of the UN forces led by the US. Peng was barely known to Westerners at that time and they had no idea that he was the Commander of both the Chinese and North Korean armies. He achieved tremendous success in the first Chinese offensives, inflicting heavy casualties on US forces in combat. When the Korean War came to a stalemate, Peng was the one who signed the armistice

agreement at Panmunjom in July 1953. He received a triumphal welcome upon his return to Beijing in August of the same year.

During the Korean War, Mao's eldest son **Mao Anying** 毛岸英 was killed in a decapitation action by the US command. This accident may have sowed the seeds of Mao's disaffection with Peng Dehuai later which led to him being purged by Mao.

However, there were other reasons why Peng Dehuai was subsequently purged by Mao Zedong. In the 1950s, Peng resisted Mao's attempts to develop a personality cult for himself. His bad temper and straight talking also contributed to his downfall. He openly criticized Mao's **Great Leap Forward 大跃进.**

His advocacy of democracy within the party led to his being excoriated by Mao's supporters, one of whom was **Bo Yibo 薄一波, father of Bo Xilai 薄熙来**. Peng even dared to denounce the dissipated emperor-like life style of Mao. In 1959, an open confrontation took place at the **Lushan Conference 庐山会议** between Mao and Peng. Mao labeled Peng Dehuai an "anti-Party clique" and purged him from

all important positions. Although reformers like **Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 and Deng Xiaoping 邓小平** helped to restore him to certain government positions at a later date, Peng was again purged during the Cultural Revolution. This time, he met a terrible fate. Radical factions within the CCP led by **Jiang Qing 江青** singled him out for national persecution and accused him of many crimes.

Down with he who is guilty of the three oppositions, Peng Dehuai, ca. 1967

Peng Dehuai was publicly humiliated in numerous Communist-style struggle sessions and underwent much suffering. He was put into solitary confinement until his death in 1974.

Overthrow Peng Dehuai, Luo Ruiqing, Chen Zaidao, Liao Laotan!, 1967

Conclusion:

Peng Dehuai was one of the most able generals of Mao Zedong. It was unfortunate that he fell out with Mao and was persecuted. After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, Peng Dehuai was one of the first leaders to be posthumously rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping.

Chapter 118 - Lin Biao 林彪

Introduction:

Lin Biao 林彪 is ranked third among the Ten Marshals. As mentioned in Chapter 115 Chinese Civil War, the epic Yangtze River crossing by Mao's army in 1949 was headed by Marshal Lin Biao. Lin Biao decisively defeated Chiang Kai Shek's army, after which the Communists took control of the coastal provinces in Southeast China. It paved the way for the CCP's full control of mainland China.

Lin Biao, wearing KMT uniform.

Main Story:

Born into a wealthy business family in Hubei, Lin Biao was interested in student movements while in school. He participated in the **May Thirtieth Movement 五卅运动.** This labor and anti-imperialist movement led to the Shanghai massacre of 1927 (see chapter 114). He joined the newly established **Whampoa (Huangpu 黄浦）Military Academy** where he met Chiang Kai-shek and Zhou Enlai.

In 1926, he joined the Northern Expedition led by Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 (see chapter 108) as a Deputy Platoon Commander. He quickly rose to become a

Battalion Commander. In 1927, after phase one of the Northern Expedition, he was promoted to Colonel. However, he left the KMT to become a Communist revolutionary. He joined Zhu Du in the Nanchang Uprising 南昌起义 against the KMT in August 1927 which failed. He and Zhu De combined their forces with that of Mao Zedong in Jiangxi. Their forces constituted the First Army whereas the Third Army was led by **Peng Dehuai 彭德怀** (see chapter 117).

He was one of the successful commanders in the Red Army during the Long March 长征 (see chapter 111.) Lin Biao adopted different battlefield tactics from those of Peng Dehuai. Lin specialized in guerilla tactics whereas Peng chose to meet the enemy head-on in frontal assaults. As Commander-in-Chief of the Communist 8th Route Army, Lin scored successes against the Japanese in the Second Sino-Japanese War.

However in 1938, Lin suffered a severe injury in the most unexpected manner. He was riding a horse wearing a captured Japanese uniform and a katana (Japanese Samurai sword) when he was mistakenly shot in the head by one of his own men. Lin also suffered a back injury when he fell from the horse. He went to recuperate in Moscow and returned to the Chinese Communist HQ at Yan'an 延安 only in 1943.

Lin with high-ranking officers under his command (Harbin, 1946)

After the Japanese surrender in 1945, Lin Biao was placed in command of the Manchurian Field Army. He was given Japanese weapons left over in Manchuria by the departing Soviet forces and his army was the best equipped among the Communist forces.

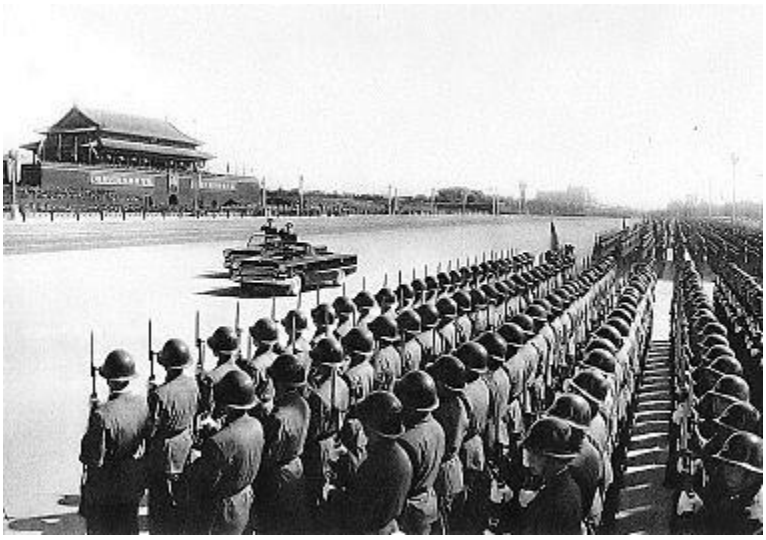
Lin as commander-in-chief of the Manchurian Field Army (~1947-1948)

Lin fought several battles with the KMT forces and succeeded in taking over Beijing. In the Spring of 1949, he marched his troops Southeast, crossed the Yangtze River and decisively defeated the KMT forces in Central China.

After Lin's injury in 1938, he had suffered from ongoing physical and mental health. Lin later declined to lead forces in Korea for the Korean War, citing his ill health. In early October 1950, Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 was named Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese forces bound for Korea. Lin flew to the Soviet Union with Zhou Enlai 周恩来 and participated in negotiations with Joseph Stalin concerning Soviet support for China's intervention in the Korean War.

In February 1958 Peng Dehuai, then China's Defense Minister, gave a speech for the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet Red Army in which he suggested increasing the military cooperation between China and the Soviet Union. Mao who had wanted to distance China from the Soviet Union, began grooming Lin Biao as a viable successor to Peng. In 1958, Lin joined the Politburo Standing Committee and became one of China's Vice-Chairmen.

After the 1959 **Lushan Conference** 庐山会议, at which Peng Dehuai criticized Mao's disastrous **Great Leap Forward** 大跃进, Peng was arrested and removed from all government positions. Peng was replaced by Lin Biao.



On October 1, 1959, Lin Biao, as defense minister, surveyed the honor guards at the military parade celebrating the 10th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Lin worked closely with Mao, promoting Mao's cult of personality. Lin directed the compilation of some of Chairman Mao's writings into the Little Red Book.

Lin's support impressed Mao, who continued to promote Lin to higher political offices. After Mao's second-in-command, President Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇, was denounced as a "capitalist roader" during the Cultural Revolution in 1966, Lin Biao emerged as the most likely candidate to replace Liu as Mao's successor. Lin lent his absolute support to Mao during the Cultural Revolution as part of a calculated plan to survive the Revolution. He directed Red Guards to destroy the Four Olds: Old cultures, old ideas, old customs and old habits.

Lin Biao (right), Mao Zedong (center) and Zhou Enlai, waving copies of the *Little Red Book*, at Tiananmen, during the Cultural Revolution (1967)

Lin Biao reading the *Little Red Book*. This is the last photo of him ever taken (1971)

In the course of the Cultural Revolution, a serious rift developed between Mao and Lin Biao. Mao was displeased with comments that Lin had made about his wife, Jiang Qing 江青, at the Lushan Conference. In July 1971 Mao decided to remove Lin and his supporters. Lin died when an aircraft carrying him and several members of his family crashed in Mongolia on 13 September, 1971. He was alleged to have failed in his attempt to assassinate Mao and had tried to flee. Zhou Enlai replaced Lin as the second most powerful man in China.

Conclusion:

Unlike many other leaders who had been purged, Lin Biao was never politically rehabilitated, even after the death of Mao. In 1981, Lin was held, along with the Gang of Four, as one of the two major "counter-revolutionary cliques" responsible for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. Among the "crimes" he was charged with was the ouster of China's head of state, President Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇, using "false evidence". As a sycophant to Mao, his effort paid off when Mao designated Lin as his successor. It appeared that Lin could not wait to take over from Mao. His conspiracy to take Mao captive and rule in his name was uncovered, which led to his death in the air crash.

All said, Lin Biao is still being recognized today as one of the outstanding founder generals of the Red Army/PLA and ranked third among the top “Ten Marshals”.

Chapter 119 – Ye Jianying 叶剑英

Introduction:

Ye Jianying 叶剑英 was one of the founding Ten Marshals of the People's Liberation Army.

The most significant part of Ye Jianying's career was towards its end when he engaged in a political power struggle with Mao's wife, **Jiang Qing 江青** who headed the **Gang of Four 四人帮**. He succeeded in staging the bloodless coup that helped restore **Deng Xiaoping 邓小平** as the paramount leader of China. Thenceforth, the course of China's modern history took a remarkable turn and led to the China we see today.

Main Story:

Ye Jianying's military career was much earlier than most of the Chinese marshals as he served under **Sun Yat-sen 孙中山** and had an active role in the establishment of the Whampoa Military Academy (the one that trained many KMT and CCP leaders). Ye taught at this academy. His application to join the CCP in 1927 was approved by **Zhou Enlai 周恩来**, with whom he established a life-long friendship.

He participated in two uprising against the powerful KMT, the **Nanchang Uprising 南昌起义 and the Guangzhou Uprising 广州起义**. Both failed and, each time, he fled to Hong Kong. He subsequently went to Moscow to study military science.

In 1932, he returned to China and participated in the **Chinese Civil War 国共内战** and helped plan the **Long March 长征**. He earned a reputation as an outstanding strategic planner. At that time, the Communists were divided into various groups. The most powerful group, the Fourth Army, was headed by **Zhang Guotao 张国焘,** and Ye Jianying served under him. Zhang Guotao did not get along with Mao Zedong, head of the other group. The two leaders disagreed on the movement of the Red Army. Zhang wanted to move his troops southward whereas Mao wanted to go the mountainous northwest. Zhang's move proved to be a disaster as Mao had anticipated. His army was encircled by the KMT and practically decimated.

When Mao and Zhang linked up in Shaanxi 陕西, Ye Jianying switched to Mao's camp. He brought along Zhang's code books and maps. Zhang, as a result, lost all contact with Comintern (Communist International). Mao was able to maintain radio contact with Comintern and was recognized as the leader of the CCP. Mao never forgot Ye's contribution, observing later that "Ye Jianying saved the (Chinese Communist) Party, the Red Army and the Revolution".

After the **Second Sino-Japanese War** 抗日战争 **broke** out, Ye was appointed the Chief of General Staff of the **8th Route Army** 八路军. Since Ye had strong connections in the KMT, he represented the CCP in its negotiation with the KMT regarding the establishment of the **Second United Front** between the KMT and CCP.

In 1949, after the liberation of Beijing, Ye was appointed the first mayor of Beijing. In 1951, Ye's right hand man Chen Bo 陈伯 and his deputy Chen Kun 陈坤 were purged for using old police and detectives of KMT for espionage. Ye escaped the purge due to the support of Zhou Enlai. However, his conflict with **Peng Dehuai** 彭德怀 led to his being purged by Peng.

When Mao launched the **Cultural Revolution** 文化大革命, he entrusted Ye with many important assignments because Ye was the only marshal who did not join any faction. Ye followed Mao's instruction to purge **Liu Shaoqi** 刘少奇 and his close aides. On his death bed, Mao was fearful that Ye would thwart his plan to transfer power to his wife, **Jiang Qing** 江青 and his nephew **Mao Yuanxin** 毛远

新. Before his death, Mao stripped Ye of his powers and replaced him with a younger General **Chen Xilian** 陈锡联, who was close to his nephew Mao Yuanxin.

However, Chen had great respect for Ye. Moreover, Mao's successor **Hua Guofeng** 华国锋 was against Jiang Qing because of her arrogant and domineering style. Despite having much of his powers removed, Ye still enjoyed the strong support of the PLA. In 1976, with the support of Chen Xilian, Ye staged a bloodless coup and toppled Jiang Qing and the **Gang of Four** 四人帮， and ended the Cultural Revolution. This paved the way for Deng 's ascension to the position of paramount leader.

Ye Jianying - Alchetron, The Fre...
alchetron.com

Having grown feeble from old age, Ye then served as China's nominal head of state as Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress from 1978 to 1983, before retiring from official life to his hometown in Guangdong.

Marshal

Ye Jianying

叶剑英

3rd Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress

Conclusion:

A man who had done great deeds but had always maintained a low profile, Marshal Ye Jianying has been called the “unsung hero” (see picture below).

A memorial hall had been built to honor him.

The Former Residence of the Marshal Ye Jianying is simple in style and looks like an ordinary farmhouse with simple and classical furniture. It was selected as a key provincial cultural preservation center in 1989. To the left the home is the Marshal Ye Jianying Memorial Hall. It has two floors and five showrooms, illustrating the marshal's life. [Globaltimes.cn]

叶剑英
· 1897 - 1986 ·
CN
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Visit
Ye Jianying and his clan legacy - Broadcast China

Chapter 120 – The Korean War 抗美援朝 (1950-1953)

Introduction:

After the Japanese surrender at the end of WWII, Korea which had been occupied by the Japanese for 35 years was divided into North and South Korea along the 38th parallel. The North came under Soviet administration whereas the South was administered by the Americans. The Supreme leader of North Korea was Kim Il Sung (grandfather of Kim Jong-un) and the equally autocratic leader of South Korea was Syngman Rhee.

After some border skirmishes, the North Korean military – Korean People's Army KPA – invaded the South on 25 June 1950, starting the Korean War.

Supported by artillery and tanks, the KPA rapidly demolish the South Korean Army ROKA at the border and pushed both the ROKA and the supporting American forces all the way to Pusan in the south east corner of Korea.

In September 1950, American military leader, General Douglas MacArthur, launched a risky amphibious UN counteroffensive at Incheon, on the west coast of Korea bordering Seoul, cutting off the KPA troops and supply lines. The KPA retreated to the north, leaving behind their tanks and heavy artillery. The UN forces (90% of which were US troops) pursued them into North Korea. They were at the doorsteps of China when China decided to intervene.

Main Story:

Fresh out of winning the Chinese Civil War, the PRC was in a weak position, having inherited a ruined economy, still fighting the remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's army and preparing to invade Taiwan to reunite the remaining province.

Mao Zedong could not accept having the US occupying territory up to China's doorsteps. However, most of the generals were against an intervention in the Korean war, fearful of US military might and their nuclear capability. **Peng Dehuai 彭德怀** was almost alone in his support of Mao who appointed him to be the Commander-in-Chief in charge of the 380,000 man **People's Volunteers Army PVA 中国人民志愿军**, which was actually part of the regular army earlier tasked for the invasion of Taiwan.

Peng Dehuai's strategy was to infiltrate his army deep into North Korea, moving mainly by night. He had intelligence that the UN army was mostly scattered in small units. Peng's army would form a giant V shape formation in front of each scattered unit. Once the back opening was closed up, his troops would charge towards their target with fixed bayonets to engage the UN forces at close quarters so that their superior fire power would be of no use.

This strategy worked as the UN forces were taken by surprise. During such encounters, the Chinese troops would have bugles blowing and gongs beating. The UN troops, who had never faced such situations before, were shocked and disoriented.

In all, the Chinese PVA launched five major campaigns in one year, before the war settled into a stalemate for the next two years. In the First Offensive, the UN troops were badly mauled. However, the PVA withdrew, awaiting more troop reinforcement as well as resupply. Peng executed a similar attack in a Second Offensive. It was recorded that the US X Marine Corps in Chosin suffered the worst marine defeat in history, see below.

'God ... Let Us Survive':
Remembering Korean War's
Chosin Battle And Evacuation

This Battle of Chosin Reservoir/Battle of Lake Changjin 长津湖之战 has been immortalized in a top grossing Chinese movie called 长津湖.

Poster

It depicts the heroism of the Chinese forces during this brutal 17-day battle in freezing weather. An ill-equipped army had forced the world's most powerful military forces into a complete withdrawal from North Korea.

In the Third Offensive, which was on New Year's Eve, the Chinese captured the city of Seoul. The Chinese PVA had not only pushed back the UN forces from the Yalu River; they had also entered South Korea. (The Yalu River 鸭绿江 marked the Chinese-North Korean border).

Volunteer Army crossing the Yalu river ...

The US was rattled by their defeat under the hands of a poorly equipped Chinese army. They contemplated using nuclear weapons. Ground crews at Okinawa started to assemble atomic bombs for use in Korea, but the essential pit nuclear cores were not put in place yet. In Operation Hudson Harbor, the US started the practice runs for B-29 bombers from Okinawa to North Korea, coordinated from Yokota Air Base in east-central Japan.

How the Korean War Almost Went N...

However, the US eventually decided against the use of atomic bombs, which would be tactically ineffective against an army that was mostly unseen and often engaged the UN forces at close quarters. The US was also afraid that it would potentially escalate into nuclear warfare with the Soviet Union. The US instead resorted to heavy carpet-bombing, including fire-bombing with napalm. According to Dean Rusk, who later became US Secretary of State, the US bombed "everything that moved in North Korea, every brick standing on top of another."

B-29s dropping bombs on North Korean targets early in the conflict.

When the US realized that they had grossly underestimated the fighting ability of the Chinese troops, they rapidly beefed up their forces and ordnances. UN forces brought heavier equipment to bear, including Sherman medium tanks backed by M26 heavy tanks, and the British Centurion, Churchill and Cromwell tanks. Heavy US air attacks soon took its toll on the Chinese forces who were without air cover, anti-aircraft guns and artillery support. Meanwhile, a new generation of faster, jet-powered fighters arrived and dominated the war theater. Even Mao Zedong's son, **Mao Anying** 毛岸英, was killed in an air attack.

Being far away from home base with resupplies coming only on foot and subject to constant bombardment from heavy artillery and aerial attacks, the Chinese forces were not getting the supplies they needed amid the freezing weather. The logistical problems became so serious that Peng Dehuai lost his cool at a meeting in Beijing and railed at his superiors which included Zhou Enlai: “You should go to the front and see with your own eyes what food and clothing the soldiers have! Not to speak of the casualties! For what are they giving their lives? We have no aircraft. We have only a few guns. Transportations are not protected. More and more soldiers are dying of starvation. Can’t you overcome some of your difficulties?”

In the next two offensives, the Chinese suffered heavy casualties. Injured Chinese soldiers had little chance of survival whereas the large-scale deployment of helicopters for medical evacuation ensured a 97% chance of survival for the UN troops. The original plan of the Chinese was to drive the UN forces out of Korea. Faced with a huge firepower advantage on the side of the UN forces, Mao and Peng decided to dig into a defensive position, around the 38th parallel.

The next two years were a war of attrition. It was a stalemate that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. On-again, off-again armistice negotiations continued throughout the two years. Finally, with the election of a new US President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the two sides could decide on a truce. The UN allies, notably the UK and France, were concerned about a geopolitical imbalance rendering NATO defenseless against the Soviet Union, while the US was bogged down in Korea. South Korean strongman, President Syngman Rhee, refused to sign the armistice agreement at Panmunjom on 27 July 1953. The signatories were US Army Lt General William Harrison, North Korean General Nam Il and Chinese Commander Peng Dehuai.

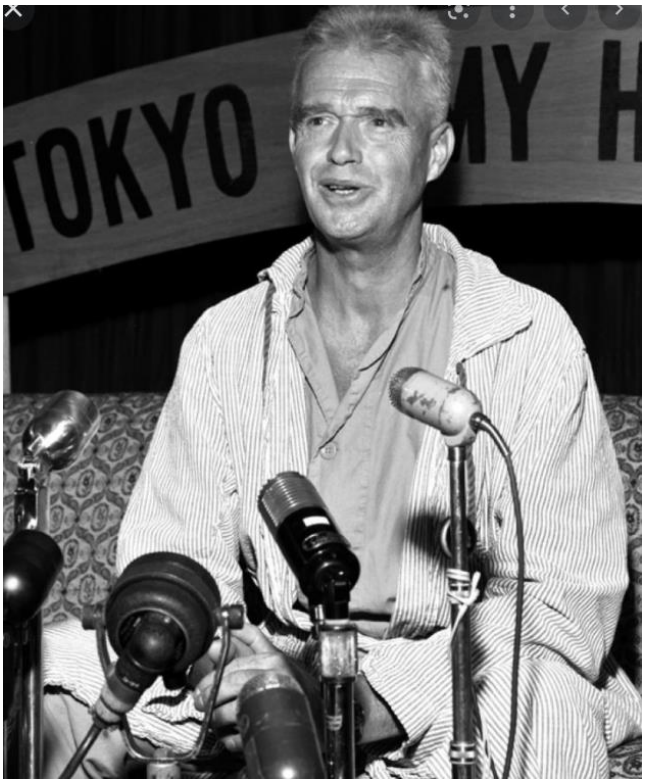
The Korean War was costly in terms of human lives lost. The Chinese PVA sacrificed at least 400,000 lives, coming to the aid of the North Koreans. Both North Korea and South Korea suffered at least 300,000 deaths each. Almost 40,000 US troops died in action. Civilian deaths number in the millions. Many more were wounded or missing.

The US handling of the Korean War was a disaster. General Douglas MacArthur, who grossly underestimated the fighting ability of the Chinese army, was removed from his post. On 28 November 1950, the WWII hero had confidently made this famous “Home by Christmas” statement to his field commander, Major General John Coulter: “You tell the boys that when they get to the Yalu River they are going home. I want to make good on my statement that they are going to eat Christmas dinner at home.” Unfortunately, many of the boys did not make it home.

Truman also asked for the resignation of Louis Arthur Johnson, the US Secretary of Defense, and replaced him with General George C. Marshall.

Louis Johnson, General MacArthur,

Major General William F. Dean was captured by the Chinese army, being the war's highest-ranking US POW.



Top US commander, four-star general Walton Walker, died in a jeep accident.

Conclusion:

The Korean War enhanced the prestige of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Peng Dehuai and increased the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party which had only in recent years won the Chinese Civil War against the Western-backed Chiang Kai-shek. An under-equipped Chinese army was able to stand up against the strongest military power in the world, forcing it into retreat, and fighting it to a military stalemate.

However, it had one significant negative consequence for the PRC. It led the US to support Chiang Kai-shek's regime in Taiwan, effectively ensuring that Taiwan would remain outside PRC control through to the present day.

Chapter 121 – Sino-Soviet Split (1960 – 1989) 中苏交恶

Introduction:

The Sino-Soviet split refers to the breakdown in political relations between China and the Soviet Union, the two biggest Communist powers in the world. Tensions between the two sides deteriorated to the extent that they resulted in a minor warfare over the Sino-Soviet border in 1969.

The cold war between the two Communist giants happened at the same time as the cold war between Russia and the US, thus transforming the bi-polar cold war into a tri-polar one.

Main Story:

Marxist philosophy was initially imported from Russia into China between 1900 and 1930. In 1919, Vladimir Lenin established Comintern (Communist International), an organization of national communist parties for the propagation of communist doctrine, with the aim of bringing about a world revolution. At its second meeting in Moscow in 1920, delegates from 37 countries, including China, attended. Comintern required all parties to model their structure on disciplined lines in conformity with the Soviet pattern.

In October 1949, the Communist Party of China was victorious in the Chinese Civil War and Mao Zedong proclaimed the formation of the People's Republic of China. With a population of almost 800 million people, the PRC replaced the Soviet Union as the world's most populous socialist state. The rise of Mao leading such a huge nation state portended rising tensions with its former master.

In the late 1930s, Mao had begun to develop his own sinicized version of Socialism as opposed to the Soviet model. Mao's idea for a socialist revolution was one that was driven by the peasantry, and not the proletariat (the working-class people). There were also many differences in the interpretation and practical application of Marxism-Leninism. Nonetheless, the relations between China and the Soviet Union were on even keel. In late 1949, Mao travelled to Moscow during which Stalin and Mao signed a bilateral treaty called the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance.

It included a $300 million loan and the provision of Soviet technical assistance. During the 1950s, thousands of scientists, industry experts and technicians from the Soviet Union lived and worked in China, contributing to the industrialization of China.

Despite the successful collaboration, signs of strain were developing. During Mao's 1949 visit to Moscow, Mao had felt undervalued and disrespected by Stalin. He had felt that Stalin treated him more like a subordinate rather than a partner of

equal status. Mao felt betrayed when during the Korean War (1950-1953), the Soviet Union did not come to China's assistance as much as Mao had been promised.

When Nikita Khrushchev took over from Stalin after Stalin's death, relations between China and the Soviet Union took a dive. In February 1956, Khrushchev denounced Stalin and Stalinism in the speech "On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences" and began the de-Stalinization of the USSR. This condemnation and subsequent de-Stalinization placed Mao in an awkward position, as Mao had replicated the similar leadership style of Stalin within China.

Sino-Soviets relations began to deteriorate when Khrushchev suggested a 'peaceful coexistence" with the West as opposed to Mao's belligerent stance towards the West. Mao detested the softer line taken by Khruschev towards the West. When Khrushchev visited China in July 1958, he was given a shoddy treatment by Mao. The Soviet leader and his entourage were housed in dilapidated apartments without air conditioning, despite the sweltering heat. During the talks, Mao treated Khrushchev with disdain and condescension, much like the treatment he suffered under Stalin.

In the following year, Khrushchev again visited China and infuriated Mao with a speech that heaped praise on US president Dwight Eisenhower and his foreign policy. The trip was so acrimonious that it was trimmed from seven days to just three. Following the unfriendly encounters during the trip, Moscow began to repudiate terms of the 1949 Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance and started to pull their advisors out of China. Several major infrastructure projects were left unfinished.

Matters came to a head following the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

The Cuban missile crisis

Khrushchev had backed down by agreeing to remove the Soviet nuclear missiles from Cuba. Mao accused Khrushchev of being afraid of the US and asserted that the USSR should had gone to war with the US following their failed Bay of Pigs Invasion and the US embargo against Cuba. Khrushchev doubted Mao's mental sanity surmising that Mao's unrealistic policies of geopolitical confrontation might provoke a nuclear war with the US.

When China and India went to war briefly in late 1962 over disputed borders, Moscow threw its support behind India. The war of words between Khrushchev

and Mao continued with Mao accusing the Soviet Union of holding on to Chinese territory stolen from the Qing dynasty. In July 1964, Mao withdrew China's ambassador and cut diplomatic ties with Moscow. Anti-Soviet propaganda inside China reached fever pitch. At the start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, some 200,000 Red Guards, whipped into a frenzy by Mao's anti-Soviet rhetoric, laid siege to the Soviet embassy in Beijing.

Following the lead of the USSR, the Warsaw Pact countries broke relations with the PRC. In March 1969, minor border disputes escalated to firefights in areas of the Argun and Amur rivers.

The Sino-Soviet Border Conflict:

Hundreds of casualties were suffered on both sides in this seven-month undeclared military conflict. This border conflict brought the two world's largest communist countries to the brink of war and raised concerns that it could ignite World War III. The conflict ended after Zhou Enlai held secret talks with his Soviet counterpart, Premier Alexei Kosygin, and reached an initial resolution in November 1969.

Conclusion:

Despite their rivalry, the USSR and the PRC co-operated in assisting North Vietnam during the Vietnam War (1955-1975). The PRC allowed safe passage for the Soviet Union's transport of logistics and equipment to North Vietnam to prosecute the war against the US-sponsored Republic of South Vietnam. The rivalry with the USSR facilitated the Sino-US rapprochement with US President Nixon's visit to China in 1972.

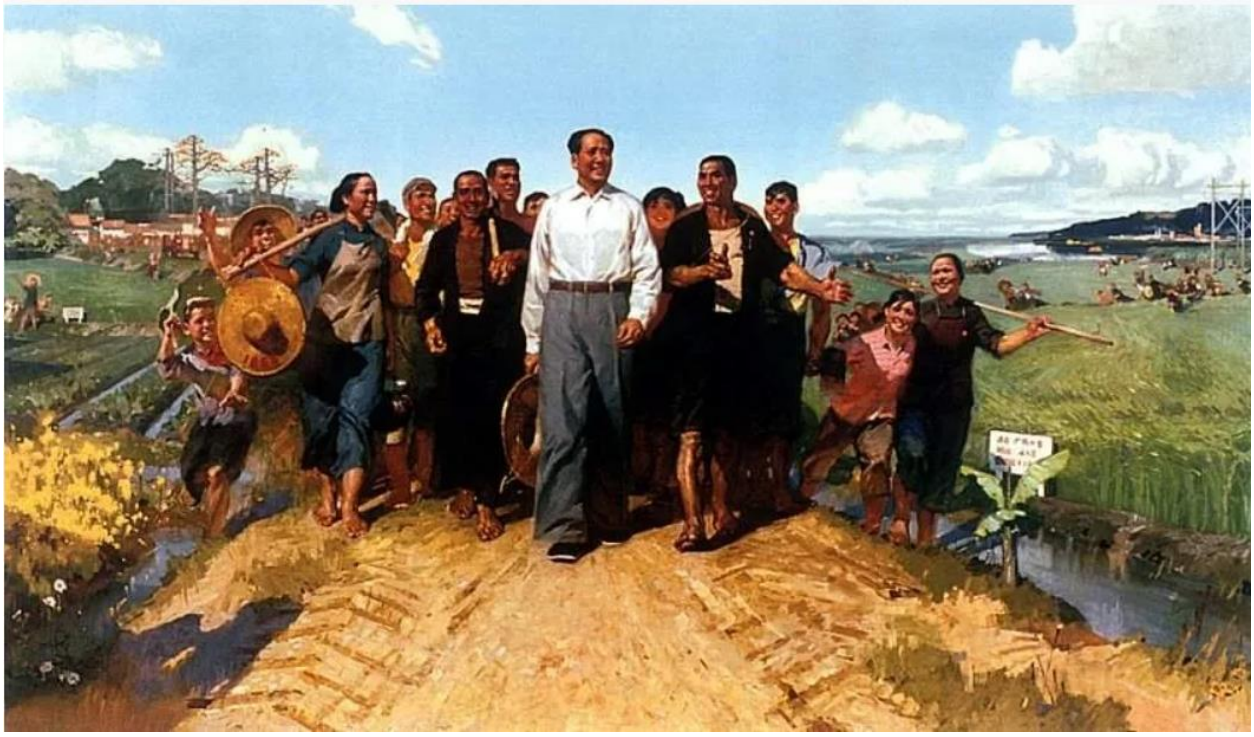
After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, the new Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, focused his attention on economic reforms and Sino-Soviet tensions took a back seat. At the same time, the Soviet Union wanted to constrain US-China cooperation which was developing at a rapid pace under Deng. The first breakthrough in Sino-Soviet relations was in July 1986 when Gorbachev announced a series of unilateral concessions to China. The Soviets withdrew troops from Mongolia, East Russia and Afghanistan and also accepted China's position

regarding the border issue, recognizing that the border between the two countries should run along the line of the Chinese bank of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers. In the same year, the Chinese opened a consulate in Leningrad and the Soviets open one in Shanghai. Large scale industrial and trade exhibitions were held by the Chinese in Moscow and by the Russians in Beijing. Cooperation in all fields were expanded.

Sino-Soviet relations were finally normalized after Mikhail Gorbachev paid an official visit to China in 1989 and shook hands with Deng.

It is noteworthy that this historic meeting took place at the time of the Tiananmen Square Protests. Despite the fact that the protesters were pushing for political changes which Gorbachev himself had implemented in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev refused to comment or pass judgements on the massive student protests. The two leaders agreed that they should leave the past behind them and take a forward looking approach to develop good Sino-Soviet relations. At the end of the visit, a joint communique was issued by both sides which laid the foundation for the restoration and development of good relations between these two major Communist powers.

Chapter 122 –Mao’s Rural Collectivization 1950s 人民公社化



Introduction:

It was the CCP’s land reforms that had won the strong support of the peasantry in the Communist Revolution. Ever since Mao Zedong came to lead the CCP and established his strongholds in the **Jiangxi Soviet 江西苏联** and subsequently in **Yan’an 延安**, the CCP had been experimenting with measures to return land to the vast number of peasants. In the final analysis, it simply boiled down to abolishing the landownership by landlords and distributinbg the land to the peasants.

Main Story:

After the CCP took over power in the whole of mainland China, they promulgated the Land Reform Law on 30 June 1950. For the next three years, land was seized from landlords, many of whom were badly treated or even executed. Land was then distributed to the peasants.

Distributing land, ca. 1948

In 1952, the reform was declared a success as seen from the poster below.

1952 Poster declaring the accomplishment of the Three Year Land Reform

However, before long, the land that had been handed out to the peasants was slowly returned to the state. In a process of collectivization that started in 1953, the farmers were first organized in so-called mutual help teams.

1953 Poster showing the abundant food production due to the mutual help of farmers

The land reform had several related goals. The work teams would redistribute some land from the wealthier families or land-owing class to the poor and so effect a more equitable distribution of the basic means of production. In the process, village elites were removed especially those that opposed the party and its programs. Everyone was taught to think in terms of class status rather than kinship group or patron-client ties.

In pursuit of the last goal, the party work teams convened extensive series of meetings, and they classified all the village families either as landlords, rich peasants, middle-class peasants or poor peasants. These labels became a permanent and hereditary part of every family's identity and, as late as 1980, still affected, for example, such things as chances for admission to the armed forces, colleges, universities, and local administrative posts and even marriage prospects.

These mutual help teams were gradually merged into agrarian cooperatives.

Goods have been delivered in the cooperative, 1954

During the Great Leap Forward which started in 1958, the cooperatives would again be merged into huge People's Communes.

People's Communes

The people's communes represented the most extensive form of collectivization of agriculture known to mankind. These communes were large, embracing scores of villages. They were intended to be multipurpose organizations, combining economic and local administrative functions. An interesting feature of collectivization at that time was the appearance of "barefoot doctors" who were farmers with only minimal basic medical and paramedical training.

Bare-foot doctor in China

The Collectivization efforts proved to be a total failure and led to widespread famine and millions of deaths (see next chapter The Great Leap Forward).

China's Great Leap Forward ...

Backyard furnaces dotted the rural areas

Conclusion:

After the passing of Mao Zedong in 1976, China entered a phase of Decollectivization. Decollectivization obviated the supervisory functions of low-level cadres who used to oversee work on the collective fields. The process of decollectivization opened up more opportunities to individual households, giving household heads more responsibilities to achieve economic success for their households.

By 1987, peasants were allowed to leave their village and move into a nearby town to work in a small factory, open a noddle stand or set up a machine repair business. Village membership, once the single most important determinant of an individual's circumstances, was overshadowed by other factors such as occupation, personal connections and managerial talent.

Chapter 123 – The Great Leap Forward 1958-61 大跃进

Introduction:

After the Communists came into power in 1949, landlords and wealthier farmers had their land holdings forcibly redistributed to the poorer peasants. Crops deemed to be “full of evil”, such as opium, were destroyed and replaced with crops such as rice.

The first Five Year Plan of the CCP initially saw great success through investment in state-owned factories. In 1958, Mao Zedong embarked on The Second Five Year Plan naming it 大跃进 The Great Leap Forward. The goal was to rapidly evolve China from an agrarian economy into a modern industrial society. Agricultural production was aggressively collectivized and rural industrialization was widespread, both with the twin targets of increasing grain and also steel production.

Within the CCP, there were major debates about collectivization. A moderate faction led by Politburo member, Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇， argued that change should be gradual and any collectivization of the peasantry should wait until certain level of industrialization was achieved, which would provide the agricultural machinery for mechanized farming. However, the radical faction led by Mao Zedong argued

that the best way to finance industrialization was for the government to take full control of agriculture which would help raise the capital for the industrialization of the nation. Thus the Great Leap Forward was implemented.

Main Story:

Under the plan, private plot farming was abolished and rural farmers were forced to work on collective farms where all production, resource allocation and food distribution was centrally controlled. These were the **People's Communes** 人民公社. By the end of 1958, 25,000 communes had been set up, with an average 5,000 households each. The communes were relatively self-sufficient co-operatives where wages and money were replaced by work points.

Beside economic changes, the government implemented major social changes including the banishing of all religious and mystic institutions and ceremonies, replacing them with political meetings and propaganda sessions. Attempts were made to enhance rural education and the status of women (allowing them to divorce if they desired) and ending foot-binding, child marriage and opium addiction. An internal passport system (the **hukou** 户口, to be covered in chapter 132) prevented inter-country travel without appropriate authorization.

The initial phase of collectivization resulted in modest improvements in output. However, as time went on, cracks in the system began to be revealed. Large-scale irrigation projects, with little input from trained engineers, were initiated.

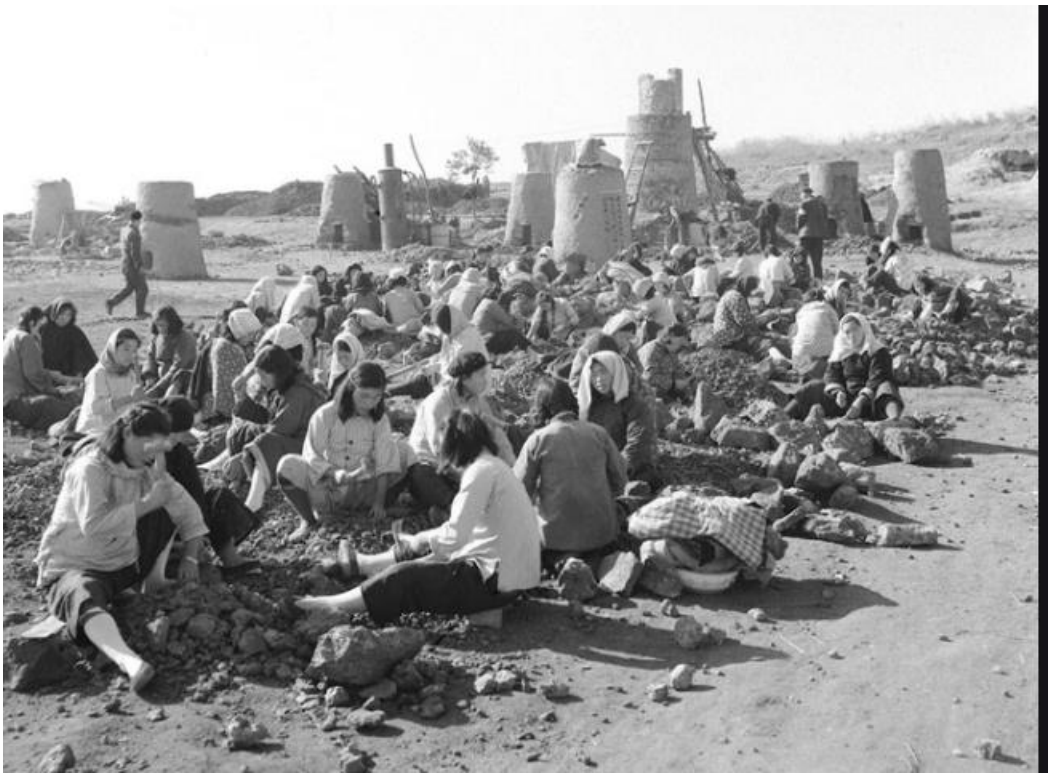
Experimental, unproven new agricultural techniques were quickly introduced around the country. These innovations resulted in declining crop yields from failed experiments and improperly constructed water projects.

Mao initiated the **Four Pests campaign** 除四害 to eliminate the four main pests. Unfortunately, beside rats, flies and mosquitoes, Mao included sparrows and specially targeted sparrows in the **Smash Sparrows Campaign** 打麻雀运动**.** The sparrows had been blamed for damaging crops.

The Eurasian tree sparrow was the most notable target of the campaign.

This nationwide campaign to exterminate sparrows resulted in a severe ecological imbalance in the form of massive locust swarms due to the absence of natural predation by the sparrows. Grain production fell sharply.

Large-scale state projects to increase industrial production were introduced in urban areas, and backyard steel furnaces were built on farmland and in urban neighborhoods.



Huge efforts on the part of illiterate peasants and other workers were made to produce steel out of scrap metal. To fuel the furnaces, the local environment was denuded of trees and wood taken from the doors and furniture of peasants' houses. Pots, pans and other metal artifacts were requisitioned to supply the scrap for the furnaces.

Propaganda poster urges people to contribute steel to help industrialization

The backyard steel industry produced largely useless, low-quality pig iron.

The Great Leap Forward was a massive failure and brought about the **Great Chinese Famine** 三年大饥荒**.**

Initially, state officials did not dare to report the economic disaster caused by these policies, choosing instead to blame bad weather for the decline in food output. The Great Leap Forward was officially halted in Jan 1961.

Conclusion:

The CCP discussed the damage done by the Great Leap Forward at various conferences. In 1962, Mao Zedong made a self-criticism, admitting the mistakes he made in launching the Great Leap Forward. In the years that followed, he ceded day-to-day leadership to pragmatic moderates like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.

As Mao was gradually being side-lined, he initiated the Cultural Revolution in 1966 文化大革命 in order to quell the opposition and re-consolidate his power.

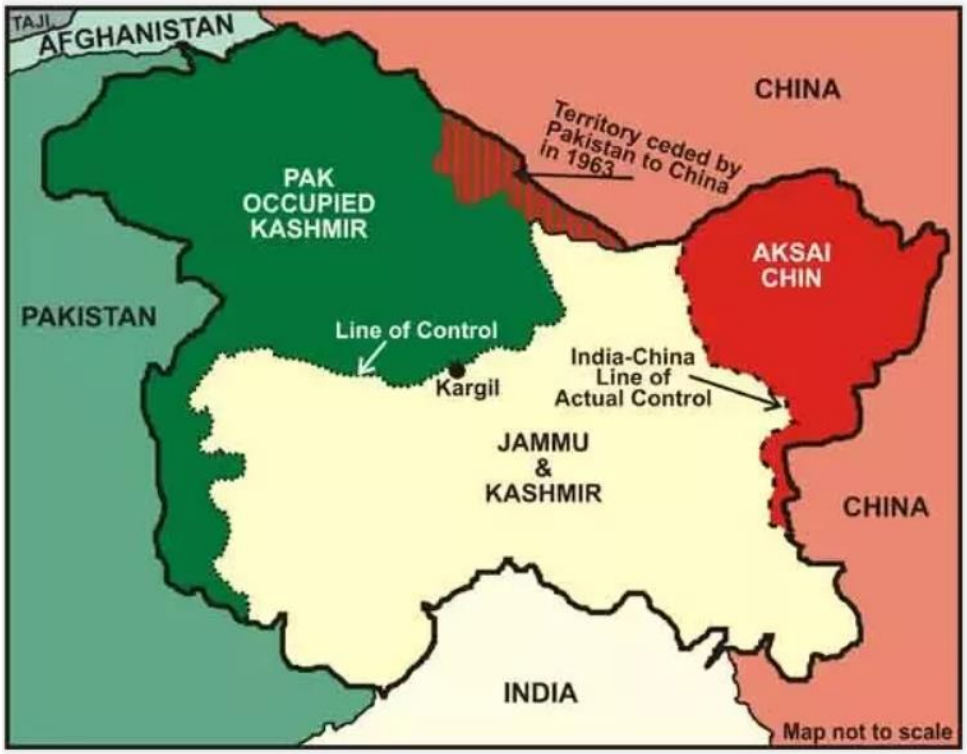
Chapter 124 – Sino-Indian War 1962 中印战争

Introduction:

China and India fought only one war, in 1962, when India suffered a humiliating defeat. The Sino-Indian War claimed about 2,000 lives and played out in the harsh terrain of the Karakoram Mountains in the Himalayas, some 4,270 meters (14,000 feet) above sea level.

Main Story:

The primary cause of the 1962 war was the disputed border between the two countries, in the high mountains of Aksai Chin.



India asserted that the region, which is slightly larger than Portugal, belonged to the Indian-controlled portion of Kashmir. China countered that it was part of Xinjiang.

The roots of the disagreement go back to the mid-19th century when the British Raj in India and the Qing Chinese agreed to let the traditional border stand as the boundary between their realms. As of 1846, only those sections near the Karakoram Pass and Pangong Lake were clearly delineated; the rest of the border was not formally demarcated.

In 1865, the British Survey of India placed the boundary at the Johnson Line, which included about 1/3 of Aksai Chin within Kashmir. Britain did not consult with the Chinese about this demarcation because Beijing was no longer in control of Xinjiang at the time. However, the Chinese recaptured Xinjiang in 1878. They gradually pressed forward, and set up boundary markers at Karakoram Pass in 1892, marking off Aksai Chin as part of Xinjiang.

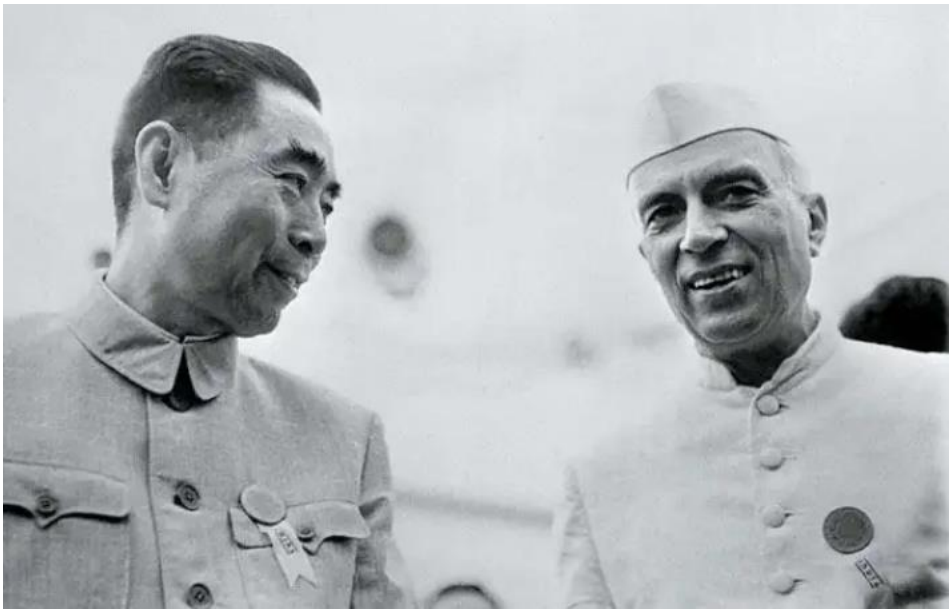
In 1899, the British proposed a new border known as the Macartney-Macdonald Line, which divided the territory along the Karakoram Mountains and gave India a larger piece of the pie. British India would control all of the Indus River watersheds while China took the Tarim River watershed. When Britain sent the proposal and map to Beijing, the Chinese did not accept it. Neither did they responded. China had more pressing concerns with the fall of the Last Emperor and the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, which set off the Chinese Civil War. Britain would soon have World War I to contend with, as well. By 1947, when India gained its independence and maps of the subcontinent were redrawn in the Partition, the issue of Aksai Chin remained unresolved. Meanwhile, the Chinese Civil War would continue for two more years, until Mao Zedong and the Communists prevailed in 1949.

Many subsequent developments all added together to further complicate matters, namely, the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the Chinese invasion and annexation of Tibet in 1950, and China's construction of a road to connect Xinjiang and Tibet through land claimed by India. Relations reached a nadir in 1959, when Tibet's spiritual and political leader, the Dalai Lama, fled into exile in the face of a Chinese invasion to re-claim Tibet. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru reluctantly granted the Dalai Lama sanctuary in India, angering Mao immensely.

From 1959 forward, border skirmishes broke out along the disputed line. In 1961, Nehru instituted the Forward Policy, in which India tried to establish border outposts and patrols north of Chinese positions, in order to cut them off from their supply line. The Chinese responded in kind, each side seeking to flank the other without direct confrontation.

The second half of 1962 saw increasing numbers of border incidents in Aksai Chin. The skirmishes led to heavier fighting.

On October 20, the PLA launched a two-pronged attack, seeking to drive the Indians out of Aksai Chin. Within two days, China had seized the entire territory. During a three-week ceasefire, Zhou Enlai ordered the Chinese to hold their position, as he sent a peace proposal to Nehru.



The Chinese proposal was that both sides disengage and withdraw twenty kilometers from their current positions. Nehru responded that the Chinese troops needed to withdraw to their original position instead, and he called for a wider buffer zone. On November 14, 1962, the war resumed with an Indian attack against the Chinese position at Walong in Arunachal Pradash. This Battle of Walong was the only counterattack India could manage in the war.

After hundreds of more deaths and an American threat to intervene on behalf of the Indians, the two sides declared a formal ceasefire on November 19. The Chinese announced that they would "withdraw from their present positions to the north of the illegal McMahon Line."

The war lasted just one month but killed more than a thousand Indian troops and a smaller number on the Chinese side. Nearly 4,000 Indian soldiers were captured. Many of the casualties were caused by the harsh conditions at 14,000 feet above sea level, rather than by enemy fire. In the end, China retained actual control of the Aksai Chin region. Prime Minister Nehru was roundly criticized at home for his pacifism in the face of Chinese aggression, and for the lack of preparation prior to the Chinese attack.

Conclusion:

Despite simmering tensions, another war has not taken place since because both sides have much to lose. There would be a huge economic fallout as China and India are major trading partners with each other. Both sides are also established nuclear powers which make it all the more dangerous should the situation spiral out of control.

Chapter 125 – The Cultural Revolution 1966 – 1976 文化大革命

Introduction:

Fifty five years ago, **Mao Zedong** 毛泽东 initiated the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, a decade-long upheaval which had widespread consequences at all levels of Chinese society. It was a sociopolitical movement supposedly aimed at eradicating the old capitalistic and traditional ways of Chinese life. But it was in reality Mao's attempt to reassert control over the CCP by setting radical youths against his political opponents.

Introduction:

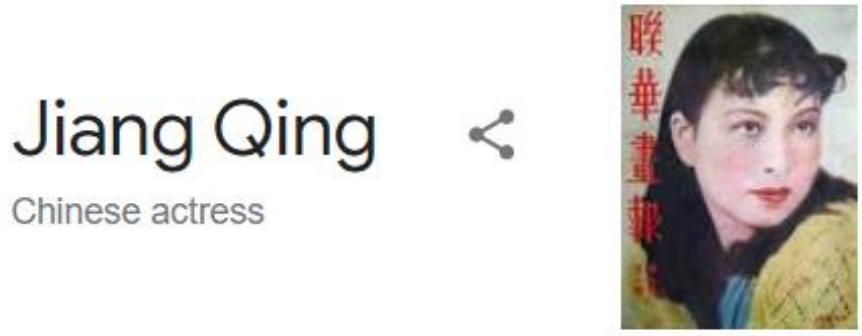
The Cultural Revolution had its roots in the **Great Leap Forward 1958-1961** 大跃进 (see chapter 123). The failure of that campaign precipitated a famine that left many millions dead. Mao was blamed and partly sidelined by Communist Party leaders, such as **Peng Dehuai** 彭德怀**, Liu Shaoqi** 刘少奇 **and Deng Xiaoping** 邓小平, who pulled back some of the most extreme collectivization efforts.

At that time, China's relations with the Soviet Union had grown increasingly tense (see chapter 121 **Sino-Soviet Split** 中苏交恶). The Soviet Union was under a new leader, **Nikita Khrushchev**, who denounced the cult of personality of **Joseph Stalin**, a style which was increasingly adopted by Mao himself. The de-Stalinization campaign by Khrushchev led Mao to worry about what was in store for he himself as he realized that he was losing influence among his revolutionary comrades.

Mao unleashed the **Red Guards** 红卫兵 to wipe out the "Four Olds" – old ideas, old customs, old culture and old habits. The Red Guards were students who formed into paramilitary groups at the instigation of Mao. Mao shut down the nation's schools and called for a massive youth mobilization to take current party leaders to task for their embrace of bourgeois values and lack of revolutionary spirit. The Red Guards targeted political enemies for abuse and public humiliation. These included campus authorities, party officials and other "class enemies". In reality, anyone could be a target of abuse. People were made to betray friends and family in order to protect themselves. The number of people persecuted is estimated in the tens of millions. Damage was also done to many of China's temples, valuable works of art and buildings.

Liu Shaoqi, China's president, who had tried to promote de-collectivization, was a leading target. He died in custody in 1969, after two years of abuse. Deng Xiaoping was also purged.

Mao's wife, **Jiang Qing** 江青 a leading figure of the Gang of Four, reached the peak of political power during the Cultural Revolution. An actress, Jiang Qing was particularly involved in the field of art. She condemned various cultural production which had openly criticized Mao and purged key figures in the cultural bureaucracy as well as many writers of articles seen as critical of Mao. She was the one who distributed red armbands to the students and declared them to be the Red Guards – the front line of the new revolution.



Lin Biao 林彪**(**see chapter 118), leader of the PLA, played a crucial role in promoting the cult of Mao. As Mao's strongest ally, he compiled Mao's sayings into the Little Red Book and required every soldier to read it.

Mao greeted huge parades of Red Guards holding aloft the Little Red Book.

The situation soon spiraled out of control as different factions of Red Guards battled each other for dominance. Amid the chaos, the Chinese economy plummeted by 12% in 1968 compared to that of 1966, pre-Cultural Revolution. As the Red Guards grew more extreme, even Mao himself became concerned with the state of anarchy. The PLA was sent by **Zhou Enlai** 周恩来 to disarm the student groups and banished them to work on communes in the countryside. In a twist of irony, many of the Red Guard leaders got a treatment of their own medicine. Despite their previous revolutionary fervor, they were now tortured and banished from the CCP. The greatest ally of Mao, Lin Biao was also accused of trying to overthrow Mao. He and his wife died of a plane crash in 1971 while trying to flee the country. Although the most chaotic phase of the Cultural Revolution had petered out by the summer of 1968, the Cultural Revolution officially continued until 1976.

Conclusion:

The Cultural Revolution ended with Mao's death in 1976, and the subsequent arrest of the **Gang of Four** 四人帮 led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing. She committed suicide in 1991.

Chapter 126 - Mao Zedong 毛泽东

Introduction:

The most dominant figure in 20th century China, Mao Zedong 毛泽东 was both a product and a part of the revolutionary changes that took place in China during that time. Mao is known as the Father of Communist China.

Main Story:

Mao Zedong was born in 1893 into a moderately well-to-do peasant family in Shaoshan 韶山, Hunan province 湖南省. He was a school teacher before becoming a librarian in the Beijing University Library 北京大学图书馆. From an early age, Mao was a voracious reader. During his time as a librarian, he read many books pertaining to China's history, especially the works of nationalist reformers such as Kang Yuwei 康有为(see chapter 99) and books on Marxism. He developed an admiration for the strong emperors in the earlier periods of Chinese history.

At the Beijing University, Mao came to know the dean, Chen Duxiu 陈独秀 and librarian Li Dazhao 李大钊(both founders of the CCP (see chapter 109 Chinese Communist Party). He became caught up in the intellectual and political activity of the May Fourth Movement 五四运动 (see chapter 102 New Culture Movement 新文化运动).

Mao had a first wife, **Luo Yixiu** 罗一秀, which marriage was arranged by his parents when Mao was only 13. The couple never lived together and the marriage was never consummated. Luo died of dysentery in 1910.

Mao married his second wife, Yang Kaihui 杨开慧, in 1920. Together they had three children. The eldest, Mao Anying 毛岸英, was killed in the Korean War. Both Yang Kaihui and Mao Anying were captured by the KMT in 1930. Yang was forced to publicly renounce Mao which she steadfastly refused. She was publicly executed and Mao Anying was forced to watch his mother being shot.

Mao attended the First Congress of the Communist Party at the Red Boat, when Chen Duxiu was unable to attend, and represented Chen as the Secretary of the Communist Party of China. Unlike many other communist leaders at that time, Mao did not travel to the West or to Moscow for study. This could have influenced him to focus his attention on peasants in his thinking regarding the Communist Revolution.

After the Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案 in 1927 (see chapter 114), Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (chapter 128) launched a number of insurrections against the KMT.

They failed and Mao and his comrades retreated to southeast China. Mao was subsequently joined by Zhu De 朱德(chapter 116), a KMT commander who decided to switch his allegiance to Mao. Mao and Zhu forged a solid alliance that was to continue long into the future. They were soon joined by Peng Dehuai 彭德怀(chapter 117) who was also pursued by the KMT. They established a new enclave in southeastern Jiangxi Province called the Jiangxi Soviet 江西苏联.

Following Chiang Kai-shek's encirclement campaign, Mao and his comrades were forced into embarking the Long March 长征 in 1934 (chapter 111) and ended up on a mountain in Jiangxi Province called Jinggangshan 景岗山. Jingganshan had an elevation of 5000 feet and was under the control of two bandit gangs. Mao managed to bring the gangs over to his side.

During the Long March, Mao's third wife He Zizhen 贺子珍, an expert guerrilla fighter, was injured by a shrapnel wound to her head. She travelled to Moscow in 1937 for treatment. He Zizhen had six children with Mao but they either died or were separated from Mao during the Long March.

While He Zizhen was in Russia, Mao fell for an actress who had newly arrived at their Yan'an 延安 hideout. Mao divorced He Zizhen and married actress Jiang Qing 江青. Jiang Qing would play a large role in the communist party during the Cultural Revolution 文化大革命 (Chapter 124).

The Communists and the KMT formed a second alliance during the Second Sino-Japanese War 1937-45 抗热战争 (See chapter 113). The forceful Japanese advance starting with the Nanking Massacre 南京大屠杀 pushed the KMT government inland to Chungking. The Red Army under Mao was seen to be a more disciplined and professional army compared to the Nationalist army. The ranks of the Red Army were rapidly swollen, aided by the Japanese brutality. Mao authored several texts meant for his troops, covering subjects such as guerilla warfare tactics and his ideas for China's future.

Photo] Chinese Red Army troops training ...

The Chinese Civil War 国共内战 (see chapter 115) resumed after the New Fourth Army Incident 1941 新四军事件 (see chapter 114). The Americans who had been supporting Chiang Kai-shek realized that the Communists army was less corrupt, more unified and more vigorous in its resistance to the Japanese than the KMT. This was confirmed by the Dixie Mission (US army observation group) and by US airmen who were shot down over North China. The US withdrew their support for the KMT. Neither did they support the Communists because of the different ideology.

In 1949, the Communists were victorious and Mao proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China. With the support of Peng Dehuai, Mao intervened in the Korean War in 1950 抗美援朝 (see chapter 120 Korean War). In the 1950s, Mao's relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated (see chapter 121 Sino-Soviet Split) and was broken in 1962. Mao's emphasis on peasant support was at variance with the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism as adopted by the Soviet Union.

Since taking power, Mao instituted rural collectivization which escalated into the Great Leap Forward 大跃进 in 1958 (see chapter 123 Great Leap Forward). It failed and Mao attempted to re-assert his authority through the Cultural Revolution 文化大革命(see chapter 124). Lin Biao (see chapter 118) helped Mao to build a cult of personality. The deteriorated relationship with the Soviet Union （chapter 121 Sino-Soviet Split） saw Mao attempting to build bridges with the US. On the

heels of the ping-pong diplomacy in 1972, Richard Nixon went on the historic visit to China and shook hands with Mao.

Chain-smoking Mao suffered from multiple lung and heart ailments during his later years. He died on 9 Sept 1976 at the age of 82.

Conclusion:

While Mao Zedong was blamed for the disastrous policies of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, it has been widely acknowledged that without Mao, China today would be just a satellite nation, under the suzerainty of one of the world's great powers. As such, he is credited for returning dignity and self-respect to the Chinese people as China existed as a semi-colony during the final years of the Qing dynasty and the years as a Republic.

After his death, it was revealed that Mao had never accumulated any wealth for himself or his family. He had served the country believing that all that he had done was for the good of the nation. Mao had also made immense personal sacrifices for the Party and nation. Many of his children were either killed or gone missing during the Chinese Civil War, the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Korean War.

Mao has a presence in China and around the world in popular culture where his face adorns everything from T-shirts to coffee cups.

Chapter 127 – Jiang Qing 江青 & the Gang of Four 四人帮

(1) JIANG QING 江青

Introduction:

A beautiful actress, Jiang Qing used her marriage to Mao Zedong (chapter 126) to reach the apex of power in China and helped preside over the brutal persecution and chaos of the Cultural Revolution 1966-76 (chapter 125). When Mao died in 1976, Jiang Qing/Madame Mao and her allies in the Gang of Four were soon overthrown.

Main Story:

Jiang Qing had a miserable childhood. Her mother was a concubine and her father a carpenter who beat mother and daughter until they both fled home. Due to the fact that she was an illegitimate child, Jiang was looked down upon by her schoolmates. At age 14 she joined an underground theater troupe in Shandong Province. At age 16, bereft even of underwear, she went off to Beijing with a travelling theatrical group without consulting her mother. She made contact with the Communists in Qingdao, a port city in Shandong, and joined the CCP in 1932.

In Shanghai, the most exciting city in China in those days, Jiang Qing played bit parts in a variety of plays, and later films, as well as a few larger roles. One of her roles was that of Nora, the rebellious modern woman, in Henrik Ibsen's "Doll's House." She lived with at least two men in that period, and in later years she went to great effort to cover up her early romances.

In 1938, in the midst of the Chinese Civil War (chapter 115), Jiang Qing fled Shanghai for the Communist base at Yan'an 延安, in northern China. In the caves of Yan'an, Jiang Qing caught the eye of Mao Zedong.

She scandalized top Communist officials when the couple began living together before Mao got around to divorcing his previous wife, He Zizhen 贺子珍, a respected revolutionary who had previously completed the Long March with Mao. He Zizhen also had five children with Mao.

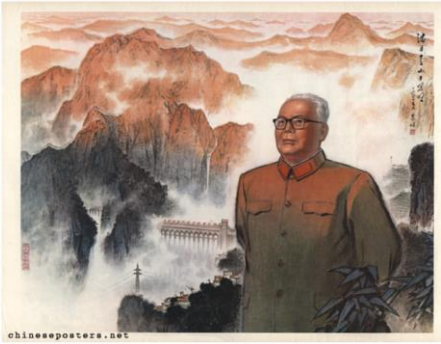
Jiang Qing was Mao's third wife, not counting a childhood betrothal that was never consummated (chapter 126 Mao Zedong). Jiang Qing was 24 years old then while Mao was 45. Party officials insisted Mao could marry Jiang Qing only if she never exercised any political power. Mao kept that bargain for decades, even after the Communist victory of 1949. In the 1950's, Jiang Qing held only minor posts relating to arts and culture.

In the 1960's, as Mao felt his influence waning, he launched the Cultural Revolution (chapter 125). Jiang Qing was involved in the planning of the Cultural Revolution and came to play an increasingly important role. They made use of Red Guards to spearhead the movement. On 18 August 1966, Jiang Qing organized one million students (Red Guards) and brought them to a rally in Beijing's Tienanmen Square. Mao addressed the rally telling the Red Guards that the revolution was in danger, and that they must do all they could to stop the emergence of a privileged class in China. Jiang Qing served on the party Politburo, was in charge of literature and the arts and promoted revolutionary operas and other works intended to foster a suitable ideological outlook.

During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing oversaw mass rallies in which her enemies were humiliated and physically abused. She is said to have sought out and punished anyone who had looked down on her during her Shanghai days.

Mao died in September 1976, and within a month Jiang Qing and the other members of the Gang of Four were toppled in a bloodless coup by Marshal Ye Jianying (chapter 119).

Ye Jianying



There was widespread rejoicing in the streets. The trial of Jiang Qing was televised each night at the end of 1980 and most of the nation was delighted and riveted by the spectacle of Jiang Qing in the dock.

Cultural Revolution Leader Jiang Qing ...

She refused to repent and remained steadfast to her views. “I was Chairman Mao’s dog,” she said in her defense. “Whomever he told me to bite, I bit.” 我只是毛主席的一条狗。 他叫我咬谁，我就咬谁。After the trial, Jiang Qing was sentenced to death, with a two-year reprieve. This was commuted to life imprisonment. Her only known child was a daughter, Li Na 李纳, fathered by Mao.

Li Na visited her regularly in prison in the early 1980’s. Jiang Qing committed suicide in 1991 at the age of 77. She hanged herself in a bathroom of her hospital in Beijing, while on medical parole.

Li Na in 1950s

Conclusion:

Few people have been so hated in modern Chinese history and she became a symbol of the excesses and brutality of the Cultural Revolution. One of her grave miscalculations was to make an enemy of Deng Xiaoping and denounce him as an "international capitalist agent."

(2) THE GANG OF FOUR 四人帮

Introduction:

The Gang of Four consisted of Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Hongwen. All of them were relatively obscure before 1966, but rose to prominence during the Cultural Revolution and came to occupy high positions in the Chinese government. They had Mao's support and maintained political power through control of the media and propaganda outlets.

Main Story:

Jiang Qing led three other close associates to form what came to be famously known as the Gang of Four.

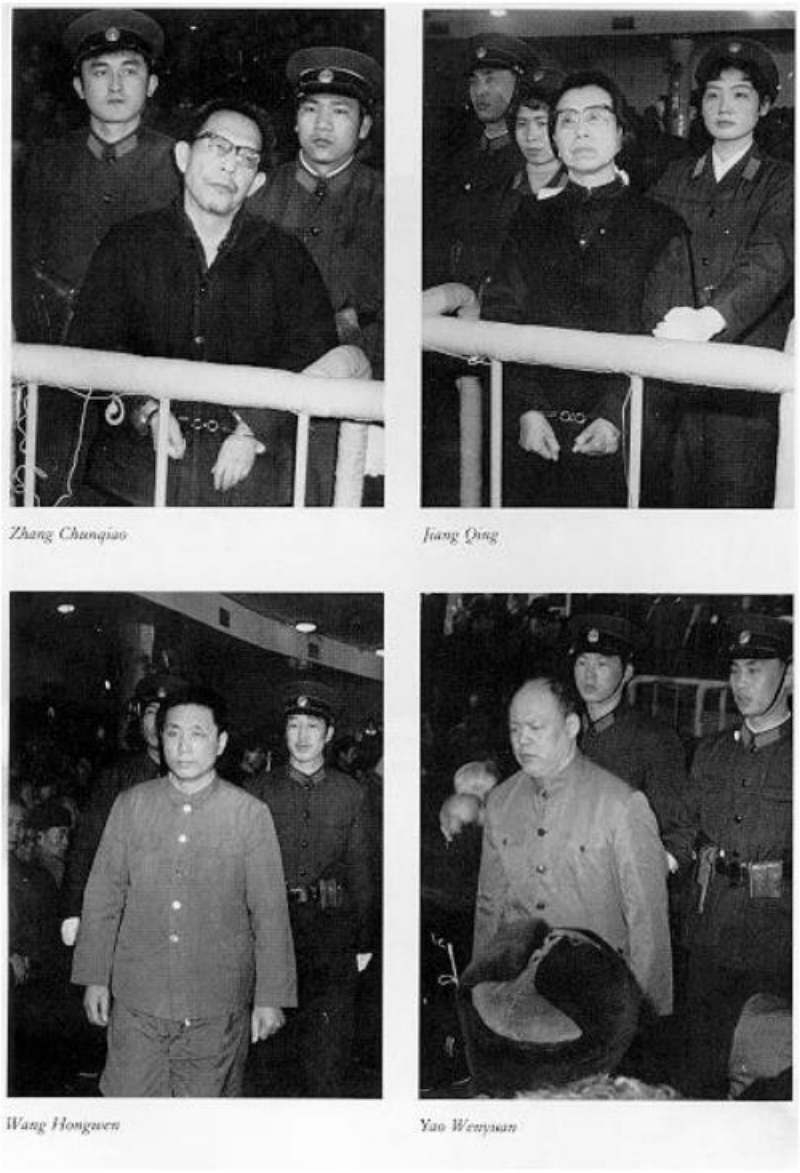
Zhang Chunqiao 张春桥 worked as a writer in Shanghai in the 1930s. With the creation of the PRC, he became a journalist in Shanghai where he met Jiang Qing. In 1969, he was already in the high position of the Politburo of the Central Committee and in 1973, he was promoted to the Standing Committee of the Politburo, the pinnacle of power in the CCP.

Yao Wenyuan 姚文元 began his career as a literary critic in Shanghai where he became known for his sharp attacks against articles written in newspapers. In1969, he was also a member of the Politiburo, working on official propaganda.

Wang Hongwen 王洪文 took part in the Korean War. After the war, he was sent to Shanghai to work in a factory as the head of security guards, where he met Zhang Chunqiao. In 1969, he was also elevated to the position of member of the Politburo and then member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo. He became Vice-Chairman of the CCP in 1973. He was rumored to be a successor to Zhou Enlai as Premier but it turned out that Huo Guofeng was appointed instead. After Mao Zedong's death in September 1976, he was the announcer for his funeral service on national radio.

The Gang of Four took aim at other top political leaders, namely Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Liu Shaoqi was imprisoned and eventually died in prison. Deng Xiaoping was placed under house arrest. Zhou Enlai, who had been fairly neutral during the Cultural Revolution, died 8 months before Mao Zedong. It was all left to the remaining senior political and military leader, Ye Jianying, to battle the Gang of Four after the death of Mao Zedong. The Gang of Four were deposed and arrested. Deng Xiaoping was released from house arrest and quickly consolidated power as the Paramount Leader of China after pushing aside Premier Hua Guofeng.

images from the trial of the Gang of Four.



Zhang Chunqiao

Jiang Qing

Wang Hongwen

Yao Wenyuan

The Gang of Four was charged for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. Jiang Qing was additionally charged for forging Mao's will. Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao refused to admit any wrong. Yao Wenyan and Wang Hongwen expressed repentance and confessed their crimes. Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao received death sentences that were later commuted to life imprisonment. Wang Hongwen and Yao Wenyuan were given lifetime and 20 years in prison, respectively.

Jiang Qing died in 1991. She committed suicide while on medical parole. She reportedly had been diagnosed with throat cancer and hanged herself to end her suffering. Wang Hongwen died of liver cancer in 1992. Zhang Chunqiao was released for medical reasons in 2002 and lived in obscurity until his death from pancreatic cancer in 2005. Yao Wenyuan ws released in 1996 and spent the remainder of his life in his hometown in Shanghai, writing a book and studying Chinese history. He died of diabetes in 2005.

Conclusion:

The Gang of Four served to take the blame for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, despite their claim that they were simply following the orders of Mao Zedong. Mao continued to be revered as the Great Leader. Images of Jiang, Zhang, Yao and Wang were airbrushed out of the photographs of Mao's funeral.

The downfall of the Gang of Four signaled the end of the Cultural Revolution. It also marked the beginning of the opening up of China which pursued a very successful course of economic liberalization propelling the nation to become arguably the biggest economic power in the world today.

Chapter 128 - Zhou Enlai 周恩来

Introduction:

Zhou Enlai 周恩来 is one of the most prominent and respected leaders of the CCP. He played a major role in the Chinese Revolution and later in the conduct of China's foreign relations. He is known to be a great negotiator and a master of policy implementation, with infinite capacity for details. Renowned for his charm and subtlety, Zhou was described as affable, pragmatic, and persuasive.

Main Story:

Born into a gentry family, Zhou Enlai was drawn into the vortex of Chinese politics during the May Fourth Movement 五四运动 in 1919 (chapter 102), after his return from studies in Japan. He met student activist, Deng Yingchao 邓颖超, who had also participated in the May Fourth Movement. He married her 1925 and shared a life-long relationship until his death in 1976. They had no children of their own but adopted several orphans of "revolutionary martyrs", including Li Peng 李鹏, who later became the Premier of the PRC. Deng rose to be a prominent member of the CCP before passing away in 1992, 16 years after Zhou.

Zhou Enlai was arrested for his role in the May Fourth Movement and upon his release, he left China for France for further studies. While in France he participated in the founding, along with Ho Chi Minh, of the Communist Party of France. Later, when the Communist Party of China was formed in 1921 in Shanghai, Zhou joined it in 1922. He quickly rose to become the political commissar of the Whampoa Military Academy in Canton, which was under Chiang Kai-shek's command, during the CCP's first United Front with the KMT.

During the Northern Expedition 国民革命军北伐(chapter 108), Zhou Enlai had gone in advance of Chiang's army, and organized an insurrection in Shanghai against the Beiyang Government previously established by Yuan Shikai 袁世凯. In 1927, Chiang's distrust of the Communists led to the Shanghai Massacre 四一二惨案 (chapter 114). Zhou barely escaped. He then organized the Nanchang Uprising 南昌起义 against the KMT, which failed. This event nevertheless led to the formation of the Chinese Red Army (forerunner of the PLA) and is today being celebrated as such.

Zhou again escaped and traveled to Moscow in 1928. He returned to Shanghai from Moscow but in 1931 he had to flee again during the Chinese Civil War. He traveled to Jiangxi Province where Mao Zedong, along with Zhu De, had organized a rural enclave called a Jiangxi Soviet 江西苏联. In 1932 the rest of the

Communist organization in Shanghai followed Zhou to Jiangxi. Zhou became the political commissar of the Red Army which had been created in the Jiangxi Soviet by Mao Zedong and Zhu De.

Moscow had sent a representative of Comintern (Communist International) to the Jiangxi Soviet. He was a German Communist named Otto Braun. He took the Chinese name of Li De 李德. Otto Braun was supposed to have had some military experience as a street fighter in Europe, but his skill as a military leader was very doubtful. Li De, through political maneuvering came into control of the Red Army in the Jiangxi Soviet. The control of the Red Army was vested in a three member committee, a troika. The three members of the committee were Otto Braun, Zhou Enlai and a Chinese Communist named Bo Gu 博古 who had been trained in Moscow. Bo Gu always supported Otto Braun giving him a two-to-one majority over Zhou Enlai, so Otto Braun effectively controlled the Red Army. However, Otto Braun's tactics of direct confrontation with the KMT proved disastrous and soon the leadership of the CCP was returned to Mao Zedong whose guerilla fighting tactics were much more effective.

Otto Braun and the Communist Party ...

Zhou played many prominent roles as a negotiator during periods when the CCP had to reach out to hostile political forces. In 1936, he negotiated the release of Chiang Kai-shek during the Xian Incident (chapter 112) and helped established the Second United Front against the Japanese invaders. When the US General George Marshall arrived in China to negotiate between the CCP and the KMT, Zhou was the one who represented the CCP. As Premier and Foreign Minister (1949-1958), he very successfully acted as China's bridge with the US and other nations.

During the Cultural Revolution, Zhou managed to carry on a conflict-free relation with Mao Zedong and was the only senior leader not purged by Mao. He used his office to limit the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and help several other people who would otherwise have ended up in a far worse situation during those tumultuous years. In 1972, he represented Mao in welcoming President Nixon to China and signed the historic Shanghai Communique, which promised to normalize relations between the US and China.

Zhou Enlai passed away from cancer on 8 January 1976 at the age of 78, eight months before the passing of Mao Zedong.

Conclusion:

Zhou Enlai is a highly respected figure, both in China and abroad. The year that he died, 1976, was also the year the US and China formally normalized relations but much of the work in normalizing the relations had already been done by him.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger found him “one of the two or three most impressive men” he had ever met, “urbane, infinitely patient, extraordinarily intelligent, subtle.”

Chapter 129 – Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 and Hua Guofeng 华国锋

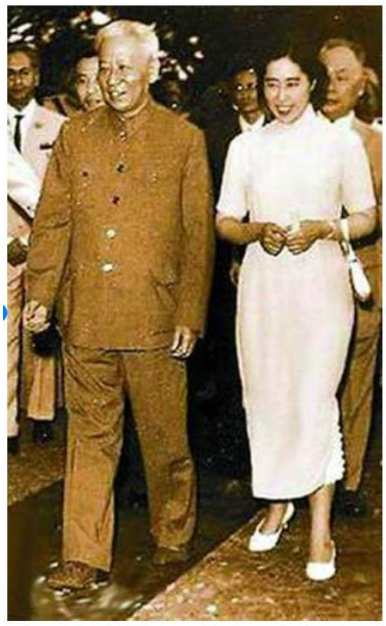
(1) Liu Shaoqi

Introduction:

Main Story:

Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 joined the CCP at its inception in 1921. He was active in the CCP's labor movements and both the Chinese Civil War/Long March and Second Sino-Japanese War. He rose to become the Party's General Secretary in 1943. By 1945 (end of the Second Sino-Japanese War and WWII), he became the Deputy Chairman of the CCP and was the third-ranking leader, after Mao Zedong and Zhu De. By the beginning of 1959, Mao Zedong was coming under increasing criticism for the failures of the Great Leap Forward (chapter 123). Mao stepped down as

Chairman of the PRC in April of that year and Liu Shaoqi was elected to replace him. As head of state, Liu visited many foreign countries, usually accompanied by his sixth wife, Wang Guangmei 王光美.



Liu Shaoqi's state visit to Indonesia with Wang Guangmei.

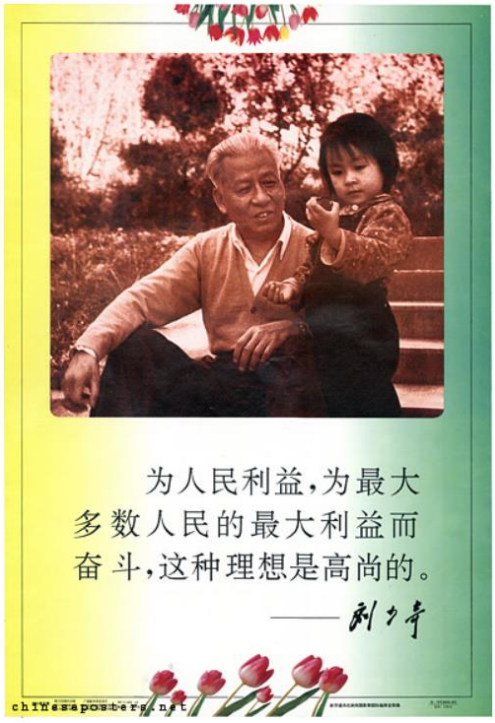
After Mao was sidelined, Liu worked closely with Deng Xiaoping to reverse many of the economic policies started by Mao. Communes were broken up, the use of communal dormitories and mess halls ended, and rural markets and private subsidiary farming plots re-introduced. In 1966, Mao launched the Cultural

Revolution (chapter 125) in an attempt to re-assert his authority. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, along with others were branded “revisionists” and “capitalist roaders”. Liu was denounced as a “traitor” and “the biggest capitalist roader in the Party.” In July 1966, Liu was replaced as Party Deputy Chairman by Lin Biao. In 1967, he and his wife, Wang Guangmei, were placed under house arrest in Beijing. In 1968, he was expelled from the CCP. He was sentenced to a Kaifeng prison and died in 1969 due to “medical neglect,” - untreated diabetes and pneumonia.

Liu was politically rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping in 1980, given a state funeral (a decade after his death), and included with Mao Zedong, Zhu De and Zhou Enlai as one of the “first leaders” of the CCP.

Conclusion:

In 1945, after the Japanese defeat in the Second Sino-Japanese War, Liu Shaoqi was the supreme leader of all the Communist forces in Manchuria and northern China, a stature overlooked by historians. He ranked third after Mao Zedong and Zhu De and was a successor to Mao. From that high position, it was ironical that he was later accused as being the “supreme leader of a black gang” and branded “China’s Khrushchev.” However, he was politically rehabilitated and posters such as the one below reappeared bearing his quotations.



(2) Hua Guofeng

Hua Guofeng

华国锋

Hua Guofeng during a visit to the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, 1979

Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party	
In office	
7 October 1976 – 28 June 1981	
Deputy	Ye Jianying
Preceded by	Mao Zedong
Succeeded by	Hu Yaobang

Introduction:

As the chosen successor of Mao Zedong, Hua Guofeng reached the pinnacle of power when he served as Chairman of the CCP and Premier of the PRC. He was

subsequently forced out of supreme power by a coalition of party leaders who backed Deng Xiaoping.

Main Story:

Hua Guofeng joined the CCP in 1938 and saw action in both the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War as a guerrilla fighter. A popular local administrator, Hua rose to become Party Secretary of Hunan during the Cultural Revolution. Hua supported the Cultural Revolution and led the movement in Hunan. In 1971, he was appointed a member of a committee investigating the Lin Biao Affair, a sign of the strong trust Mao had in him.

In 1973, he was appointed to the Politburo and headed the Ministry of Public Security, thus having control of the police and security forces. He was also made the Vice Premier. After the death of Zhou Enlai, Mao elevated Hua to the position of Premier and First Vice Chairman of the CCP, which made him Mao's designated successor.

After Mao's death, the highest power organ of the country, the Politburo Standing Committee, consisted of Hua Guofeng, Ye Jianying 叶剑英, Zhang Chunqiao 张春桥 and Wang Hongwen 王洪文. Ye Jianying 叶剑英 was in semi-retirement and both Zhang and Wang were part of the Gang of Four 四人帮. Hua knew that it was a matter of time the Gang of Four would go after him. He made contact with Ye Jianying, who enjoyed the strong support of the PLA, to seek Ye's help against the Gang of Four.

As the Gang of Four had many supporters in the Central Committee, Hua and Ye concluded that the only way to remove the Gang of Four was to use force, instead of putting their case before the Central Committee. On 6 October, Hua called for a meeting with Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Hongwen and Yao Wenyuan at Zhongnanhai 中南海, supposedly to discuss the fifth volume of Mao's "Selected Works". Hua Guofeng and Ye Jianying were the only two leaders present at the meeting, awaiting the arrival of the Gang. The three members of the Gang of Four were arrested as they walked into the meeting. Jiang Qing 江青 and Mao Zedong's nephew, Mao Yuanxin 毛远新, were arrested at their respective residences. As mentioned in chapter119, Mao had earlier removed much of the powers of Marshal Ye 叶 as he was fearful that Ye would thwart his plan to transfer power to his wife, Jiang Qing and his nephew, Mao Yuanxin.

Hua Guofeng was basically a keen follower of Mao's ideology.

It was at variance with Deng's idea for economic liberalization. After Deng Xiaoping eventually gained control of the CCP, Hua Guofeng was replaced by Zhao Ziyang as Premier in 1980. In June 1981, Hua was replaced as party chairman by Hu Yaobang. Subsequently, he did not hold any major post although he remained a member of the Central Committee of the CCP, until his resignation in 2002.

Hus's health deteriorated in 2008, and he was hospitalized for kidney and heart complications. He died on 20 August 2008, during the festive Beijing Olympics, and his death was not given much attention by state media.

Conclusion:

During his relatively short period in power, from October 1976 to December 1978, Hua Guofeng (instead of Ye Jiangying who had always preferred a low profile) was credited for decisively ousting the Gang of Four from political power and thus became the leader whose emergence marked the end of the Cultural Revolution.

Chapter 130 - The Soong sisters 宋氏三姐妹

The Soong sisters, left to right: Soong Ei-ling (1890 - 1973), Soong May-ling (1897 - 2003) and Soong Ching-ling (1893 - 1981) in Chongqing (Chunking), China, 1940. The sisters were uniquely influential in Chinese politics in the early 20th Century, with Ai-ling marrying banker and finance minister H. H. Kung, May-ling working with and marrying Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek and Ching-ling marrying first President of the Republic of China, Sun Yat-sen. Topical Press Agency—Getty Images

Introduction:

The three Soong sisters were remarkable women in the modern history of China. Each one of them is remarkable in her own way. Mao Zedong famously said of the sisters: "One loved money, one loved power and one loved her country" 一个爱钱，一个爱权， 一个爱国.

"Big Sister" 大姐 Ai-Ling, was known as the brightest mind in the family, gaining fortune through her own business as well as through her marriage to a rich banker and eventual finance minister of China H.H. Kung. "Little Sister" 小妹 Mei-Ling, married the powerful Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek

and became first lady of the Republic of China known around the world, even gracing the cover of TIME three times. And "Red Sister"红姐 Ching-ling married Sun Yat-sen, the great progenitor of the Chinese Revolution.

Main Story:

The three sisters were born in Shanghai in the 1890s to Charlie Soong, a wealthy merchant and Methodist missionary, who made a fortune in banking and printing (especially Chinese-language bibles). They were all educated at Wesleyan College in Georgia, USA.

In 1913, Sun Yat-sen was in exile in Tokyo, where he had (in 1905) established Tongmenhui 同盟会 (see chapter 105 Sun Yat-sen). Soong sent his second daughter Ching-ling to Tokyo to be Sun's secretary and to assist with daily chores and miscellaneous work, only for the two to fall in love, much to Soong's fury when he learned about their intention to be married.

He was dead set against the relationship because of the 27-year age gap. Despite this, with the blessing of Japanese friends and the comrades of the Chinese Revolutionary Party, Sun Yat-sen and Ching-ling were married in Tokyo. Subsequently, Madame Sun Yat-sen (as she later became known) followed her husband back to Shanghai and then Guangzhou. She was by his side assisting him in his revoluntionary work, right up until his death.

Ching-ling remained in China after 1949, serving as vice-chairperson of the PRC until 1975. During the Cultural Revolution, even a distinguished figure like Soong Ching-ling did not escape heavy criticism by some Red Guard factions. Her safety was only guaranteed after Ma Zedong accepted Zhou Enlai's recommendation to put her on a "List of Cadres to be protected." Ching-ling's public appearances were limited after the Cultural Revolution as she was generally in poor health. Just two weeks before her death in 1981, she was named the first and only honorary president of the PRC.

On 25 October 1915, Sun Yat-sen and Soong Ching-ling were married in Tokyo, and had their wedding photos taken on 24 April 1916.

As for youngest sister Mei-ling, she too had a strong love for her country and people, which was matched by political ambition as well. While in Guangzhou, Mei-ling got to know Chiang Kai-shek, then a political rookie with the KMT, and the two were quickly drawn to each other. Their marriage was opposed by Mei-ling's mother because Chiang was married and 11 years older. They only got married after Chiang's divorce. At the time of their marriage, Chiang had already taken over the leadership of the KMT from Sun Yat-sen, who had passed away. Their marriage in Shanghai was the talk of the town. The couple had no children.

The lavish wedding between Soong Mei-ling and Chiang Kai-shek was the first and only "wedding of the century" in the Republic of China.

During the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, Mei-ling persuaded the CCP and the KMT to work together against the Japanese aggressors.

On Nov. 22 1943, The President Of The U.S.A, Franklin D. Roosevelt meets General Chang Kai-Shek and his wife Soong May-Ling in Cairo to arrange the conditions to be proposed to Japan after the Allied Victory, including the return of all land conquered by aggression. Keystone-France—Gamma-Keystone via Getty Images

After the Japanese surrender in 1945, the Chinese Civil War resumed and Mei-ling sided with the KMT whereas Ching-ling sided with the CCP. Well-versed in both Chinese and Western culture, she acted as Chiang's English translator, secretary and advisor and also helped build a legacy for Chiang Kai-shek far beyond what Chiang alone could have achieved. As a fluent English speaker and a Christian, Madame Chiang struck a chord with American audiences as she traveled across the country, raising money and lobbying support for her husband's government. After the KMT defeat in 1949, Mei-ling and Chiang Kai-Shek fled to Taiwan. She continued to play major role in international affairs until Chiang's death in 1975. In the late 1960s, Mei-ling was voted one of America's most admired women. She died in New York in 2003 at the ripe old age of 106.

Eldest sister Soong Ai-ling, an outspoken tomboy with a talent for business, was also once a secretary to Sun Yat-sen. Sun's revolution forced the Soongs to flee to Japan where Ai-ling met her future husband Kung Hsiang-hsi (H.H. Kung). They married in Yokohama and had four children. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, Ai-ling engaged in relief work for the refugees and wounded soldiers and donated two hospitals. During the later years of the war, Ai-ling and her husband and children were accused of graft, corruption, black-marketing and profiteering. In 1944, he husband was finally asked to step down as Minister of Finance. After the fall of the KMT in 1949, Ai-ling and her husband transferred their immense wealth and business abroad and left for the US, where she continued to energetically support Chiang Kai-shek's cause until her death in 1973 at the age of 85.

Conclusion:

From the start, all three sisters were supporters of the nationalist revolution. However, following the death of Sun Yat-sen and the KMT-CCP split, a rift began to show between the sisters.

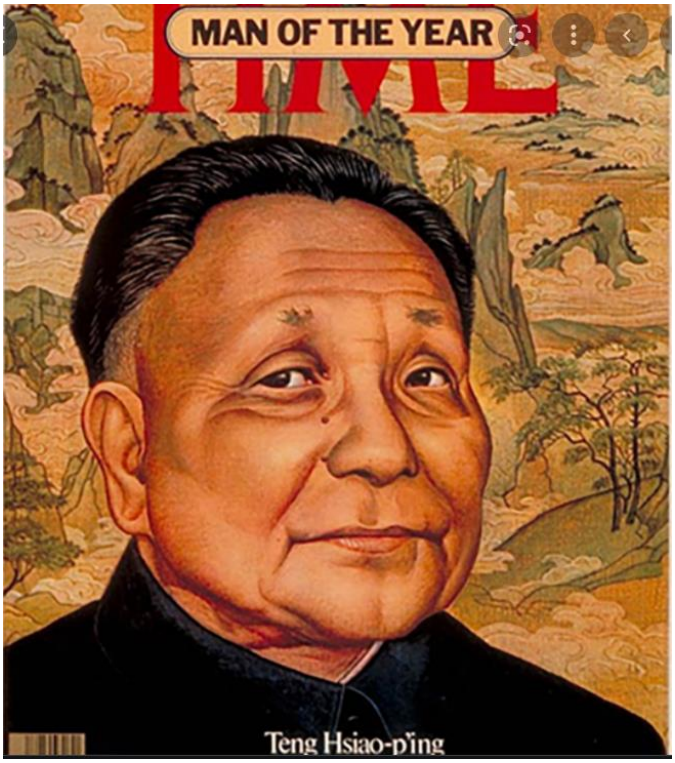
As Chiang Kai-shek became the chairman of the Nationalist government, his wife Soong Mei-ling became the first lady of the Republic of China (ROC). But her sister Ching-ling sympathised with the CCP and felt that its ideas were what Sun Yat-sen would have wanted for the revolution. She was unhappy with Chiang's autocratic ways, and used her personal influence to help the liberal intellectuals who criticised the Nationalist government.

After 1949, the three sisters were never together again, estranged by history. Soong Ching-ling passed away in Beijing in 1981. A dazzling white statue of her stands next to her cemetery in Shanghai. Her two sisters passed away in New York and were buried in the US.

Chapter 131 – Deng Xiaoping 邓小平

Introduction:

Deng Xiaoping is the most significant and remarkable political leader of the latter part of the 20th century, earning the reputation as the “Architect of Modern China.” He was the Time Person of the Year in 1978 and 1985.



A man of diminutive size (barely 1.5 meters tall), Deng has had an outsized impact on China’s and indeed the world’s economic history.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev meeting with Deng Xiaoping in Beijing on the eve of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989. Boris Yurchenko/AP

Main Story:

Deng Xiaoping was born in Sichuan Province in 1904 and hence about a half a generation younger than Mao Zedong. Deng's family was of Hakka background, the ethnic minority that migrated from North China to South China in the seventeenth century and were known as the “guest people.” Deng himself traveled to France at the early age of sixteen. He went there to study but spent most of his time working to support himself. Among other things, he worked as a machinist. After 1924 he traveled to the Soviet Union. He was in the Soviet Union until 1926 when he returned to China to work in the Jiangxi Soviet under Mao. Deng served as a political and military officer in the Communist Party organization in the Jiangxi Soviet.

Like many other CCP leaders, Deng had important roles in the Chinese Civil War, The Long March and the Second Sino-Japanese War. He also had his fair share of purges, being purged twice in his life-time. He was banished from the Chinese leadership early in the Cultural Revolution until he was rehabilitated in 1973 by his patron, then-Premier Zhou Enlai. He was purged a second time after Zhou died in 1976.

His extraordinary achievements were especially notable when he became the paramount leader after the toppling of the Gang of Four (chapter 127).

In 1978, Deng's announcement of the "Four Modernizations" 四个现代化 (regarding agriculture, industry, defense , and science and technology) is seen as the starting point for the massive shifts that would loosen up China's economy and dismantle what was known as the "bamboo curtain" that had shielded it from the outside world.

In 1992, Deng, then 88 and in bad health, embarked on what was described as a 南巡, or southern inspection tour, in which he re-energized the reform process after it had fallen into the doldrums following Tiananmen.

Historians may well come to regard Deng's 南巡 as not simply his last hurrah, but his most enduring contribution to China's surging power and influence.

Deng is also known for negotiating an end to the British colonial rule of Hong Kong under a One Country Two Systems format 一国两制. He also normalized relations with the US and the Soviet Union. Although some people took him to task for the suppression of the Tiananmen protests of 1989, others believed that if not for the strong handed action, China would have descended into anarchy.

In all of this, it is important to remember that in 1978, China's economy was about the same size as Italy's. By 2021, China's economy on a nominal GDP basis is the world's second largest behind the United States, and should surpass the US in the next few years. At the same time, China has lifted 800 million people out of poverty. Never before in human history have we seen anything quite like this.

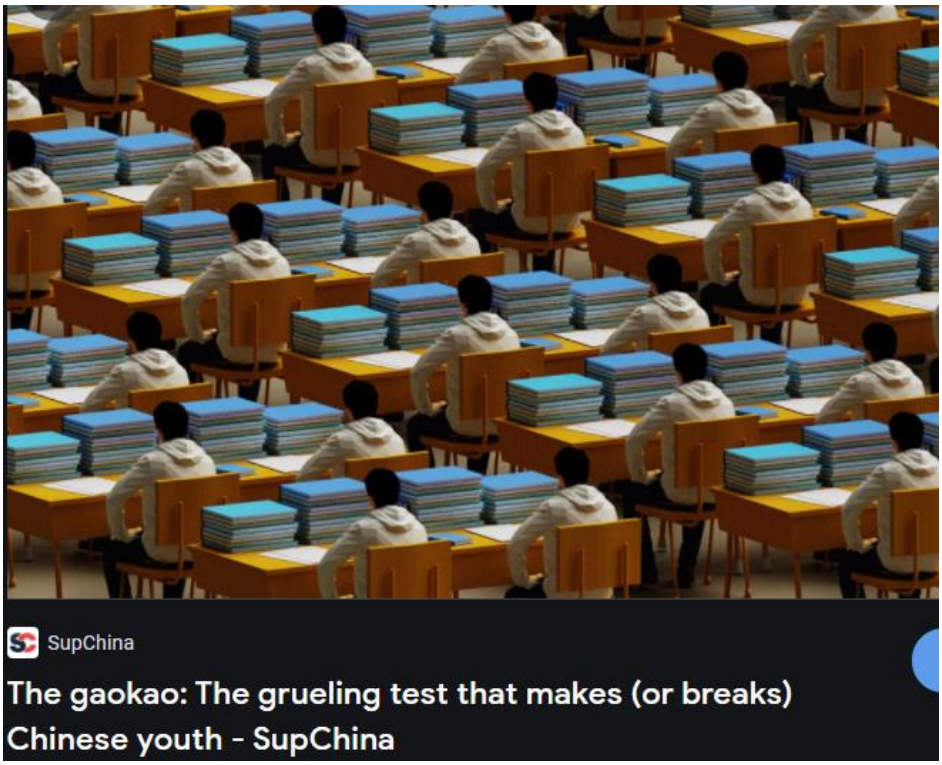
Deng is noted for quotes like "To get rich is glorious" and "It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice."

Conclusion:

Deng Xiaoping passed away on 19 February 1997 at the age of 92 from lung infection (he was a heavy smoker) and Parkinson's disease. International reaction to his death could be summed up in the words of French President Jacques Chirac: "In the course of this century, few men have, as much as Deng, led a vast human community through such profound and determining changes".

Chapter 132 – Gaokao 高考　1952 and Hukou 户口　1958

(1) GAOKAO 高考



Introduction:

Gaokao 高考 refers to the National College Entrance Examination which was introduced in 1952. It is held annually and is required for entrance into almost all higher education institutions at the undergraduate level. The exams last about nine hours over a period of two or three days (generally from June 7 to 9 every year).

The Standard Chinese language and mathematics are included in all tests. Students can choose one of the six foreign languages for their foreign language test, viz. English, French, Japanese, Russian, German and Spanish. Most choose English. In addition, students must choose between the social sciences (history, political science and geography) or the natural sciences (physics, chemistry and biology).

Main Story:

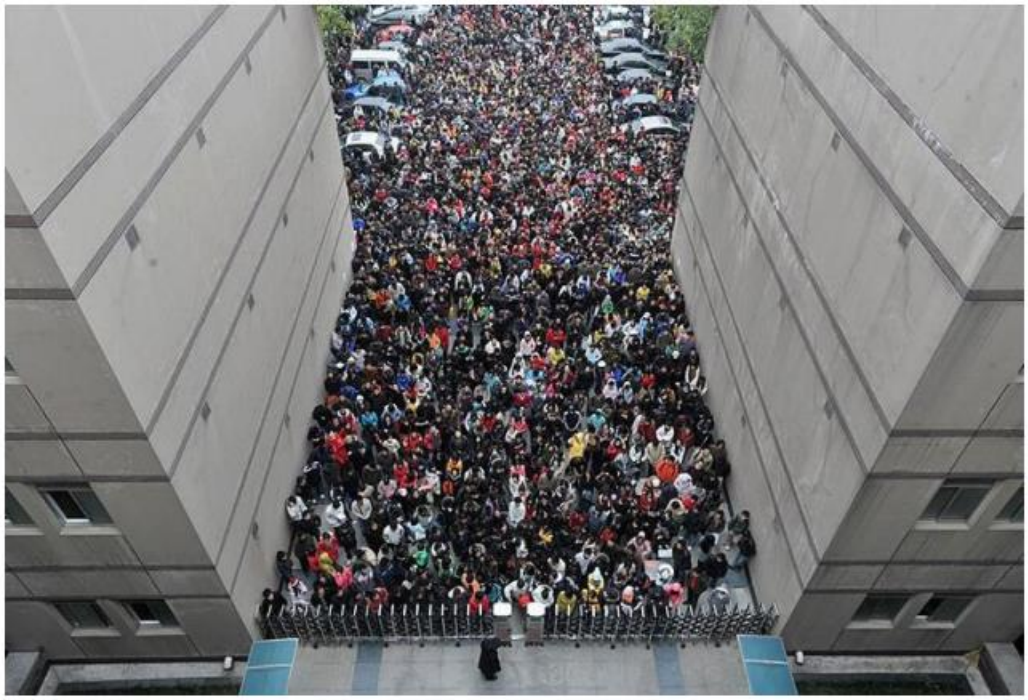
The first gaokao was held in August 15–17, 1952 after the formation of the PRC.

In 1966, at the start of the Cultural Revolution, the gaokao was officially canceled and substituted by a new admission policy of recommending workers, farmers and soldiers to college. During the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution, Mao initiated a Down to the Countryside Movement which forced high school graduates to go to the country and work as farmers in the villages. In the early 1970s, new students for higher education institutions were selected on the basis of their evaluation by a revolutionary committee rather than formal academic scores.

After the Cultural Revolution, in late 1977, Deng Xiaoping, then under Hua Guofeng, the heir apparent of Mao, officially resumed the gaokao, which has continued to the present day. The first such examination after the Cultural Revolution was a history-making event. Students were overjoyed as they could prove themselves through their own academic merits rather than depend on recommendations to enter universities. Starting from 1978, the examination was uniformly designed by the Ministry of Education and all the students across the country took exactly the same examination.

An excerpt of an article that appeared in the internet gives you an idea of what the modern Gaokao is like:

“The roadblocks are being set up, the police dispatched and the drones are hovering in the sky to catch cheaters. This year, China’s annual college entrance exam season will run from June 7 to 9. You can almost smell the pressure in the air as more than 10 million students across the country prepare to take the National College Entrance Examination, aka the ‘gaokao,’ a high-stakes exam on which students’ entire future depends.”



Parents waiting for their children to come out of GaoKao examinations. Image via Reuters.

Conclusion:

While often criticized for prompting a culture of cramming, the gaokao is also regarded as the fairest way of screening talent in a country with such a large population. For students coming from rural places, the gaokao can be their ticket to big cities and more promising futures.

For all its importance, one thing that should be noted is that the gaokao weighs more in less developed areas, as students in first-tier cities like Shanghai are more likely to choose to study overseas. Also, the intake scores in those cities are relatively lower than those in less developed regions.

(2) HUKOU 户口

Introduction:

China’s hukou system is a system of household registration introduced in 1958. The system descends in part from ancient Chinese household registration systems. In its current version, the Hukou fulfills three main functions: the control of internal migration, the management of social protection, and the preservation of social stability.

Main Story:

The control of internal migration is the first objective of the hukou system. Each citizen must be registered at birth, similar to the way a census functions. The registry, which is the hukou itself, contains each individual’s basic demographic information, which includes the following:

Status, ie urban or rural;
Legal address;
Sector of activity;
Religion; and,
Physical description.

The original idea behind the system's establishment was that because rural areas had the most opportunity to utilize labor, China's government felt that a large majority of the country's population should live and work in those regions. This idea led to the belief that giving citizens the ability to move freely around the country could pose a threat to the agricultural output.

Additionally, China kept strict restrictions on migration into the country's larger cities to prevent megacities from developing slums or poor health conditions as a result of the fast-growing population. This has been a persistent problem in nearby countries.

In it's early years, the People's Republic of China was largely agrarian. To hasten industrialization, the government emulated the Soviet model of prioritizing heavy industry. In order to finance such an expansion, authorities overpriced industrial goods simultaneously underpricing agricultural ones. Therefore, the two sectors experienced unequal exchange where peasants' agricultural products were paid less than their market price.

For the government to sustain such an untypical imbalance, it created a system that will impose restrictions on the free flow of relevant resources, more particularly labor between agriculture and industry in the city and the countryside. This resulted in the classification of individuals into either urban or rural residents. The state required these two categories of the population to continue residing and working within their geographical locations.

While traveling was allowed, it was highly controlled and subjected to conditions. They will not be able to gain access to education, employment, food services, healthcare and other public services unless they obtain a government-issued Hukou.

Conclusion:

As decades passed and China began to become more industrialized, the hukou system was continually reformed to adapt its structure to the new economic state. The end result was the easing of restrictions on migrant workers who wish to move to the cities.

Chapter 133 - First Atomic Bomb 第一原子弹 1964

Project 596

The mushroom cloud from the test

Information

Country	People's Republic of China
Test site	Lop Nur Test Base
Period	16 October 1964

Introduction:

Project 596 was the first nuclear bomb test conducted by the PRC, detonated on 16 Oct 1964, at Lop Nur test site in Xinjiang province. It had a yield of 22 kilotons, comparable to the Soviet Union's first nuclear bomb in 1949 and the American

FAT Man bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan in 1945. With the test, China became the fifth nuclear power in the world (after the US, USSR, Britain and France) and the first Asian nation to possess nuclear capability.

Main Story:

Although Mao Zedong once famously called the US atomic bomb a “paper tiger”, Mao announced China’s own nuclear ambition in 1955. The decision made by the Chinese leadership was prompted by confrontations with the United States in the 1950s, including the Korean War, the 1955 Taiwan Straits Crisis (the 9-month bombardment of Nationalist-controlled Kinmen Island), and eventually the Vietnam War. But the main motivation was the US threat to use nuclear weapons on China during the Korean War (chapter 120).

China’s nuclear program started at the height of Sino-Soviet cooperation. A comprehensive agreement signed in 1957 promised a wide range of cooperation,

including the pledge of a prototype nuclear warhead and detailed plans for how to manufacture one. But the collaboration broke down during the Sino-Soviet Split (chapter 121). In June 1959, Nikita Khrushchev formally cancelled Soviet aid to China's nuclear program. Furious, China rededicated itself to developing its own bomb, and renamed the project as Project 596: June 1959, the date of the aforesaid cancellation.

The withdrawal of Soviet aid coincided with the disastrous Great Leap Forward (chapter 123). Despite its abject poverty, China pursued the project with a single-minded focus on the national objective. Given the obstacles, the speed with which the bomb was developed surprised observers.

The next step for China was to develop the mode of delivery of a nuclear payload. Just eight months after the 596 test, a deliverable nuclear bomb was successfully dropped from a bomber and detonated. A year later, medium range missiles were fitted with nuclear warheads.

Ballistic missiles that can carry nuclear warheads go on display at a parade in Beijing. Credit: Kyodo News/Getty

The Lop Nur test site was used to develop more sophisticated nuclear weapons such as the hydrogen bomb, multi-stage thermonuclear devices,
and Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM). While China's nuclear arsenal was

modest compared to that of the Soviet Union and the United States, the appearance of another nuclear power in Asia raised the fear of uncontrolled proliferation. The USA took measures to forestall the independent development of nuclear capabilities in more Asian nations, most immediately with India. Top U.S. officials began open talks of non-proliferation with the Soviet Union soon after the 596 test to offset the possibility of a nuclear China propelling a larger and more unpredictable global arms race.

Chinese nuclear capacity prompted the Soviet Union and the U.S. to sign the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons wo which China was also a signatory.
China's last nuclear test was conducted in 1996, a few months before the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed.

Conclusion:

Since the 596 test, China has asserted its nuclear doctrine of no-first-use, with officials characterizing the Chinese nuclear arsenal as a minimal deterrent to nuclear attack. However, the recent escalation of tensions between the US and China over Taiwan and other issues casts this conflict in grave undertones.

Chapter 134 – Ping Pong Diplomacy 中美乒乓球外交 and Nixon's Visit 1972

Introduction:

In his most fitting metaphor relating to the Ping Pong Diplomacy, Mao Zedong said "The little ball moves the Big Ball." This event had led to the visit of President Richard Nixon to China which helped restore the relations between the US and China.

Main Story:

In the years since Mao Zedong's communist revolution in 1949, relations between the People's Republic of China and the United States had been clouded by Cold War propaganda, trade embargos and diplomatic silence. The two superpowers had met on the battlefield during the Korean War, but no official American delegation had set foot in the People's Republic in over 20 years.

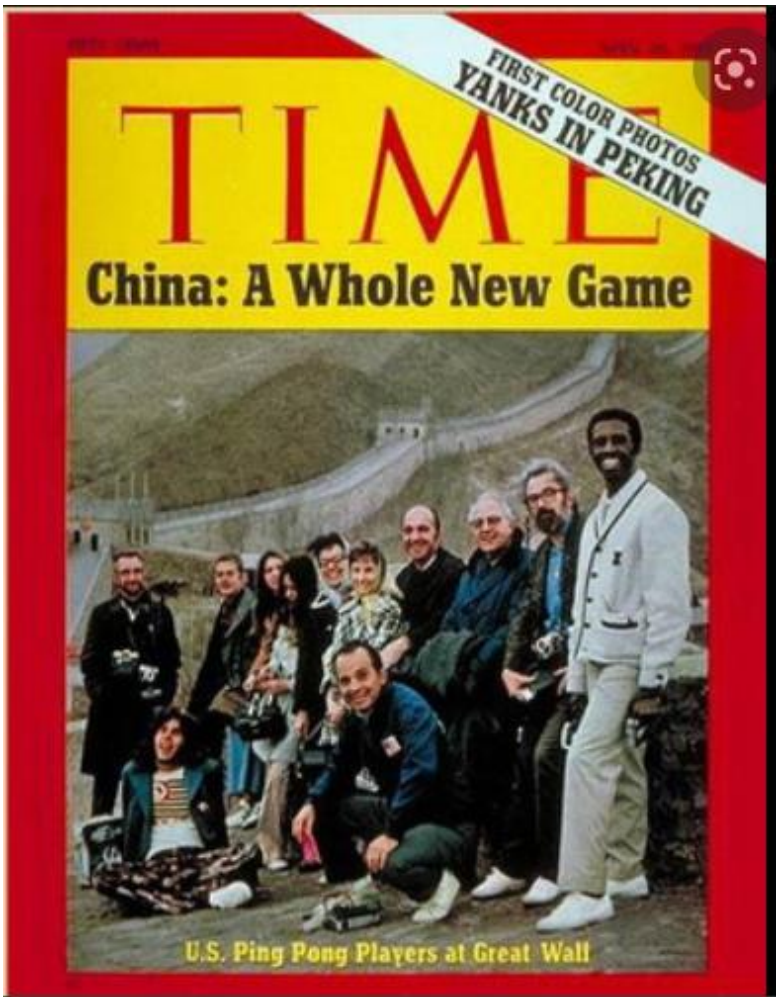
By 1971, however, both nations were looking to open a dialogue with one another. China's alliance with the Soviet Union had soured and produced a series of bloody border clashes, and Chairman Mao believed ties with the Americans might serve as a deterrent against the Russians. U.S. President Richard Nixon, meanwhile, had made opening China a top priority of his administration.

The two countries eventually opened secret communications, but the real breakthrough came courtesy of a public encounter between a pair of ping-pong players.

During the 1971 World Table Tennis Championships in Nagoya, Japan, 19-year-old U.S. player Glenn Cowan hopped on a shuttle bus carrying the red-shirted Chinese national team. Most of the Chinese eyed the shaggy-haired American with suspicion, but Zhuang Zedong 庄则栋, the team's greatest player, stepped forward to shake Cowan's hand and speak to him through an interpreter. He even presented the teenager with a gift: a silk-screen picture of China's Huangshan mountains. Cowan, a self-described hippie, returned the gesture the following day by giving Zhuang a t-shirt emblazoned with a peace symbol and the Beatles' lyric "Let It Be." Photographers caught the incident on film, and the unexpected good will between the U.S. and Chinese teams soon became the talk of the tournament. A few days later, as the U.S. team was preparing to leave Nagoya, Chairman Mao shocked the world by inviting them to make an all-expense paid visit to China.

An American tennis table player trains with a Chinese tennis table player, in April, 1971 in Beijing, China. (Credit: AFP/Getty Images)

The historic visit began on April 10, 1971, when 15 American table tennis players, team officials and spouses crossed a bridge from Hong Kong into China.



The U.S. team was diverse, including everyone from the hippie Glenn Cowan to a college professor to a Guyanese immigrant to a pair of high school-age girls. None of the players were particularly accomplished at ping-pong—the U.S. men's team was ranked 24th in the world at the time—and most had been forced to beg or borrow the money to make it to the championships in Japan. Now, only a few days later, they had inadvertently become the most important American diplomats on the planet.

Along with visits to the Great Wall, the Summer Palace and a revolution-themed opera, the U.S. players also participated in a series of exhibition ping-pong matches. The American trip culminated at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, where the team had a historic audience with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai.

The American and Chinese governments soon opened new back-channel communications with one another. In July, U.S. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger made a secret trip to Beijing.

The ripple effects of what had become known as “Ping-Pong Diplomacy” only continued the following year. In response to the American trip, the Chinese sent their table tennis team to the United States for an eight-city tour.

Still mired in the unpopular and frustrating Vietnam War in 1971, Nixon surprised the American people by announcing a planned trip to the PRC in 1972. Relations between the US and China had been damaged following the Communist Revolution, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.
Nixon seemed an unlikely candidate to thaw those chilly relations. During the 1940s and 1950s, he had been a vocal cold warrior and had condemned the Democratic administration of Harry S. Truman for “losing” China to the communists in 1949. The situation had changed dramatically since that time, though. In Vietnam, the Soviets, not the Chinese, had become the most significant supporters of the North Vietnamese regime. And the war in Vietnam was not going well. The American people were impatient for an end to the conflict, and it was becoming increasingly apparent that the United States might not be able to save its ally, South Vietnam, from its communist counterpart.

Conclusion:

Nixon’s trip to China, therefore, was a move calculated to drive an even deeper wedge between the two most significant communist powers. The United States could use closer diplomatic relations with China as leverage in dealing with the Soviets, particularly on the issue of Vietnam. In addition, the United States might be able to make use of the Chinese as a counterweight to North Vietnam. Despite their claims of socialist solidarity, the PRC and North Vietnam were, at best, strongly suspicious allies. For its part, the PRC was desirous of another ally in its increasingly tense relationship with the Soviet Union and certainly welcomed the possibility of increased U.S.-China trade.

Ping Pong Diplomacy, which touched off the Nixon trip, is still being celebrated by both Chinese and US table tennis teams.

Chapter 135 - Deng Xiaoping’s Four Modernizations 1978 四个现代化

Introduction:

The goal of the Four Modernizations 四个现代化, as seen in the table above, was to turn China into a modern nation state by the year 2000. The emphasis on economic development marked a significant departure from the country’s previous policies (under Mao) of primarily focusing on ideology.

Main Story:

The Four Modernizations were first proposed in December 1964 by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai but were not immediately implemented, as the ideology of the Cultural Revolution, launched by Mao Zedong took precedence.

It was not until Mao’s death in 1976 and the overthrow of the Gang of Four, that the Four Modernizations were given priority. Championed by Deng Xiaoping, the Four Modernizations became the basis for the policies that contributed to the country’s impressive economic development.

Modernizing Agriculture:

Deng Xiaoping wanted to modernize farming by introducing mechanization. He abolished the people's communes and introduced the responsibility system as a way to involve the people.

This system returned the responsibility to each farm family for looking after their own livelihood, but with the assistance of the state where necessary. Where the farmers did not have enough land, the government leased land to them. After a harvest, the family would sell a portion to the government in return for a set price. The rest could be sold to the open market for a profit. This motivated the farmers to increase their productivity.

Expanding Industry:

Under Mao Zedong, China was undergoing very heavy industrialization. It was developing mining and military weapons. Many factories were set up all over the country, making manufactured goods like tools and furniture. However, Mao's China lacked the technology to produce products of quality.

Deng Xiaoping shifted emphasis to light industry, such as consumer goods. Managers of the factories were given the ability to choose what they were going to sell, but were still responsible for making a profit. He extended the responsibility

system to industry to make them more efficient. The profit-driven factories became much more productive.

Developing science and technology:

After Mao Zedong passed away, Deng Xiaoping removed China's policy of isolation from the world. He opened the door to foreign trade and investment and encourage the transfer of technology to China. To encourage foreign trade, Deng Xiaoping created Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in southeastern China, which proved to be a great success in spearheading the economic liberalization for the rest of the country.

Upgrading the defense forces:

When Deng Xiaoping came to power, he quickly began to prioritize the modernization of the country’s defense forces and their weaponry. The Sino-Vietnamese War (chapter 138) revealed many weaknesses of the PLA. In the past, the Red Army did not use ranks or insignia. After the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979, reforms were made to professionalize the PLA. The rank system was introduced.

In weaponry, Deng prioritized research over production, the results of which are seen today with China being in the forefront of military technology. Also, Deng encouraged modern training for his soldiers, learning the newest of tactics and strategies to improve battle techniques.

The Four Modernizations Program had its pros and cons. It was successful because the economy boomed. GDP rose immensely, and trade flowed through China very smoothly. Also, industrial output rose, due to the automation of factories. China became one of the world's fastest developing countries. The people could enjoy a better standard of living.

China's Quiet Revolution | Foreign Affairs
foreignaffairs.com

However, the Four Modernizations also gave rise to problems. Because of the industrialization process, millions of people from the rural areas of China poured into towns and cities, causing overpopulation and the problems that come with it: poor living conditions, poverty, increased rate of diseases, etc. Also, the booming industrialization caused air and water pollution. The crime rate rose, and corruption in populated areas grew. It made many people very rich but also deepened the inequality between the rich and the poor.

Conclusion:

Deng Xiaoping's Four Modernizations were not only welcomed by the Chinese people. The West, especially the US, was exhilarated to see a Communist giant joining the Capitalist world of nations. This is seen from the many Time magazine articles where Deng enjoyed front page coverage.

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content.time.com

The Amber of the Moment: ...
lukebartolo.blogspot.com

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Time Magazine September ...
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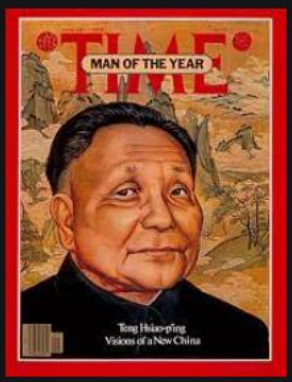

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Robert Rauschenberg | Tim...
artsy.net

TIME Magazine Cover: Den...

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19 Deng Xiaoping ideas | ch...

Chapter 136 - The Great Green Wall of China 1978 三北防护林

Introduction:

Overgrazing, deforestation, and drought convert arid land to desert, creating a layer of mobile topsoil. This is known as desertification.

And it is expanding the Gobi desert by about 2,500 sq km (950 square miles) per year - an area almost three and a half times the size of Singapore. Each year, dust storms blow off as much as 2,000 sq km (800 sq miles) of topsoil and they pose serious problems to the agriculture of nearby countries, such as Japan, North Korea and South Korea, beside being a nuisance to city dwellers.

In 1978, Beijing officials have initiated a massive campaign to attack the problem. The plan is known as the Great Green Wall - a 3,000-mile network of forest belts designed to stop the sands and to provide timber to the local population.

Main Story:

The program is officially known as the Three-North Shelter Forest Program 三北防护林. As the name suggests, it will be carried out in all three of the northern regions: the North, the Northeast and the Northwest.

Chinese scientists from the Ministry of Forestry believe the trees can serve as a windbreak and halt the advancing desert.

The Green Wall Of China | WIRED

Chinese officials predicted that the effort will "terminate expansion of new desertification caused by human factors" within a decade. By 2050, they claim, much of the arid land can be restored to a productive and sustainable state.

Main Story:

Possibly the largest proposed ecological project in history, the new Great Wall calls for planting more than 9 million acres of forest at a cost of up to US$8 billion. To build the wall, the government has launched a two-pronged plan: Use aerial seeding to cover wide swaths of land where the soil is less arid, and pay farmers to plant trees and shrubs in areas that require closer attention. A US$1.2 billion oversight system, consisting of mapping and land-surveillance databases, was implemented. The government has also worked out a dust-monitoring network with Japan and Korea.

The wall itself is made up of an outer belt - ranging from 775 to 1,765 feet wide - with a sand fence along the perimeter. Inside, low-lying, sand-tolerant vegetation, arranged in optimized checkerboard patterns, creates an artificial ecosystem to stabilize the dunes. A 6-foot-wide gravel platform holds sand down and encourages a soil crust to form. The government has also funded research to explore the use of genetically engineered plants, chemical dune stabilization, grass strains bred in space, and even farming techniques that will allow rice to grow in sandy soil.

The program is not without its problems. The trees soak up large amounts of groundwater and presented a problem to people living in northern China. Water management solutions have to be found. Planting blocks of fast-growing trees reduces the biodiversity of forested areas and is not suitable to animals, especially birds. The lack of diversity also makes the trees more susceptible to disease. China’s forest scientists, however, argued that monoculture free plantations are more effective at absorbing the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide than slow-growth forests, thus helping to offset China’s carbon emissions.

Conclusion:

The Great Green Wall project is expected to continue until 2050 and aims to plant around 88 million acres of forests in a wall stretching about 3 000 miles and as wide as 900 miles in some places. The government has subsidized and added numerous major afforestation projects in more recent years, resulting in the biggest tree-planting project in human history.

The results have so far been satisfactory, as thousands of acres of moving dunes have been stabilized and the frequency of sandstorms nationwide has fallen significantly.

Chapter 137 – China's Population Policy

Introduction:

Up until the 1970s, China was largely an agricultural economy. The large rural population contributed to the exponential growth of the population. The population explosion meant social, economic and environmental problems for China. When Deng Xiaoping took over in 1978, one of his first tasks was to curb the then surging population.

Main Story:

In 1980, the **One-Child Policy** 独生子女政策 was rolled out. At that time, the population of China had hit almost 1 billion. And China was one of the poorest nations on earth.

In order to be effective, the policy had to be strictly enforced in a nation with such a huge population. There was a system of fines for violators, and even forced abortions in some recalcitrant cases. This had invited severe criticisms from the Western media and human rights groups, such as Amnesty International.

This One-Child Policy was maintained for many years. As late as 2013, famous filmmaker Zhang Yimou 张艺谋 and his wife Chen Ting were fined 7.48 million RMB for having three children. It was a key factor in raising the standard of living of the Chinese.

The One-Child Policy meant one birth per family, meaning if women gave birth to twins or more children at the same time, they would not be penalized. This loophole led mothers to take fertility drugs to have multiple births.

Although it was called One-Child Policy, it was not strictly the case. Rural families were allowed two children if the first was a girl. Urban couples were also allowed to have a second child if the parents were both single children. Ethnic minorities were also allowed an extra offspring. Some Chinese dubbed it a “One-and-a-half Child Policy.”

Eventually, an aging population and a shrinking workforce forced China to review its One-Child Policy.

In 2016, the Two-Child Policy was introduced. In 2019, this was further relaxed to a Three-Child Policy.

China's new “three-child-policy” met ...

However, by 2020, China’s fertility rate was 1.3 children per woman, below the replacement level of 2.1 needed for a stable population. Rising affluence had led the Chinese to prefer fewer children.

Do China's 'one child generation' want more children?

The 2020 census date led to calls for China to “fully open up childbirth.” However, generations of Chinese have lived without siblings and are used to small families. Affluence had meant less need for multiple children to become family-supporting workers, and young professionals say they’d rather give one child more advantages than spread their resources among several children. Moreover, officials fear that doing away entirely with population control would create a sort of imbalance as those in the countryside still want large families compared to those in the cities.

Conclusion:

Going forward, China is likely to see a stagnation in its population growth or even a decline. This will have consequences on the Chinese economy and even far reaching consequences affecting the whole world as China is still the workshop of the world.

Chapter 138 – Sino-Vietnamese War 1979 对越自卫反击战

Introduction:

The Sino-Vietnamese War was named by the Chinese as the “Self-defensive counterattack against Vietnam.” It was a brief one month border war fought between China and Vietnam that lasted from 17 February to 16 March 1979. Nonetheless, it claimed tens of thousands of lives on both sides (no exact figures could be relied upon as the numbers differed widely depending on the source.)

Main Story:

Following a series of provocative actions and policies undertaken by Hanoi (Vietnam contesting Chinese claims to the Paracel Islands, invaded China’s friend Kampuchea in December 1978, and deported ethnic Chinese), Deng Xiaoping decided to “teach Vietnam a lesson.” On 17 February 1979, about 300,000 PLA troops crossed the northern border of Vietnam and initiated a bloody strike.

The Vietnam War had ended in 1975 and China was an important supporter for Vietnam in that war against the US as well as the war against the French .

revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh ...

However, during that period China's relations with the Soviet Union was at its low (see chapter 121 Sino-Soviet Split) whereas the Nixon visit of 1972 had bolstered the relations between the US and China. Vietnam's cozying up to the Soviet Union became a thorn at China's side. In 1978, Vietnam joined the Soviet-dominated Council for Mutual Economic Cooperation (Comecon) and signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR. China viewed that treaty as a military alliance and branded Vietnam the "Cuba of the East," pursuing hegemonistic "imperial dreams" in Southeast Asia with the backing of the USSR. During the 1970s, Moscow gave extensive arms to countries bordering China, such as India and Afghanistan. It was seen to be trying to contain China (much like what the US is doing today). Geographically, Soviet control of Vietnam meant an extension of Soviet military reach into the Malacca Straits, as well as control over a warm water port which is lacking for the Soviet Union. With most of eastern Europe under its control, it was time for the USSR to look south.

A Soviet poster entitled “The distance is long, but our hearts are close”. —

China’s relations with Vietnam was aggravated by Vietnam’s 1978 incursions into Kampuchea (Cambodia) which was a friend of China, although Vietnam’s action eradicated the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was massively building up forces on China’s northern border and was seen by China as a threat to its security.

In January 1979, while on a visit to the US, Deng Xiaoping reportedly told US President Jimmy Carter: “The little child is getting naughty, it’s time he got spanked” 小朋友不听话，该打打屁股了。

In February 1979, the PLA was primed for an attack against the northern border of Vietnam. The PLA could not commit the bulk of its forces because the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance compelled China to deploy the majority of its forces along China’s northern frontier with the Soviet Union as a deterrent to Soviet intervention.

The tactics employed by the PLA were similar to those used during the Korean War whereby the US marines in North Korea were routed by sudden frontal onslaughts and human wave attacks. However, unlike the US soldiers, the Vietnamese soldiers were fighting on their own home ground. Moreover, unlike the US marines that were on the move, the Vietnamese army was well dug in.

The PLA suffered severe casualties from the defending Vietnamese whose morale was at its peak after their recent victory against the powerful American military. Vietnam shares a common border with China and all approaches to Vietnam had been heavily mined. The attacking PLA troops stepped onto many of the mines. In some instances, they had to herd buffaloes in front of them to clear a path for their attack. Nevertheless, the Chinese forces were able to quickly capture several cities near the border.

In early March 1979, China suddenly declared its “lesson” to Vietnam was finished and withdrew its troops. China decided not to escalate the matter further despite the fact the Vietnamese troops did not withdraw from Cambodia - where they remained until 1989.

The USSR did not come to Vietnam’s assistance during the war (other than providing intelligence and equipment support). China felt that they had proven the point that the Soviet Union was unable or unwilling to protect its Vietnamese ally, which was one of the main aims of the invasion. The war helped to consolidate Deng Xiaoping grip on the PLA and the CCP, which some analysts suspected to be yet another reason for the invasion.

Conclusion:

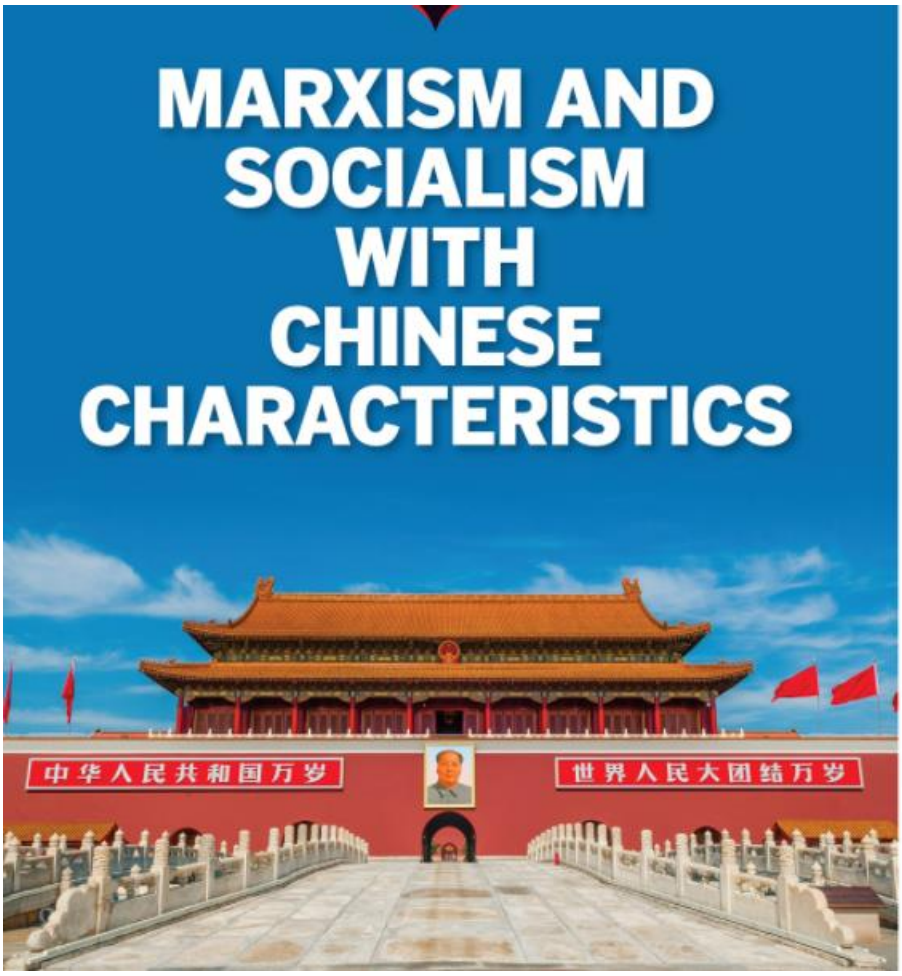
After this brief confrontation, both sides declared victory. Minor conflicts however continued for another decade. Eventually, both sides chose to downplay the

incident as they saw the overriding benefit of future economic cooperation. The normalization of relations between China and the Soviet Union following Mikhail Gorbachev's official visit to China in 1989 (chapter 121 Soviet Split) and the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia in the same year also allayed China's fear that Vietnam was the "linchpin" in the Soviet Union's goal to contain China.

In 1999, the Sino-Vietnamese border disputes were successfully settled by the Treaty of Land Border signed in December. Both sides decided to forget about the sad past and look forward to a brighter future for China-Vietnam ties. Cross-border trade with China since then has brought improvements to the war-torn northern border provinces of Vietnam.

Following the Sino-Vietnam War, the PLA learnt that their organization and tactics were no longer suited for modern warfare. The PLA underwent drastic reforms and military reform was one of Deng Xiaoping Four Modernizations (Chapter 135).

Chapter 139 - Socialism with Chinese Characteristics 中国特色社会主义



Introduction:

Marxism-Leninism was the theoretical system that had been adopted by China. Mao Zedong was the first to deviate from the Soviet model. Subsequent leaders modified the system to suit the period of their governance and they were known by various names: Deng Xiaoping Theory, Three Represents (Jiang Zemin), Scientific Outlook on Development (Hu Jintao), and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Main Story:

During the Mao era, Mao Zedong had felt that the Soviet model was geared towards a revolution by the working class in the city. However, Mao believed that the peasants should be the basis of their revolutionary thinking. A large part of his ideology had to do with land reform which later was subsumed under his collectivization policy.

After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping took over and his idea of Marxism-Leninism was enunciated through his chief economist Yu Guangyuan 于光远, the then CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang and the then acting CCP General Secretary Zhao Ziyang.

Yu Guangyuan

Chinese economist

Hu Yaobang

Former General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party

Zhao Ziyang

Former Premier of the
People's Republic of China

For the first time, the term “with Chinese characteristics” was mentioned when Zhao Ziyang delivered a report called “Advance Along the Road of Socialism with Chinese characteristics.” He wrote that China was a socialist society, but that socialism in China was in its primary stage due to the undeveloped state of the country’s productive forces. During this phase of development, Zhao recommended introducing a planned commodity economy on the basis of public ownership. In line with the same thinking, Economist Yu Guangyuan published an article entitled “Economy in the initial stage of socialism” and speculated that this stage of development would last for at least two decades. During this period, there should be “One Center, Two Basic Points” , i.e. one central focus of the Chinese state on economic development but two ways to fulful it – one by opening up the economy and two by maintaining centralized political control. (This proved to be wise because the freeing of political control together with economic management by the Soviet Union led to its own demise in 1991).

Deng Xiaoping, the architect of the Chinese economic reforms did not believe that the market economy was synonymous with capitalism nor that planning was synonymous with socialism. He believed that both capitalism and socialism need the market economy as well as planning. It was the clever balancing of market forces with careful planning that will produce the best results. As he famously said, “No matter if it is a white cat or a black cat; as long as it can catch mice, it is a good cat.” 不管黑猫白猫，捉到老鼠就是好猫。

The thoughts of Deng Xiaoping were continued by his two protegees, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

When it came to Xi Jinping, a new set of policies and ideas were derived from the writings and speeches of Xi known as Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era 习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想, commonly abbreviated to Xi Jinping Thought.

It is said that Xi helped create this ideology together with his close advisor Wang Huning 王沪宁.

Unlike Deng Xiaoping's economist Yu Guangyuan who mentioned the development of socialism would require "two decades", Xi argued that "the consolidation and development of the socialist system will require its own long period of history…it will require the tireless struggle of generations, up to ten generations."

Xi Jinping was especially concerned with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, citing it as a cautionary tale that China must learn from. An important reason for the demise of the USSR, Xi surmised, was that history of the Soviet Union had been forgotten, the Party had lost control of its leadership position and there were too much internal struggle. "In the end, the Soviet Communist Party, a great party, was scattered, the Soviet Union, a great socialist country, disintegrated. This is a cautionary tale!"

Conclusion:

Xi Jinping's Thought was unanimously affirmed by delegates to the 19th Congress. Xi's ideology was incorporated into the Constitution of the CCP, thus raising Xi above his two most recent predecessors, Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, putting him into the class with Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. One of the outstanding feature of Xi's ideology was the concept of the "Chinese Dream" 中国梦.

Chapter 140 – Tiananmen Square Incident 1989 六四事件

Introduction:

The Tiananmen Square incident, also called June Fourth incident or 6/4 六四, refers to the government crackdown on protesters in Tiananmen Square following a series of protests and demonstrations which was threatening to be China's Arab Spring.

With the chaos of the Cultural Revolution fresh in his mind, paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, brought a rapid end to the protest movement by forceful action.

Main Story:

In May 1985, two months after coming to power, Mikhail Gorbachev delivered a speech in St. Petersburg (then known as Leningrad), in which he publicly criticized the inefficient economic system of the Soviet Union, making him the first Communist leader to do so. This was followed by a February 1986 speech to the Communist Party Congress, in which he expanded upon the need for political and economic restructuring, or perestroika, and called for a new era of transparency and openness, or glasnost.

The developments in the Soviet Union had major ramifications in China. When Gorbachev visited China on 15 May 1989, thousands of student protesters were gathering at Tiananmen Square and the Chinese government had to switch the site of the welcoming ceremony from the square to the airport.

By the Spring of 1989 there was growing sentiment among university students and others in China for political and economic reform. The country had experienced a decade of remarkable economic growth and liberalization, and many Chinese had been exposed to foreign ideas and standards of living. Although the economic advances in China had brought new prosperity to many citizens, it was accompanied by price inflation, inequality and opportunities for corruption by government officials.

Student-led demonstrations calling for more individual rights and freedoms in late 1986 and early 1987 caused hard-liners in the government and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to suppress what they termed “bourgeois liberalism.” One casualty of this tougher stance was Hu Yaobang, who had been the CCP general secretary since 1980 and who had encouraged democratic reforms; in January 1987 he was forced to resign his post.

The catalyst for the chain of events in the Spring of 1989 was the death of Hu Yaobang in mid-April; Hu was transformed into a martyr for the cause of political liberalization. On the day of his funeral (April 22), tens of thousands of students gathered in Tiananmen Square demanding democratic and other reforms. For the next several weeks, students in crowds of varying sizes - eventually joined by a wide variety of individuals seeking political, social, and economic reforms—gathered in the square. The initial government response was to issue stern warnings but take no action against the mounting crowds in the square. Similar demonstrations rose up in a number of other Chinese cities,

notably Shanghai, Nanjing, Xi'an, Changsha, and Chengdu. However, the principal outside media coverage was in Beijing, in part because a large number of Western journalists had gathered there to report on the visit to China by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in mid-May. Shortly after his arrival, a demonstration in Tiananmen Square drew some one million participants and was widely broadcast overseas.

Meanwhile, an intense debate ensued among government and party officials on how to handle the mounting protests. Moderates, such as Zhao Ziyang (Hu Yaobang's successor as party general secretary), advocated negotiating with the demonstrators and offering concessions.

Given a chance to meet top Chinese officials, the student leaders botched it by behaving arrogantly and disrespectfully towards the Chinese leaders right in front of TV cameras. This prompted hard-liners led by Chinese premier Li Peng and supported by paramount elder statesman Deng Xiaoping, to act forcibly to curb the protests.

During the last two weeks of May, martial law was declared in Beijing, and army troops were stationed around the city. However, an attempt by the troops to reach Tiananmen Square was thwarted when protesters flooded the streets and blocked their way. The protesters remained in large numbers in Tiananmen Square, centring themselves around a plaster statue called "Goddess of Democracy,"

By the beginning of June, the police was ready to act on the night of June 4. However, devoid of anti-riot gear and training at that time, tanks and heavily

armed troops advanced toward Tiananmen Square, opening fire on or crushing those who again tried to block their way. By morning the area had been cleared of protesters, though sporadic shootings occurred throughout the day. The military also moved in forcibly against protesters in several other Chinese cities, including Chengdu, but in Shanghai the mayor, Zhu Rongji (later to become the premier of China), was able to negotiate a peaceful settlement.

The most iconic image of the Tiananmen Square Incident is that of the "tank man" who stood in the path of a line of armored tanks to block their advance. This picture brings to mind the courage of Chinese soldiers who, during the Sino-Japanese War and Korean War, strapped their bodies with explosives and set them off, after diving underneath advancing enemy tanks.

In the aftermath of the crackdown, the United States instituted economic and diplomatic sanctions for a time, and many other foreign governments criticized China's handling of the protesters. The Chinese government arrested thousands of suspected dissidents; many of them received prison sentences of varying lengths of time, and a number were executed. However, several dissident leaders managed to escape from China and sought refuge in the West. The disgraced Zhao Ziyang was soon replaced as party general secretary by Jiang Zemin and put under house arrest.

The actual death toll resulting from the incident is never known because of conflicting data provided but it was enough for Western media to label this incident a "massacre." In the years since the incident, the government generally has attempted to suppress references to it. Public commemoration of the incident is officially banned. However, the residents of Hong Kong have held an annual vigil

on the anniversary of the crackdown, even after Hong Kong reverted to Chinese administration.

Conclusion:

The Tiananmen Square Incident is a taboo subject as far as the CCP is concerned. All the more, it created opportunity for China bashers to use it whenever it seemed right. But as far as China is concerned, it is best to have it relegated it to the dustbin of history as the nation concentrates on taking its major strides forward.

Chapter 141 – Special Economic Zones 经济特区

Introduction:

China’s special economic zones (SEZs) refer to various localities where trade and investments are conducted without having to obtain authorization from Beijing. Moreover, tax and business incentives have been introduced into these zones to attract foreign investment and technology.

Main Story:

Deng Xiaoping saw the failure of the centrally planned economy under Mao Zedong. When he effectively took over in 1978, he made it a point to institute drastic economic reforms. He decided to look outward for ideas. He could not have missed looking at a country that has ethnic Chinese in its majority and yet had achieved a level of economic success far greater than that of China. So Deng visited Singapore in November 1978.

Lee Kuan Yew told Deng Xiaoping that if the Singapore Chinese, who were descendants of peasants and coolies, could do well in Singapore, what more the Chinese in China who were descendants of literati and high officials.

In 1980, under the instruction of Deng Xiaoping, four SEZs were created in southeastern China along the coastline. They were Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen (Amoy). The first three were all in Guangdong and the fourth is in Fujian Province. The reason for the choice of these locations was obvious as they were located next to the capitalist centers of Hongkong and Taiwan.

In these locations, not only were the local governments allowed to offer tax incentives to foreign investors without the prior approval of the central government, they were also allowed to develop their own infrastructure as they deem fit. Starting as small towns or fishing villages, these SEZs soon became boomtowns, with rapidly expanding economies and populations. Shenzhen originally had a population of only 30,000. Today, it has almost 13 million.

The Miracle of Shenzhen in China's ...

In 1984, the Chinese government opened another 14 locations along the coast as **“Open Coastal Cities”沿海开放城市**。 They offered the same incentives as the SEZs but the corporate taxes were higher. These cities were Dalian 大连, Qinhuangdao 秦皇岛, Tianjin 天津, Yantai 烟台, Qingdao 青岛, Lianyungang 连云港, Nantong 南通, Shanghai 上海, Ningbo 宁波, Wenzhou 温州, Fuzhou 富州, Guangzhou 广州, Zhanjiang 湛江, and Beihai 北海. In 1985, China appointed **Dr Goh Keng Swee** as their advisor on the development of the SEZs. In the same year, the central government expanded the coastal area by establishing the following open economic zones: the Liaodong Peninsula, Hebei Province, Shandong Peninsula, Yangtze River Delta, Xiamen-Zhangzhou-Quanzhou Triangle in southern Fujian Province Pearl River Delta, and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

In 1988, Hainan Island was made a separate province and also a SEZ. In 1990, the Pudong 浦东 NewArea within the Shanghai municipality also became an SEZ, with policies even more flexible than those of the original four SEZs.

The developments of the SEZs were temporarily disrupted when the Tiananmen Incident erupted in June 1989. Two years later, they were put back on track. At the advance age of 88, Deng Xiaoping went on his momentous **southern inspection tour** 南巡 in February 1992 to give a final push to the reform and opening up of China. While in Zhuhai, Deng Xiaoping said that China should strive to be better than Singapore in social and economic management. It was actually a direct instruction to China's officials to learn from Singapore. Following that, hundreds of officials paid their official visits to Singapore. In that same year (1992), SEZs were also established in some two dozen major cities in inland China.

As the Singapore Government ministries were overwhelmed by visitors from China, Lee Kuan Yew thought of a better solution – Singapore would help China develop an industrial township in Suzhou and also train Chinese officials there.

Today, China has 215 industrial parks at the national level and over 1000 industrial parks at the provincial level. It can be said that the SEZs were the precursors to the industrial parks.

Conclusion:

The SEZs played an important role in China’s economic development as they proved that economic liberalization away from a centrally planned economy contributed to rapid economic growth. They gave birth to the Chinese economic miracle.

Chapter 142 – Jiang Zemin 江泽民

Introduction:

The transfer of power from Deng Xiaoping to Jiang Zemin was China's first peaceful and orderly transfer of power after decades of tumultuous years. It was even more orderly than the transfer of power from Trump to Biden, in the world's foremost democracy.

Jiang Zemin oversaw a China that undertook Deng Xiaoping's capitalist reforms which delivered an explosively growing economy. On the personal side, he appeared the easy going, showy personality, ever ready to burst out into a foreign song in front of overseas dignitaries. He had a reasonable command of the English and Russian languages. His oversized glasses and affable smiles belied the steely persona which qualified him to be the first protege of Deng Xiaoping.

The artistic talents of Chinese leaders ...

Main Story:

Jiang Zemin graduated from Shanghai Jiaotong University with a degree in electronic engineering. Initially working in state-owned factories, he subsequently joined government agencies that oversaw industries. In 1989, after the Tiananmen Incident, he vacated his position as Shanghai mayor to become the General Secretary of the CCP and Chairman of the Central Military Commission. He became President in 1993, taking over from Zhao Ziyang who had been ousted for his support of the student protests in the Tiananmen Incident (chapter 140).

With the death of Deng Xiaoping in February 1997, Jiang Zemin oversaw the return of Hong Kong from the United Kingdom in that same year, and then the return of Macau from Portugal in 1999.

While serving out his term of office, Jiang Zemin had to deal with various tough issues. During his visit to the US in 1997 when Clinton was President, Jiang faced protests from the Tibet Independence Movement supported by some Americans who questioned Jiang on the issues of democracy and freedom. In 1999, the Falun Gong 法轮功 movement posed a threat to the CCP and to China's stability. Jiang initiated a crackdown on Falun Gong and was criticized by the foreign media for human rights abuses. In that same year, the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was bombed by the American-led NATO air force (chapter 147). In 2002, Jiang also had to deal with the Hainan Island Incident (chapter 150).

In 1997, the Asia Financial Crisis ravaged much of Asia. Fortunately, Jiang was assisted by Premier Zhu Rongji 朱镕基 who was shrewd in economic governance. Under their joint leadership, China easily pulled through the crisis and continued to enjoy 8% GCP growth annually.

Other achievements of Jiang included the successful bid by the PRC to join the WTO and Beijing winning the bid to host the 2008 Summer Olympics, the first time China hosted the Olympics.

The Beijing 2008 Olympics

Traditionally, each paramount leader would write his theory encompassing his idea of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. Jiang Zemin's theory was called the Three Represents 三个代表. It aimed to change the CCP into a governmental and more democratic party, reducing the focus on so called "class enemies". Critics would view this as another piece of work adding to Jiang's cult of personality.

In November 2002, at the age of 76, Jiang Zemin retired and handed the reins to the 4G leadership headed by Hu Jintao. However, he retained the chairmanship of the powerful Central Military Commission. This together with his leadership of the "Shanghai Clique" (consisting of 6 of the 9 members of the Standing Committee) made Jiang a very powerful figure despite his retirement. In 2005, at the age of 79, Jiang relinquished his post as chairman of the CMC. Jiang's era had finally come to an end.

Jiang passed away on 30 November 2022 due to leukemia and multiple organ failure.

Regarding his family life, Jiang had two sons, one of whom - Jiang Mianheng 江绵恒- was a Chinese physicist and business executive who founded Grace Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation. He is said to have a role in the Chinese space program.

Jiang's personal life had not been too impeccable as he was rumored to have an affair with a songstress Song Zuying 宋祖英. Song was investigated by the Xi Jinping administration for corruption involving the alleged misuse of public funds in financing her personal musical concerts. Some other Jiang Zemin loyalists also came under investigation for corruption.

Conclusion:

Although Jiang Zemin was the first PRC leader who was not of the Long March generation, he quickly consolidated his position after Tiananmen and achieved a kind of personal power that typified his predecessors. It is believed that he continued to wield massive influence on Chinese politics a decade after his retirement

Some historians noted that Jiang could have got a more positive legacy if not for having overstayed his welcome by remaining as Chairman of the CMC. Nonetheless, no one can deny the fact that during the Jiang Zemin era, China did achieved significant milestones like joining the WTO and hosting the Summer Olympics as well as attaining phenomenal economic growth.

Chapter143 - Three Gorges Dam project 三峡大坝

Introduction:

About a decade ago (2012), China completed the construction of the gigantic Three Gorges Dam spanning the Yangtze River in Yichang 宜昌市, Hubei province. Yichang is the third largest city in Hubei after Xiangyang 襄阳 and the capital, Wuhan 武汉.

The dam is 185 meters high (equivalent to a 60 storey building), more than 2 kilometers long and built at a cost of over US$25 billion. By comparison, the famous Hoover Dam in the US is less than 380m long although it is taller at 221 meters.

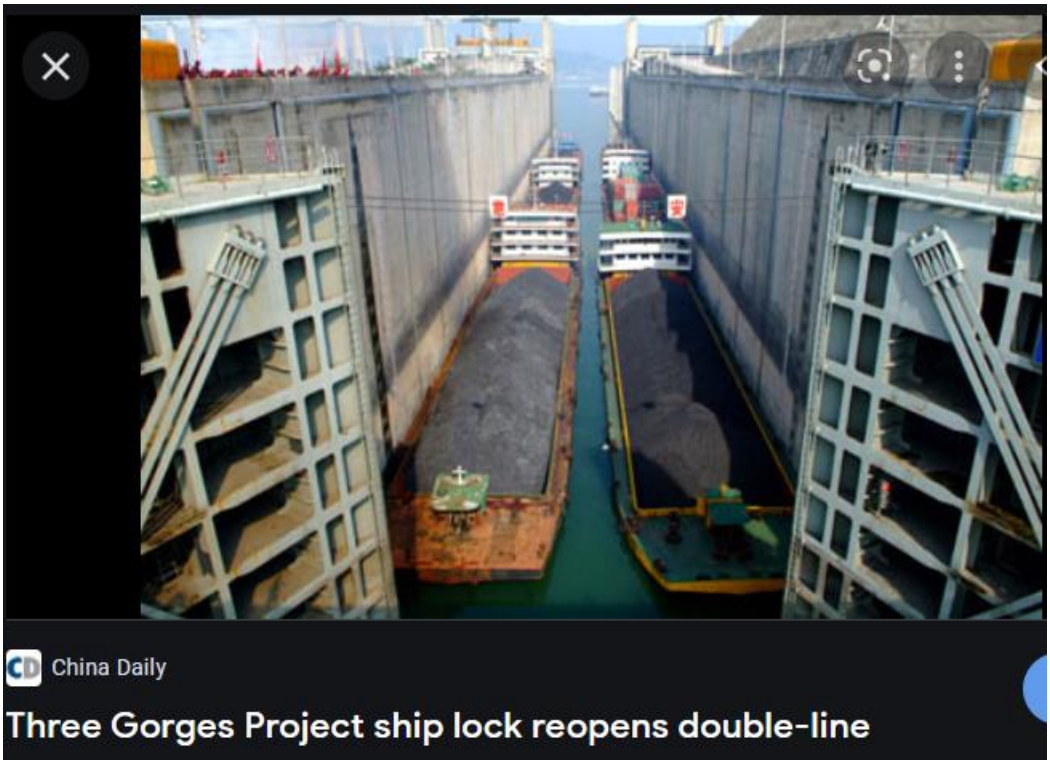
The Three Gorges Dam is the world's biggest hydroelectric facility, but it is not the largest dam in the world as reported by some foreign media which were keen to criticize its impact. Beside producing massive amount of electricity, it also facilitates transport by increasing shipping capacity and helps to control the devastating flooding by the huge Yangtze River.

Main Story:

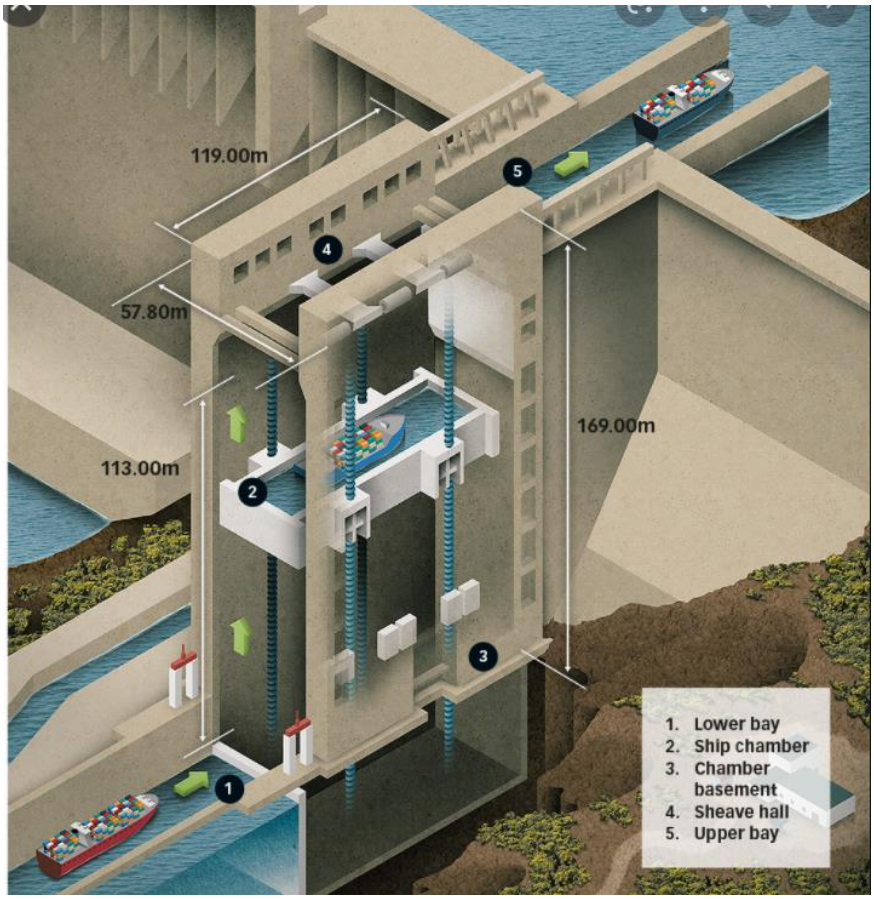
Few people would have thought that the idea for the Three Gorges Dam originally came from Sun Yat-sen way back in 1919 when he wrote the article titled, "A Plan to Development Industry." However, due to the turmoil in China (the Chinese Civil War, the Second Sino-Japanese War, WWII, the Cultural Revolution), the plan was shelved. Construction only started in December 1994.

The Three Gorges Dam has three main purposes, namely flood control, hydroelectric power production and improvement in navigation along the Yangtze River. In terms of energy production, its 34 massive generators produced an amount equivalent to burning many million tons of crude oil or coal annually.

The installation of ship locks increased river shipping from 10 million to 100 million tonnes annually, cutting shipping costs substantially. Moreover, shipping has become much safer as the gorges are notoriously dangerous to navigate.



In addition to canal locks, massive ship lifts are used to transport ships from one level to another. The ship lift can lift ships of up to 3,000 tons.



Despite the many advantages of the Three Gorges Dam, it has been heavily criticized for damages to the environment (including destruction of the habitat of plants and animals), displacement of over 1 million people (regardless of the fact that without the dam, floods caused deaths of 4 million people in 1931), and the high cost of construction (some estimates range from US23 billion to as high as US$37 billion). It is even reported that the massive reservoir holding 42 billion tons of water has slowed the rotation of the earth by 0.06 microseconds.

The Central China Floods of 1931 ...

Conclusion:

Regardless of the controversy surrounding the Three Gorges Dam, the Chinese people are proud of China's biggest construction project of the 20th Century. Many mass weddings take place at the foot of the Three Gorges Dam. The couples were usually blessed with expressions like "May your marriage remain as strong and enduring as the Three Gorges Dam."

100 couples tie the knot at Three ...

Chapter 144 - The Yinhe Incident 银河号事件 1993

Introduction :

In 1993, the US claimed that they had “conclusive evidence” that the China-based container ship Yinhe 银河号(Milky Way) was transporting chemical weapon materials (nerve gas ingredients) to Iran. The US ordered the surrounding Middle Eastern countries to refuse docking rights to the Yinhe, leaving it adrift in the international waters of the Indian Ocean for 24 days.

Eventually, the US discovered that they had made a mistake. However, the US government refused to apologize, stating that the US “had acted in good faith on intelligence.” The Clinton administration accused China of carrying out a false flag operation in order to embarrass Washington.

Main Story:

The Yinhe was a Chinese container ship that ran on a fixed schedule between Tianjin and Kuwait. Its scheduled port visits included Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Jakarta, Dubai and Daman and Diu. It belonged to the China Ocean Shipping Corporation 中远集团.

In late July 1993, the US alleged that a Chinese ship was carrying chemical weapon materials to Abbas Harbor, Iran, citing a ship’s manifest obtained by the

CIA. The US requested that the Yinhe turn back to China, but China refused. At that time, the Yinhe was on its way to Kuwait.

The US sent warships and helicopters into international waters where the Yinhe was located to intercept the vessel. It also threatened to impose sanctions on China.

On 20 August, after being sieged for three weeks at international waters, the ship was allowed to take on fuel, food and water for the crew, after persistent requests from the shipping company. On 28 August, the US and China agreed to an open inspection of the ship at a Saudi Arabian port.

All 782 containers on board were cracked open and inspected by US technicians at the Saudi port of Damman, but no chemical weapon materials were found. Intelligence had stated that two dozens of the containers carried the nerve agent. The only chemical material carried by the ship was ordinary solid paint. On 4 September, the representatives of the Chinese, Saudi and US governments jointly signed a certification that the ship's cargo did not contain any chemical weapon materials.

NO CHEMICAL ARMS ABOARD CHINA SHIP

By Patrick E. Tyler
Sept. 6, 1993

See the article in its original context from September 6, 1993, Section 1, Page 4

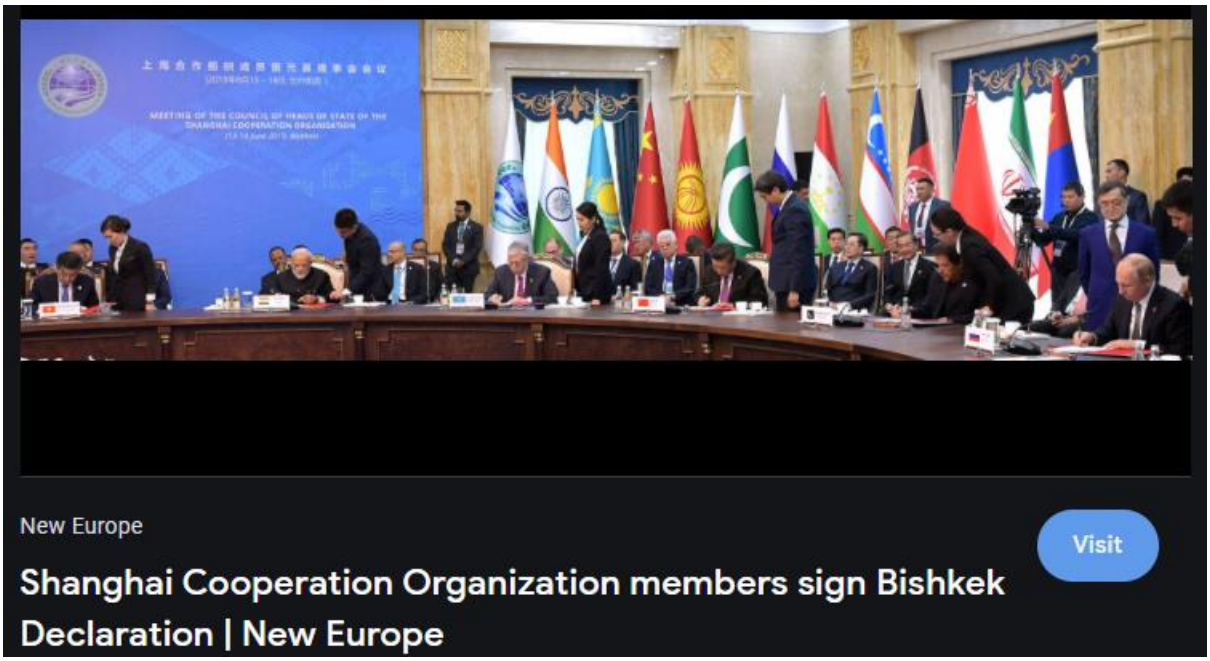
China denounced the “self-styled world cop” behavior by the US and demanded compensation. American officials declined to apologize for the mistake, claiming that the US had acted “in good faith” on intelligence from a number of sources. The US nevertheless thanked China for the “open and forthright” way it had submitted the ship for an inspection.

Conclusion:

The Yinhe incident was an embarrassment to the Clinton administration, which had been engaged in a war of words with Beijing over human rights, arms sales and a hefty trade imbalance. It was also cited by China as a case of international bullying by the US. It had a role in increasing Chinese nationalism.

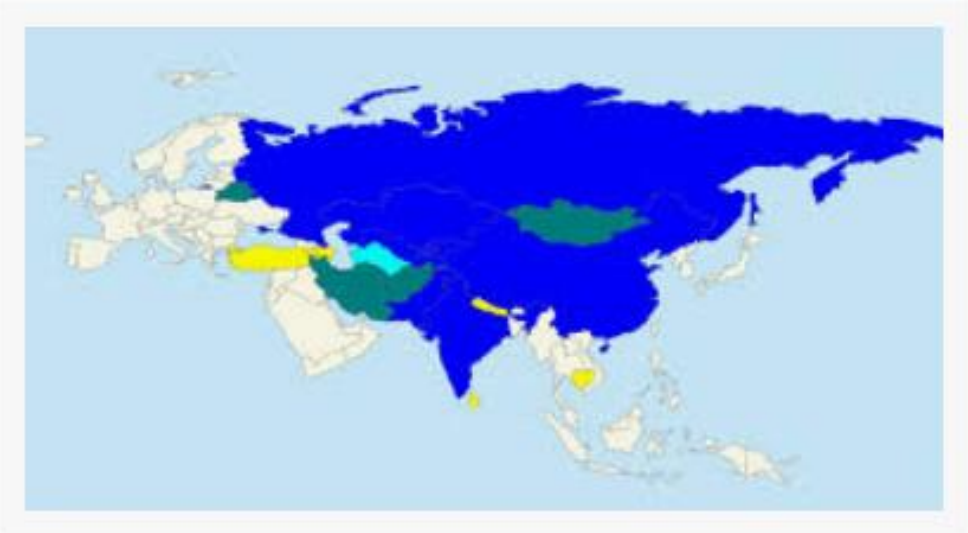
Chapter 145 - The Shanghai Cooperation Organization 上海合作组织

Shanghai Cooperation Organ...



Introduction:

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), also known as the Shanghai Pact is an intergovernmental organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001. It is a political, economic, and security alliance in the Eurasian region. In terms of geographic scope and population, it is the world's largest regional organization. It covers three-fifths of the Eurasian continent, 40% of the world population, and more than 20% of global GDP.



Shanghai Cooperation Organization ...

Main Story:

The SCO currently comprises eight Member States (China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).

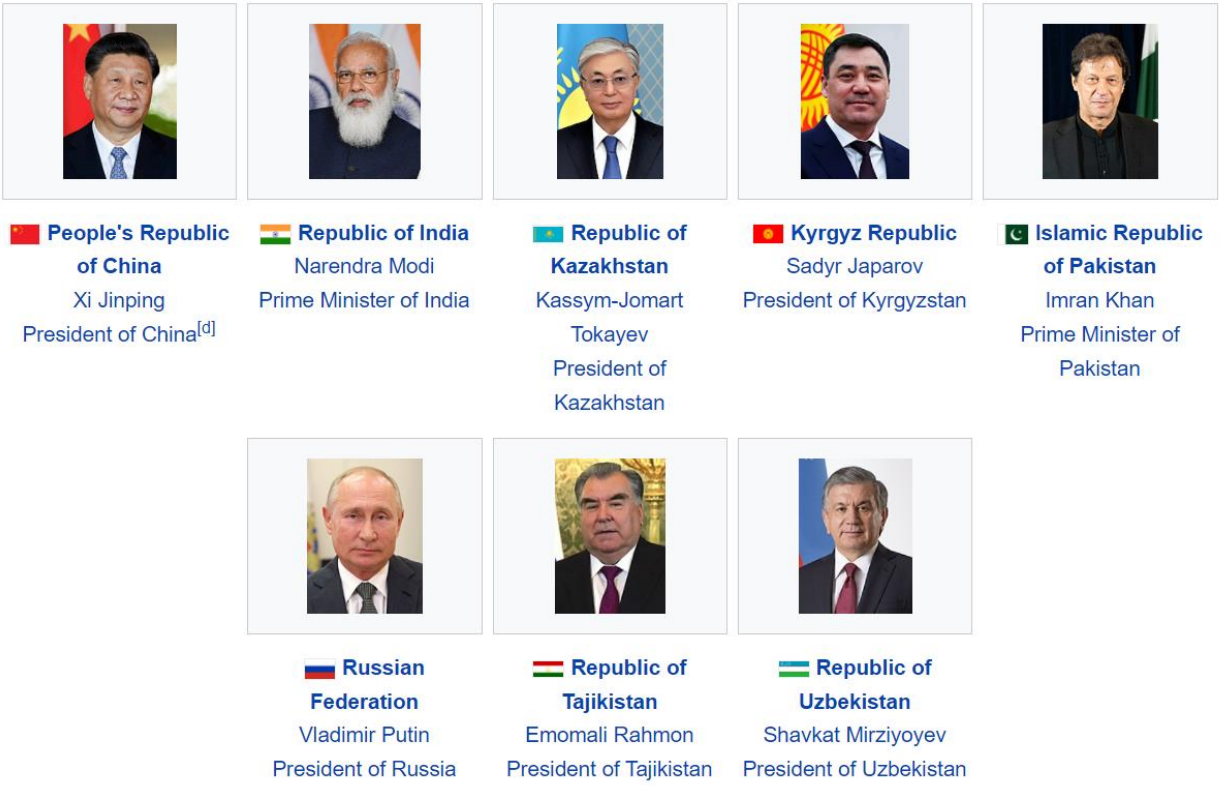
SCO, the Shanghai Cooperation ...

There are four Observer States interested in acceding to full membership (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia) and six "Dialogue Partners" (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey). In 2021, the decision was made to start the accession process of Iran to the SCO as a full member, and Egypt, Qatar as well as Saudi Arabia became dialogue partners.

Since its inception in 2001, the SCO has mainly focused on regional security issues, its fight against regional terrorism, ethnic separatism and religious extremism. To date, the SCO's priorities also include regional development.

The SCO has been an observer in the UN General Assembly since 2005. In April 2010, the UN and SCO Secretariats signed a Joint Declaration on Cooperation. SCO Secretariat has also established partnerships with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in addition to its ongoing cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Office on Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).
The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), as well as UNRCCA (United Nations Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia) maintain regular contacts with the SCO officials. The cooperation activities focus on security developments in the region and key issues related to counterterrorism and prevention of violent extremism. Since 2017, DPPA has deployed a Liaison Officer to the SCO in Beijing.

The SCO is governed by the Heads of State Council, its supreme decision-making body, which meets once a year. Current leaders of SCO member states, forming the Council of Heads of State, are:



The SCO is the successor to the Shanghai Five, a mutual security agreement formed in 1996 between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. The SCO has deeper political and economic cooperation as compared to the Shanghai Five.

The SCO is primarily centered on security-related concerns, often describing the main threats it confronts as being terrorism, separatism and extremism. Military exercises are regularly conducted among member states and includes intelligence sharing.

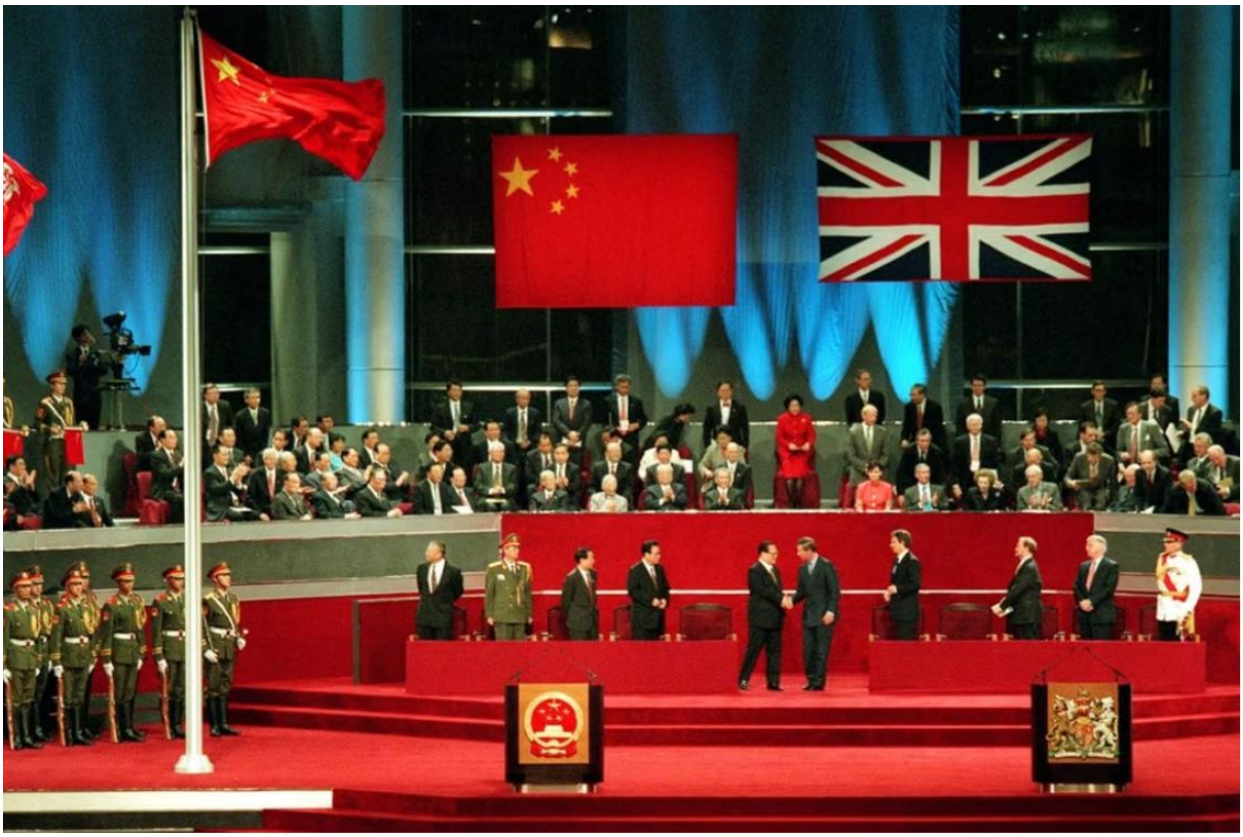
Shanghai Cooperation Organisation ...

Cyberwarfare is also a matter of concern. Economic, cultural, educational, scientific, technological and humanitarian cooperation are also included on their agenda.

Conclusion:

The US applied for observer status in the SCO, but was rejected in 2005.
It appears that the SCO intends to counterbalance the activities of the US and NATO in Central Asia.

Chapter 146 – Handover of Hong Kong 香港回归 1997



Jiang Zemin shakes hands with Charles, Prince of Wales at the handover ceremony for Hong Kong at midnight on June 30, 1997. Photo: Handout

Introduction:

It was the end of an era. At midnight on 1 July 1997, the flag of the United Kingdom was lowered over Hong Kong, after 156 years of British rule. Hong Kong reverted back to Chinese rule in a ceremony attended by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Prince Charles of Wales, Chinese President Jiang Zemin and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The Chief Executive of the new Hong Kong government, Tung Chee Hwa, ruled the island based on Deng Xiaoping's policy of "one country, two systems."

Hong Kong was ceded to the British in 1842 by the Qing dynasty through the Treaty of Nanjing which ended the First Opium War. In 1860, after winning the Second Opium War, Britain forced the Qing Empire to cede Kowloon Peninsular and Stonecutters Island (Following land reclamation, this island is now attached to

the Kowloon Peninsula.) Then in 1898, Britain leased the New Territories for 99 years. The 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration set the conditions for the transfer of Hong Kong back to Chinese rule under a principle of “one country, two systems”, the brainchild of Deng Xiaoping.

British Crown Colony in 1842 ...

Main Story:

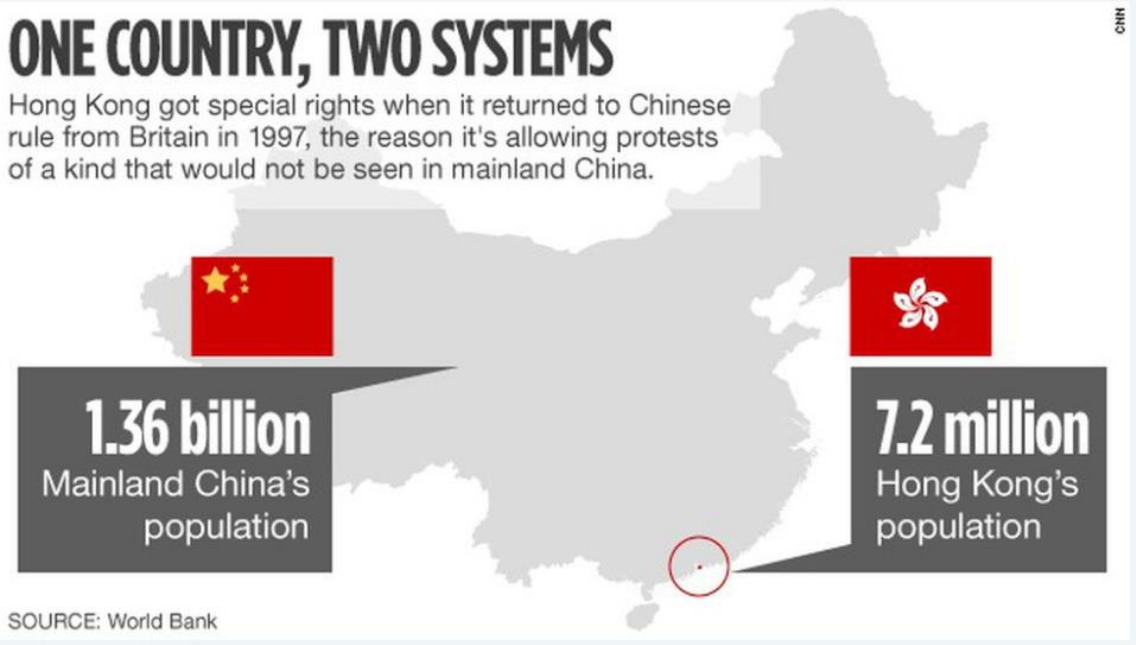
The 99 year lease contained in the 1898 Treaty (the Second Convention of Peking) applied to the New Territories but not to Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. However, it was not possible to separate the New Territories from the rest of Hong Kong. Margaret Thatcher had wanted to return only the New Territories but not Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. Deng Xiaoping would not accept a treaty that had been signed under the barrel of the gun. He threatened to forcefully seize Hong Kong if the British refused to return all the three components of Hong Kong. Deng had remarked that the British Empire was no longer the great power that it once was during the time of the Qing dynasty. It was already “a spent force.” The real prospect of a seizure by force by a once humiliated China caused the Hang Seng Index to go into a drastic free-fall and forced the British to adopt a more conciliatory attitude.

Lengthy discussions ensued. In 1984, British PM Margaret Thatcher and China's premier Zhao Ziyang signed the Sino-British Joint Declaration, agreeing that China would give Hong Kong some political and social autonomy through a "one country, two systems" policy for a 50-year period. This 一国两制 system for 50 years was more palatable to the British than simply returning all of Hong Kong to China.

The handover was not so smooth because of the last governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten. Unlike his predecessors, Patten was not a diplomat, but a career politician and a former MP. Just before the hand over, he deliberately introduced democratic reforms, which made it more difficult for the PRC to control Hong Kong.

British hong kong, Chris patten ...

After the handover, China gradually curbed some of the democratic processes introduced by Chris Patten, which Hong Kong never had during its earlier rule by the British. Starting in 2014, elections were conducted using a list of candidates vetted by Beijing. That and other Chinese policies, like a recent attempt to allow extradition to the mainland, have led to mass protests, strained British-Chinese diplomatic relations, and led to accusations that China is eroding human rights in Hong Kong.



Conclusion:

In1997, Hong Kong had a population of 6.5 million, which constituted 67% of the total population of all British Dependent Territories at the time. Moreover, with its wealth, Hong Kong was the last significant colonial territory of the British Empire. Its handover therefore marked the end of British colonial prestige in the world and the definitive end of the British Empire.

The handover still has another phase ahead: the expiration of the Basic Laws in 2047. After that, the "one country, two systems" policy technically will not apply anymore. Meanwhile, Chinese influence has increased after the passing of the 2020 Hong Kong national security law in response to the destabilizing protests in Hong Kong. If developments in major Chinese cities are any clue, it may actually be good for Hong Kong.

Chapter 147 - US bombs Chinese embassy in Belgrade, 1999

Introduction:

On the night of 7 May 1999, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was “accidentally” bombed by an American B-2 bomber, killing three Chinese journalists. The bombing was part of airstrikes on Belgrade by U.S.-led NATO forces operating against Yugoslavia during the Kosovo War.

The Kosovo War (1998-1999) was fought between forces of The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro), which controlled Kosovo before the war, and the Kosovo Albanian rebels (Kosovo Liberation Army). The conflict

ended after NATO intervened (without UN authorization) and forced the Yugoslav forces to leave Kosovo. In 2003, FRY broke up into Serbia and Montenegro. Kosovo proclaimed its independence from Serbia in 2008.

Main Story:

China never accepted the U.S. explanation that the bombing was a mistake. It was widely believed that the Americans had deliberately targeted the embassy thinking that the Chinese journalists were actually intelligence agents, providing intelligence to the Serbian army. Chinese President Jiang Zemin stressed that the bomber could not have made a mistake as it dropped GPS-guided precision bombs accurate to 13 meters.

US investigations claimed that the plane attacked the wrong target because of an outdated map. When it was subsequently revealed that the CIA indeed had the proper maps, six CIA officers were reprimanded and one was fired.

Following the incident, tens of thousands of Chinese student protesters gathered in front of the US Embassy in Beijing. They threw plastic bottles of paint turning the building yellow, red and blue. The embassy's front windows were also shattered by rocks.

Peking University had played a central role during the 1989 Tiananmen Square prorests for democracy. This time, the outburst of patriotism was directed against the U.S. Student protesters carried banners with slogans condemning the bullying tactics of the U.S.

For a week, Jiang Zemin declined phone calls from President Clinton, eventually accepting a 30-minute apology call in which Clinton expressed “regret” over the incident. Jiang had waited for the Politburo to gather the necessary information and reach a decision about China’s responses.

Eventually, the US made a “voluntary humanitarian payment” of US$4.5m to the families of the three killed Chinese journalists and 20 others who were injured. They also paid $28m in compensation for damages to the Chinese Embassy whereas China paid $2.87 m for damages inflicted on the US embassy and other diplomatic facilities in China.

Conclusion:

The Chinese has never forgotten this part of its history. Within days of the heated US-China diplomatic exchange in Alaska, senior officials from both countries were flying around the world, bolstering ties with various nations. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi left on a six-nation tour of the Middle East. But it was Defense Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe 微风和, through a carefully chosen itinerary, who sent

the strongest message. Gen. Wei went to Belgrade and met with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. After inspecting Serbian troops and thanking Serbia for respecting China's "core interests," Wei told Vucic that he had made a trip to a special place earlier in the day (see picture below.)

Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe on March 26 visits the site of the country's embassy in Belgrade that was bombed by NATO in 1999 during operations against Yugoslavia. Three Chinese journalists died in the bombing. (Photo courtesy of the Chinese Ministry of National Defense)

Chapter 148 – Macao Reverts to Chinese rule 1999 澳门回归

Introduction:

On the stroke of midnight on 20 December 1999, China raised its red flag over Macao (or Macau in Portuguese), ending 442 years of Portuguese rule and erasing the last of the foreign enclaves that once dotted the Chinese coastline.

Main Story:

As in the case of Hong Kong, Macao was returned to China under the “one country, two systems” formula propounded by Deng Xiaoping. The Macau Special Administrative Region would enjoy a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defense affairs. Macao, with a population of 425,000, felt more like a colony than Hong Kong did. While Hong Kong had torn down Victorian buildings to make way for new development, Macao lingers in the past. Its narrow alleys and cobblestone streets are still lined by old Mediterranean-style buildings.

Macao's "smooth transition" towards Chinese rule contrasted with Hong Kong's rough transition (chapter 146). While Britain was reluctant to see the jewel of its shrinking empire returned to China, Portugal was anxious to see Macao go. In fact, it had been trying to give the peninsula back since the mid-1970s. In 1974, Portugal's dictatorship was toppled by army officers who had wanted to give up all the country's old colonies.

Macao and Hong Kong have significantly different histories. In contrast to Hong Kong, which Britain won from China after the second Opium War, Macao was given more willingly to the Portuguese. As early as 1516 during the Ming dynasty, Portuguese traders began stopping in Macao on their way to Japan. Portugal asked for, and was granted, permission by the Qing dynasty to set up an outpost on Macao. China, however, did not relinquish sovereignty over the port.

After the Second Opium War, the Portuguese government, along with the British, signed the 1887 Sino-Portuguese Treaty of Peking that gave Portugal perpetual colonial rights to Macau on the condition that Portugal would cooperate in efforts to end the smuggling of opium.

Macao was also much more of a Chinese place in a way. Half the population of Macao came from China in the 20 years prior to the handover. Overrun by the triads, Macao welcomed the strong hand of the Beijing central government in running the place.

The handover event was somewhat marred by the Falun Gong when 30 cult members appeared in the morning to practice the meditation exercises which Jiang Zemin said was a mortal threat to the Chinese nation.
The Falun Gong demonstration was broken up in a public park opposite the Hotel Lisboa, the centre of the gambling monopoly run by the enigmatic Dr Stanley Ho.

More than 500 PRC soldiers crossed into Macao. Although the deployment of troops was not provided for in the Sino-Portuguese agreement, most Macao residents approved in the hope that they would quell the recent wave of triad violence.

In the late afternoon of that day, the Portuguese governor, Rocha Vieira, presided over the lowering of his country's flag. At midnight, the Chinese flag was raised.

Conclusion:

Like Hong Kong, a number of people left Macao worried about the transformation from European administration to Communist Party rule. However, today no one denies that Macao has been prosperous and stable after its return to China under the “one country, two systems”. The development of tourism and casinos was a major factor in the rapid development of the economy of Macau.

And just like Hong Kong, the transfer of sovereignty of Macau to China marked the end of the Portuguese Empire and its decolonization process and also the end of European imperialism in China and Asia.

Chapter 149 - Hainan Island Incident 海南岛事件

Introduction:

On 1 April 2002, just months before the 9/11 attacks gripped the US, a US Navy spy plane (EP-3) collided mid-air with a Chinese J-8 interceptor fighter jet just miles off the coast of Hainan Island, touching off a tense international showdown.

The EP-3 that had taken off from its base in Okinawa, Japan, was operating about 110 km away from Hainan when it was intercepted by two J-8 fighters. One J-8 fighter jet piloted by Lt Cdr Wang Wei cut it a little too close to the spy plane and the collision occurred. The Chinese fighter jet disintegrated into two and the pilot was never found. The Spy plane made an emergency landing in Hainan and the 24 crew members were detained.

EP-3 Spy plane

J-8 fighter jet

Main Story:

The South China Sea is one of the most strategically sensitive areas in the world. The US routinely carries out missions of intelligence and other patrols in the area in the name of "freedom of navigation." The PRC does not agree on the legality of the overflights by US naval aircraft over the area.

Hainan Island houses a large signals intelligence facility that tracks civil and military activity in the area and monitors traffic from commercial communications satellites. The US has long kept the island under surveillance.

On the day of the incident, the US spy plane was flying at 6,700m and 180 knots (210 mph), about 110 km away from the island. Two Chinese J-8s approached the spy plane. One of the J-8s piloted by 33-year-old **Wang Wei** 王伟 made two close passes to the EP-3. On the third pass, it collided with the larger aircraft. The J-8 broke into two pieces. The spy plane was only crippled (its radar antenna dome, left aileron (a movable airfoil on an airplane wing that acts like a rudder on a ship) and one of its propellers were badly damaged). It had to make an emergency albeit unauthorized landing on Hainan.

For the next 26 minutes, the crew of the EP-3 carried out an emergency plan which included destroying sensitive items on board the aircraft, such as electronic equipment related to intelligence-gathering, documents and data. The crew had not been formally trained on how to destroy sensitive documents and equipment, and so improvised. Beside knocking on sensitive equipment, they poured coffee into disk drives and motherboards.

Lt. Cdr. Wang was seen to eject after the collision, but the Pentagon said that the damage to the underside of the EP-3 could mean that the cockpit of the Chinese fighter jet was crushed, making it impossible Wang to survive. Wang's body was never recovered, and he was presumed dead.

Area of the collision in the South China Sea

Both sides disputed the cause of the collision. The U.S. government stated that the Chinese jet bumped the wing of the larger, slower, and less maneuverable EP-3. One US comedian nicknamed Wang Wei as “wrong way.” The Chinese government stated that the American aircraft "veered at a wide angle towards the Chinese", in the process ramming the J-8.

For 15 minutes after landing, the EP-3 crew continued to destroy sensitive items and data on board the aircraft. After they had disembarked from the aircraft, they were taken to a military barracks at Lingshui 陵水 where they were interrogated but generally treated well. They gradually developed good relations with their guards, with one guard inquiring of them the lyrics for the song "Hotel California" by the Eagles.

The 24 crew members (21 men and 3 women) were detained in total 10 days, shortly after the U.S. issued the "letter of the two sorries" to the Chinese.
The "Letter of the two sorries" was the letter delivered by the United States Ambassador Joseph Prueher to Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan of the People's Republic of China to defuse the incident. The delivery of the letter led to the release of the U.S. crew from Chinese custody, as well as the eventual return of the disassembled aircraft.

The letter stated that the United States was "very sorry" for the death of Chinese pilot Wang Wei (王伟), and was "very sorry" the aircraft entered China's airspace and that its landing did not have "verbal clearance". The United States stated that it

was "not a letter of apology," as some state-run Chinese media outlets characterized it at the time, but "an expression of regret and sorrow". The exact phrasing of this document was intentionally ambiguous and allowed both countries to save face while defusing a potentially volatile situation.

Aircrew of the US EP-3 line-up along a red brick walkway upon arrival 12 April 2001 at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. Photo: Ben Margot/AFP/Getty Images

For more than a decade, US officials had refused to say what secret China might had gleaned from the plane. However, in 2013, a comprehensive Navy-NSA report completed three months after the collision was among other documents exposed by NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden. It revealed extensive details about the incident.

The crew was only partially successful in their destruction of classified material, and some of the material they failed to destroy included cryptographic keys, signals intelligence manuals, and the names of National Security Agency employees. Some of the captured computers contained detailed information for processing Pro Forma communications from North Korea, Russia, Vietnam, China and other countries. The plane also carried information on the emitter parameters for U.S.-allied radar systems worldwide. The fact that the United States could track PLAN submarines (PLA Navy submarines) via signal transmission was also revealed to China.

The crew of the EP-3 was released on April 11, 2001, and returned to their base at Whidbey Island via Honolulu, Hawaii, where they were subject to two days of intense debriefings, followed by a heroes' welcome.

The pilot, Lt. Shane Osborn, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for "heroism and extraordinary achievement" in flight. After the Snowden report and his failed bid for a US Senate seat in Nebraska in 2014, Osborn was attacked by critics who had thought that he should have ditched the plane and its sensitive equipment in the sea, or even land the plane in Vietnam, rather than land it in enemy territory. The Chinese military had boarded the EP-3 and thoroughly stripped and examined the aircraft's equipment.

The J-8 pilot, Lt. Cdr. Wang Wei, was posthumously honored in China as a "Guardian of Territorial Airspace and Waters".

Fighter pilot Wang Wei was killed because his parachute did not open in time as he tried to escape his aircraft, according to military sources.
Photo: Baidu

His widow received a personal letter of condolence from President George W. Bush.

The disassembled aircraft was released on July 3, 2001, and was returned to the United States by two large Russian military transport aircraft, the Antonov 124.

In addition to paying for the dismantling and shipping of the EP-3, the United States paid for the 11 days of food and lodging supplied by the Chinese government to the aircraft's crew, in the amount ofUS$34,567.89. The Chinese had demanded one million dollars compensation from the U.S. for the lost J-8 and their pilot, but this was declined.

Conclusion:

One positive outcome from the incident was the consensus between the US and China to strengthen crisis management and how to handle aircraft interactions in the region. In November 2014, the US and China adopted a memorandum to regulate the “safety of air and maritime encounters,” after a dangerous near-miss event occurred in August that year between a Chinese fighter jet and a US Navy P-8 anti-submarine warfare aircraft.

Encounters in the region had become safer in the wake of the 2014 agreement.

Chapter 150 – Admission to WTO, December 2001

Introduction:

When China joined the WTO, it agreed to considerably harsher conditions than other developing countries. Its service sector was considerably liberalized and foreign investment was allowed. Its restrictions on retail, wholesale and distribution ended. Banking, financial services, insurance and telecommunications in China were also opened up to foreign investment. Furthermore, China had to deal with certain concerns linked to transparency and intellectual property.

Main Story:

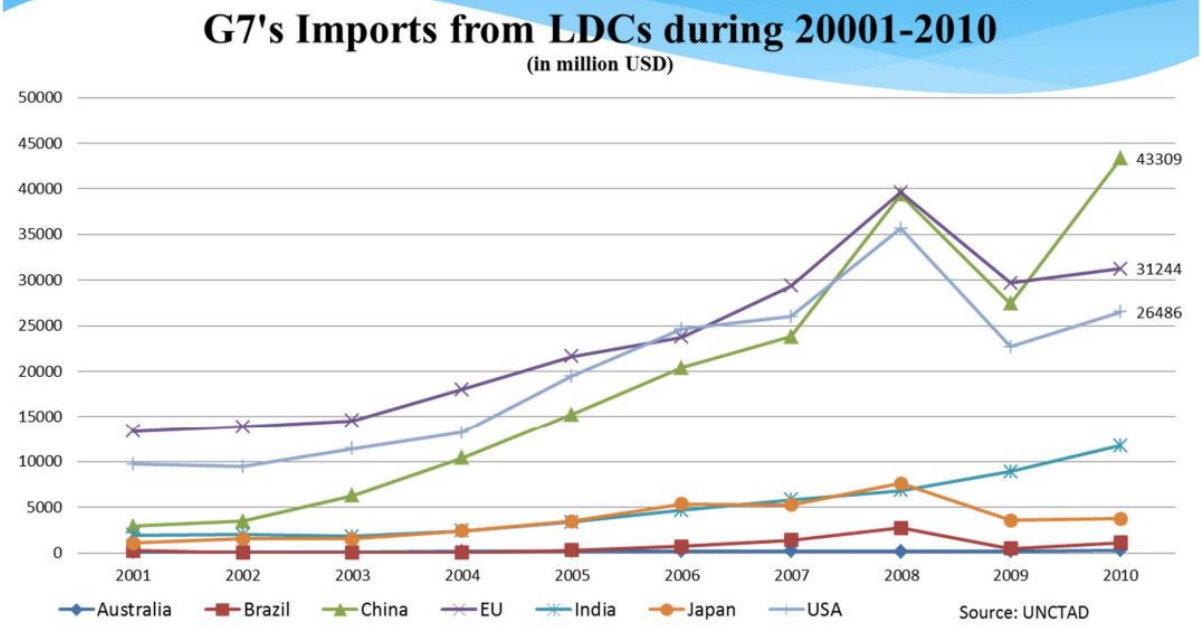
China became a member of the WTO on 11 December 2001, three months after the September 11 attack on the US World Trade Center. Relations between China and

the US which cooled during the Clinton era (over the variety of issues such as the 1999 US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, see chapter 147) began to warm under George W. Bush who was focusing his energies on the War On Terror.

China actually gained observer status with GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in 1986 after it began to open its economy. China shifted from state planning towards private enterprise after the change of premiership from Li Peng to Zhu Rongji, the latter of whom strongly believed that China needed deeper economic restructuring. This restructuring, which had been happening since the 1980s, included crackdowns on corruption and the estblishment of chambers of commerce.

At the Tenth Anniversary of China's Accession to the WTO in 2010, China presented a stirling report card summarized as follows:

China's Contribution (II)



China's Contribution (III)

* **First Largest trading partner of:** Australia, Chile, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong China, Malaysia, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, Saudi Arabia

* **Second largest trading partner of:** Argentina, Canada, European Union, India, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, United States

* **Third largest trading partner of:** Turkey, Germany, Italy

Conclusion:

China's accession to the WTO has helped both the Chinese and the world economy. China's accession resulted in an astounding growth of its exports, and a reduction in tariffs both on imports into China and tariffs placed on Chinese products.

In February 2022, the Biden Administration however concluded that "China has not moved to embrace the market-oriented principles on which the WTO and its rules are based, despite the representations that it made when it joined 20 years ago. China has instead retained and expanded its state-led, non-market approach to the economy and trade."

Chapter 151 – Hu Jintao 胡景涛 （2003-2013）

Introduction:

At the age of 60, Hu Jintao was elected President of the PRC on 15 March 2003 but he only took over the post of the country's top military position as chairman of the Central Military Commision from 78 year-old Jiang Zemin 江泽民 in 2004. He thus became paramount leader of China from 2004 to 2012.

His success in managing the volatile situation in Tibet brought him to power. Along with Premier Wen Jiabao 温家宝, Hu presided over nearly a decade of consistent economic growth and development that cemented China as a major world power.

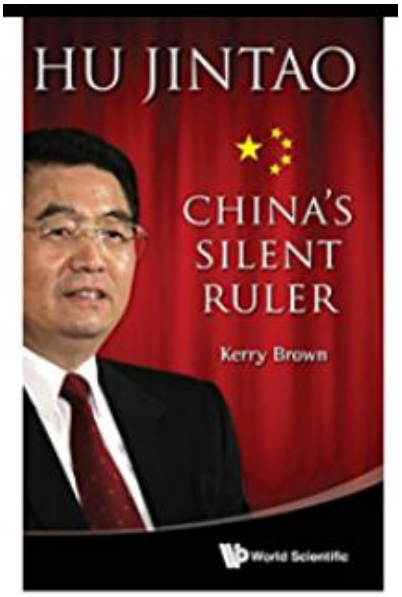
Main Story:

A Han Chinese, Hu Jintao was a native of Jixi 计息, Anhui 安徽 province. He joined the Communist Party after graduating from Tsinghua University where he studied water conservancy engineering.

By the time Hu became President of the PRC, Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 and his anointed successor, Jiang Zemin, had radically reformed the opened up the Chinese economy. For a time, it appeared that Hu remained under the shadow of Jiang Zemin who had a penchant to remain powerful and influential.

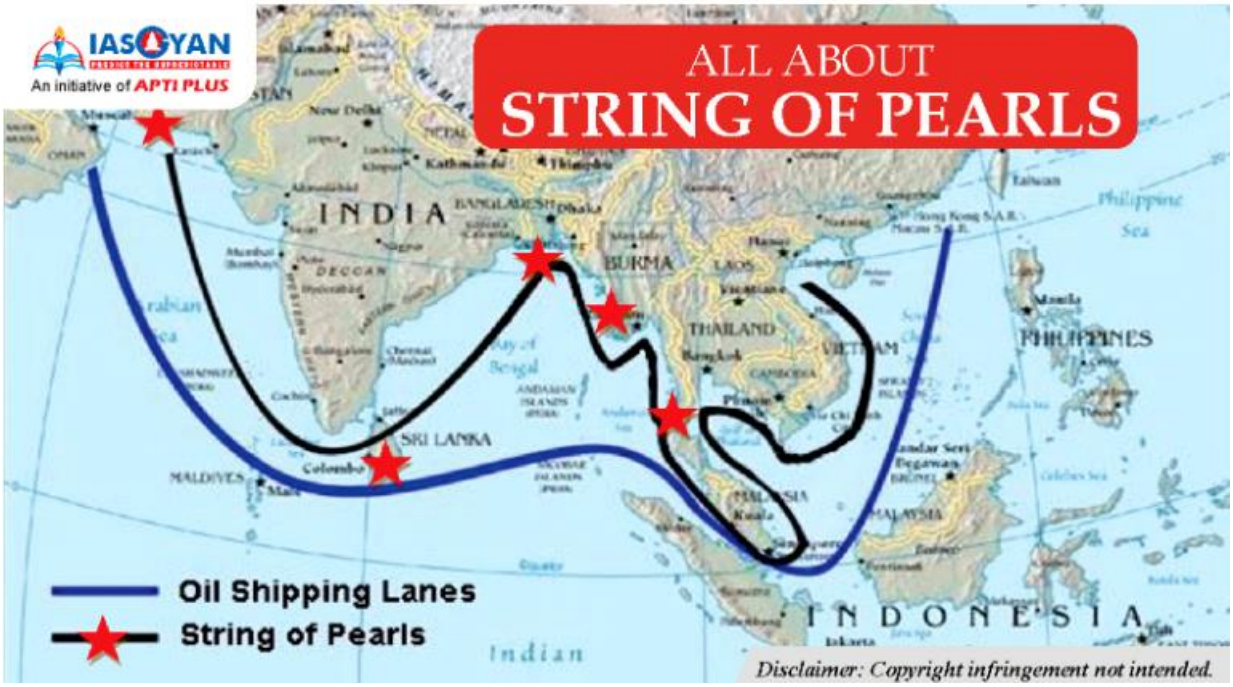
Hu was alarmed by the color revolutions in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East (the Arab Spring). He focused on internal security matters, thus giving the internal security czar, Zhou Yongkang 周永康, the opportunity to amass tremendous power. As we all know, Zhou Yongkang was one of the tigers targeted by Xi Jinping 习近平 in his anti-corruption drive.

Hu Jintao appeared to be the quiet, reserved leader who some Western media and analysts referred to having the look of a middle manager. He also earned the sobriquet “China’s Silent Ruler.”



Little did they know that it was Hu Jintao who set the stage for Xi Jinping's aggressive international diplomacy and accelerated military modernization program.

He announced new historic missions by the Chinese military to protect the country's growing overseas commercial interest. The "String of Pearls" strategy originated from Hu when China developed a network of logistical hubs, ports and naval facilities in the Indian Ocean to protect its energy and other supplies.



Hu also developed a precursor to Xi's Belt and Road initiatives, asking Chinese state-owned enterprises to scavenge the earth for commodities and investments in overseas companies.

China's Silk road reach throughout the world.

Belt And Road Initiative, China's Great Game

Under Hu, China passed an anti-secession law which allowed China to go to war with Taiwan should the island declare its independence. Early in his presidency, Hu faced a pro-independence counterpart in Taiwan, President Chen Shui-bian 陈水扁.

Anti-Secession' Law peace protest ...
taipeitimes.com

Hu pursued a vigorous policy of isolating Taiwan diplomatically. He increased contacts with the Kuomintang, its erstwhile foe in the Chinese Civil War. The contacts culminated in the historic meeting between Hu and Lien Chan 联产 in 2005.

HISTORIC MOMENT: Hu, Lien meet in Beijing

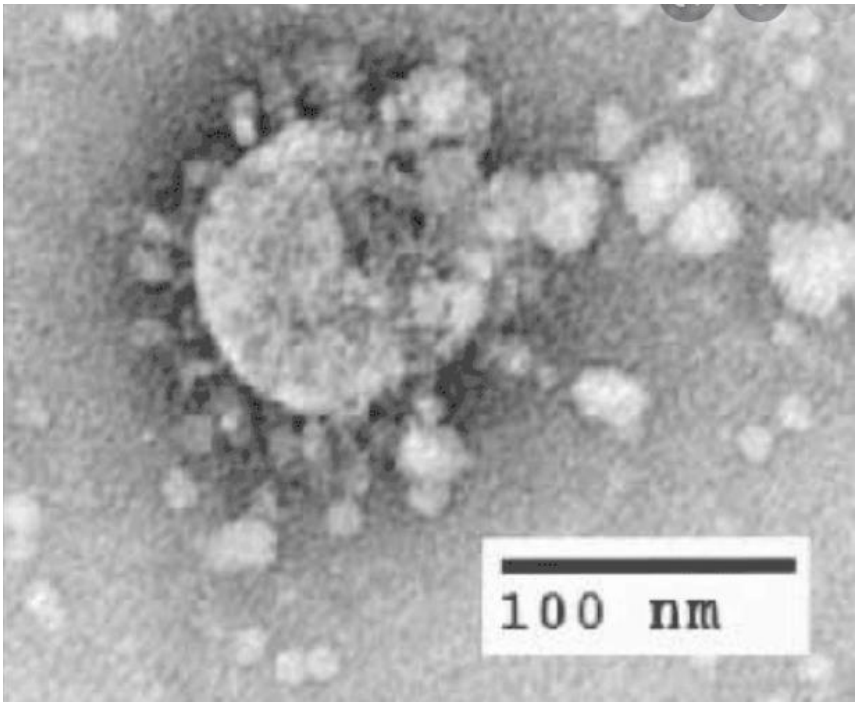
China also provocatively shot down one of its own old satellites to show-case its anti-satellite missile capability. In the South China Sea, Hu instructed the Chinese Navy to send a task force to circle the entire sea, beginning the now-regular pattern of cutting through the Japanese archipelago and the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and the Philippines. In the Spratly Islands dispute with the Philippines, China effectively controlled the Scarborough Shoal by the end of Hu's term.

Conclusion:

Hu's tenure as President of the PRC was characterized by collective leadership and consensus-based rule. His modest and reserved leadership style belies the fact that many of Xi Jinping's policies and programs that we see today, such as the Belt and Road Initiative, exertion of China's rights over the South China Sea and even the term "Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation" were actually started during Hu Jintao's tenure.

Throughout Hu's tenure, China greatly increased its influence in Africa, Latin America, and other developing regions.

Chapter 152 - SARS 萨斯病毒 Outbreak 2003



Introduction:

SARS stand for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. In November 2002, the SARS outbreak in China infected 5,000 and killed 349, mostly in Beijing and Guangzhou. Eight months later, it spread to other parts of Asia and even America and Europe. Worldwide, over 8000 were infected from 29 countries and resulted in 774 deaths.

FILE PHOTO: A nurse wearing protective gear walks outside a Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Clinic (SARS) in suburban Toronto, April 24, 2003. REUTERS/Mike Cassese/File Photo

Main Story:

In mid-November 2002, a “strange disease” was detected in Foshan 佛山, a city southwest of Guangzhou in Guangdong province. It spread to Heyuan 河源 and Zhongshan 中山 in Guangdong. A team of health experts from the Ministry of Health dispatched to Zhongshan completed an investigation report on the unknown disease. The report was marked “top secret”. Thus Guangzhou’s health authority could not discuss it with other health departments in China.

SARS: Chronology of the Epidemic

There was widespread speculation about this "deadly flu" spreading via SMS on mobile phones in Guangzhou. Some said it was bird flu and others said it was anthrax. Soon the local internet sites began discussing this new disease. Guangzhou pharmacy shelves were cleared of antibiotics and flu medications. Even vinegars were sold out. Panic spread to other provinces.

Feb 11 - Guangdong health officials finally broke the silence. However, in a press conference, the disease was downplayed. News blackout continued during the run-up to the National People's Congress in March. The government reported to WHO in early April.

SARS was not simply a public health problem. It was the most severe socio-political crisis for the Chinese leadership since the 1989 Tiananmen incident. The outbreak fueled fears that the Chinese economy was headed for a severe downturn. Premier Wen Jiaobao declared that "China's national interest and international image are at stake."

In the weeks that followed, the Chinese government launched a crusade against SARS, effectively bringing the disease under control in late June and eliminating all known cases by mid-August.

In respect of Singapore, the patient with the index case of SARS was a 23year-old Chinese Singaporean who had stayed on the 9th floor of a hotel in HK during a

vacation. She was infected by a physician from Southern China who stayed on the same floor. She subsequently infected others in Singapore when she returned and sneezed in a lift.

Conclusion:

While there was initial government decision to withhold information from the public, the subsequent dramatic shift in government policy and ability to contain the spread of SARS in a relatively short period sheds light on the government's pattern of crisis management which was repeated when Covid-19 struck in 2019.

In fairness, any nation in a similar situation would face the dilemma of weighing public health protection vs the equally important social and economic stability. In the initial phase when there was little knowledge about the disease and its mode of transmission, there is always a tendency to stand back and assess the situation before making any public announcement in order to avoid a panic.

In 2017, a Chinese scientist traced the virus to cave-dwelling horseshoe bats in a remote cave in Yunnan province. In Dec 2019, another strain of SARS-CoV was identified, named Covid-19 新型冠状病毒.

Bats Confirmed As Source Of SARS ...
asianscientist.com

Chapter 153 – China’s Space Program Overview

Introduction:

China’s Space Program had its humble beginning in the 1950s when China developed its first ballistic missile. This was followed by the development of the Long March 长征 rockets. China used the Long March 1 rocket to launch its first satellite, Dong Fang Hong 1 (The East is Red) 东方红 into low Earth orbit in April 1970, becoming the fifth nation to achieve independent launch capability.

Dongfanghong 1, China's first satellite ...

Main Story:

After the US Space Shuttle Challenger met with a fatal accident in 1986 (leading to the death of 7 crew members aboard), a growing commercial backlog gave China the chance to enter the international launch market.

1986 Space Shuttle Challenger disaster ...

Even US satellites were launched on Chinese rockets. Eventually, there was growing concern in the US that US technology was being transferred to improve the design of Chinese rockets and ballistic missiles. In 1998, the US State Department stopped approving any satellite export licenses to China.

In 1999, China launched its first uncrewed Shenzhou 神舟 spacecraft on a Long March rocket. Its crewed space program began in 2003 with Shenzhou 5, making

China the third country conducting an independent human spaceflight. In 2007, China launched its first unmanned lunar orbiter, Chang'e 1, also using a Long March rocket.

Despite being a Communist country, China introduced a fair amount of spirituality into the names of apparatuses used in its Space program. Long March carrier rockets were also called Divine Arrows 神剑, spacecraft Divine Vessel 神舟, space plane Divine Dragon 神龙, land-based high-power laser Divine Light 神光 and supercomputer Divine Might 神威. Chang'e 嫦娥 lunar orbiter is named after the Chinese Moon Goddess. The space station is named Tiangong 天宫(Heavenly Palace). The first module of the Tiangong space station is the Tianhe core module (Harmony of the Heavens) 天和核心舱。The interplanetary mission which sent a robotic spacecraft to Mars was named Tianwen 天问 (Heavenly Questions). The Mars Rover was named Zhurong 祝融 (God of Fire).

In October 2000, China launched BeiDou-1 (North Star) 北斗 to establish its own satellite navigation system as an alternative to GPS. In October 2007, China successfully launched its first lunar orbiter, Chang'e 1, making it the fifth nation to do so, after the Soviet Union, the US, Japan and the European Space Agency.

In Sept 2008, two crew members on Shenzhou 7 carried out China's first EVA (Extravehicular activity or spacewalk) by an astronaut outside a spacecraft beyond earth's atmosphere.

Sept 2011, China launched Tiangong-1, the first prototype of the Chinese space station module. Together with Shenzhou 8, 9 and 10, China demonstrated that it has developed critical human spaceflight capabilities like space docking and berthing (the joining of two space vehicles.)

By 2016, the Chinese Space Lab, Tiangong-2 was launched. Shenzhou 11 was the first and only expedition to Tiangong-2. China was ready for a long-term space station built and maintained by its own.

In 2019, the Chinese lunar orbiter, Chang'e 4, conducted the first ever soft landing on the far side of the moon by any country. In 2020, Chang'e 5 completed a successful lunar sample return mission, which involved orbiting the Moon, landing and returning with Moon rocks.

In June 2020, the final satellite of The Beidou Navigation Satellite System was successfully launched by a Long March rocket. President Xi Jinping formally announced the commissioning of this Satellite System.

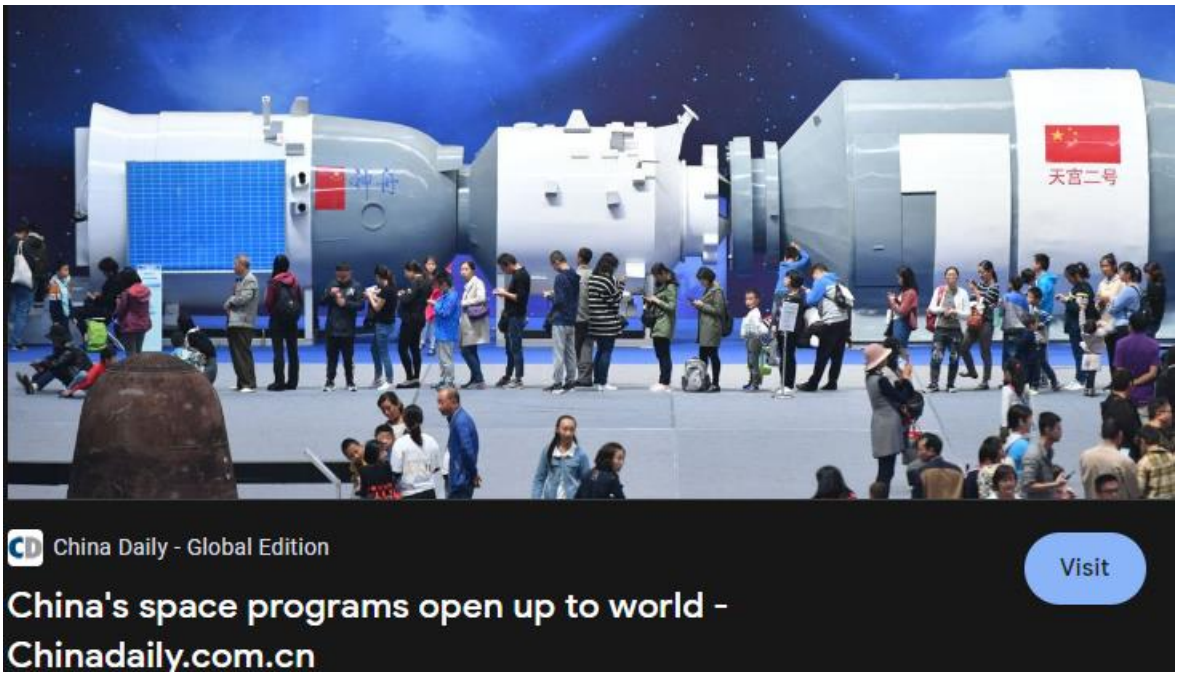
In April 2021, Tianhe 天和, the 22-tonne core module of Tiangong space station was successfully launched into Low Earth orbit by a Long March rocket, beginning of construction of the Chinese Space Station.

In July 2020, robotic spacecraft Tianwen-1 天问一号 which included an orbiter, a lander, and a rover (Zhurong) 祝融 was launched. China became the second country to land a rover on Mars.

In April 2021, China signed an agreement with Russia to work together to build a Moon base. China also plans to start building the first-ever solar power plant in space by 2028.

A new Space race is opening up another front in the tensions between the US and China. NASA had already prohibited its researchers from working with any Chinese citizen and stopped hosting any Chinese visitors at NASA facilities. No Chinese astronaut has ever been aboard the International Space Station (ISS) as NASA has a crew living aboard the ISS.

Excluded from the ISS, China had no choice but to develop their own space station and they succeeded. However, the Chinese response to the exclusion policy of the US involved opening up its space station to the outside world, welcoming scientists from all countries.



Conclusion:

With its vast resources to back up its long-term goals, China appears to be ahead of the game in the space race. NASA has announced plans for the aging ISS to be

officially decommissioned in 2031. Meanwhile, China is training European astronauts and teaching them Chinese so that they might visit its space station.

Increasingly, the US' main advantage over China lies in its burgeoning commercial space industry, led by SpaceX, founded by Elon Musk (not the government initiatives led by NASA.)

Elon Musk's privately held SpaceX ...

Chapter 154 – Long March Rockets 长征火箭

The rockets range in size from 95-foot to 187-foot.

Introduction:

The Long March series of rockets are a family of expendable launch system rockets, i.e. the rocket can be launched only once, after which its components are either destroyed during reentry or discarded in space. Expendable launch vehicles (ELVs) typically consist of several rocket stages that are discarded sequentially as their fuel is exhausted to enable the vehicle to gain altitude and speed.

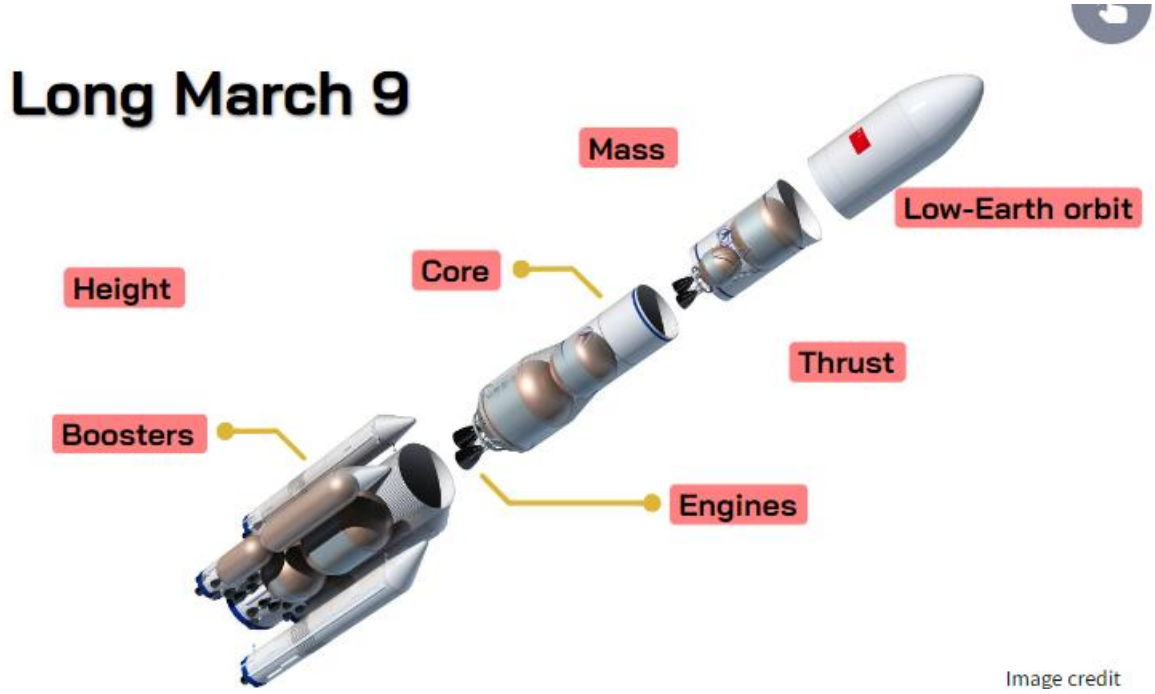


Image credit

Most satellites and human spacecrafts are launched on ELVs. The Shenzhou 神舟 spacecrafts, Chang'e 嫦娥 lunar orbiters and several satellites have been launched on the Long March rockets.

Main Story:

The Long March rocket had its origin in the Dong Feng ballistic missiles which were first built with the help of Russian technology.

Long March 1: The first Long March 1 on the pad at Jiuquan in 1970. (Image credit: CALT)

The latest Chinese ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile), the DF-41 is China's newest addition to its nuclear arsenal. Capable of be armed with up to 12 warheads and with an estimated range of 12,000 – 15,000 km, it surpassed the range of the US's LGM-30 Minuteman ICBM to become the world's longest range missile.

The Long March rockets started with launching satellites, the first being Dong Fang Hong (The East is Red) in 1970. Early launches had an inconsistent record with a number of failures.

After the mid-air explosion of the US Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986, China entered the international launch market in a big way. Even US satellites were launched on Chinese rockets.

A Chinese Long March 2D rocket launched four satellites, two for China and two for Argentinian company Satellogic, into orbit from the Taiyun Satellite Launch Center on Jan. 15, 2020.
(Image credit: China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation)

Subsequently, fear of the expansion of the Chinese military led the US to place an embargo on Chinese launches. For example, the satellite ChinaSat 8, which had been scheduled to launch in 1999 on a Long March rocket, was placed in storage, sold to Singapore company ProtoStar, and finally launched on a European rocket Ariane 5 in 2008.

A Chinese Long March 2F rocket launches the three Shenzhou 13 astronauts on a six-month mission to the country's new Tiangong space station module Tianhe from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the Gobi Desert on Oct.16, 2021. (Image credit: CASC)

A Long March 5B rocket launches Tianhe, the core module of China's new space station, on April 28, 2021. (Image credit: CASC)

Conclusion:

The Long March rockets are organized into several series, ranging from 1 to 11 (however, there is no Long March 10).

As of 5 June 2022, the Long March rocket family has made over 400 launches. Since 2010, Long March launches have made up about 20% of all space launches globally.

Long March 11 rocket launched at sea. (Image credit: CNSA)

Chapter 155 – Shenzhou 神舟 1 - 15

Introduction:

Shenzhou is a spacecraft developed to support China's Manned Space Program. Its first four flights, Shenzhou 1- 4, were uncrewed launches. They were all launched by the Long March rockets.

Main Story:

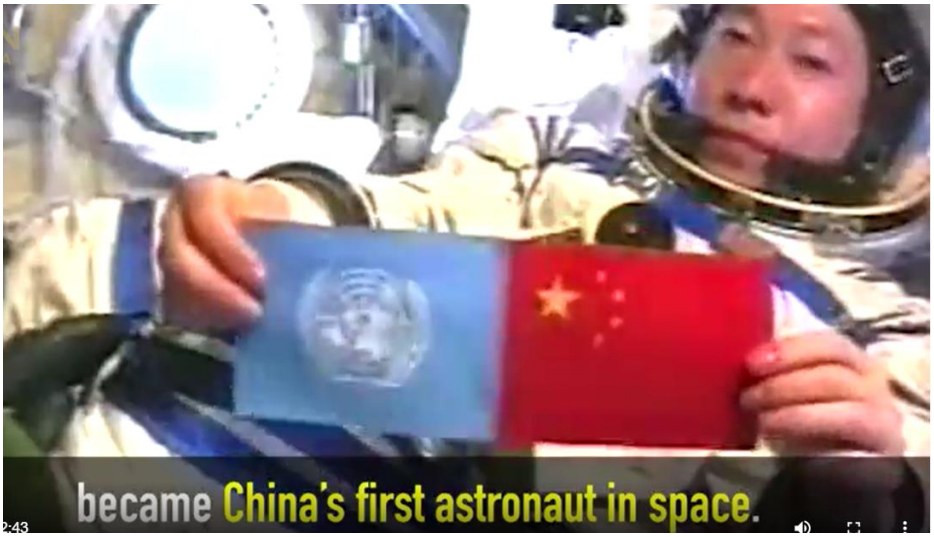
Shenzhou 1 – the first uncrewed launch of the Shenzhou aircraft, was launched in November 1999. After a successful reentry, it landed about 415 kilometers from its launch pad in Inner Mongolia.

Shenzhou 2 – launched in January 2001, it carried an animal cargo consisting of a monkey, a dog and a rabbit. Shenzhou 2 was tested more rigorously than its predecessor Shenzhou 1, with two orbit changes. It was not completely successful as its parachutes failed to open upon re-entry, which resulted in a hard-landing.

Shenzhou 3 – launched in March 2002, its mission was to test the systems required to support a human in space. It carried a dummy which simulated the physiological signals of a human – palpitation, pulse, breathing, eating, metabolism, and excretion. After 107 orbits, with two orbit changes, it made a successful touchdown.

Shenzhou 4 – the fourth and final unmanned space flight launched in December 2002. The spacecraft was equipped for a crewed flight (including a sleeping bag, goods, and medications) but two dummy astronauts were used to test the life support systems. Shenzhou 4 touched down successfully after a week-long mission, with a parachuted landing.

Shenzhou 5 – the spacecraft had no major differences to that of Shenzhou 4. This is the first Chinese crewed spacecraft (taikonaut Yang Liwei 杨利伟) making China the third nation to put humans in space. Launched in October 2002, it was a 21-hour spaceflight. Yang Liwei showed the flag of the United Nations in addition to the flag of the PRC.



Shenzhou 6 – launched in October 2005, it carried two crewmen for five days in low Earth orbit. The crew was able to change out of their space suits, conduct

scientific experiments, and enter the orbital module for the first time, giving them access to toilet facilities.

Shenzhou 7 – launched in September 2008, this spacecraft carried 3 crew members. It carried out China's first extra-vehicular activity (EVA). China became the third country to carry out the spacewalk.

China's first spacewalk succeeds ...

Shenzhou 8 – an uncrewed flight launched in October 2011. The spacecraft docked with the Tiangong-1 space module,

Shenzhou 9 – in 2012, China performed a crewed docking with Tiangong-1. Only the USSR, Japan and the European Space Agency had achieved this.

First astronauts enter China'...
scmp.com

China Set for Historic Space Docking ...
space.com

Liu Yang 刘洋 became the first Chinese woman in space.

Profile of Liu Yang, China's first ...

Shenzhou 10 – in 2013, with a crew of 3 taikonauts. It was the final mission to conduct a series of docking tests with Tiangong-1.

Shenzhou 11 – in 2016, with a crew of 2. It was the longest mission (33 days) until Shenzhou 12 which took 3 months and was the only expedition to Tiangong-2 (which had replaced Tiangong-1.) It had only 2 crew members instead of 3 to extend supplies to increase mission length for their long duration.

Shenzhou 12 - in June 2021, with 3 crew members. It set a new national human spaceflight duration record of 92 days.

Shenzhou 13 – in October 2021, with 3 taikonauts. It set a new national human spaceflight duration record of 182 days.

Shenzhou 14 – in June 2022, with 3 taikonauts. It marks the beginning of keeping the Tiangong space station permanently inhabited as it would only depart after Shenzhou 15 arrived.

Shenzhou 15 – a planned Chinese spaceflight to the Tiangong Space Station, expected to launch in December 2022, with 3 taikonauts.

China rolls the Shenzhou 14-Long March 2F stack to the launch pad on May 20, 2022, ahead of a June 4 launch to China's space station. Shenzhou 15 and its Long March 2F are now ready to launch on a potential rescue mission, if Shenzhou 14 should encounter an emergency in orbit. (Image credit: CNSA/OurSpace)

Conclusion:

China has plans for a permanent Chinese space station by end 2022 as well as crewed expeditions to Moon, Mars and other planets in Solar System. The Shenzhou spacecrafts will play a crucial role in this quest.

Chapter 156 – Tiangong Space Station 天宫空间站

Introduction:

The Tiangong Space Station is being constructed by China in low Earth orbit at an altitude of about 400 km above the earth's surface. It will have a mass of about 200,000 lb, roughly one-fifth the mass of the International Space Station (to be decommissioned in 2031) and about the size of the Russian Mir space station (decommissioned in 2001).

Main Story:

The Tiangong Space Station was constructed based on the experience gained from its precursors, Tiangong-1 and Tiangong-2.

Tiangong-1: China's First Space Station ...
space.com

Tiangong-2 space station ...
spaceflightinsider.com

Tiangong-1 and Tiangong-2 were not designed to be a permanent orbital station but as a testbed for key technologies used in the building of the current Tiangong station.

The Tiangong space station is a modular space station, assembled on-orbit from pieces launched separately.

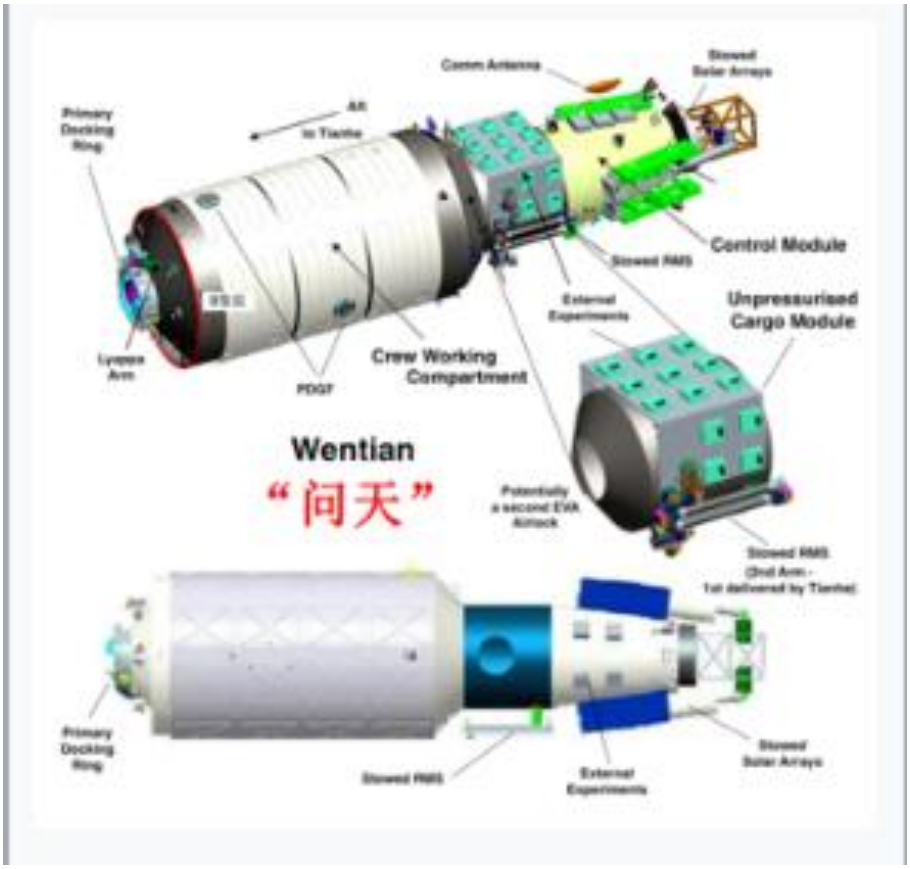
How will China build the Tiangong space ...
news.cgtn.com

The first module, the Tianhe (Harmony of the Heavens) core cabin module (main living quarters) was launched in April 2021, followed by multiple crewed and uncrewed missions. China plans to have the space station fully crewed and operational by December 2022.

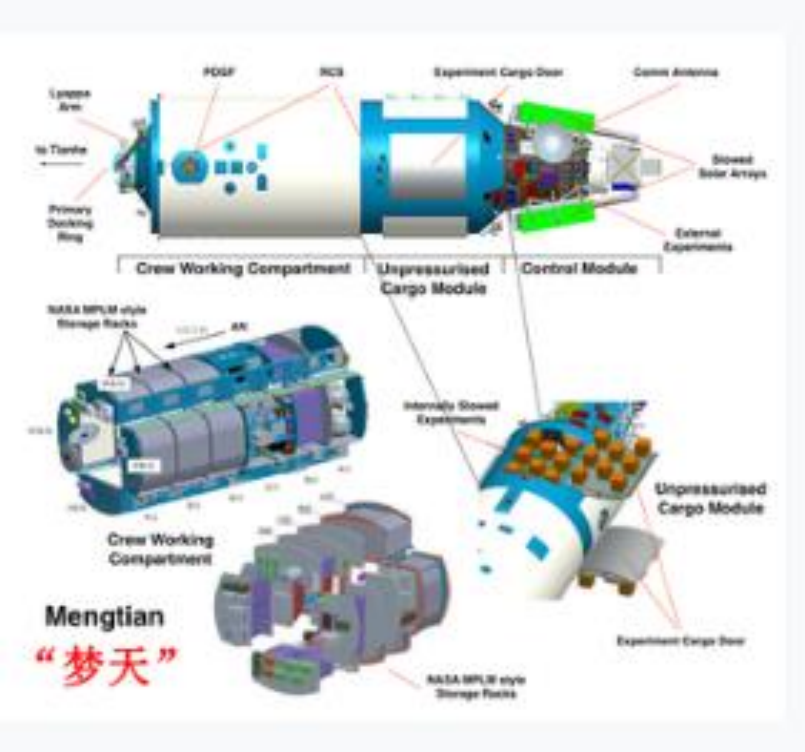
A Long March 5B launching the *Tianhe* core module in April, 2021

The core module, Tianhe, provides the living quarters for the crew, containing three sleeping berths, a toilet, shower facility, and a gym. There is Wi-Fi network for wireless connection and each taikonaut wears a headphone and microphone for easy communication.

The modular space station Wentian (Quest for the Heavens), the second of three modules for the permanent space station was launched in July 2022.



The third module, Mengtian (Dreaming of the Heavens), is planned for October 2022.



A separate space telescope module Xuntian (Touring the Heavens) is planned for 2023.

Like Mir and the Russian orbital segment of the ISS, the Tiangong modules will be carried fully assembled into orbit, in contrast to the US Orbital Segment of the ISS, which required spacewalking to interconnect cables, piping, and structural elements manually.

Tiangong is currently staffed with a crew of 3 taikonauts. After construction is fully completed, the crew size will double to 6. Shenzhou 15 will bring the other 3 members when it launches before the end of 2022.

Chinese astronauts enter Tiangong …
spaceflightnow.com

To protect the safety of the taikonauts on board the space ship, a Long March rocket with a Shenzhou spacecraft will always be on standby for an emergency rescue mission.

Tiangong is designed to be used for 10 years, though it could be extended to 15 years.

Conclusion:

China was incentivized to built its own space station after the US refused Chinese participation in the International Space Station. However, China maintains close cooperation with Russia and Europe as part of a cooperative and multilateral approach in space.

As the ISS is coming to its natural end, Tiangong will probably remain the only functioning space station. However China is trying to be open, having declared Tiangong will be open to host non-Chinese crews and science projects. Astronauts from Europe's space agency, ESA, have in fact begun training with Chinese taikonauts, and international projects have been included in the station's first approved batch of selected experiments.

Chapter 157 – Lunar Exploration Program 中国探月

Introduction:

Also known as the Chang'e 嫦娥 Project, China's Lunar Exploration Program incorporates lunar arbiters, landers, rovers and sample return spacecraft, launched by the Long March rockets. The ultimate objective of the program is a crewed mission to the Moon and the setting up of a Lunar Research Station and a moonbase.

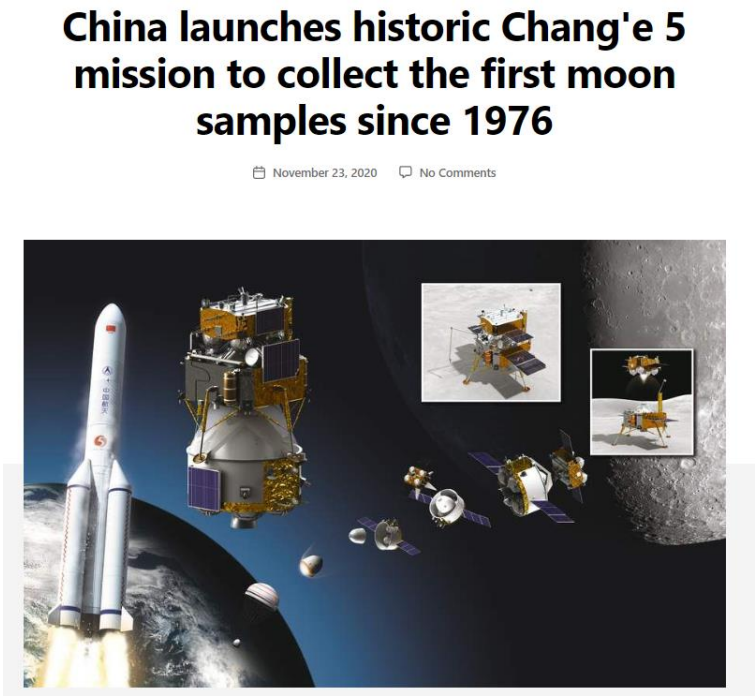
Main Story:

The first spacecraft, Chang'e 1 lunar orbiter, was launched in 2007. Chang'e 2 was launched in 2010. Chang'e 1 and 2 were orbital missions. They scanned the entire Moon in great detail, generating a high definition 3D map that would provide a reference for future soft landings. They constituted Phase I of the program.

Chang'e 3 which included a lander and rover, was launched in 2013 and successfully soft-landed on the Moon in 2013. Chang'e 4, which includes a lander and rover, landed on the far side of the Moon in 2019. Chang'e 3 and 4 constituted

Phase II of the program with soft-landing on the Moon and the deployment of lunar rovers.

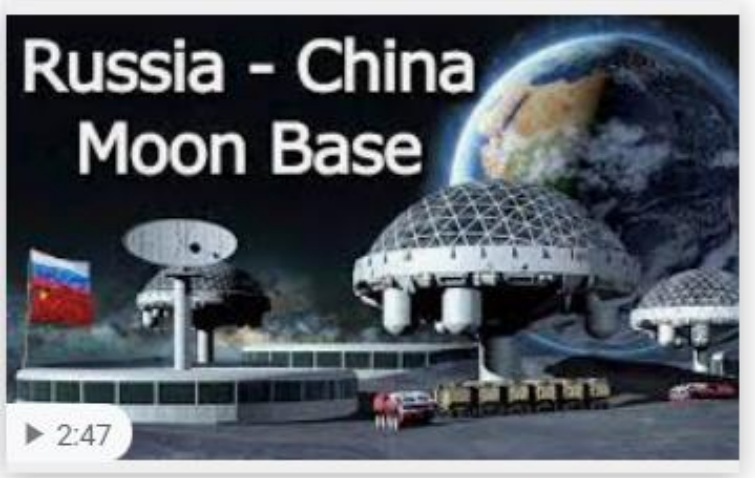
Phase II also consisted of Chang’e 5, which launched in 2020 and returned to earth with lunar samples.



Chang'e 5 moon rock sampling set ...
scmp.com

Conclusion:

The final phase (Phase III) will see Chang'e 6, 7 and 8 setting up a lunar robotic research station on the Moon's South Pole by 2036. In 2021, China and Russia announced that they will be building a moonbase together, and also formally invited other countries and international organizations to join their International Lunar Research Station (ILRS). By 2036, human visitors will arrive to begin scientific work and further building of the base.



The US also has a lunar exploration program called the Artemis Program (named after the Greek Goddess of the Moon, Artemis), aiming for its first touchdown on the lunar south pole by 2025 or 2026. The southernmost point on the Moon is of special interest to scientists because of the possible presence of surface water ice.

Chapter 158 – Interplanetary Exploration Program/Tianwen 天问 Program

Introduction:

This program called Tianwen 天问 (Questions to Heaven) by the Chinese is a series of missions aimed to explore planets of the Solar System, starting with Mars, and will be expanded to Jupiter and more in the future.

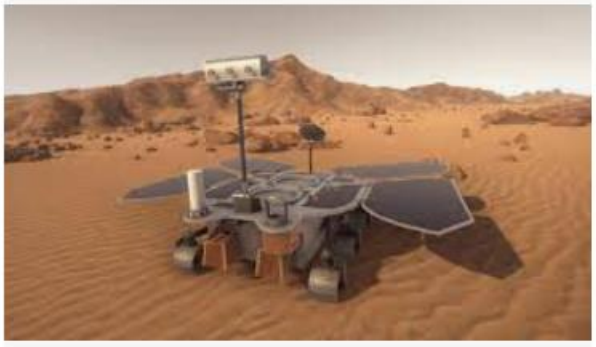
The name Tianwen is derived from the eponymous poem by the famous ancient poet Qu Yuan 屈原 (known for his patriotism) of the state of Chu 楚国 during the Warring States period (475-221 BC). The 172 Questions consists of a series of verses, in question format, addressed to Tian 天 (Heaven) revolving around Chinese mythology and ancient Chinese religious beliefs. The poem is considered a treasure and the most valuable document in Chinese mythology.

Heavenly Questions (Tian Wen), attributed to Qu Yuan,

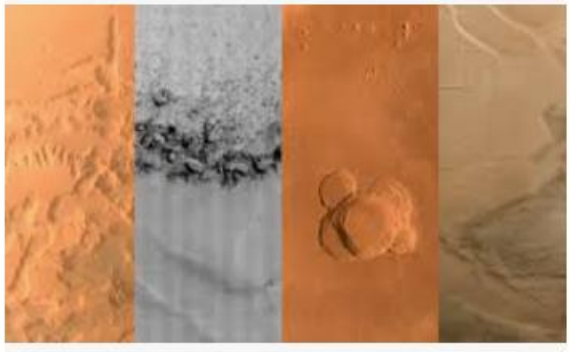
Main Story:

China's Planetary Exploration Program began with its first mission, Tianwen-1, which explored Mars in July 2020. A spacecraft, which consisted of an orbiter, a lander, and a rover, was launched by a Long March rocket. Tianwen-1 was inserted into Mars orbit after a seven-month journey, followed by a successful soft landing of the lander and Zhurong 祝融 rover in May 2021. Several high-resolution images taken on the Martian surface confirmed the success of the mission. So far only the US had achieved this feat.

Mars explorer arrives at the red planet



Tianwen-1 – China's first rover to Mars ...
spacerobotics.eu



spacecraft captures stunning photos ...
news.cgtn.com

Prior to the commencement of the Tianwen mission, China had made the following preparations for the planetary exploration program:

2011 – China launched Yinghuo-1 萤火一号, the first Chinese planetary space probe and the first Chinese spacecraft to orbit Mars. It was launched from Kazakhstan, along with the Russian Fobos-Grunt sample return spacecraft. The mission was not successful and both Yinghuo-1 and Fobos-Grunt underwent destructive re-entry in January 2012, disintegrating over the Pacific Ocean.

Model of Fobos-Grunt presented at the Paris Air Show in 2011. The Chinese satellite Yinghuo-1 is in the center, marked with the label 3.

Dec 2012 – the Chinese lunar probe Chang'e 2 嫦娥二号 made a flyby of the asteroid 4179 Toutatis. With a distance of over 7 million kilometers away from Earth, Chang'e 2 became China's first interplanetary probe which tested the limit of China's deep space communication capability.

4179 Toutatis asteroid captured by Chang'e 2.

November 2019 – China invited some foreign embassies and international organizations to witness a hovering and obstacle avoidance test for China's Mars Lander. Following this successful test, the Tianwen program was formally announced in April 2020.

Conclusion:

Tianwen 1 was a big step for China; it was the country's first fully homegrown interplanetary mission and pulled off China's first landing on another planet.

Following the success of the Tianwen-1 Mars mission in 2020, the China National Space Administration announced in June 2021 its future plans for near-Earth sample return, Mars sample return and Jupiter system exploration.

China will launch Tianwen 2 asteroid-sampling mission in 2025. The mission will sample an asteroid, return to Earth and then head out again to study a second space rock. Its objectives would be to glean insights into questions such as the mystery of the source of Earth's water. Tianwen 2 was also tentatively named Zhen He, after the famous Chinese naval explorer of the early 1400s, with the name evoking historic exploration feats as China embarks on new expeditions into deep space.

An artist's illustration of the asteroid Kamo'oalewa, the target of China's Tianwen 2 asteroid-sampling mission. Some astronomers think Kamo'oalewa may be a blasted-off chunk of Earth's moon. (Image credit: Addy Graham/University of Arizona)

Tianwen 3, currently scheduled for launch in 2028, will attempt to collect samples from Mars and deliver them to Earth, while Tianwen 4 will send a probe to Jupiter.

Chapter 159 – A Shadow War in Space

Introduction:

As US-China tensions continue, a shadow war is also brewing in space. Will there be Star Wars?

Main Story:

When the US dominated International Space Station (ISS) is decommissioned after 2024, the US government is determined to continue its footprint in space with the Lunar Gateway, a small outpost that will orbit the moon as part of the US-led Artemis Program that again sees China excluded. Of the original ISS members, only four (US, Europe, Japan and Canada) are part of the Gateway.

Gateway space station in concept video ...

In its basic conception, the Lunar Gateway will serve as a science laboratory and short-term habitation module. It will then act as a hub, allowing for spacecraft and rovers to resupply during their multiple trips to the Moon. In the first week of September 2022, two attempts to launch an unscrewed test flight under Artemis I failed. However, NASA will undoubtedly continue to try another launch of its Artemis I mega-rocket to set the stage for future Artemis missions with astronauts.

NASA has also supported private corporations in designing their own orbital modules, e.g. the B330 inflatable space habitat built by Bigelow Aerospace,

Inflatable space stations could orbit ...

and the commercial space station built by Axiom,

Axiom Commercial Space Station ...

Another US company Blue Origin, an aerospace company founded by Amazon's Jeff Bezos, also has a vision for space and has planned for a moon lander known as "Blue Moon".

The main threat to China's space ambition at the moment seems to come from another US company: Elon Musk's SpaceX. SpaceX has a megaconstellation of

over 2,300 Starlink satellites in space and has permission from the US government to launch a total of up to 12,000 in a program aimed at providing internet access to most of the planet. However, in 2021, two of the satellites almost crashed into the Chinese space station, Tiangong., which has to make evasive manoeuvres to avoid a collision. Musk is widely admired in China where his electric car firm Tesla sells tens of thousands of vehicles each month. But the two incidents had caused Chinese netizens to criticize Musk and even called for a boycott of his vehicles.

Will the threat from satellites lead to the development of so-called kamikaze satellites that can destroy other satellites, or kidnapper satellites that could snatch other satellites out of orbit? A physical attack on satellites would undoubtedly lead to a huge output of space debris which is not in the interest of any of the space nations. As a matter of fact, China launched a ballistic missile in 2007 which destroyed one of China's own non-operational weather satellite, creating a cloud of space debris. However, at the moment instead of blowing satellites out of orbit, countries are said to be resorting to spoofing attacks (hacking with a disguised identity) or jamming satellite signals to temporarily disrupt a satellite's operation.

In August 2021, China tested a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile that circled the globe before speeding towards its target, demonstrating an advanced space capability that caught US intelligence by surprise. The test showed that US had underestimated China's military modernization.

China tests new space capability with hypersonic missile

Launch in August of nuclear-capable rocket that circled the globe took US intelligence by surprise

The new hypersonic glide vehicle was launched with a 'Long March' rocket, seen here carrying China's Chang'e-5 lunar probe for its space programme © AFP via Getty Images

Conclusion:

Space war, if it occurs, could be mainly a war on satellites. Major countries depend on satellites to transmit signals for satellite-based navigation systems, credit-card transactions, hospital systems, television stations, weather reports, military communication and surveillance, etc. All these satellites are basically sitting ducks and impossible to defend.

The best way would still be for all the countries to work together to avoid any catastrophe in space and to get rid of existing problems, such as space junk, which is a growing problem.

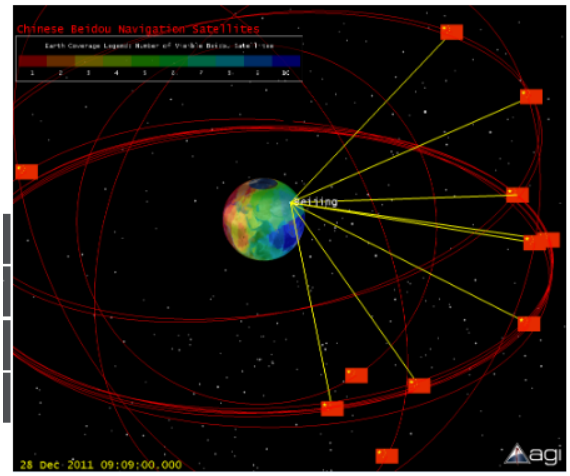
Chapter 160 – BeiDou Navigation Satellite System 北斗卫星导航系统

Introduction:

BeiDou is Chinese for the North Star, which has been used for centuries for navigation. China is adopting the BeiDou as an international standard of GNSS.

"Chinese GPS" system (BeiDou) begins service

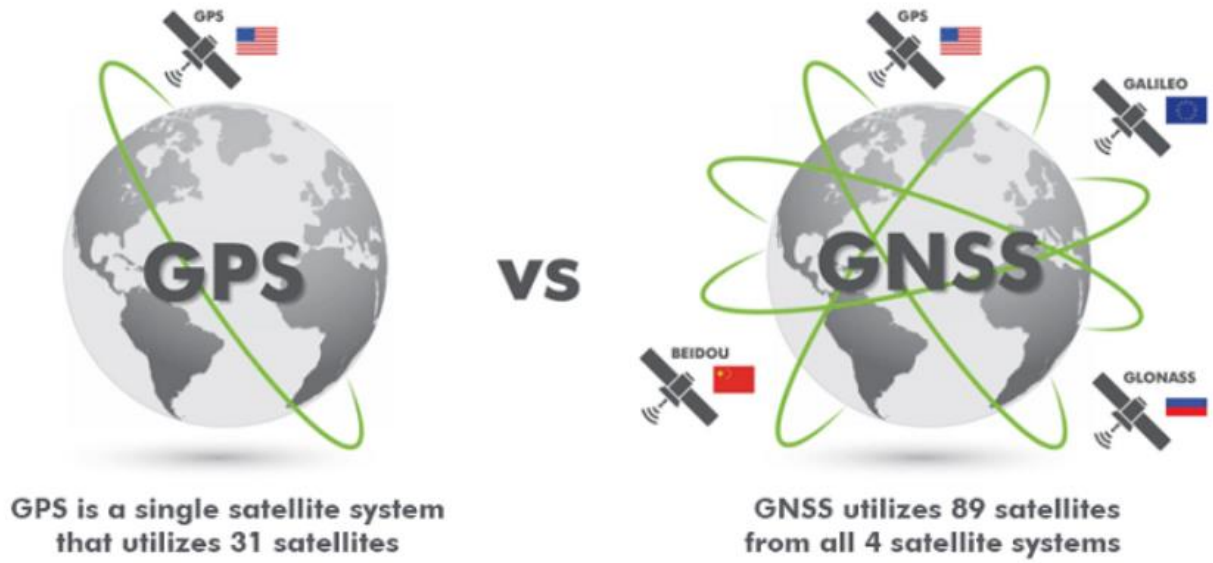
Dec 28, 2011 | Article | Space Operations



Main Story:

GNSS refers to the international Multi-Constellation Satellite System, which includes GPS, GLONASS (Russian), BeiDou, Galileo (European), and other constellation systems.

GNSS and GPS work together, but the main difference between GPS and GNSS is that GNSS-compatible equipment can use navigational satellites from other networks beyond the GPS system, and more satellites means increased receiver accuracy and reliability.

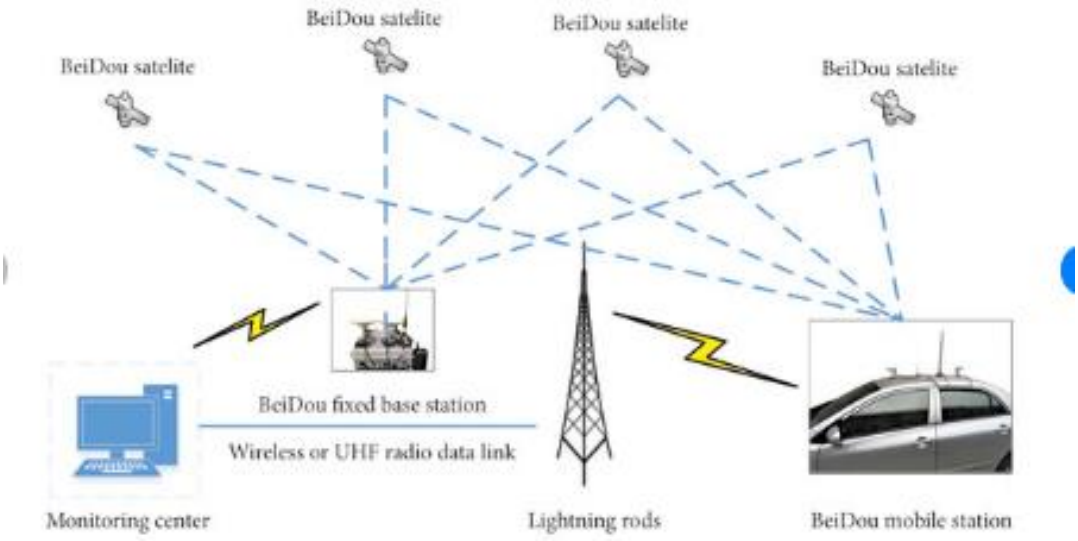


GNSS are used in all forms of transportation: space stations, aviation, maritime, rail, road and mass transit. Positioning, navigation and timing play a critical role in telecommunications, land surveying, law enforcement, emergency response, precision agriculture, mining, finance, scientific research, etc.

BeiDou Navigation Satellite System ...
news.cgtn.com

Conclusion:

In June 2020, the final BeiDou satellite was successfully launched. It is the 55th satellite in the BeiDou family. It offers an alternative to Russia's GLONASS, the European Galileo Position System, and the US's GPS.



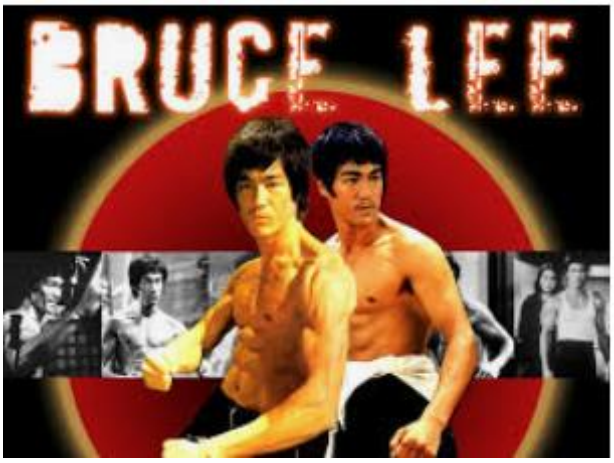
Principle of BeiDou Navigation Satellite System.

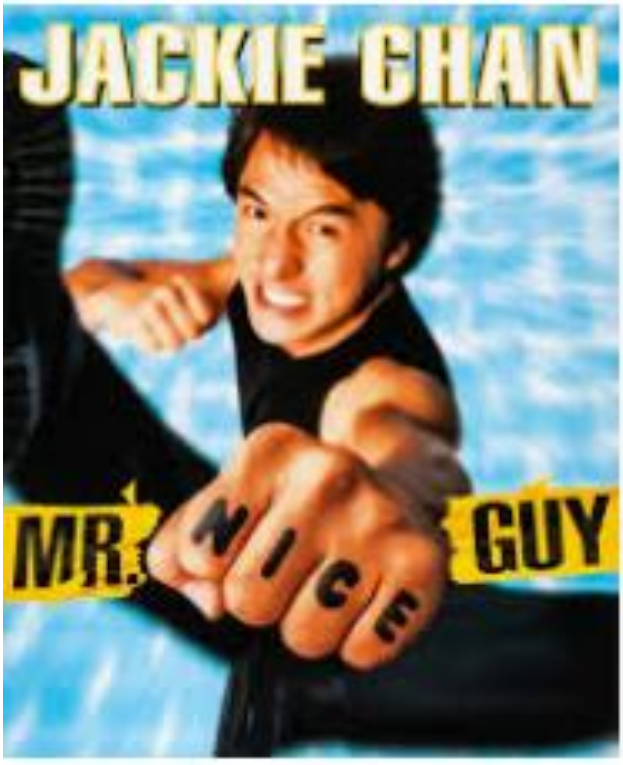
When considered as an entire system with additional ground antennas, signal post-processing, and communications, BeiDou is superior to GPS, GLONASS, and Galileo. "Through the lens of Great Power competition, BeiDou signifies another incremental erosion of the status of the United States as the sole superpower." :National Defense University Press.

Chapter 161 – Martial Arts in Modern China

Introduction:

Chinese martial art is known in the West as kung fu (a loan word from the Cantonese gong fu 功夫) whereas in China it is referred to as Wushu 武术. Kung fu has been popularized by actors like Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Donnie Yen. Slapstick, comic-style kungfu performed by Jackie Chan and Stephen Chow has been a big draw.

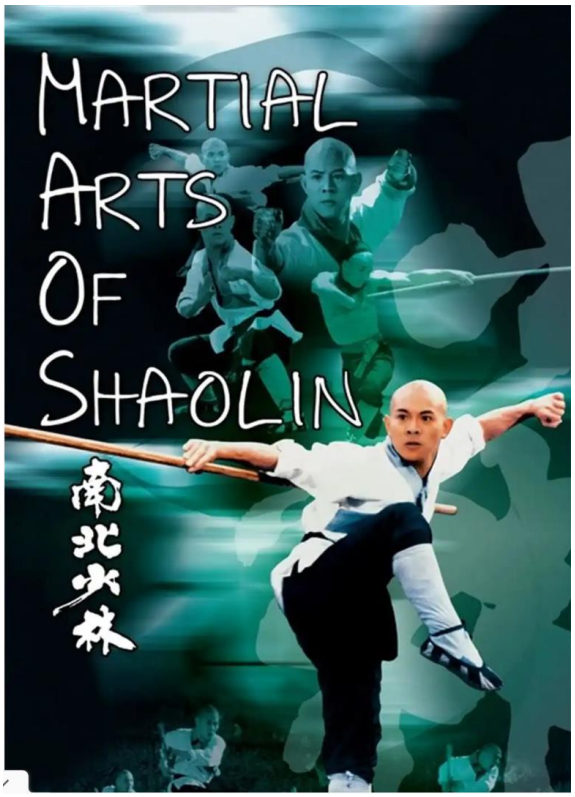




Main Story:

Martial arts in China have been practiced for thousands of years. Today, it is a force for Chinese soft power. Thus, the Chinese government had instituted a Chinese Martial Arts Five-year Development Plan (2016-2020) which saw China building over 3,000 new martial arts schools and created an industry worth over 1 trillion yuan.

The most well-known kung fu is, of course, the Shaolinquan 少林拳. Shaolin martial art is more prevalent in northern China, and has its origin in the Shaolin Temple in Dengfeng, Henan Province 登封市，河南. Shaolin kungfu is famous for its five styles named after the Tiger, Leopard, Snake, Dragon and Crane.



Wing Chun (yong chun 咏春) is more popular in Guangdong province. It has been popularized by Donnie Yen, especially in his Wong Fei-Hung series. Wing Chun's two most famous practitioners are the master-teacher Ip Man and his famed pupil, Bruce Lee.

And it was back in Hong Kong that the Bruce Lee legend began to take shape.

Tai Chi (taijiquan 太极拳), created by the Taoist monks, is a daily routine for millions of Chinese, especially the elderly, who practice it in parks or public spaces throughout China.

Surprisingly, Taekwondo （跆拳道）from Korea, is currently one of the most practiced martial arts in China. Taekwondo gyms and clubs are established in 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions with each province having an average of 300 dojos. The trend of Taekwondo in China is now spreading beyond the first-tier cities to second and third-tier cities. Taekwondo appeals especially to children aged 5 to 14, mostly boys.

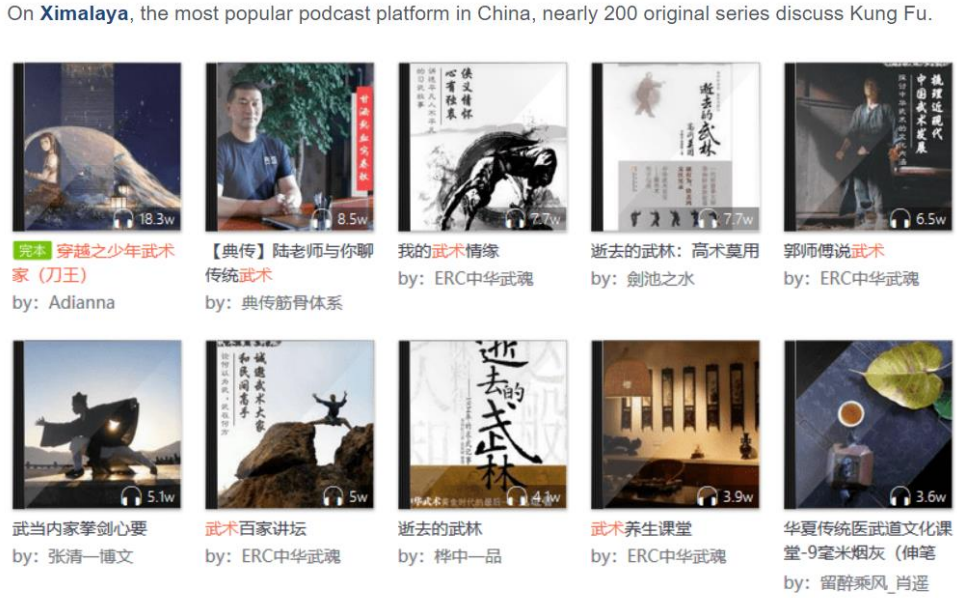
Chinese Because China Invented Korea ...
koreaboo.com

Other martial arts which are popular in China are Muay Thai, Mixed Martial Art and Boxing. Less popular ones are Wrestling, Judo and Karate.

Hong-Kong born actor, Jackie Chan, became an advisor to the Chinese government on soft power and martial arts promotion since 2013.

On Bilibili 哔哩哔哩, a famous Chinese sharing video platform, short kungfu videos can reach up to 3 millions views.

Another platform is Ximalaya 喜马拉雅.



[Source: Xiamalaya – Martial arts in China]

Conclusion:

The love of kung fu has brought billions of dollars to China through movies and sports clubs. There are many business opportunities in terms of equipment, specialized clubs, and gyms or on the professional side by investing in competitions or becoming a sponsor.

Chapter 162 – Calligraphy in Modern China

Introduction:

Chinese calligraphy 书法 is an ancient art form dating back as early as around 200 BCE. The earliest form of Chinese writing were found carved on animal bones and bronze vessels during the Shang Dynasty (around 1600 – 1100 BCE).

However, it was during the Han dynasty 汉朝 (206 BCE – 220 CE), that calligraphy came to the fore. All educated men and some court women were expected to be proficient at it, an expectation which remained well into modern times.

Main Story:

Political leaders in the CCP like to be photographed with their calligraphy work.

Mao writing in the 1940s [source]

Hua Guofeng writing in the late 1970s [source]

In 2001 China's premier Jiang Zemin had himself photographed conferring an inscription in his own calligraphy to a society he wanted to support.

What do you think a political leader has to gain from publication of a picture like this?

Jiang Zemin presenting his calligraphy to a society in 2001 source

Calligraphy can be a powerful tool in extolling revolutionary zeal to the people. Arguably, the most important piece of calligraphy in China today is the 1963 poem written by Mao Zedong 毛泽东 in response to a poem sent to him by Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (a literary figure and President of the University of Science and Technology of China 1958-1978.)

Mao's poem was titled "Reply to Comrade GuoMoruo –to the tune of Man Jiang Hong" 满江红 《和郭沫若同志》.

Man Jianghong 满江红 is Song Dynasty Yue Fei's most acclaimed poem. It reflected his heroic struggle against the invading Jurchen (Jin dynasty) army.

Mao’s calligraphy was displayed at the Mao Mausoleum, the year after his death.

An English translation of this poem by Mao is available on Google.

Calligraphy for signs and door frames form a significant part of everyday visual culture in China and even outside China.

The entrance to this house has not only the character for "blessings" cut into the brick (visible behind the bicycle) and a four character phrase above the entrance but also two temporary paper strips on either side of the door. The phrase across the top reads "auspicious stars shine on high." The paper strip hanging down the right side reads "The two characters 'peace' and 'calm' are worth a thousand in gold." The one on the left reads "When harmony and obedience fill the home it adds a hundred blessings."

Do you think whoever put up these characters cared about their calligraphy? If the auspicious meanings were legibly represented, would that have been enough?

Doorway, Shanxi province, 2001 [source]

Stores, of course, also have signs announcing their names and products.

Do some of the characters on these store signs seem more calligraphic than others? What makes them different?

Cosmetics shop, Shanxi 2001 [source]

There is no denying that Chinese Calligraphy is an immensely intricate and expressive artistic technique. Unlike painting which has several mediums as acrylic, watercolor oil, gouache, encaustic, tempera, and fresco, Chinese Calligraphy revels in the simpler version of art, with only an ink brush, ink, paper, and inkstone.

Conclusion:

In the age of the digital media, the ancient art of calligraphy has partly lost its vitality. Nevertheless, Chinese Calligraphy is still being practiced by millions of Chinese, both amateurs and professionals. Chinese Calligraphy has held its own even in modern times.

Chapter 163 – Chinese Silk Today 今天的中国丝绸

Introduction:

The production of silk originates in China (somewhere in the Henan region) in the Neolithic age, 4th millennium BC. Silk cloth manufacture was well advanced during the Shang dynasty 商朝(1600 – 1046 BC). Silk remained confined to China until the Silk Road opened at some point during the later half of the first millennium BC.

History of silk - Wikipedia

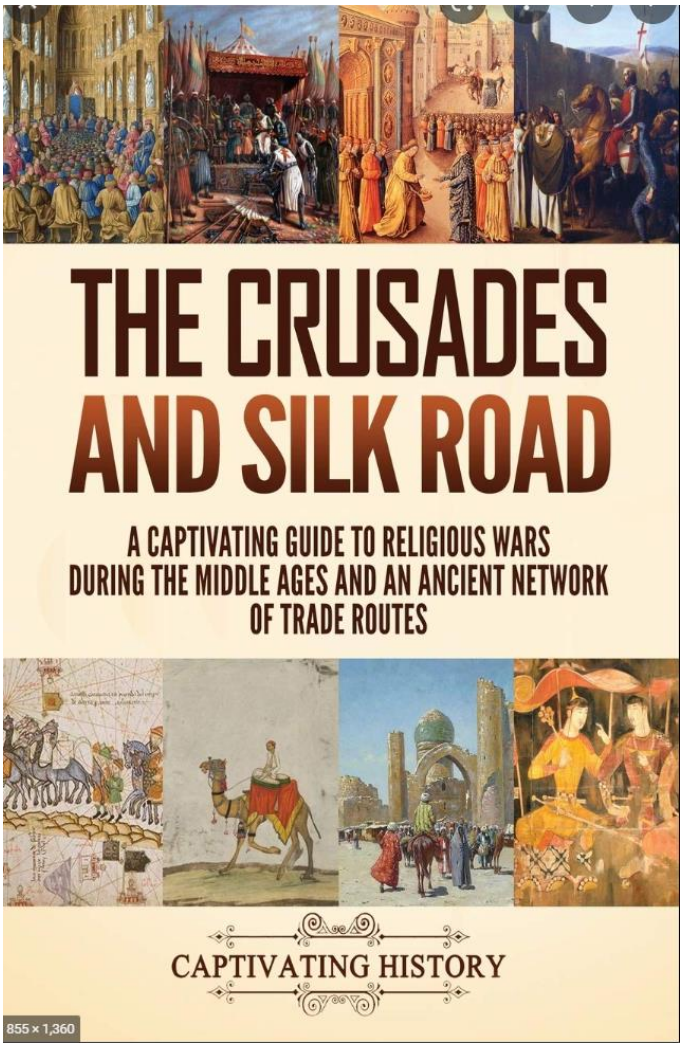
China maintained its virtual monopoly over silk production for another thousand years but other countries like Japan and Europe overtook China. Today, however, China has regained its position as the top Silk producer in the world.

Main Story:

Silk cultivation spread from China to Japan around 300 AD. And, by 522 AD, the Byzantines managed to obtain silkworm eggs and were able to begin silkworm cultivation. The Arabs also began to manufacture silk during this same time. As a result of the spread of sericulture (silk farming, the cultivation of silkworms to

produce silk), Chinese silk exports became less important, although they still maintained dominance over the luxury silk market.

The Crusades brought silk production to Western Europe, in particular to many Italian states, which saw an economic boom exporting silk to the rest of Europe, especially France.



Changes in manufacturing techniques also began to take place during the Middle Ages, with devices such as the spinning wheel first appearing.

The very first spinning wheels? | New ...

The Industrial Revolution changed much of Europe's silk industry. Due to innovations on spinning cotton, cotton became much cheaper to manufacture and therefore caused more expensive silk production to become less mainstream. An epidemic of several silkworm diseases in Europe, especially France, caused production to fall and the industry never recovered.

Today, China is still the world's foremost silk producer, producing about 150,000 metric tons annually. Only India has a large industry that produces about 30,000 metric tons annually.

The top modern silk producing regions are in the south of the Yangtze River Delta, such as Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Sichuan provinces. Cities such as Suzhou, Hangzhou, Nanjing, and Shaoxing are well known for their silk industries.

The best places to buy quality silk are Suzhou, Hangzhou and Shanghai. Silk tours are conducted taking tourists to observe the silk making process, after which they are taken to a display room where they can purchase silk clothing, comforters, brocades, scarves or other silk products direct from the manufacturer.

The Hangzhou National Silk Museum is the largest of its kind in the world. It showcases the origin, evolution and technique of silk production. It has a section devoted to the Silk and its importance in commerce.

China National Silk Museum in Hangzhou ...

Conclusion:

In the 20th century, China regained its role in silk production and its position as the world's largest producer of silk. With the invention of synthetic polymers in recent times, the rise of new fabrics such as nylon and polyester greatly reduced the prevalence of silk throughout the world and silk is now once again a rare luxury good.

Chapter 164 – New China Porcelain 磁 and Ceramics 陶瓷

Introduction:

Chinese ceramics range from construction materials such as bricks and tiles, to hand-built pottery vessels fired in bonfires or kilns, to the sophisticated Chinese porcelain wares made for the imperial court and for export. Porcelain was a Chinese invention and is so identified with China that it is still called “china” in everyday English usage.

Ceramic is made from clay by the process of heating and solidifying. Porcelain is also made from clay but at a higher temperature (1400 degree Celsius) than ceramics. Porcelain has a fine and smooth surface which is said to resemble the smoothness of an eggshell, and the material is thinner than ceramics. The Ming dynasty is famous for porcelain, especially the cobalt blue-and-white porcelain known for its smooth surface, its pure whiteness, and its translucent quality.

Main Story:

Ceramics and porcelain are made from a type of clay called kaolin 高岭土/陶土, which China has in abundance. Pottery first appeared in the Shang Dynasty 商朝 (1600-1046 BCE). Porcelain production started from the Han Dynasty 汉朝 (206BD – 220AD). Until today, there is no other product in the world that has achieved such a lasting influence for thousands of years. Once upon a time, porcelain was referred to as “white gold” by the Europeans.

Han Dynasty porcelain

The Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220)

It is thought that the first porcelain was made by firing the ceramic materials to the necessary temperature. By so doing, they made a kind of light but strong ceramic that was preferable for artistic and decorative purposes, and it has been in high demand ever since. 23 Aug 2021

https://www.chinahighlights.com › ... › Chinese Porcelain

Chinese Porcelain History from the 1st Century to the 20th

High grade Chinese porcelain is available for viewing and purchase in Jingdezhen 景德镇, Quanzhou 泉州, and Foshan 佛山 in Guangdong, and Hong Kong. Jingdezhen is China's "porcelain capital." The Jingdezhen Ceramics Museum has one of the world's best collections of ancient porcelain.

In the modern era, Chinese porcelain can be divided into six types:

1. Tang Sancai 唐三彩 (Tang dynasty three colors).

Wikimedia Commons
File:Tang sancai camel with persian merchant.JPG - Wikimedia ...

2. White Porcelain 骨瓷

Elegant White Porcelain Bowls for Your ...
trendir.com

3. Blue and White Porcelain 青花瓷

Blue and White Porcelain

4. Celadon 青瓷

Celadon

5. Black Porcelain

Black porcelain

6. Qing Porcelain

Conclusion:

Large quantities of Chinese porcelain were exported as diplomatic gifts or for trade from an early date, initially to East Asia and the Islamic world, and then from around the 16th century to Europe. Today, Chinese porcelain is still one of the main exports of China. It is a popular souvenir for tourists.

Chapter 165 - Modern Architecture in China

Introduction:

Modern Chinese architecture refers to structures built in China since the mid-1800s, i.e. after the Opium Wars 鸦片战争 (1839-1860) when Chinese architects began incorporating more Western architectural characteristics into their style and designs. This departed substantially from the traditional Chinese styles which included bright, colorful ornamentation, sweeping roofs, towering wood column, and sculptures of mythological beasts such as the dragon and the qilin 麒麟.

This chapter covers only buildings whereas bridges will be covered in the next chapter.

Main Story:

Until the early 2000s, contemporary Chinese architecture meant Soviet-style apartment blocks and bland office buildings, with freestanding columns in their facades. They tend to have large and heavy roofs laden with ceramic tiles, often stacked in multiple layers recalling the towering form of the pagoda.

Tiananmen Square

Beijing railway station

In the early 2000s, however, Chinese cities saw some of the world's most extraordinary architectural creations. Unlike old traditional Chinese buildings and the clunky Soviet-style ones, modern Chinese architecture takes on a very sleek and futuristic style.

The National Grand Theater of China in Beijing (The Giant Egg) with it seamless curvilinear design is a prime specimen of modern architecture in China.

Giant egg – location in China

Another building that showcases clean lines and a contorted form is the CCTV Headquarters, which was completed just in time to broadcast the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. The completely glass façade on this unusual structure reflects the surrounding cityscape.

CCTV Headquarters Beijing – China ...

Also constructed for use in the Beijing Olympics is the National Aquatics Center (The Water Cube). It now functions as a public aquatics center, spa, and shopping center, not to mention a fun architectural statement. The bubbles change colors in the evening and is a lively gathering place for visitors.

Water Cube, History, Culture ...

The 2008 Beijing Olympics also inspired the building of the Beijing National Stadium (the Bird's Nest)

The Chaoyang 朝阳 Park Plaza, also in Beijing, references the China's mysterious stone forests.

With China set to overtake the U.S. as the world’s largest aviation market, China built the Beijing Daxing 大兴 International Airport. Its famous starfish design not only boosts the number of aircraft and cargo that funnel through, but also cuts down distances for travelers.

Beijing Daxing International Airport ...

There is a lot of verticality in modern Chinese design. This is understandable in view of China's dense population in the major cities. This design resulted in the creation of powerful skylines and cityscapes. The Shanghai skyline is a prime example.

Shanghai skyline Images | Free Vectors ...

Shanghai boasts one of the largest art museums in Asia, the China Art Museum. Built for the 2007 Shanghai Expo, it is dubbed "the Crown of the East" due to its resemblance to an ancient crown.

The Harbin 哈尔滨 Grand Theater appears as if carved from wind and water.

Harbin Grand Theater, Harbin Opera ...

Conclusion:

Three decades of sustained and rapid economic growth spawned a spurt of urbanization and famous contemporary buildings. Into the 21st century, Chinese architects once again stand at a key historical crossroad.

At this point, Chinese architects need to look back and determine what is and where to base the core value of the development of Chinese architecture, and figure out a path for architectural designs that truly bear the Chinese characteristics.

Chapter 166 – Modern Bridges of China

Introduction:

Over the past 70 years, China has built the longest, the highest and the fastest-built bridges in the world. Some of them are also the most unusual. China has built eight of the world's 10 highest bridges, six of the world's ten longest sea-crossing bridges, six of the world's top ten suspension bridges, and seven of the world's top ten cable-stayed bridges.

Main Story:

1. Hangzhou Bay Bridge 杭州湾大桥

The 36 km-long six-lane highway bridge is the world's longest cross-sea bridge. Completed 2008. Designed to withstand a super typhoon, an 8.0 magnitude earthquake or a strike by a 300,000 ton cargo vessel.

.

2. Donghai Bridge 东海大桥

Connects Shanghai's Pudong New Area with the offshore Yangshan deep-water port in Zhejiang's Sengsi County. 32.5 km, completed 2005. It was the world's longest transoceanic bridge when it opened in 2005 until it was surpassed by the Hangzhou Bay Bridge.

3. Jiaozhou Bay Bridge 胶州湾大桥

This 26.7km long highway bridge in Shangdong is part of the 42km Jiaozhou Bay Connection Project which connects Qingdao to Huangdao. It is one of the longest bridges in the world and was the longest sea bridge when it opened in 2011.

4. Danyang-Kunshan Grand Bridge 丹昆特大桥

World’s longest bridge. It is a 165km long viaduct on the Beijing-Shanghai High-Speed Railway. It is the longest bridge in the world.

5. “Over-water” Highway Bridge

Built around the mountainous Hubei Province landscape, it is the 10.9km long highway linking Shanghai to Chengdu. The Over-water Highway is the name of a motorway completely built over water. It is one of the world’s most scenic drives. The road opened to traffic in 2015. This highway bridge avoided having to cut into the forest.

6. Weinan Weihe Grand Bridge 渭南渭河特大桥

This 79.7 km long bridge carries the section of the High Speed Railway which connects Zhengzhou and Xi'an. Completed in 2008, it is now the third longest bridge in the world.

7. Tianjin Grand Bridge 天津特大桥

At 113.7km, it is the second longest bridge in the world. It is railway bridge connecting Langfang and Qingzian. Completed 2010.

8. Beijing Grand Bridge 北京特大桥

A 48km long railway viaduct on the Beijing-Shanghai High-Speed Railway. Completed 2010. It is one of the longest bridges in the world.

9. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge 港珠澳大桥

It consists of a series of bridges, two man-made islands and undersea tunnels on the Pearl River Delta. The bridge-tunnel system is 55km long, making it both the

longest sea crossing and the longest open-sea fixed link (i.e. unbroken road or ail connection across water) in the world.

10.Duge Beipanjiang Bridge 北盘江第一桥

The highest bridge in the world, at a dizzying height of 1,854 feet above the Beipan River (height of a 200-storey building). It is a 4-lane cable-stayed bridge on the border between the provinces of Guizhou and Yunnan. Completed 2016.

11.Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge 张家界大峡谷玻璃桥

12.London Tower Bridge Replica

Just outside Suzhou’s SIP district.

Conclusion:

During the infrastructure boom of the past two decades, bridge-building has proceeded at a rapid pace and on a vast scale. Crossing over mountains, spanning rivers and seas, they have facilitated transportation as well as being avenues for admiring the beautiful surrounding landscape.

Chapter 167 – Pandas 大熊猫 and Panda Diplomacy

Introduction:

Native to central China, the giant panda is a symbol of peace and friendship for the Chinese people. The panda bear has for several years now played a key role in cultivating friendship between China and other nations. It is part of the so-called "panda diplomacy."

Fewer than a hundred pandas live in zoos and breeding centers outside China. As pandas are only native to China, pandas living in zoos in other countries are mostly on loan from the Chinese government, including those born there.

Main Story:

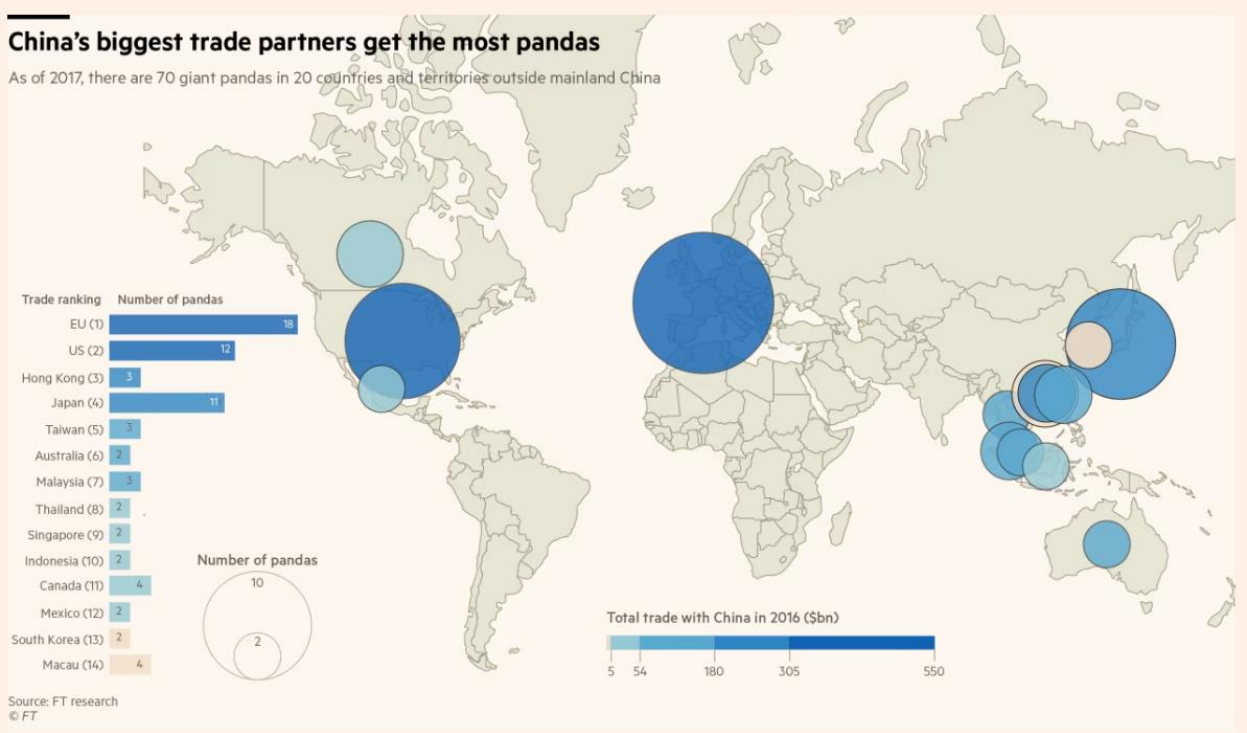
The giant panda has often served as China's national symbol. It was one of the five Fuwa mascots of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, representing the colors of the Olympic rings. Fuwa 福娃 literally means "good-luck dolls".

The Chinese Gold Panda is a series of gold bullion coins issued by the People's Republic of China. It was introduced in 1982.

2020 China Gold Panda 5-Coin Prestige ...

The Qinling 秦岭 panda is a subspecies of the giant panda, discovered in the 1960s.It has a smaller skull and dark brown and light brown fur. They are very rare.

China’s panda program is a pretty effective soft power instrument. The world loves China’s giant pandas. The enigmatic, reserved herbivores evoke goodwill wherever they travel.



From the early 1980s, with their own panda numbers under threat, the Chinese government shifted from gifting to loaning their pandas to nations around the world. Panda pairs are loaned out on a 10-year renewable basis, at significant cost to the host nation.

Singapore's giant panda Jia Jia and her cub. (Photo: Mandai Wildlife Group)

Hosts must meet strict requirements regarding care and accommodation, while also paying up to US$1 million per year for the privilege. This money is meant for panda programs in China. There is an additional substantial fee levied for any panda cubs born during the loan period. Panda cubs must be returned within the first four years to join the national breeding program.

Conclusion:

For China, the panda program has yielded positive results, in diplomacy and in lifting conservation awareness. Funds raised from the loan scheme are directed towards the improvement of the pandas' natural bamboo habitat and to support ongoing breeding programs.

Chapter 168 – Beijing Olympics 2008 & 2022

Introduction:

In hosting both the 2008 Summer Games and the 2022 Winter Games, Beijing is the first city in the world to host both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

Main Story:

China participated in the Olympic Games for the first time at the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki, Finland with only a small contingent of 38 men and 2 women.

As a result of the “two Chinas” conflict in the Olympic Movement, China withdrew from the Olympics in 1958.

It was not until the normalization of relations with the US through the Ping Pong Diplomacy (see Chapter 134) that China returned to the IOC in 1979.

Since then, China’s performance in the Olympics had been stellar mainly in six sports: table tennis, badminton, diving, gymnastics, weightlifting, and shooting.

In the 2008 Olympics, China as the host country won 100 medals (48 gold) and ranked 1st in the games.

Beijing 2008/Mascots | Olympics Wiki ...

In 2022, China held its first ever home Winter Games and ranked 3rd. It was the third time China hosted the Olympics, and second time held in Beijing.

mascots for the 2022 Winter Olympics ...

To Chinese fans, the event's highlight was the freestyle skier, Aileen Gu (nicknamed frog princess 青蛙公主 in China), who switched from Team USA to China. She became the first freestyle skier to win three medals at a Winter Olympics.

Gold medalist Eileen Gu of Team China poses with her medal during the women's big air freestyle skiing medal ceremony on Day 4 of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games at Beijing Medals Plaza on Feb. 8.

Conclusion:

China's first Olympics, the 2008 Games, symbolized China's ascension as a prosperous modern country and a great power. It debuted China's new stature, wealth, and capacity to accomplish the daunting task of putting on an especially ambitious and lavish event. The Games featured newly constructed buildings that would become icons (see Chapter 165 on Modern Architecture in China).

The 2022 Games was however marred by the Covic-19 pandemic and the US-led boycott amid the geopolitical tensions between US and China.

Chapter 169 – Bo Xilai 薄熙来

Introduction:

A high-flyer in the CCP and Party chief in Chongquing 重庆, Bo Xilai was tipped for the top job in the Politburo before he was expelled from the Communist Party and sentenced to life in prison. His wife, Gu Kailai 谷开来, was given a suspended death sentence for the murder of British businessman, Neil Heywood. It was later commuted to life imprisonment.

CNN

China's Bo Xilai: From rising star to ...

Gu Kailai stood trial over Neil Heywood's death

Main Story:

In 2012, the CCP was preparing for its upcoming leadership transition when suddenly one of China's biggest political scandal riveted the country. Bo Xilai, formerly the party chief of Chongqing and a member of China's Politburo was stripped of his posts due to an investigation stemming from Chongqing police chief Wang Lijun's 王立军 February 2012 visit to the US Consulate in Chengdu.

Wang's flight to the US consulate triggered Bo Xilai's downfall

Bo Xilai's downfall is the result of the struggle between two political factions within the CCP. One faction was led by former president Jiang Zemin's 江泽民 followers. It was known as the Shanghai Gang and comprised mainly of "princelings". Bo Xilai himself was a princeling as his father Bo Yibo 薄一波 was a revolutionary veteran who served as vice premier. The other faction primarily consists of former officials from the Chinese Communist Youth League and was led by President Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 and Premier Wen Jiabao 温家宝.

Bo's downfall could also be linked to his own egotistical personality and notorious ambition. In the months preceding the crisis, followers of Bo spread the rumor that Bo could become China's next paramount leader. They even compared Bo to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. Bo's "new left" thinking also raised the ghost of the Cultural Revolution characterized by his Mao-style campaigns.

What has Wang Lijun's attempted defection to the US had to be with Bo's downfall? Wang's entire career had been based on his patron-client ties with Bo. He was considered Bo's close confidant, knew many of his dirty secrets, and had done many highly questionable things during his three years as Bo's police chief in Chongqing.

However, Wang became suspicious of Bo when he found out that he and his wife had been targets of wiretapping under Bo's orders. Wang was at that time under investigation for his role in a corruption case in Liaoning. He was also privy to details of Neil Heywood's death. Fearing for his life, Wang sought asylum at the US consulate in the nearby city of Chengdu, bring evidence implicating Bo and his wife in the Neil Heywood murder. He was, however, denied asylum and was taken into custody by Beijing police.

Wang Lijun was sentenced to fifteen years in prison for defection, corruption, and abuse of power. Bo's downfall paved the way for the accession of Xi Jinping to President of the PRC.

Conclusion:

Without Wang Lijun’s dramatic defection to the US consulate, it would not have been possible to remove Bo Xilai. After Bo was jailed, the aftermath of the events continued to reverberate across the Chinese political landscape. Following Xi Jinping’s accession to power, Bo’s former supporter and Security Tzar, Zhou Yongkang 周永康, was caught up in Xi Jinping’s anti-corruption dragnet in 2013, and ended up in prison.

South China Morning Post

China's disgraced security tsar Zhou ...

Chapter 170 – Digital Yuan/Digital RMB 数字人民币

Introduction:

Launched by China's central bank, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) in April 2021, the digital yuan or e-CNY is China's answer to the cryptocurrency challenge.

The goal of the digital yuan is to partially replace cash. It will help eliminate money laundering, gambling, corruption, terror financing and tax evasion. PBOC stated that its goal is not to replace the US Dollar or international currencies. However, it may reduce the potency of the US "dollar weaponization" using santctions and controlling access to the SWIFT payment system. The digital yuan might sideline some of the private digital payment platforms such as WeChat and AliPay.

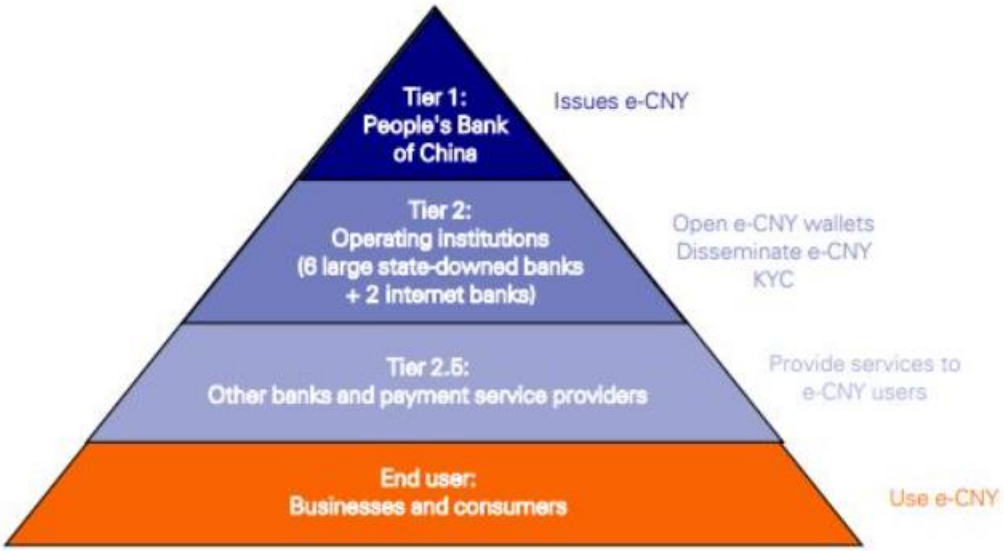
Main Story:

After large scale pilot programs in multiple cities (Shenzhen, Suzhou, Chengdu, Xiong'an, Shanghai, Hainan, Changsha, Xi'an, Qingdao and Dalian), the e-CNY is primarily used for retail payments in China. Eventually, tourists can gain access to the system.

It was also rolled out for foreign attendees of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. However, it saw limited use due to the entrenched usage of credit cards, as well as the lack of familiarity. After the Beijing Olympics, more regions in China were included in the testing.

The e-CNY structure is multi-tiered:

The e-CNY structure



Once the e-CNY wallet is set up, the user will be able to enjoy a wide range of services.

Chinese technology firms such as Alibaba (through its affiliate Ant Group), Tencent (which owns WeChat), Huawei, JD.com and UnionPay were invited to cooperate with the central bank in developing and testing the digital RMB.

This sign in Shenzhen, Guangdong is displayed by a store to show that it accepts e-CNY.

This ATM supports e-CNY.

PBOC describes e-CNY's privacy protection as "controllable anonymity" giving users the option to hide their identity from counterparties, other than law enforcement agencies.

Conclusion:

The successful e-CNY roll-out has accelerated the pace of currency digitalization globally. The US has started to issue a government-backed digital currency and the EU is also considering issuing a digital euro.

Chapter 171 – China’s Quantum Computers

IEEE Spectrum

Quantum Computers Made in China ...

Introduction:

Supercomputers are bound by the normal laws of physics. The more the processors, the better the speed. Quantum computers are far more efficient than supercomputers as the former harnesses the power of quantum mechanics to carry out calculations.

Quantum mechanics is a fundamental theory of physics that provides a description of the physical properties of nature at the scale of atoms and subatomic particles, such as proton, electron, neutron, gluon, etc. It is the study of things that are very, very small, but very, very powerful. It is the hardest part of physics. In 2020, China claimed to have developed a quantum computer that performs computations 100 trillion times faster than any supercomputer.

Main Story:

Beyond experimental and theoretical laboratory applications, several organizations have built working quantum computers, viz. IBM, Google, Honeywell, Intel, Microsoft, and the University of Science and Technology of China.

The United States, the EU and China have initiated massively funded projects in quantum computing, hoping to pull ahead in the field, which is often considered as one of the cornerstones on which the new global supremacy will be determined.

The world of Quantum Computing has been rocked by claims and counter-claims of success.

In 2019, Google claimed that it had achieved quantum supremacy by solving a problem in 200 seconds that classical supercomputers would have taken 10,000 years to compute. However, scientists at IBM disagreed.

Then, scientists in China tested two different quantum computers, Zuchongzi 组虫子 and JiuZhang 九章 2.0, which could complete the same task a million times faster.

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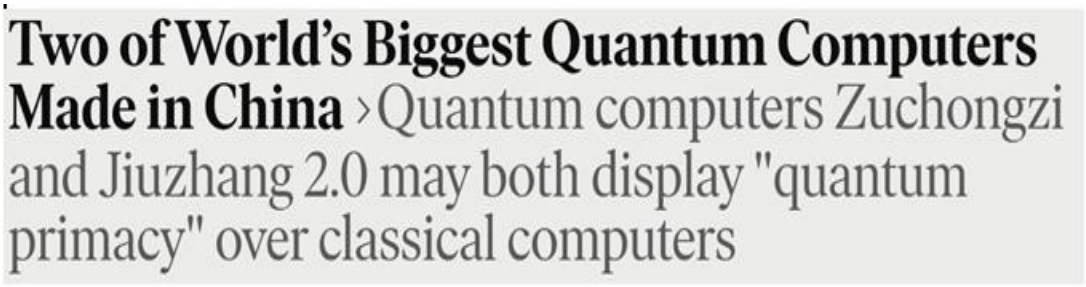
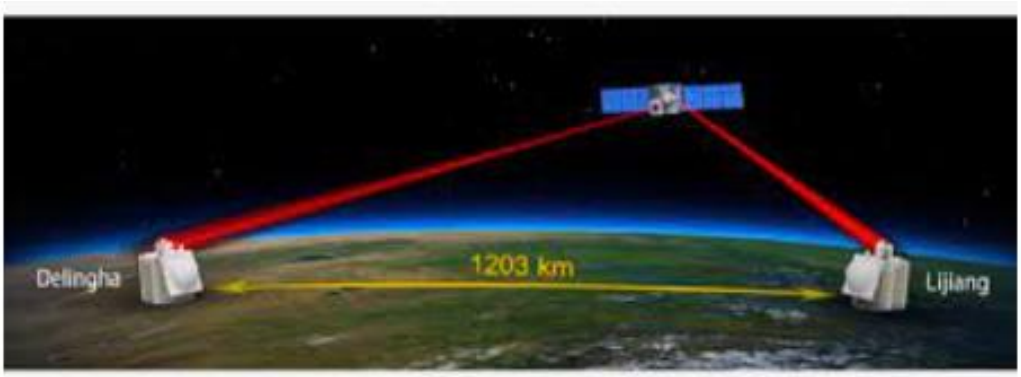


In 2020, the University of Science and Technology of China conducted the first space-based quantum communications, using the Micius satellite to create an ultra-secure data link between two ground stations separated by more than 1,000 miles. The Micius or Mozi 孟子 Satellite, named after the ancient Chinese philosopher, Mencius, was used in the Quantum Experiments at Space Scale (QUESS) 孟子科学实验卫星。 QUESS is a mission designed to facilitate quantum optics experiments over long distances to allow the development of quantum encryption and quantum teleportation technology. It can absolutely detect whether a third party has intercepted a message in transit thus denying undetected decryption.

China's success in those experiments meant that Chinese satellites cannot be hacked, thus securing communications between Chinese cities. Whistle blower Edward Snowden's leak of US surveillance documents was said to be an impetus for the development of QUESS.



Semantic Scholar

PDF] Progress of the Quantum Experiment ...

China May Have Just Taken the Lead in the Quantum Computing Race

China's record-shattering processor is 1 million times faster than what Google achieved three years ago–but we are years from the finish line.

By THOMAS CORBETT and PETER W. SINGER

APRIL 14, 2022

China may have taken the lead in the race to practical quantum computing with a recent announcement that it has shattered a record for solving a complex problem.

Conclusion:

Following those achievements, China is widely seen to be taking the lead in Quantum Computing, although NASA and ESA are taking steps to vie for quantum supremacy.

Chapter 172 – China’s 5 and 6 G technology

Introduction:

Most of the world is yet to experience the benefits of a 5G network, but the geopolitical race for the next big thing in telecommunications technology is already heating up.

For companies and governments, the stakes couldn’t be higher. The first to develop and patent 6G will be the biggest winners in this next industrial revolution. Though still at least a decade away from becoming reality, 6G —which could be up to 100 times faster than the peak speed of 5G — could deliver the kind of technology that’s long been the stuff of science fiction, from real-time holograms to flying taxis and internet-connected human bodies and brains.

Main Story:

After being a follower for 2G, 3G and 4G, China became the global leader for 5G. By the end of 2021, China has built the largest 5G mobile infrastructure in the world. Now China has already embarked on 6G.

Network maintenance staffers at the local subsidiary of China Mobile in Tongling, East China's Anhui Province test antennas for 5G base stations on December 13, 2021. As of early December, the Tongling subsidiary had built over 650 5G stations, enabling full coverage in Tongling's rural hot spots. Photo: cnsphoto

Huawei announced it was starting work on 6G in 2019. This was followed by various research collaborations with other Chinese household names, such as ZTE; international brands, such as Nokia and Ericsson; and state-owned telecoms companies China Unicom and China Mobile.

Huawei's plans to develop 6G in China is going well, but will their overseas expansions be challenged by Japan and the US?

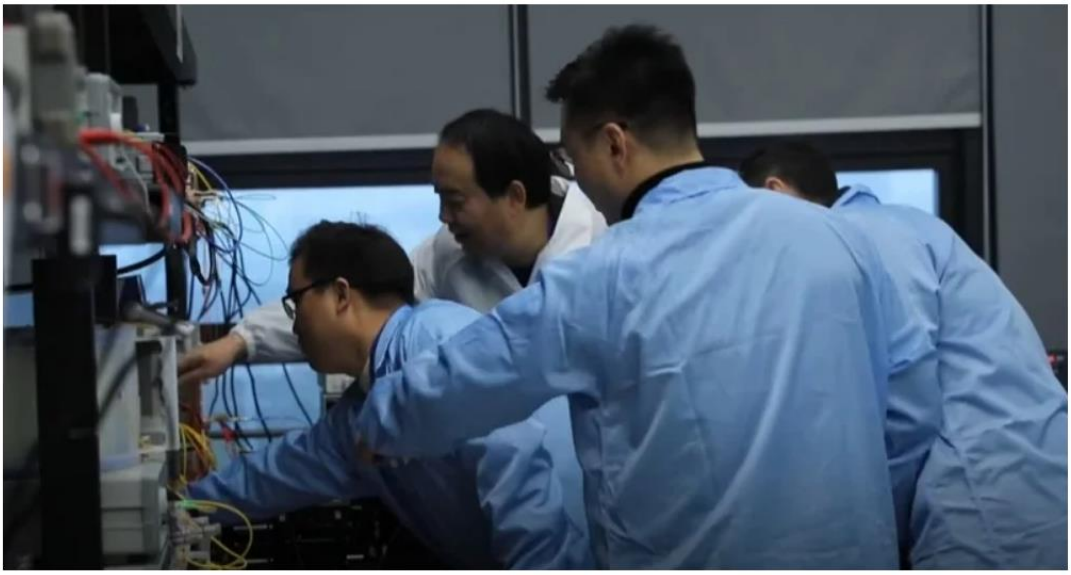
China has the most 6G patents in the world. According to a recent report by Nikkei, China is responsible for 40.3% of global 6G patent filings (US 35.2%, Japan 9.9%, Europe 8.9% and South Korea 4.2%).

China also reportedly achieved several "6G firsts." In November 2020, China launched the world's first 6G satellite from Shanxi province. Said to be able to provide data-transmission speeds 100 times faster than 5G, the 6G test satellite was used to test systems which will be used to build smart cities, for disaster prevention and mitigation, and for environmental protection.

A lab in Nanjing (Purple Mountain Laboratory)reportedly realized the world's faster real-time transmission for wireless communication which is 10-20 times higher than 5G networks.

Chinese lab claims world record with 6G breakthrough, 10 to 20 times faster than 5G

Ryan General · January 11, 2022



A state-run lab in China has reportedly recorded the world's fastest wireless transmission speed of 206.25 gigabits per second (Gbps) via 6G.

The recorded speed was about 10 to 20 times faster than those of most 5G networks.

Experts predict that the commercial rollout of 6G technology could occur as early as 2028.

At the moment, there is no unified international 6G standards. If China does take a major role in setting the standards, it will increase the power Beijing wields on the global stage.

Conclusion:

6G may not reach its potential at least 15 years from now. Major scientific obstacles abound as well as the geopolitical competition between China and the US. As 6G is widely expected to achieve commercialization around 2030, various nations are ramping up research and development efforts. China is taking a leading position based on the huge investment and technological reserves of its mobile operators and equipment makers.

Chapter 173 – World's Largest Radio Telescope 天眼 (Eye of Heaven)

FAST will enable highly sensitive measurements of astronomical phenomenon.Credit: Ou Dongqu/Xinhua/ZUMA

Introduction:

Nicknamed Tianyan 天眼 , the Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST), is located in Guizhou 贵州, southwest China. It was fully operational on 11 January 2020. Like the China space station, China has opened it up to the world's scientists.

China is opening the world's largest radio telescope up to international scientists

By Chelsea Gohd

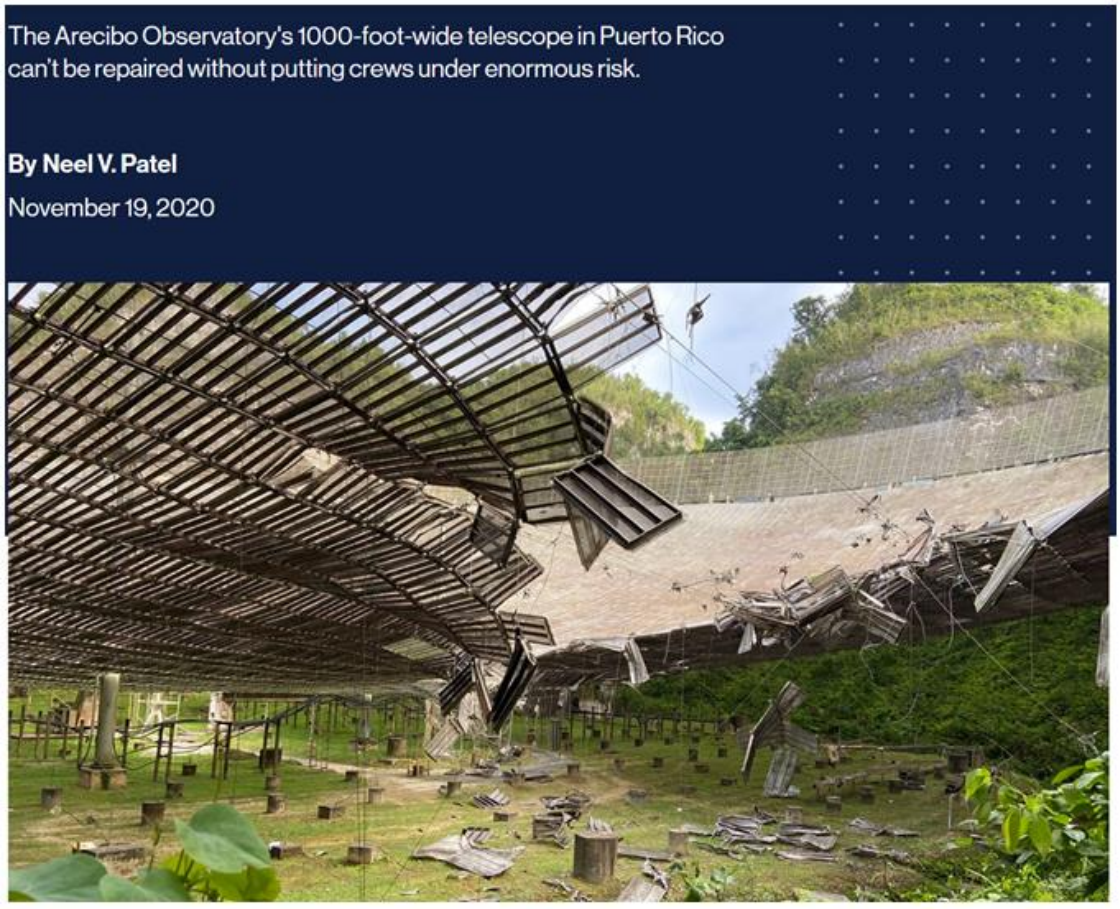
published December 18, 2020

This photo shows the 500-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope in southwest China's Guizhou Province. (Image credit: NAO/FAST)

Before FAST, the world's largest radio telescope was Arecibo Observatory located in Puerto Rico and managed by the US National Science Foundation. For 53 years, Arecibo was studying the atmosphere and objects in space in ways no other instruments could, especially when it came to making radar observations of distant planets, moons, and near-Earth asteroids.

Arecibo could blast radar beams to objects in the solar system and successfully pick up a bounce back that could be used to ascertain the structure and movement of those objects. It also played a huge role in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence or ALIENS.

However, the Arecibo Observatory collapsed in 2020 due to wear and tear. Its role has now been replaced by China's FAST, which completion in 2020 was timely and a boon to the Astrology community.



Beside FAST, China is also working on the world's largest steerable radio telescope, which would be operational by 2026.

World's largest steerable radio telescope to play a timely role in China's space aspirations

- Jingdong Radio Telescope will help keep a watchful eye on pulsars to ensure Earth stays on time
- Bold new project will be a giant leap for China's role in radio astronomy

Ling Xin in Beijing + FOLLOW
Published: 6:00am, 29 Oct, 2022

Why you can trust SCMP

Conclusion:

According to senior Chinese scientists, China is considering building five more radio telescopes of similar size to FAST to study aliens and other cosmic mysteries. No doubt, China will continue its practice of opening up these facilities to the global scientific community.

Chapter 174 – China's High Speed Rail 中国高速铁路

Introduction:

Twenty years ago, China had no high-speed railways (HSR), only slow and rusty trains that plodded along routes connecting major cities like Shanghai and Beijing. Today, China boasts the world's largest network of high-speed railways totaling 40,000 kilometers. More than half of that has been completed in the last five years alone. China's HSR accounts for two-thirds of the world's total HSR networks.

Main Story:

In 1978, Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 came to Singapore to learn about Singapore's economic growth miracle. In that year, he also went to Japan to learn about the world's first high speed rail, Shinkansen 新干线. Following the visit, Deng invoked the "high-speed rail dream."

Japan House London

Shinkansen: History in the Making

Initially, China relied on foreign technology, mainly Japan, Germany and France. Today, Chinese companies are world leaders in HSR. China's high-speed rail expansion is entirely managed, planned and financed by the Chinese government. The Shanghai maglev train, at a top speed of 460 km/h (286mph), is the fastest train in the world.

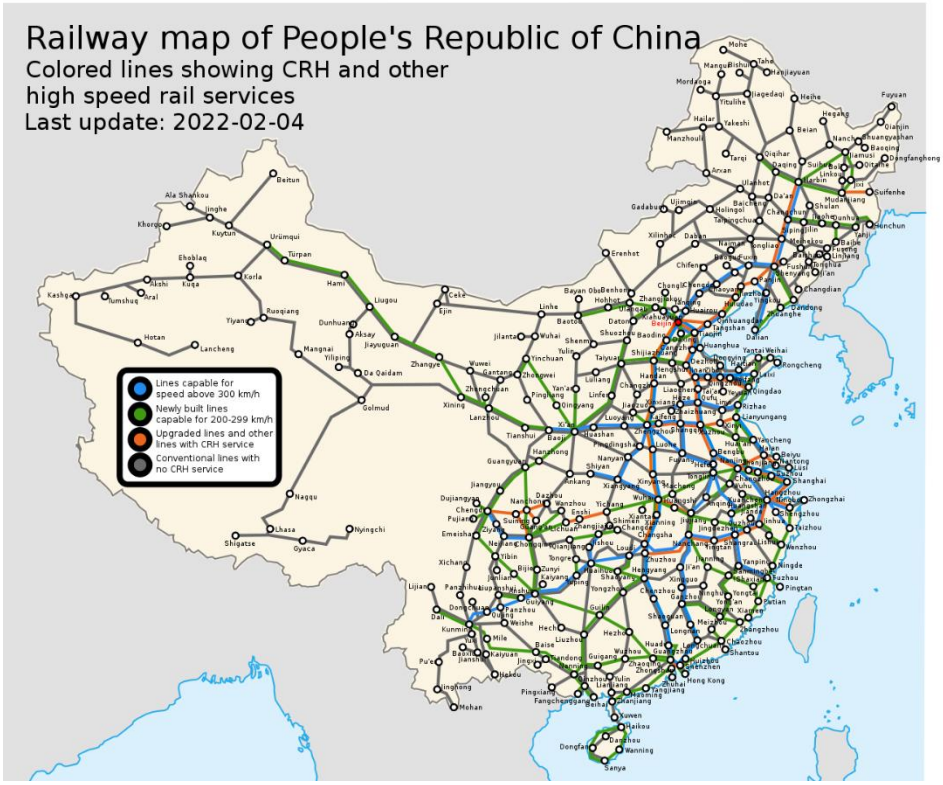
Which country has the fastest train in world?

China

1: Shanghai Maglev - 460 kph/286 mph (**China**)

The world's fastest public train is also unique -- it's the only link in the world currently carrying passengers using magnetic levitation (Maglev) rather than conventional steel wheels on steel rails. 10 Dec 2021

The extension track network crisscrosses the entire country. It has enabled many travelers to reduce their reliance on airlines.



By 2020, 75% of Chinese cities with a population of 500,000 or more had a high-speed rail ink.

In Contrast, Spain, which has Europe's most extensive high-speed network and occupies second place in the global league table, is a minnow in comparison with just 3,200 km of dedicated lines built for operation at 250 kph. Even Japan, once the Mother of high speed rail, has less than 2,700 km.

The UK currently has just 107 kilometers while the United States has only one rail route that (just about) qualifies for high-speed status -- Amtrak's North East Corridor, where Acela trains currently top out at 240 kph on expensively rebuilt sections of existing line shared with commuter and freight trains.

Conclusion:

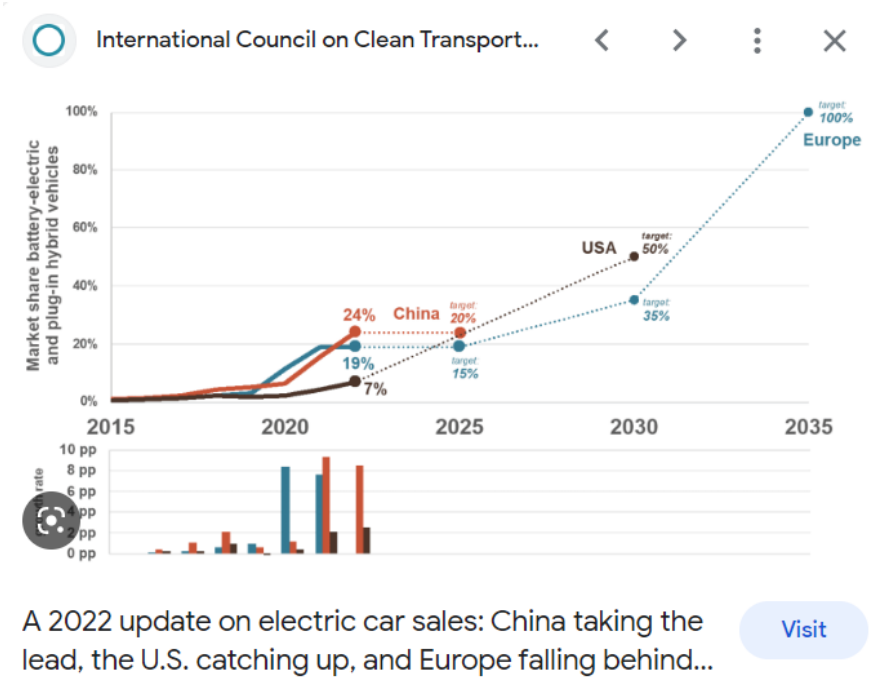
As China seeks to expand its influence across Asia and into Europe and Africa via the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, rail is playing a fundamental part in creating the new "Silk Road" it desires.

Chapter 175 – China’s Electric Car Market 中国电动汽车市场

Half of the world's electric car sales are made in China

Introduction:

In China, consumers are adopting electric vehicles EV at a faster pace as compared to other countries. In 2021, the sales of electric vehicles in China reached three million and dominated more than half of the global market share. Government subsidies are a strong factor in stimulating EV purchases.



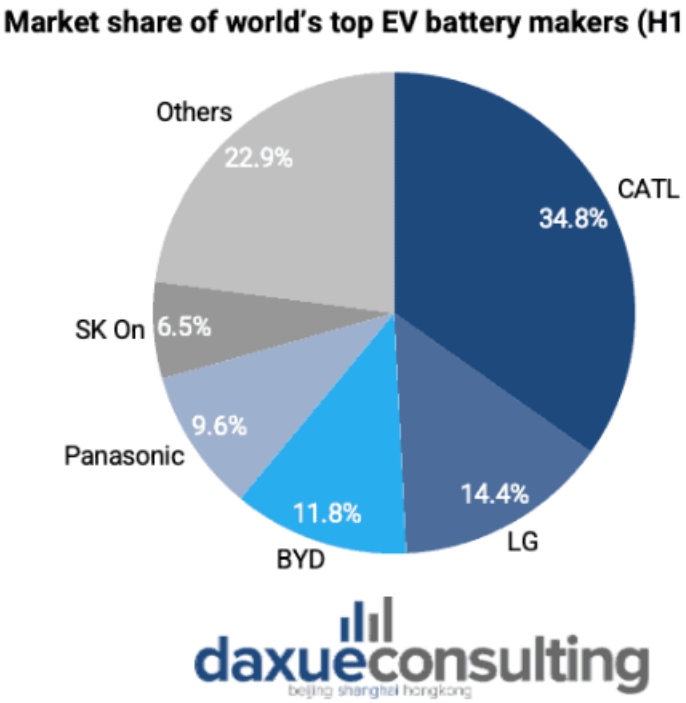
A 2022 update on electric car sales: China taking the lead, the U.S. catching up, and Europe falling behind...

Visit

Main Story:

Beside Government subsidies, batteries play an important part in the growth of the EV market in China. Batteries are one of the core components of electric vehicles and account for 40% of the EV's total cost. China possesses abundant rare earth materials for batteries. Although the world's largest lithium mines are mainly concentrated in South America and Australia, Chinese companies hold a substantial shares in them.

Currently, China is the world's largest supplier of the battery industry, boasting a global market share of 60%. In 2021, six of the world's top ten battery companies are Chinese. The top Chinese company is Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Ltd. CATL.



Another reason for the growth is that China is the world's factory. BYD is the top EV Manufacturer in China. The Guangzhou-based conglomerate has a 28% market share in the first half of 2022. Others are Wuling, Tesla, Chery and GAC Group.

The China EV market is enormously competitive with more than 500 companies vying for a place in it. Some non-automotive companies, like Alibaba, and even an airline, Juneyao Air 吉祥航空, want a share of the EV market.

Electrek

Weird Alibaba Electric Vehicle ...

ET Auto

Juneyao Airlines In Ev: Chinese airline ...

The Hong Guang 宏光 Mini is currently China’s most popular EV.

Affordable electric cars like this Wuling Hong Guang Mini EV have helped boost the Chinese market

Battery-swapping stations are becoming common in China

Conclusion:

As the world’s largest EV maker, home-grown brands, such as Nio, Xpeng and Li Auto, aided by the Made in China 2025 master plan, will no doubt be making inroads into overseas markets. It won’t be long before we start to see Chinese EV’s in Singapore.

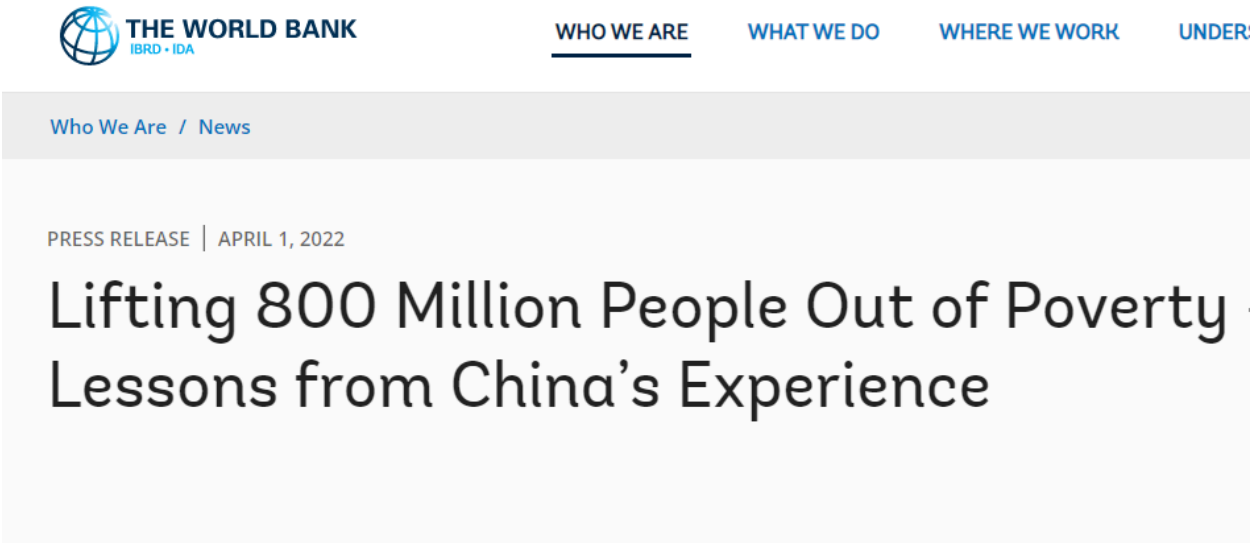
Chapter 176 – Poverty Alleviation and Common Prosperity

(1) POVERTY ALLEVIATION

China's Rural Vitalization
Poverty Alleviation in China ...

Introduction:

In 2014, Xi Jinping set the goal for China to become a “moderately prosperous society.” To achieve that, he adopted the concept of Targeted Poverty Alleviation 精准扶贫.



Main Story:

Since taking over power in 2012, poverty elimination was one of Xi Jinping's most signature national policies. By February 2021, in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic, Xi was able to declare that China had eliminated poverty, calling his campaign a "complete victory" and China's great contribution to the world. He attributed the success to the "institutional advantage" of the Chinese party-state political system which contributed to effective governance.

Xinhua

successful poverty alleviation ...

Poverty elimination was a mass mobilization campaign. Since 2015, the government has relocated millions of households from remote rural regions to new villages more suitable for economic development; constructed new roads, houses, and other infrastructure projects; and offered direct cash transfers. It cost the government over US$80 billion.

Conclusion:

The poverty alleviation generated tremendous support for Xi Jinping's government. A Harvard University study found that there was high satisfaction of the Chinese government, especially among the low-income and inland regions.

(2) COMMON PROSPERITY

Introduction

Decades of break-neck economic growth had led to wide-spread social inequality. Xi Jinping aimed to correct that with his concept of Common Prosperity 共同富裕.

Main Story:

It was implemented through the large-scale regulations and crackdowns on perceived excesses of private industries, most prominently the tech, property, entertainment and the tutoring sectors. Giant companies like Alibaba Group, Tencent, Baidu and DiDi were affected.

To support the Government's campaign, several billionaires and big companies, such as Alibaba Group, Tencent and JD.com pledged billions of dollars in investments and donations.

The campaign targeted the large property sector with high property taxes. China also pledged to build millions of low-cost rental houses.
Criticisms of the campaign include stifling innovation and dynamism of the private sector and that it was an excuse for the CCP to gain control over the economy.

Conclusion:

The common prosperity campaign has certainly benefited the country and its people. Drives to address issues like excessive homework, unpaid overtime, and videogame addiction has improved the health of the citizens. It stimulated the growth in the healthcare and wellness industry as well as the environment and clean technology. The retail and consumption businesses also benefited as crackdowns on practices like excessive overtime free up more time and resources for personal consumption and retail.

In the final analysis, it aimed to create a more equal society, a moderately prosperous society or Xiaokang society 小康社会.

China, a hopeful land for common prosperity - Global Times Visit

Chapter 177 – Most Visited Destinations in Modern China

Introduction:

With a rich history that dates back 5000 years and an economy which is the largest in the world by PPP standard, China is one of the world's most visited countries. Not to mention that the vast country is endowed with beautiful natural and man-made landmarks.

Some of the most visited destinations in modern China (many of which are UNESCO World Heritage Site) are:

1. Great Wall of China 长城

The Great Wall of China is more than 13,000 miles long and is one of the world's seven wonders.

2. Forbidden City (now called the Palace Museum)故宫

Built in 1420 during the Ming Dynasty, it is the world's largest imperial palace.

3. Tiananmen Square 天安门

Just next to the Forbidden City, the Tiananmen Gate was once the main entrance to the Forbidden City. Many people like to visit at sunrise or sunset when the guards raise and lower the national flag.

4. Temple of Heaven 天坛

This was a place of worship for the Ming and Qing Dynasties' emperors.

Temple of Heaven in Beijing - Xinhua ...

5. Summer Palace 颐和园

It was the imperial garden in the Qing Dynasty.

6. Yu Garden, Shanghai 豫园

It is over 400 years old, dating back to the Ming Dynasty, well known for its classical art and carvings.

7. The Bund, Shanghai 外滩

It is the waterfront area with amazing views of ancient colonial buildings and beautiful modern skyscrapers.

8. Nanjing Road, Shanghai 南京路

Lying at the heart of Shanghai, it is famous for its shopping precinct with its bustling energy.

9. Shanghai World Financial Center 上海环球金融中心

At 492 meters and 101 stories tall, it is the world's 12th tallest building. Tourist can travel up to the 100th floor and enjoy an unblocked 360-degree panoramic view of Shanghai.

10.Oriental Pearl TV Tower, Shanghai 东方明珠

It houses The Shanghai History Museum, Game City, a Revolving Restaurant and the Dynamic Ring Multimedia Show.

11.Terracotta Warriors Museum, Xian 兵马俑，西安

It is Emperor Qinshihuang's 秦始皇 Mausoleum Site Museum.

12.Ming Dynasty Tombs 明十三陵

The first Ming emperor's tomb is located near his capital Nanjing. However, the majority of the Ming tombs are located in a cluster near Beijing and are collectively known as the Thirteen Tombs of the Ming Dynasty 十三陵.

Ming Tombs, the Ming Tombs Beijing ...

13.Yangtze River 长江

This 6,300 kilometers long river is the third longest in the world.

14.Three Gorges Dam 三峡

15.Chengdu Panda Base 成都大熊猫繁育研究基地

16.Reed Flute Cave, Guilin 芦笛岩

Named after natural reeds that grew outside the caves, which are historically cultivated and turned into flutes, the caves are lit up by multi-colored lights.

17.Zhangjiajie National Park, Hunan 湖南张家界国家森林公园

The inspiration for the movie “Avatar”.

A Floating World | AnOther

18.Mogao Caves, Dunhuang 摸高石窟，敦煌

19.Giant Buddha, Leshan 乐山大佛

20.West Lake, Hangzhou 西湖杭州

21.Huangshan (Yellow Mountain)黄山

22.Mount Tai, Tai'an 泰山

One of five sacred mountains in China. A place of spiritual significance since 1,000BC, when emperors visited to meditate and offer sacrifices.

Mt. Taishan Tai Shan - ...

23.Harbin Ice and Snow Festival 哈尔滨国际冰雪节

24.Jiuzhaigou National Park 九寨沟国家公园

A nature reserve located in the north of Sichuan Province known for its pristine sparkling clear water lakes and myriad waterfalls.

Jiuzhaigou National Park (Official GAN...

Conclusion:

With economic growth, more and more locations are being opened up to tourists. Some of the new locations offer alarming scenic beauty for those who are prepared to make the journey off the beaten paths into the interior of China or the mountains of Tibet.

Chapter 178 – China’s Real Estate Market

Introduction:

In August 2021, the collapse of Shenzhen-based Evergrande Group, China’s second largest developer, signaled the end of decades of break-neck growth for the Chinese property sector. What happened and what is the future of China’s property market?

Main Story:

In the early 2000s, a booming real estate market led to speculative buying as new homes were pre-sold by property developers who turned more and more to international investors for funds. This was initially ignored as the urban population was expanding and the rapid development helped the central government to meet its ambitious annual economic growth target.

However, it eventually led to the prevalence of ghost towns and ghost cities across the country. Borrowings by developers surged from US$675M in 2009 to $64.7 billion in 2020. A debt bomb was in the making.

DW

Checking in on China's ghost cities ...

Chinese authorities imposed a series of steps to deflate the bubble, famous among which was the “three red lines” which aimed to control the leverage taken on by developers. The strict measures touched off a cash-flow crisis for developers, made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, at least 18 developers defaulted on offshore bonds, including the biggest developer – Evergrande.

The property market slumped. Developers generally could only complete about 60% of projects before they went into financial difficulty. Millions of citizens who had put up money for these pre-sold houses instituted wildcat boycotts, refusing to pay their mortgages on unfinished homes. Social stability was disrupted. Hundreds of housing projects in about 90 cities, with loans of as much as 2 trillion yuan were under threat.

T TIME

China's Mortage Boycotts Are Spreading ...

In early 2022, the government decided to intervene. Among other measures, Beijing injected about 200 billion yuan in special loans to ensure stalled housing projects are delivered to buyers. A “Lehman moment” was averted.

By August 2022, the government has already injected 1 trillion yuan into the real estate market. The package of measures was a turning point for China’s property sector. Property stocks began a strong recovery.

China’s real estate crisis could be over. Property stocks are soaring

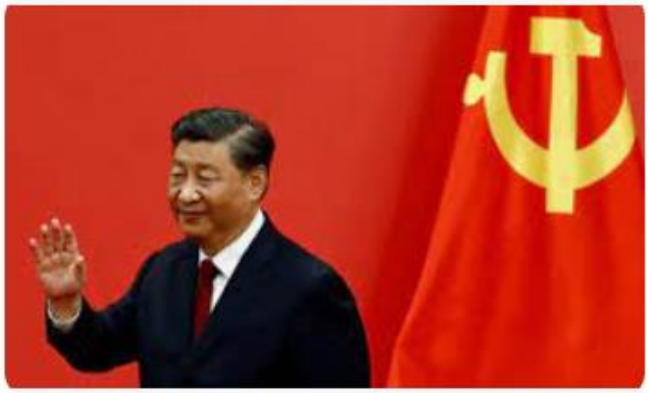
By Laura He, CNN Business

Published 1:28 AM EST, Mon November 14, 2022

Conclusion:

China’s real estate landscape is undergoing profound structural shifts driven mainly by significant policy changes. Xi Jingping’s key policy message has been “houses are for living in, not for speculation.” The structural changes will see a stronger hand of the government vis-a-vis the private developers.

Chapter 179 – Xi Jinping 习近平



Introduction:

Son of a deputy prime minister, Xi Jinping is considered a “princeling”. Yet he aligned himself with the faction led by Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao (see Chapter 169 Bo Xilai) and defeated the princeling gang of Jiang Zemin to become the President of the PRC in 2013. By 2016, he was already elevated to a CCP “core” leader, an honor previously bestowed upon Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

Main Story:

Xi Jinping was born in 1953 in Shaanxi province. His father, Xi Zhongxun, who reported directly to Deng Xiaoping, fell out of favor with Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution led by Mao’s wife Jiang Qing. He was labelled an enemy of the Party, publicly humiliated and jailed. Xi Jinping was sent to the countryside in 1969 where he worked as a manual laborer for six years. This, however, proved to be a benison for Xi as he was able to forge good relations with the peasantry which would later pave the way for his rise to power.

In 1974, Xi attended Beijing’s Tsinghua University, where he studied chemical engineering. In early 2007, a scandal surrounding the upper leadership of Shanghai led to his taking over as the city’s party secretary. That led to his appointment as one of the nine members of the standing committee of the Politburo in 2007. Xi’s fortunes got another boost in 2012 when the Bo Xilai scandal paved the way for his accession to the Presidency in 2013.

Xi was able to rapidly consolidate his power after assuming office. His first tasks included a nationwide anti-corruption campaign which saw the removal of “tigers”and “flies”. China became more assertive in international affairs, with its claim of territorial sovereignty over the South China Sea and Taiwan. Xi also pushed for the “One Belt One Road” initiative which impacted directly the countries of East Asia, Central Asia and Europe.

Xi’s leadership brought significant changes to China and raised it status in the world as a major world power, rivalling the US. In Oct 2022, breaking from the CCP’s traditional limit of two terms, Xi was reelected to a third term as general secretary of the CCP and President of the PRC.

www.voanews.com

10 Ways China Has Changed Under Xi Jinping

Xi Jinping’s Chinese Dream has been viewed as a call for China’s rising international influence. Xi refers to the dream as a form of national rejuvenation.

Young Chinese who are envious of America’s cultural influence bear the hope that China could one day rival the US in soft power.

Reviled by the Western media as a dictator, Xi has recently shown that he does listen to the people when he made an abrupt U-turn on China's long proclaimed zero-Covid policy, following mass protests to Covid lockdowns .

Conclusion:

Accomplishments of Xi Jinping include reducing poverty and curbing corruption, promoting the Belt and Road initiative and deepening economic ties with other countries, especially Russia, Africa and the Middle East.

Asia Times

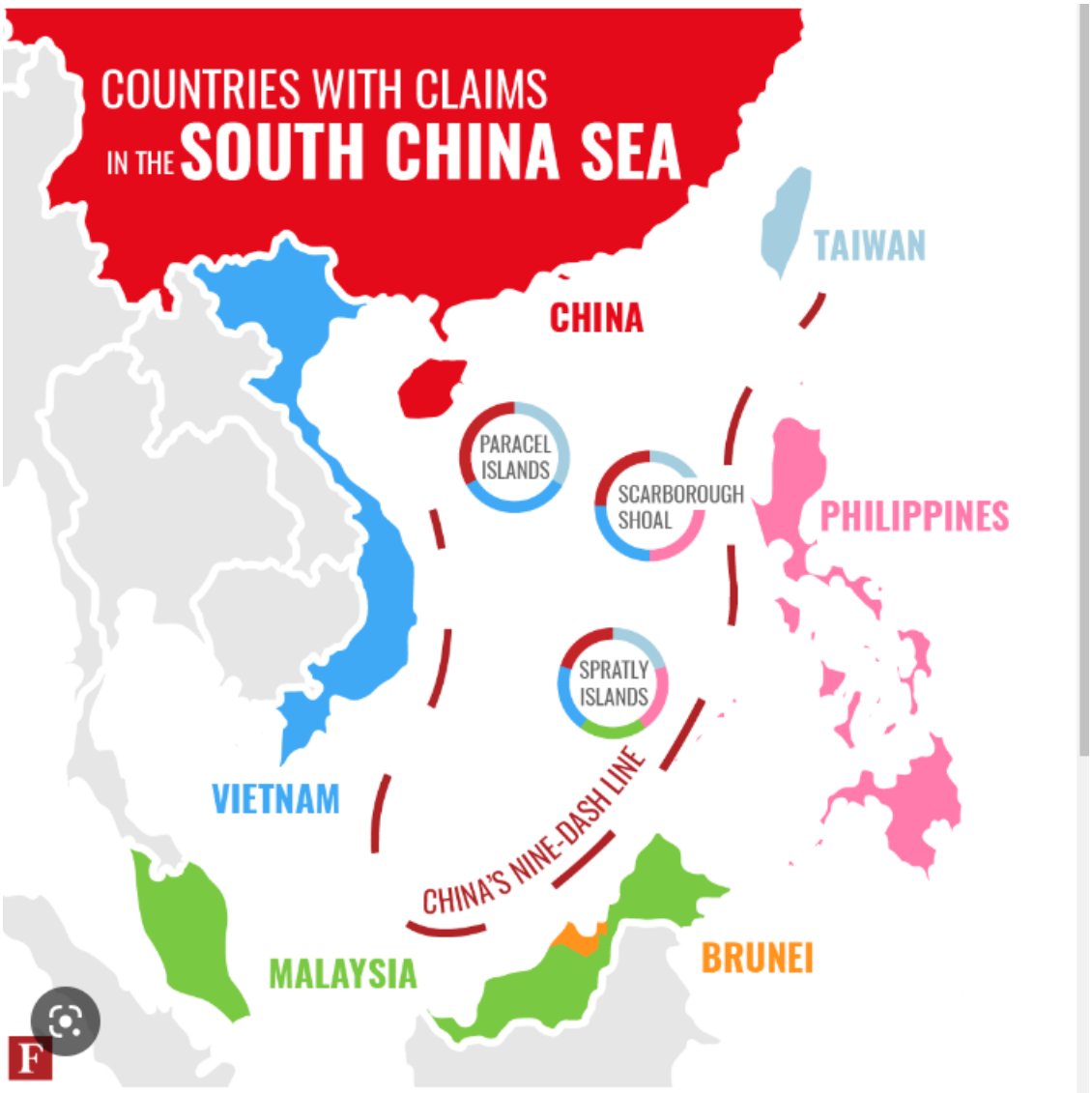
Saudi Arabia trip a game changer ...

He also face the formidable task of steering China through the great challenges posed by the US and its European allies, which increasingly see China's rise as a growing threat.

Chapter 180 - South China Sea Disputes

Introduction:

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea (SCS) involved half a dozen nations, including China. They revolve around islands, reefs, and other features of the South China Sea, potentially drawing in a conflict between China and the US.



Main Story:

Why is the SCS so important and why are so many nations vying for a piece of the pie? As can be seen from the map above, Taiwan, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines are making active claims separately over the Paracels, Spratlys,

Scarborough Shoal, and other features, with China making claim over almost all of the SCS with its nine-dash line.

There are very important reasons to do so. About a third of global trade goes through the South China Sea, including - significantly - half of oil and gas tankers from the Middle East. For China, 80% of its energy imports and 40% of its total trade passes through the SCS. Moreover, the sea itself is rich in fish and other marine resources. There are oil and natural gas reserves below the sea bed, far exceeding those of the oil-rich country of Kuwait.

It may be interesting to note that in the course of history, some others countries that had made claims to the SCS, had dropped out from the competition. In 1932, France formally claimed both the Paracel and Spratly Islands. In 1933, France followed up on their claim by annexing the Spratlys and formally included them into French Indochina. However, the French lost their claims to both Islands, to South Vietnam after they lost the Indochina War and were driven out of South Vietnam.

Another country that lost is claim is Japan. In 1939, Japan had laid claim and occupied both the Paracel and Spratly Islands. They were controlled by the Imperial Japanese Navy. After WWII, Japan was forced to relinquish control of the islands.

What is the basis of China's claims. This dates back to 1947 when the Republic of China published a map with nine dashes forming a U that encloses most of the SCS. When the Communists took over China in 1949, Zhou Enlai adopted the map. To emphasize China's sovereignty over Taiwan, a tenth dash was added in some cases, which included Taiwan.

In 1974, just before the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, China drove out the South Vietnamese troops from the Paracels and took control of the islands. The ownership of the islands remains hotly contested, with Vietnam and Taiwan both claiming de jure sovereignty.

Navy Times

China won the Battle of the Paracel Islands

In 1988, China again defeated the Vietnamese in the Battle of Johnson Reef and occupied the Spratlys.

Business Insider

Vietnam Marks Johnson South Reef Battle ...

In the 1990's, China began building artificial islands in the SCS. The building of artificial islands in the SCS was nothing new because Vietnam and the Philippines had done that before, for decades. However, China was building those islands to an unprecedented scale, thus drawing the attention of the US which believes that those islands will be used as unsinkable aircraft carriers.

In 2009, China presented the "nine dash line" for the first time at an international conference. Following that, there was a standoff with the Philippines in 2012, over Scarborough Shoal. The case reached the International Court of Justice, the Hague which settled in favor of the Philippines. China did not attend the proceedings and refused to recognize the arbitration court's decision. China continued their preferred way of handling the dispute through bilateral negotiations.

To counter China's moves, the US started the Freedom of Navigation operations, intentionally sailing Navy vessels near Chinese occupied disputed reefs and artificial islands. China charged that the US wanted to "pick quarrels and make troubles under the banner of 'freedom of navigation'."

Conclusion:

The South China Sea disputes are thorny issues that are difficult to settle. Many countries are involved, not only those which are making direct claims. Disquietingly, the South China Sea disputes are drawing the US and China closer and closer to a confrontation, which all countries would not like to see happen.

Chapter 181 – One Belt One Road 一带一路

Introduction:

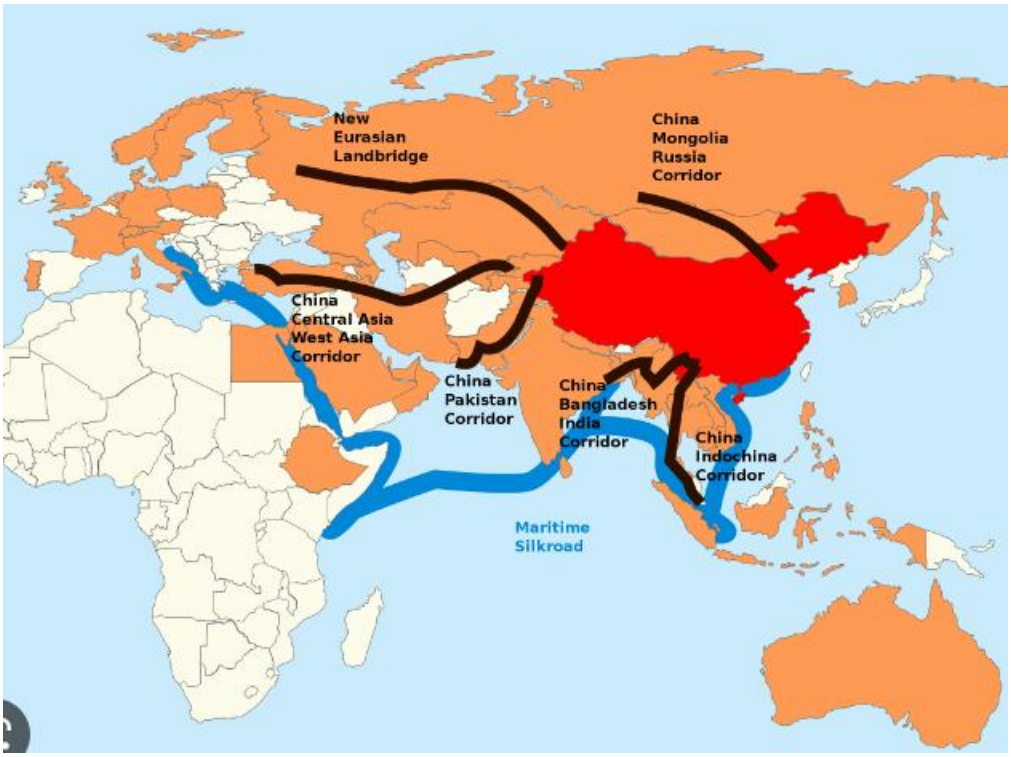
One Belt One Road (OBOR), started in 2013, is China's new Silk Road. A centerpiece of Xi Jingping's foreign policy, it aimed to improve connectivity and cooperation among multiple countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Main Story:

Also called the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the project is divided into two parts.

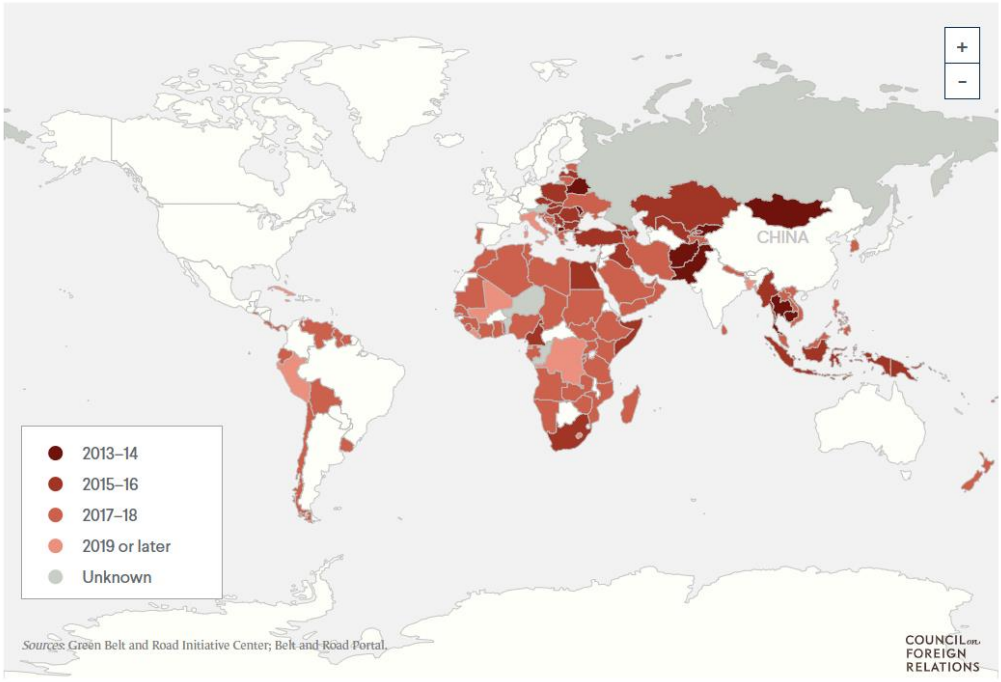
The first, "One Belt", is a land-based "Silk Road Economic Belt" connecting China with Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and Western Europe. The second, "One Road", is a sea-based "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" connecting China's southern coast to the Mediterranean, Africa, South-East Asia, and Central Asia.

The map below show the "One Belt" denoted by black lines and the "One Road" denoted blue lines.



Singapore is connected via the maritime Silk Road and is the link between coastal China and the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Strait of Hormuz.

China has announced investments of over US$1 trillion in the various infrastructure projects and is funding them by offering low-cost loans to the participating countries. As of August 2022, 149 countries have signed up to the BRI.



As can be seen from the map, the countries that support the BRI are generally the lesser developed countries. These are the countries which will benefit the most from China's infrastructure developments (roads, railways, sea ports and airports.) They would also have access to China's vast market as well as technology.

The developed countries of the West opposes what is seen as China's claim to global leadership and the re-shaping of the World Order.

Conclusion:

The scope of the BRI is indeed wide and ambitious. It is a mega project which covers two-thirds of the global population and three-fourth of the energy resources. Like the ancient Silk Road, BRI or OBOR cannot be ignored due to its role on mutual peace and economic development.

Chapter 182 – The Fight against Covid-19

Introduction:

The first known case of Covid-19 was identified in Wuhan 武汉. The disease quickly spread worldwide, resulting in a pandemic which lasted three years and still expected to be around for another year.

Main Story:

In late December 2019, an outbreak of this mysterious disease happened in a seafood wholesale wet market, the Huanan 华南 Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, Hubei 湖北. The market was shut down on 1 January 2020. Unlike SARS, this novel Coronavirus, later named Covid-19 by WHO, was rapidly transmissible and many infected patients showed no symptoms at all (asymptomatic). There were claims that the virus was even air-borne. Although the mortality rate was not as high as SARS (which is around 10-15%), the high rate of infection also resulted in numerous deaths in China and around the world.

Once identified, China took decisive action to fight the spread of the virus. The world saw how China was able to build the 1000-bed Huoshenshan 或深山 Hospital just within 10 days.

Similar rapid built hospitals were constructed in other parts of the country, especially Beijing.

Armies of medical and nursing personnel were sent to Wuhan from various parts of China to help fight the disease.

Donald Trump turned the pandemic into a political issue, calling the virus a “Chinese virus” and “Kung flu”. He initiated the call to investigate the source of the virus and demanded US$10 trillion reparations from China, a call that was quickly supported by Scott Morrison of Australia.

Although many vaccines were subsequently developed, none of them could actually prevent an infection. China used their own home-grown vaccines, mainly the Sinovac and Sinopharm vaccines. However, the country relied more on lockdowns and quarantines. It adopted a zero-Covid policy.

Initially, China’s efforts at controlling the spread of Covid-19 was effective and China could celebrate the 100th anniversary of the CCP in July 2021 with much fanfare and without masks.

China holds art performance to celebrate CPC centenary_英语频道_央视网(cctv.com)

As the virus mutated into the Delta, Omecron and other sub-variants, it became more and more transmissible. Two years into the pandemic, China instituted severe lockdowns. As the pandemic neared its third year, mass protests erupted against the continued severe Covid measures.

In December 2022, China abruptly ended its zero-Covid policy and removed almost all Covid measures. On 17 February 2023, China’s top leaders declared a “decisive victory” over Covid-19. As at that date, there were about 99,000 confirmed cases with about 120,000 deaths.

Cases spiked after the end of draconian Covid measures. Contrary to initial fears that the massive migration of travelers during the Lunar New Year would lead to an explosion of cases, there was “no obvious rebound” after the New Year holidays, as reported by Chinas CDC.

China COVID-19 LIVE | President Xi Jinping Declares ‘Decisive Victory’ Over COVID-19 | World News

Watch

Uploaded: Feb 17, 2023

Conclusion:

No country was fully prepared against this pandemic. Many countries struggled between saving lives and saving the economy. Although the pandemic is still not over, the virus has gradually become less virulent and death rates are dropping.

As at 21 February 2023, China’s Covid cases are 2 million with 87, 500 deaths. Even after factoring in alledged under-reporting, the figures will be nowhere near those of many other major countries (e.g. US has 105 million cases with 1.14 million deaths.) With a vast population of 1.4 billion people, China has done well in saving both lives and saving the economy.

Chapter 183 – Xinjiang-related issues 新疆相关问题

Introduction:

Xinjiang has been a headache to China due to separatist tendencies, not least because of its distant location from Beijing and its largely non-Han population. Problems with Xinjiang date back to the Qin dynasty, or even Ming dynasty.

Main Story:

After the Ming dynasty drove out the Mongols from China, the Mongols had constantly caused incursions into China. The Mongols were seen as barbarians by the Ming dynasty and Ming dynasty's policy in dealing with them was 以夷治夷 "using barbarians to control barbarians."

In the 17th and 18th Centuries, Xinjiang fell under the control of one subgroup of the Oirat Mongols, the Zhungars, and they formed the Zhungar Mongol Empire/Zhungar Khanate. After nearly a century of war with the Zunghars, the Qing dynasty established control over the region which comprises present-day Xinjiang.

A skirmish between the Dzungar Khanate and the armies of the Qing Dynasty [Artist is unknown to m...

Visit

After the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the Republic of China inherited Xinjiang but had to deal with separatist movements which took advantage of the turmoil in China at that time. In 1934, the USSR got involved in Xinjiang helping Chinese forces, aided by Hui and Uyghur Muslims, against rebel forces.

In 1946, Uyghur leaders came to forefront and the Chinese governor formed a shaky coalition government for Xinjiang with these leaders. When China fell to the Communists, Xinjiang became a province of the PRC. To appease the local population, the PRC recognized Xinjiang as an Autonomous Region in 1955, naming it the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. To help develop Xinjiang and also to have a better control of the region, Mao Zedong initiated the migration into Xinjiang of millions of Han Chinese.

During the period of the Sino-Soviet Split (see chapter 121), the “Yi-Ta Incident” 伊塔事件 took place in 1962, leading to a mass exodus of Uyghurs to the Soviet Union. The incident, for which China blamed the Soviet Union, exacerbated tensions between China and the USSR; and China expelled all Soviet diplomats from the Uyghur Autonomous Region. The Soviet Union supported Uyghur separatist movements against China.

After China’s rapprochement with the USSR in 1989 following Gorbachev’s visit to Beijing, Soviet support for the Uyghur separatist movements ended. In the late 1990’s up to 2014, the Uyghurs conducted numerous terrorist attacks against Han Chinese, mostly in the capital city of Urumqi.

In 2014, one year after becoming the President of the PRC, Xi Jinping instituted a policy of mass surveillance and incarceration of purportedly over one million Uyghurs in re-education camps. Human rights groups and the US denounced China with claims of genocide amongst other claims, such as suppression of religious activity and political indoctrination.

China, however, argued that it has been supportive of all Muslims in China, including Xinjiang Uyghurs. China has uplifted the living standards of the Uyghurs by investing billions of dollars in Xinjiang, modernizing the cities, building 21 airports, linking the region with bullet trains, etc. Extreme poverty in the region was eliminated by year 2020.

According to Chinese statistics, Uyghurs are living longer, growing in population, and becoming wealthier. China blames the West for stoking separatism in Xinjiang since the 1950s by arming/funding separatists.

Conclusion:

Given the US-China tensions, the issues in Xinjiang are not going to go away anytime soon. Xinjiang lies smack in the middle of the land route of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and has a lot of economic implications. China cannot afford to have an unstable Xinjiang.

Chapter 184 – Tibet-related Issues 西藏相关问题

Introduction:

The main issue with Tibet is the separatist movement in the form of a government-in-exile in India headed by the 14th Dalai Lama. Also, within the US, there is a "Free Tibet!" movement which supports Tibet's independence from China. Some historians outside China consider Tibet as a sovereign nation, illegally occupied by China.

Main Story:

The spiritual leader of Tibet is the Dalai Lama, assisted by his number 2, the Panchen Lama. Both the first Dalai Lama and the first Panchen Lama were born during the time when Tibet was under the control of the Yuan dynasty in the 14th Century.

The Dalai Lama is the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the most dominant of the four major schools of

Tibetan Buddhism. Tibet’s current Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso who is in exile in India.

Buddhism was actually introduced into Tibet during the time of the Tang dynasty (618-907) mainly by Princess Wen cheng 文成公主, daughter of Emperor Taizhong. The Princess, who was a Buddhist, was married to the Tubo King, Songtsan Gampo 松赞干布.

Top China Travel
Princess Wencheng, Wencheng Princess

Great Tibet Tour
A Brief Introduction to Princess Wencheng

Tibet Vista
Songtsan Gambo and Princess Wencheng

Prior to that, Tibet had a religion known as Bon which advocated animal and even human sacrifices. The Shamans reasserted their authority after Tubo ousted the Tang dynasty when Tang was weak. Following 30 years of warfare, the Tang dynasty defeated Tubo and diplomatic relation was re-established. Another Tang dynasty princess, Princess Jin Cheng 金城公主, also a Buddhist, was married to the Tubo king. Princess Jincheng bore a son who grew up to be a good leader. He removed the outdated and shamanistic Bon religion and replaced it with Buddhism (see chapter 48, Rise and Fall of Tubo.)

During the time of the Qing Dynasty, Tibet was invaded by forces from the Zungar Mongol Khanate. It was the Qing army that expelled the Zungar invaders. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Zungars were conquered by the Qing dynasty and Xinjiang came under the control of Qing China.

Some scholars believed that Tibet regained its independence after the Yuan dynasty was taken over by the Ming dynasty, and during the Qing dynasty the relationship between the Qing court and Tibetan lamas was a patron and priest relationship. They pointed to the fact that the 13th Dalai Lama, for example,, knelt, but did not kowtow, before the Empress Dowager Cixi and the young emperor.

Taking advantage of the turmoil in China (warlordism, Japanese invasion, Chinese Civil War), some separatist movements in Tibet had from time to time tried to seek independence for Tibet. When the Qing dynasty collapsed in 1912, Tibet declared its independence. After Mao Zedong came into power in 1949, the PLA re-exerted China's control over Tibet.

After a major pro-independence revolt took place in 1959, Zhou En-lai ordered the dissolution of the Tibetan government and the 14th Dalai Lama was forced to flee to India, along with thousands of his followers. According to Kenneth Conboy's book, The CIA's Secret War In Tibet, the CIA orchestrated the Dalai Lama's escape. A government-in-exile was set up in Dharamsala. The Dalai Lama accused China of genocide. The PRC argues that the Tibetan authority under successive Dalai Lamas was itself a human rights violator, running the kingdom as a serfdom. The invasion of Tibet by the PLA was characterized as a peaceful liberation of Tibetans from a "feudal serfdom system" 和平解放西藏.

China Daily

Tibet is liberated by PLA

Just like in Xinjiang, the PRC poured millions into developing Tibet. In the 70 years from 1959 to 2020, Tibet's GDP increased 1,500 times. Lifespan has also doubled to 70.1 years.

Conclusion:

Today's Tibet is internationally recognized as part of China. No country has recognized the Tibetan government-in-exile as the legitimate government of Tibet. However, sovereignty issues still remain.

Just like Taiwan, the US recognized Tibet as being part of China but continued to irritate China by holding high level meetings with the exiled Dalai Lama.

Dalai Lama
Travels 1990 - 1999 | The 14th Dalai Lama

NPR
Dalai Lama Meets With President ...

The New York Times
Bush and Congress Honor Dalai Lama ...

Leaders of the Tibetan Youth Congress which claims a strength of over 30,000 members are constantly needling China and are alleged by China to advocate violence to gain independence for Tibet.

India’s military includes over 10,000 Tibetans, many of whom are deployed on the high Himalayan mountains at the border with China.

Explained: Indian Army’s secretive Tibetan squad; why it’s key in China tussle

Chapter 185 – Taiwan-related Issues 台湾相关问题

Introduction:

China sees Taiwan as a renegade province which must be re-united with the motherland, by force if necessary. The US is committed to defending Taiwan. This is set to put the US and China on a collision course.

Main Story:

After the defeat of the KMT in mainland China in 1949, the KMT fled to Taiwan, which was a province of China during the Qing dynasty. Taiwan was taken over and ruled by Japan for 50 years but was returned to China after WWII. China's planned invasion of Taiwan, as a continuation of the Chinese Civil War, was curtailed when the Korean War broke out in 1950. The US, which at first was

reluctant to defend Taiwan, then decided that Taiwan was an important strategic location to stop the spread of Chinese Communism.

As Mainland China rose in economic power, the world came to recognize the PRC as China, instead of the ROC (Republic of China/Taiwan.) In 1971, the UN General Assembly admitted the PRC and expelled the ROC. The Taiwanese delegation walked out of the assembly meeting in protest. To date, only 14 sovereign states maintain official diplomatic ties with Taiwan, versus 178 with China.

The KMT and the CCP both considered themselves the sole legitimate ruler of the "One China." In 1992, the PRC and Taiwan under the KMT signed the 1992 Consensus 九二共识, basically a "One China" consensus, declaring that there is only one China thus bringing Taiwan one step closer to unification. However, when the DPP came into power, they repudiated this agreement.

After Tsai Ing-wen won the election in 2016 and then 2020, the DPP began to move closer towards independence from China. This caused an escalation of the cross-strait tensions. The Trump administration and subsequently, the Biden administration, began to show more backing for Taiwan as an independent nation although officially the US still adopted the "One China" principle and maintained the so-called policy of strategic ambiguity. They continue to sell military equipment to Taiwan and sent officials to visit Taiwan (the most prominent one being House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.) Recently, Biden even went to the extent of saying that the US would come to Taiwan's defense if China attacked.

The PRC had in turn ramped up their "grey-zone" warfare campaign (irregular tactics to exhaust the enemy without resorting to open combat) such as the frequency and scale of patrols of PLA bombers, fighter jets, and surveillance aircraft over and around Taiwan. Taiwan's air force was forced to scramble each

time an enemy plane appears on the radar. During Nancy Pelosi's visit, China conducted a large scale military exercise simulating the blockade and invasion of Taiwan.

China says its armed forces have a right to operate around Taiwan. (File)

The PRC also conducted thousands of cyberattacks on government agencies on a daily basis. Nonmilitary measures included suspending cross-strait communications, restricting tourism to Taiwan and pressuring global corporations to list Taiwan as a Chinese province.

Caught in the middle of these tensions is Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, the world's largest contract chip maker. Now both China and the US have decided to build up their own chip making capability, in case a war breaks out in Taiwan.

Conclusion:

As time passed, an increasingly powerful China had meant that the government of Taiwan had given up the idea of recovering mainland China, and instead tended to inch more and more towards independence. However, the majority of Taiwanese preferred to maintain the status quo and not turn Taiwan into another Ukraine.

The November 2022 local elections saw a very poor showing for the DPP which led to the hawkish Tsai Eng-wen stepping down as the head of the party. Taiwan's KMT had found a new star in the great grandson of Chiang Kai-shek. There is no knowing what direction Taiwan will take should the KMT returns to power.

Taiwan's Kuomintang finds new star in great grandson of Chinese nationalist leader

Chiang Wan-an, Taipei mayoral candidate for the oppositions party Kuomintang (KMT), speaks at a rally ahead of the election in Taoyuan, Taiwan, on Saturday. | REUTERS

Although the PRC appeared in no hurry to take back Taiwan, some analysts had set 2049 to be the critical date when the PRC celebrates its 100 year anniversary.

Chapter 186 – China-Pakistan Relations 中国-巴基斯坦关系

Introduction:

The relations between China and Pakistan are strong. China supported Pakistan's position on the Kashmir conflict, while Pakistan supported China's position on the Xinjiang controversy, the Tibetan sovereignty debate, and the political status of Taiwan. There is cooperation between the two countries on many fronts, including military cooperation.

Main Story:

After the PRC was established in 1949, Pakistan was one of the first countries to sever diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan) in favor of recognizing the PRC.

Initially, China was wary of cultivating a strong friendship with Pakistan because China preferred to lie low under the policy of taoguang yanghui 韬光养晦. At that

time, Pakistan needed China more than the other way around. Pakistan hoped that China would serve as a counterweight to Indian influence. Today, it includes American influence.

However, the 1962 Sino-Indian border dispute awakened China to the fact that India was a strategic concern for China, not only Pakistan. The China-Pakistan relationship can be said to have been built in the aftermath of the 1962 border war. In 1963, Pakistan cemented the relationship with China by ceding to China the Shaksgam Valley, an area which was claimed by India. China then provided Pakistan with arms, know-how and materials to build a nuclear weapon, and large amounts of economic aid.

Times of India

Pak nukes hidden at nine places, at ...

In 2004, a road in Pakistani capital Islamabad leading to the Diplomatic Enclave was named “Zhou Enlai Avenue”. It is the first road in Pakistan that is named after a foreign leader.

With the US-led War in Afghanistan, there is a general sentiment in Pakistan to adopt a foreign policy which favors China over the US. Pakistan sees China as a more reliable ally over the long term, whereas the US is seen to favor India over Pakistan. The relationship with the US was also strained after Osama Bin Laden was killed by American forces on Pakistani soil without Pakistan’s prior permission. The US also blamed Pakistan for harboring and supporting Islamist terrorism.

There are strong military ties between China and Pakistan. The JF-17 Thunder is a combat aircraft developed jointly by Pakistan and China.

Business Insider

Chinese-Pakistani Combat Jet

Pakistan is China's biggest arms buyer, counting for almost half of China's arms exports. The Chinese has even designed tailor-made advanced weapons for Pakistan, making it a strong military power in the South Asian region. Both armies hold regular joint military exercises.

China is the largest investor in Pakistan's Gwadar Deep Sea Port, which is strategically located at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz. It is viewed warily by both the US and India as a possible launch pad for the Chinese navy in the Indian Ocean. The Pakistan Army also buys Chinese-built Low to Medium Altitude Air Defense System called LOMADS. In 2015, China concluded the sale of eight conventional submarines worth US$5Bn, the biggest arms sale by China in its history.

Pakistan supports China's Belt and Road Initiative with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). CPEC contains a variety of initiatives, including infrastructure, energy, economic zones, and the development of a strategic port, Gwadar worth a whopping US$62Bn. China has a market presence in Pakistan through Haier (household appliances), China Mobile, Huawei

(telecommunications), and China Metallurgical Group Corporation (mining and minerals). In IT, a full system of monitoring and surveillance will be built in cities with 24-hour video recordings on roads and busy marketplaces for law and order.

Conclusion:

There are some problems in the China-Pakistan relationship, chief of which is China's wariness about Islamist militants in Xinjiang and their links to Pakistani militants, Chinese citizens working in Pakistan have been the target of terrorist attacks, the sporadic opposition in Pakistan to CPEC projects, and China's caution about weighing in on Kashmir. All said, the relationship between China and Pakistan is and will remain strong.

Chapter 187 – China-India Relations 中国-印度关系

Introduction:

China and India have historically maintained peaceful relations for thousands of years. However, in recent times, relations have deteriorated, especially due to clashes in the disputed border in the Himalayan region, north-east of India and west of China.

Main Story:

The first records of contact between China and India were written during the 2nd century BCE following the expedition of Zhang Qian to Central Asia. Buddhism was transmitted from India to China in the 1st century CE and was widely adopted by the Chinese, including several emperors. The Silk Road linked the two countries economically and culturally. Zheng He during the Ming dynasty visited numerous Indian kingdoms and ports, bearing Chinese gifts of silk, porcelain, etc. In return, he received rich and exotic presents like African zebras and giraffes. Good relationship prevailed to modern times with a prominent street named Sun Yat-sen Street in an old Chinatown in Calcutta (Kolkata). Chiang Kai-shek supported India's fight for independence. A division of the Kuomintang's army even entered India in 1942 to fight the Japanese.

Modern Sino-Indian diplomatic relationship began in 1950 (one year earlier than Pakistan), when India was among the first noncommunist countries to end formal relations with the ROC (Taiwan) and recognize the PRC as the legitimate government of both Mainland China and Taiwan.

However, border disputes led to the 1962 Sino-Indian War (Chapter 124) which saw India roundly defeated by China, a humiliation that India could never forget. Subsequently, there had been several border clashes and standoffs, notwithstanding many attempts on both sides to rebuild their relationship.

Many thorny issues affected the relationship. First and foremost are the territorial disputes in the Himalayan region arising from the ill-defined border demarcation.

India and China have been locked in a border dispute for decades

After India's defeat in 1962, it had been building military infrastructure along the border areas. So did China. Also, India resents China's strong strategic bilateral

relations with Pakistan, and China's allegedly funding the separatist groups in Northeast India. China, on the other hand, has expressed concerns about Indian military and economic activities in the disputed South China Sea, India's hosting of the Dalai Lama's Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala (chapter 184 - Tibet-related Issues), and India's participation in the Quad. China has a long-standing perception of India as being under the influence of big powers, at one time the Soviet Union and, more recently, the U.S.

In recent years, Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi had met on more than a dozen occasions in an effort to smoothen relations. However, the Galwan Valley clashes in June 2020 set the relationship back. Although the clash involved fighting only with sticks and clubs, not guns, it resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers and an undisclosed number of Chinese soldiers, the first fatal confrontation since 1975.

Tensions had arisen over a road built by India in Ladakh. India's decision to ramp up infrastructure seems to have infuriated Beijing. China honoured the PLA

Galwan commander as the 2022 Winter Olympics torchbearer, in an attempt to keep the Galwan Valley clash in the public spotlight.

Torchbearer Qi Fabao, a regimental commander in the People's Liberation Army, relays the Olympic flame at the Winter Olympic Park in Beijing on Februarv 2. 2022.

After the 2020 Galwan Valley clashes, relationship between China and India is slowly going back to normal, starting from low level engagements. The most recent high level engagement was the meeting between Wang Yi and Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in July 2022 on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Bali.

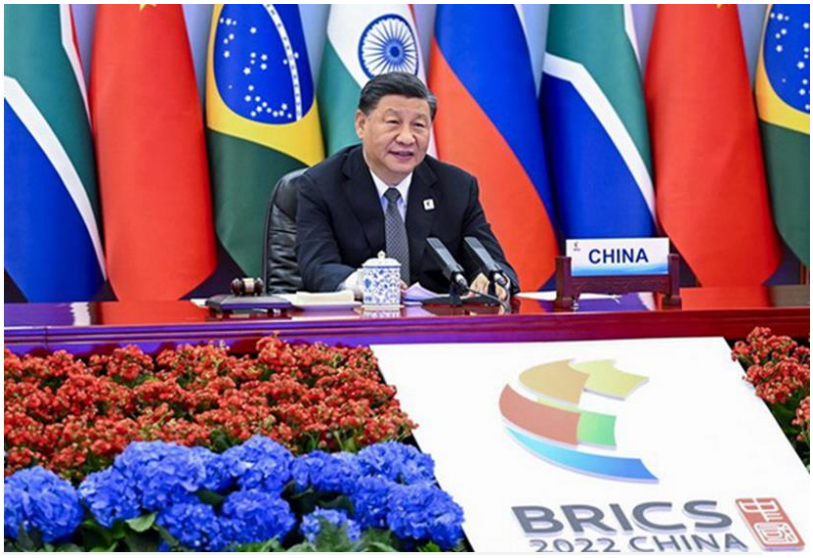
Wang Yi expressed China’s appreciation for India’s participation in BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (chapter 145). Jaishankar thanked China’s support for India’s role as the rotating chair of the G20 and the SCO next year.

Conclusion:

Strangely, it is the Ukraine war that has drawn China and India closer together. Both countries had refused to sanction Russia for the invasion of Ukraine. The US pressure on both countries to isolate Russia only served to draw China and India closer together due to their common friendship with Russia,

Chapter 188 - BRICS

Introduction:



BRICS is an acronym for Brazil,, Russia, India, China and South Africa. BRICS started in 2001 as BRIC (without South Africa). South Africa was added in 2010. The term was coined by an economist at Goldman Sachs who forecasted that the rapid growth economic growth of these countries would outstrip that of the G7 (the seven most advanced economies: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the U.S.)

Main Story:

BRICS was originally identified by Goldman Sachs for the purpose of highlighting investment opportunities. It did not originate as a formal intergovernmental organization. Since 2009, they have increasingly formed into a more cohesive geopolitical bloc, with their governments meeting annually at formal summits and coordinating multilateral policies.

After a series of high level meetings, the 1st BRIC summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, in June 2009.

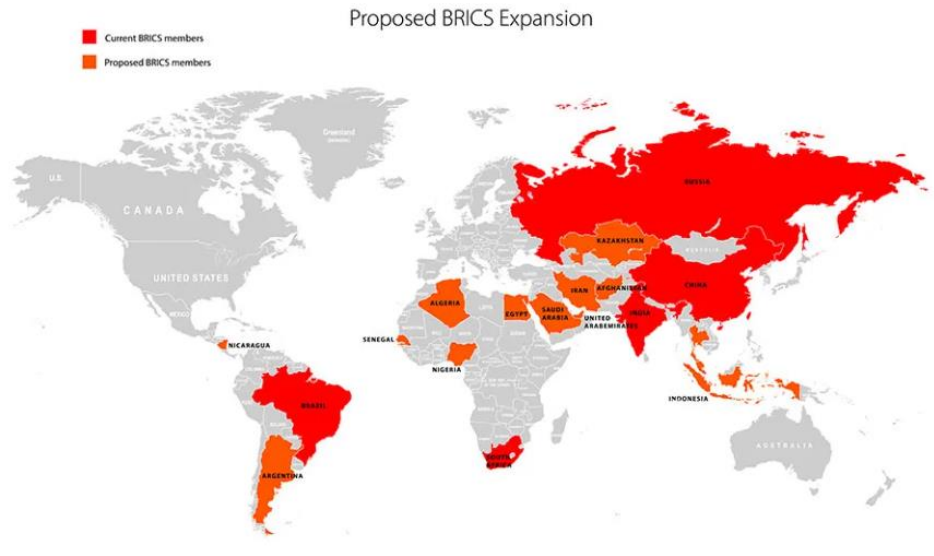
In 2010, China formally invited South Africa to join and BRICS has become a formal institution. Since then, China has cemented its position as the strongest of the BRICS economies, beng the second largest in the world behind the U.S.

BRICS is not a military alliance. However, it is seen as a counterweight to Western-dominated institutions like the G7, having initiatives such as the New

Development Bank, Contingent Reserve Arrangement, BRICS payment system, and BRICS basket reserve currency.

Following the weaponization of the US Dollar and the SWIFT system in the wake of the Ukraine war, there is an added impetus for BRICS to establish a new global reserve currency. In 2022, Algeria, Argentina and Iran have applied to join BRICS. Nations interested to join are Afghanistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye. Other likely contenders for membership include Kazakhstan, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Senegal, Thailand and the UAE. All had their Finance Ministers present at the BRICS Expansion dialogue meeting held in May 2022.

The most significant recent development is that Saudi Arabia has applied to join BRICS. The admission of this oil-rich Kingdom will be a strategic game changer. In the BRICS summit of 2023, the inclusion of Saudi Arabia is expected to be discussed. Saudi Arabia is seeking to reduce its reliance on any single country and to increase its influence on the global stage.



The BRICS expansion would create an entity with a GDP 30% larger than the U.S., over 50% of the global population and in control of 60% of global gas reserves.

Conclusion:

BRICS may well become the most powerful economic bloc in the world. It brings together the world's dominant supplier of manufactured goods and the world's dominant suppliers of raw materials. China, being the biggest contributor to BRICS will play an important role in re-shaping the world economic order.

BRICS Tower Headquarters in Shanghai

Chapter 189 – China-Africa Relations 中国非洲关系

Introduction:

No other country comes near to the depth and breadth of China's engagement in Africa. It is Africa's largest trading partner, creditor and a crucial source of infrastructure development. Political, military and security ties are becoming closer.

Main Story:

The main thrust of China's relationship with Africa was political. China saw newly independent African countries as potential allies. In 1971, when the UN voted for China to take over Taiwan's seat, 26 African countries sided with Mao. "It is our African brothers who have carried us into the UN" he said.

In the following decades, China's focus in Africa switched to eliminating all remaining recognition for Taiwan's government. Burkina Faso, Malawi, Liberia, Senegal and others all switched their recognition from Taiwan to the PRC. Eswatini is the only African nation still to recognize Taiwan's government in 2023.

African countries firmly support China in its endeavor for national unification. Most of them support China's "one China" policy.

China currently has military alliances with 6 African states, four of which are major oil suppliers: Sudan, Algeria, Nigeria and Egypt. Its official policy upholds its principle of "non-interference" in African domestic politics, while assisting African countries to choose their own development path. In this respect, it presents itself in contrast to Western countries, who as former colonial powers looted African resources during the 18th and 19th centuries.

In November 2003, the first tri-annual Forum On China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit was held in Beijing. FOCAC was created to improve cooperation between China and African states.

In 2013, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched by Xi Jinping, featuring an ambition to reinvigorate the old silk trading route along the East African coast. This should theoretically have seen Chinese investment concentrated in East Africa, but many other African states also sought opportunities through the BRI, making the initiative quickly expand in scope and ambition.

However, US commentators often describe Chinese policy in Africa as a "debt trap", part of a deliberate strategy to loan unmanageable sums to African countries, draw them into China's sphere of influence, and force unfair commitments upon them.

Some African nations do have extensive Chinese loans and are suffering from out-of-control debt, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the invasion of Ukraine, and high interest rates. But their situations cannot be entirely blamed on Chinese loans. States including Kenya and Zambia have poorly managed their debt to all creditors, not only China. Moreover, since 2000, over $10bn in debt owed by African nations to the PRC has been cancelled.

When it comes to its military bases in Africa, China places significant strategic focus on countries around the Horn of Africa and Gulf of Aden, including Djibouti, where it opened its first military facility outside China. The Chinese wanted a base in Africa to combat piracy. Also, following the collapse of the Gadhafi regime in 2011, China experienced significant difficulties evacuating its citizens, which was a shock domestically.

However, China's base in Djibouti has been criticized as part of China's "String of Pearls" geopolitical and military strategy in the Indian Ocean.

Can China really encircle India with String of Pearls? The great game of Asia - India Today

Visit

The need to protect China’s increased investments in Africa has driven a shift away from China’s traditional non-interference in the internal matters of other countries to new diplomatic and military initiatives to try to resolve unrest in South Sudan and Mali.

Crisis and Hope: A Country Guide to Africa's Top Political Risks - Bloomberg

Conclusion:

The relations between China and African states are certainly very good. A survey conducted by Bloomberg in 2022 reported that young Africans generally feel positively towards China. A survey in the same year funded by the European Regional Development Fund also reported that most Chinese viewed Africans positively.

And on a state level, their relationship has generally been excellent.

Chapter 190 – China-Japan, China-S Korea Relations

(1) China-Japan Relations 中国日本关系

Introduction:

Throughout ancient history, Japan had been strongly influenced by China in respect of its language, architecture, culture, cuisine, religion, philosophy, and law. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan became an advanced country and viewed China under the Qing dynasty as an antiquated civilization, unable to defend itself against foreign aggression.

Main Story:

However, the rise of China in modern times has caused much unease in Japan. China's relations with Japan have been affected by a number of sensitive issues:

1. Sino-Japanese Wars
   China was invaded by Japan during the First Sino-Japanese War (1894 – 1895) and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937 – 1945). Wartime crimes were committed (especially the Rape of Nanking) and many Chinese regard Japan's apology (latest by PM Junichiro Koizumi) as insufficient and insincere. Japanese PMs continue to pay official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine where Japanese war criminals of WWII were enshrined.

2. The Senkaku Islands dispute, or Diaoyu Islands 钓鱼岛 dispute.
   There is territorial dispute over these uninhabited islands.

CNN

disputed islands ...

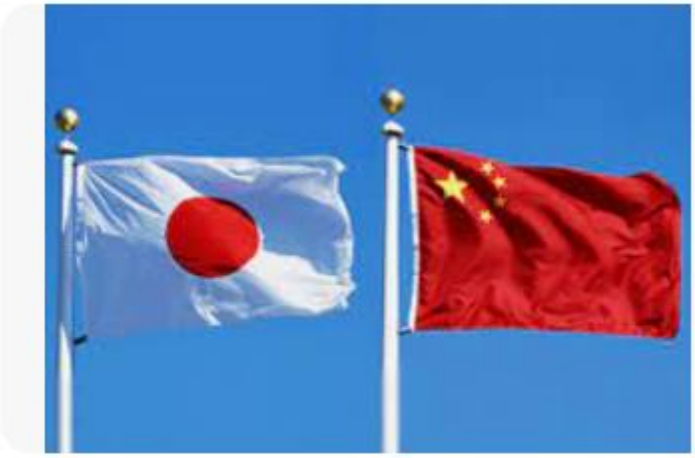
3. Taiwan issue
   The PRC has been worried about some Japanese pro-Taiwan independence politicians. In recent years, the US has been more vocal about coming to the defence of Taiwan should it be attacked by China. And Japan is toeing the US line on that. A potential military conflict spilling out beyond Taiwan, into Japan, is of growing concern.

4. In July 2019, the UN ambassadors from 22 nations, including Japan, signed a joint letter to the UN Human Rights Commission, condemning China's treatment of Uyghurs as well as other minority groups, urging the Chinese government to close the Xinjiang re-education camps.

Conclusion:

Despite recent developments casting a shadow on the Sino-Japan relations, economic ties remain robust. China is Japan's largest trade partner and Japan is China's second largest trade partner (after the US).

The Japanese public, known for being loyal to Japanese brands, has been inclined to embrace Chinese brands and merchandise. Take the example of TikTok, a Chinese social media platform which India, Australia and Canada have banned/partially banned, and which the US is also considering banning. Japan, however, has not.



Sunday Guardian

Japan-China economic ties flourishing ...

(2) China-South Korea Relations 中国南韩关系

Introduction:

Just like Japan, China and South Korea have been bound together by a shared history, including an overlap in cuisine, religion, a common language script and legal systems, and kinship ties that reach back thousands of years. Despite this, political and other disputes still play a role in the relations between these two nations.

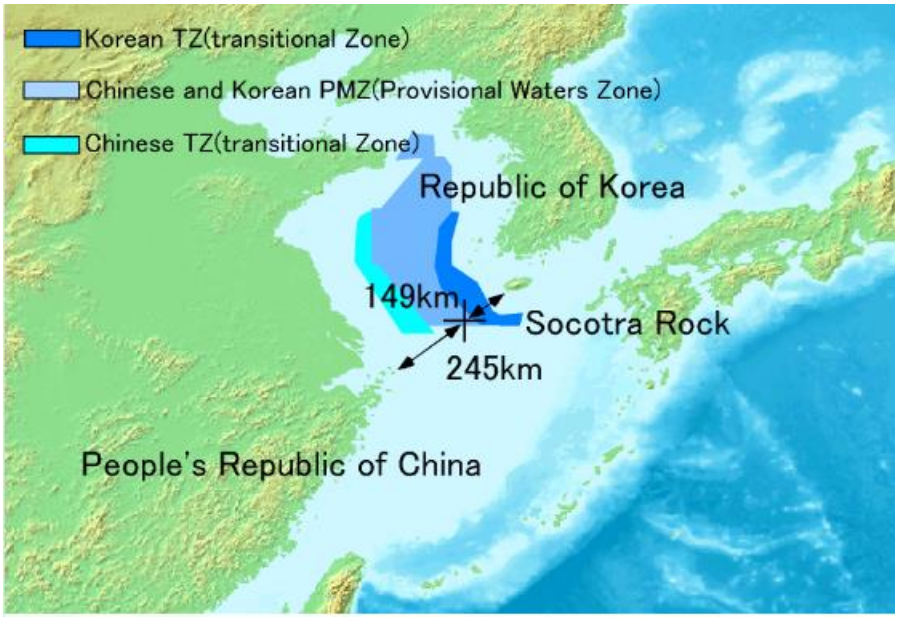
Main Story:

During the Song and Ming Dynasty, China shared a close trade and diplomatic relationship with the Goryeo and the Joseon Dynasty respectively. The Ming and Joseon shared close Confucian ideals in their societies. During Japan's invasion of Korea, Ming Dynasty's Wanli 万历 Emperor despatched a big army of well over 200,000 men to repel the invasion. Joseon had used Classical Chinese (called Hanja 汉字) in the writing of Korean.

Relations were badly affected by the Korean War. In 1950, the newly established PRC sent the People's Volunteer Army to fight against the United States and United Nations troops. It successfully drove the UN forces out of North Korea. The war ended in July 1953, resulting in the establishment of the Korean Demilitarized Zone and the eventual withdrawal of Chinese forces from the Korean Peninsula.

Throughout the Cold War, there were no official relations between the PRC and ROK. Seoul's official contact with Beijing started due to the landing of a hijacked CAAC Flight 296 in 1983. It was hijacked by six Chinese anti-Communist hijackers who demanded asylum in Taiwan. China sent a delegation of 33 officials to Seoul to negotiate the return of the plane. That marked the beginning of a series of exchanges which led to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1986.

South Korea has some territorial disputes with China. They dispute over the Socotra Rock, known in Chinese as Suyan Islet 苏岩礁, outside the coastal waters of Jiangsu 江苏. South Korea also supports freedom of navigation and the ruling of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in the South China Sea dispute.



Relations deteriorated considerably in 2016 after South Korea announced its intentions to deploy THAAD (Termal High-Altitude Area Defense) in response to nuclear and missile threats by North Korea, a move that China strongly opposed. That led to China imposing an unofficial boycott on South Korea. South Korean conglomerate Lotte Group came under particular focus. Lotte had agreed to an exchange of land, a golf course, with the South Korean government that will be used for the THAAD deployment. In addition to consumer boycott of Lotte stores in China, 75 out of 99 Lotte supermarkets were closed due to contravention of fire safety regulations and other local ordinances.

In recent times, South Korea, together with Japan, is rethinking their security posture to counter what they considered China's increasingly aggressive regional expansion. Although South Korean and Japan have been estranged neighbors for decades, they are getting together on this issue. China blamed the new South Korea-Japan thaw on the US, accusing South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol of "serving as a pawn of the US."

Conclusion:

With all that said, economic ties between China and South Korea is as strong as ever. China is by far South Korea’s largest trade partner. China and South Korea, along with 13 other Asia-Pacific nations, have signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the largest free-trade agreement in history which covers 30% of the world’s population and economic output.

Chapter 191 – China-North Korea Relations 中朝关系

Introduction:

China and North Korea are nominally allies, but relations between the two neighbors have been negatively affected by North Korea's ballistic missile development. North Korea is economically dependent on China, which currently accounts for over 90% of its trade volume and most food and energy imports. However, managing its relations with North Korea has not been easy due to several geopolitical factors.

Main Story:

During the Japanese colonial rule over Korea (1910-1945), the Beiyang government of the Republic of China recognized and provided asylum to the

Korean Government-in-exile. Yet, the biggest help China made to North Korea was during the Korean War (1950-1953).

After WWII, the northern part of Korea was placed under Soviet administration. In 1950, North Korea invaded and almost completely occupied South Korea. The US and UN forces intervened and pushed back the North Korean forces. However, the US and UN forces went far north, close to China's border, thus posing a security threat to China. Historically, the Empire of Japan invaded China through Korea twice, in the First Sino-Japanese War and the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.

In 1950, Chinese forces entered the Korean War in support of North Korea.

The war ended with a stalemate and the 38th parallel marks today's boundary between North Korea and South Korea. China made a tremendous sacrifice in this exceptionally bloody war. Casualty figures remain disputed. Western estimates commonly cite a figure of 400,000 Chinese deaths, while Chinese sources give a death toll of about 180,000.

Following the signing of the Korean War Armistice in 1953, China provided extensive economic assistance to Pyongyang to support the reconstruction and economic development of North Korea. After the war, China continued to station 300,000 troops in North Korea for five years.

In 1961, the two countries signed the Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship treaty, whereby China pledged to immediately render military and other assistance to its ally against any outside attack.

In 1962, the two countries signed a border treaty thus resolving their border dispute. China received 40% of the disputed crater lake on Paektu Mountain (known as Changbai Mountain in China 长白山), while North Korea held the remaining land.

Vulkaner.no
Changbaishan Mountains, China

China’s economic assistance to North Korea accounts for about half of all Chinese foreign aid. Beijing has to navigate the several sanctions placed by the US and UN on North Korea in order to provide the assistance. China is North Korea’s largest trade partner, while North Korea is an insignificant trade partner for China.

Despite China’s assistance to North Korea, North Korea harbors a suspicion of China. It had been reported that Peng Dehuai had urged Mao Zedong to remove Kim Il-sung from power at the time of the Korean War. It did not materialize but formed the historical basis for North Korean fears of Chinese interference. In recent times, it had been reported that the uncle of Kim Jong-un, Jang Song-thaek, met with Hu Jintao in 2012 during which Jang told Hu Jintao that he wished to

replace Kim Jong-un with his brother Kim Jong-nam. The meeting was allegedly taped by Zhou Yongkang, who leaked the plot to Kim Jong-un. Subsequently, Jang was executed for treason.

The Guardian
North Korea executes Kim Jong-un's ...

This event set back the relations between China and North Korea. Kim distrusted China for failing to inform him of the plot. China disliked Kim for executing their trusted intermediary.

Conclusion:

Despite the difficulties in their relationship, China and North Korea are tied together in friendship by a common enemy: the US.

Chapter 192 – China-Australia Relations 中澳关系

Introduction:

Up to only 10 years ago, China-Australian relations had been cordial, if not excellent. Australia was opening up its economy to Beijing, it had a Chinese speaking Prime Minister and the country even wanted to teach Mandarin in schools. Everything has changed. Australia now sees China as a military threat and is buying nuclear submarines and has forged a much closer relationship with the US.

Main Story:

Australia had been a haven for Chinese migrants for centuries. There are now large numbers of Australian-born Chinese and Chinese-born migrants/Australian Citizens in the cities of Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. The former PM, Kevin Rudd, also has strong connections with Chinese culture having studied Chinese at the Australian National University in Canberra. His daughter is married to a Chinese man, and Rudd also speaks fluent Mandarin.

A few years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Australia and the PRC, China began market-orientated reforms, which led to a significant expansion of bilateral trade. China's strong demand for iron ore, coal, liquefied natural gas and other products was the reason Australia was one of the few countries in the world during the global financial crisis that was not in recession.

During the Rudd Government (2007-2010), closer engagement with Asia was one of the "Three Pillars" of Kevin Rudd's foreign policy. China-Australia relations were generally good.

Rudd's replacement as Australian PM by Julia Gillard in June 2010 was associated with a shift in Australian foreign policy towards a closer relationship to the US alongside a revival of interest in participation in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad) and a distancing from China.

Rudd Government's decision to leave the Quad remained an object of criticism from Tony Abbott who replaced Julia Gillard. The Abbott Government (2013-2015) did not see an improvement in China-Australia relations.

Following the international tribunal ruling in July 2016 which held that China holds "no historical rights" to the South China Sea based on the "nine-dash line" map, Australia under the Turnbull Government of Malcolm Turnbull issued a joint statement with Japan and the US calling for China to abide by the ruling.

Relations reached the lowest point under the Morrison Government (2018-2022) of Scott Morrison. Beside the 2019 Australian Parliament infiltration plot and the joint letter with 21 other nations condemning China's treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, the Morrison Government also called for an independent investigation into the causes of the Covid-19 pandemic. China subsequently imposed economic sanctions on Australian beef, barley, lobsters, coal and other products.

YouTube
Australia China relations - Why the ...

Asia Times
Australia-China relations – Asia Times

In 2020, China issued a list of 14 Chinese grievances against Australia, which included the banning of Huawei and ZTE from the 5G network, calling for the international independent inquiry into Covid's origin, interference in Xinjiang, funding of anti-China think tanks, etc. In the same year, a dispute flared up over a Chinese cartoonist's posting of a computer image of an Australian soldier holding a bloodied knife against the throat of an Afghan child, a reference to the Brereton Report in which two 14-year-old Afghanistan boys had their throats slit by Australian soldiers and covered up.

In September 2021, Australia announced the purchase of American nuclear submarines, in cooperation with Great Britain, being a key element in the new AUKUS political-military alignment. In 2022, the Morrison Government criticized a draft security pact between China and the Solomon Islands that would allow Beijing to deploy military forces in the country.

When the Australian Labor Party under Anthony Albanese won the elections in 2022, relations between the two countries appear to improve. The appointment of a Chinese, Penny Wong, as foreign minister appears to indicate that Australia was aiming to improve ties with China.

Sydney Morning Herald
China-Australia relations improving ...

That has not been the case and recently Australia announced plans for major overhaul of its defenses to counter China’s rise.

Conclusion:

Despite the differences, both countries are actively engaged economically, culturally and politically which spans numerous organizations such as APEC, East Asia Summit and the G20. China is Australia’s largest trading partner and China has substantial investments in Australia, especially in the mining industry.

Chapter 193 – China-Vietnam, China-Myanmar Relations

中越关系和中缅关系

(1) China-Vietnam Relations

Introduction:

China and Vietnam share a 1,281 kilometres border. Both are socialist countries. It is not surprising then that there is a deep relationship between the two countries. However, it has been back and forth for thousands of years and till today, Vietnam harbor a suspicion of China.

Main Story:

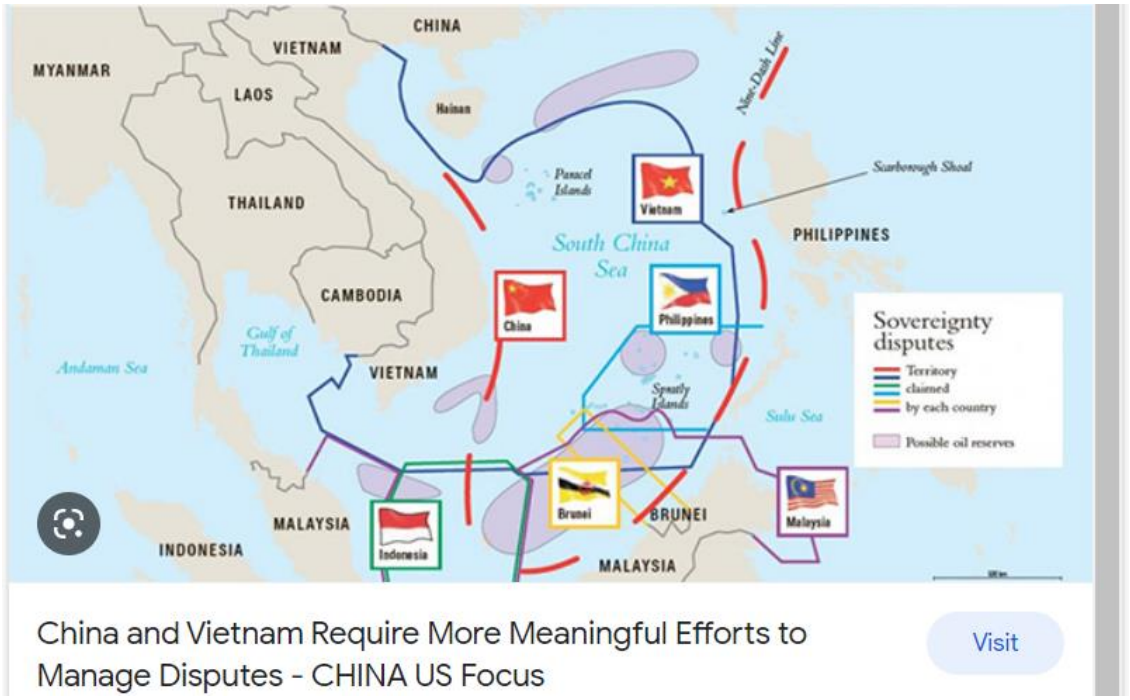
At various periods in ancient times, Vietnam had been occupied by China, the most recent being the time of the Ming dynasty, and was also dominated (though not occupied) by the Qing dynasty. In 1884, the Qing dynasty was defeated by the French in the Sino-Grench War and the Treaty of Tientsin recognized French dominance in Vietnam and Indochina, spelling the end of formal Chinese influence on Vietnam.

Along with the Soviet Union, Communist China was an important strategic ally of North Vietnam during the Indochina Wars. The Chinese Communist Party provided arms, military training and essential supplies to help the communist North defeat the imperialist French colonial empire, capitalist South Vietnam, and their ally the US, between 1949 and 1975.

Although China assisted North Vietnam during the Vietnam War, relations between the two nations soured following the Fall of Saigon in 1975. The root cause was Vietnamese oppression of the Hoa minority (Vietnamese of Chinese ethnicity) and the Vietnamese ouster of the Khmer Rouge from power in Kampuchea (Cambodia), as Kampuchea was an ally of China. China launched a two-week campaign in the northern border of Vietnam in 1979 to, in the words of Deng Xiaoping, “teach them a lesson.”

Conclusion:

The two socialist countries have since worked to improve their diplomatic and economic ties. They are now working on a code of conduct in the disputed South China Sea. China is Vietnam’s top trading partner



(2) China-Myanmar Relations

Introduction:

China is Myanmar’s largest trading partner. Myanmar has grown closer to China after the 2021 Myanmar coup d’etat which led to the international isolation of the country.

Main Story:

South China Morning Post

China's Qin Gang pledges economi...

Burma was the first non-Communist country to recognize the Communist PRC after its foundation in 1949. According to India’s ambassador to China at the time, Panikkar, Burma was anxious to be the first outside the soviet bloc and asked India to delay their recognition by a few days so they could be the first.

In recent times, relations between China and Myanmar were negatively affected by clashes between ethnic Chinese rebels and the Myanmar military near the China-Myanmar borer. The Kokang incident in 2009 was the most prominent.

In the early 2010s, the Myanmar government embraced improving relations with Western countries. However, the “Rohinya genocide” and the 2021 Myanmar coup d’etat (removal of Aung San Suu Kyi) caused Myanmar to lose Western support and they turned to China. China is the most important supplier of military aid (jet fighters, armored vehicles, naval vessels, training , etc) and maintains extensive strategic and military cooperation.

Conclusion:

In recent years, China has shown a lack of willingness to back the unpopular Burmese government and has attempted to stabilize the political situation in Myanmar. Myanmar has thus moved to develop strategic and commercial relations with India, with which it shares a long land border and the Bay of Bengal. It also developed bilateral relations with Japan and ASEAN in a shift in foreign policy to avoid excessive dependence on China.

Chapter 194 – China-Singapore Relations 中国新加坡关系

Introduction:

Diplomatic relations between Singapore and the PRC was established in 1990. Then Singapore PM Lee Kuan Yew made it a condition that Singapore would be the last country in Southeast Asia to formally recognize the PRC as he did not want Singapore to be seen as the "third China".

Main Story:

Historic links between the two nations' people began much earlier than the founding of the PRC. Most early Chinese migrants came as laborers to what was known as Nanyang 南洋 to escape war and poverty. Many ethnic Chinese Singaporeans have ancestral roots in southern Chinese provinces such as Fujian, Guangdong and Hainan.

Many Chinese Singaporeans supported China against the Japanese during WWII. China had attempted to spread Communism to Asia until the 1978 meeting between Deng Xiaoping's and Lee Kuan Yew, when Lee managed to convince Deng to stop exporting revolution to Southeast Asia.

Relations between the two countries are strong but are affected by the South China Sea dispute and the Taiwan issue. While Singapore is not a party to the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, it has an interest in the outcome of these disputes since they have implications for international law, freedom of

navigation, and ASEAN unity. Since 1975, Singapore has a military training and facilities agreement with Taiwan and hold annual military exercises in Taiwan known as Exercise Starlight 星光计画. This military relationship has been frown on by China.

In 2016, nine Singapore Army Terrex armored personnel carriers, in the course of shipment back to Singapore from Taiwan, were seized by the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department. The private shipping company, American President Lines, did not have the appropriate permits. They were released only after two months.

South China Morning Post
How Singapore's military vehicles ...

During that time, the Global Times even suggested that the military vehicles should be melted down and used as scrap iron.

Foreign Policy

China's Angriest Newspaper Doesn't ...

The Singapore government's stand in its relations with China is that its relations should be underpinned by a foreign policy that represents all citizens in the multiracial country and not just Chinese-Singaporeans. Singapore officials highlight that the local Chinese community identifies itself as Singapore "*huaren*" – or Singaporeans of Chinese ethnicity – rather than "*huaqiao*", or overseas Chinese.

Conclusion:

China-Singapore relations have grown from strength to strength. In April 2023, Singapore and China formally upgraded their relationship, ushering a new phase in diplomatic ties.

A slew of new pacts (see picture below) pave the way for more collaboration in areas from Belt and Road Initiative, dispute mediation to food safety and trade, as well as water and environment research. Plans are also afoot to bring more artistes in China to Singapore. The 14-year-old China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement will be upgraded.

The MOUs, signed by Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong (left) and China's Commerce Minister Wang Wentao on Saturday, were witnessed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Chinese Premier Li Qiang. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Chapter 195 – China-Malaysia, China-Philippines Relations

(1) China-Malaysia Relations

Introduction:

Relations between China and Malaysia which were “set to reach new highs” under Najib Abdul Razak are tested after his departure.

Main Story:

In ancient times, China’s relations with Malaya reached new heights when the Sultanate of Malacca became a protectorate of the Ming dynasty which warned Siam and the Majapahit empire against trying to conquer or attack the Malacca sultanate. Note that Siam itself was a tributary to China at that time.

During the Cold War era at the time when Malaysia was born (1957), Mao Zedong’s foreign policy was to support revolutionary leftist organizations in Southeast Asia. The Chinese population in Malaya was viewed with distrust as “fifth columns”. Reforms by Deng Xiaoping saw a withdrawal of support for Communist insurgencies abroad. Malaysia became the first ASEAN member to recognized the PRC.

In modern times, China’s transformation into a major economic power led to deeper economic relations between China and Malaysia. Mahathir welcomed the prospect of China playing a larger role in Southeast Asia. However, after the Cold War, a different security challenge emerged with Beijing’s claims in the South

China Sea. Nonetheless, Mahathir shared China's dislike for the West's focus on democracy and human rights.

After Mahathir, his successors, in particular Najib, continued to forge closer relationship with China as "good friends". Ironically, when Mahathir again won power in 2018, China was not so happy. The East Coast Rail Link along with two China-financed oil and gas pipeline projects were suspended.

After Anwar Ibrahim came into power, relations with China were back on track. After Saudi Arabia, Anwar visited Beijing and was well received by Xi Jinping.

Insiders who attended the meeting reported a strong sense of camaraderie between the two leaders.

CGTN
China-Malaysia relations ...

Anwar had emphasized that China's Global Security Initiative resonates with his flagship vision, Malaysia Madani (Madani, which is also an Arabic word, connotes modernity and civilization, and rejects any form of cruelty towards any individual or race.) This meeting was in stark contrast to his failed trip to Saudi Arabia where he failed to meet either the Saudi King or Crown Prince MBS. Anwar had aimed to attract investments and tourism from wealthy Gulf states. Analysts speculated that

Anwar's perceived pro-West, specifically pro-US, stance might have contributed to the snub from the Saudis.

Conclusion:

In the past several years, several issues – especially the South China Sea dispute, have tested the two countries' relationship. For now, the friendship narratives endure but relationship has grown cooler and perhaps more realistic.

(2) China-Philippines Relations

Introduction:

The Philippines recognized the PRC in 1975 and relations between the two countries have generally been smooth, with frequent exchanges of high-level visits.

All their presidents, Marcos Sr, Corazon Aquino, Ramos, Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroy, Benigno Aquino III, Duterte and Marcos Jr, have visited China. Similarly, Li Peng, Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji, Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao and Xi Jinping have all visited the Philippines.

Main Story:

The Philippines was a colony of the US since the Philippine-American War of 1899 and the US ruled the Philippines until after WWII ended in 1945. Since then, the Philippines had forged a close relationship with the US and, in particular, the US army.

It was not until the government of Rodrigo Duterte (16th President) took over in 2016 that the pro-American status quo was flipped upside down and Duterte seemed to favor China. Under Duterte's predecessor – the late president Benigno Aquino III, the Philippines took China to court over the Scarborough Shoal standoff. In the arbitration proceedings, which China did not attend, the Permanent Court of Arbitration awarded the case in favor of the Philippines. Despite the decision, which China rejected, China and the Philippines agreed to find a peaceful solution through diplomatic talks.

However after Duterte left office in 2022, there was a re-set in relationship. The new president Marco Junior initially gave an impression of continuing Duterte's policy when he made a visit to Beijing and recalled warmly the close relationship of his parents with Chairman Mao. After his return from China, the Philippines announced the establishment of four more US military bases in the Philippines, on top of the existing four bases. Three of the new bases are in the northern Philippines near Taiwan, while another is close to the South China Sea. Marcos

said the bases are aimed at bolstering his country's defence and not intended for any "offensive action."

China reacted angrily and sent the new foreign minister, Qin Gang to meet his counterpart in Manila, with little avail.

China and Philippines discuss ties as Manila opens bases to U.S.

Foreign ministers meet as U.S. base access deal stokes Taiwan tensions

Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo and his Chinese counterpart Qin Gang held bilateral talks in Manila on April 22. (Photo by Yuichi Shiga)

Conclusion:

US-Philippines relations have all along been strong and will unlikely be replaced by a stronger China-Philippines relations.

Chapter 196 – China-Indonesia Relations

Introduction:

Indonesia's relations with China have swung sharply veering from close allies (1950s-1965) to enemies (1966-1990), to distant associates (1990-2014), to their current close partnership.

Main Story:

The relations between China and Indonesia had been friendly since ancient times. Indonesia was part of the maritime Silk Road connecting China with India and the Arab World.

The harmonious and peaceful relations were only breached once by the invasion of Kublai Khan in 1293, to punish the Javanese king. That invasion by 1000 ships failed as Java was on the cusp of becoming the powerful Majapahit empire. Subsequently, the numbers of Chinese immigrants and Chinese influence reached new heights with the massive Ming dynasty naval expedition led by Zheng He

In modern times, Indonesia was the first country in Southeast Asia to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC, in 1950. Under Sukarno, Indonesia embarked on an anti-imperialist alliance with China and other communist regimes.

South China Morning Post

An 'Asia for Asians' vision

This sparked fear in the US and it is said that the CIA had a hand in the removal of Sukarno who was replaced by Suharto in 1967. This happened after the failed communist coup of 1965. Indonesia then severed its diplomatic relations with China.

The anti-Chinese New Order government mandated the replacement of the term Tiongkok (Indonesia term for China) with the derogatory and racist word “Cina.”. After the fall of President Suharto in 1998, the use of Tiongkok has somewhat seen a re-emergence.

KalderaNews.com

Inilah 5 Universitas di Tiongkok (China ...

Relations with China, broken after Suharto came into power, were only restored in 1990 by the visit of Li Peng. Subsequent presidents (Yudhoyono, Abdurrahman Wahid, Joko Widodo) have all been friendly towards China. Jokowi is said to have a good personal relationship with Xi Jinping.

Like many countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia has problems with China over the South China Sea. Although Indonesia is not a claimant state, parts of China's claim under the nine-dash line encroaches into Indonesia's exclusive economic zone near the Natuna islands. There had been several incidents involving fishing vessels from both sides. In 2016, Indonesian President Jokowi visited Natuna islands on a warship to send a "clear message" to China.

China is Indonesia's top trading partner both for exports and imports. Inbound investment from China, including Hong Kong, ranks second after Singapore. Beijing is the second-largest donor of foreign aid to Indonesia after Singapore.

Both China and Russia are seen as alternative security partners to counterbalance difficult relations with the US and its Western allies. Indonesia frowns on the hegemonic behavior of the US and hopes China does not adopt the same approach.

It had expressed concerns of the Quad's Indo-Pacific strategy to contain China. The same applies to AUKUS. Indonesia does not wish to take sides in the big-power geopolitical rivalry.

Foreign Affairs

America and China Need to Talk ...

Indonesia sees Western hypocrisy and double standards. The most recent is Israel's shooting Muslim worshippers in Al Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, in April 2022 and Israel's many acts of aggression towards Palestinian people over the decades. The West did not bring Israel to task; yet they continually harp on China's mistreatment of Muslim Uyghurs.

Conclusion:

Indonesia welcomes the vast investments and trade opportunities presented by China. While being wary to China's influence, it needed China as a counter-balance against what it sees as the Western hegemonic powers. Current relations are on even keel.

Chapter 197 – China-Middle East Relations

Introduction:

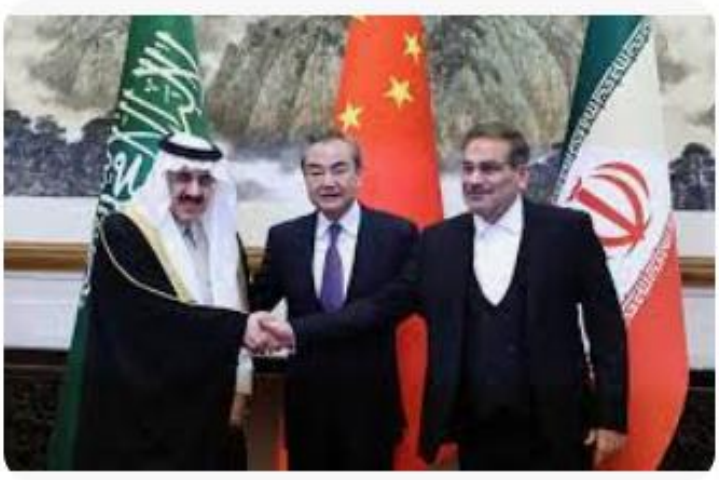
China imports half of its oil from the Middle East and is the top oil customer of Saudi Arabia and Iran. China is the largest trading partner to most Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. It has an interest in resolving Middle Eastern conflicts and realizing regional stability.

Main Story:

As early as the Han dynasty, maritime traffic between the Arabian world and China had been established. Official relations between China and the Arabs started between the Tang dynasty and the Rashidun Caliphate, the first Caliphate to succeed the Islamic prophet Mohammad and the most powerful economic, cultural and military force in West Asia. 3000 Arab mercenaries joined the Chinese against An Lushan during the An Lushan Rebellion.

There is an Arab town in China known as Kashgar or Kashi 喀什, an oasis city located in southern Xinjiang. It was a strategically important city on the ancient Silk Road between China, the Middle East, and Europe for over 2000 years.

In recent years, China has been heavily involved in Middle Eastern affairs. The one that hit the headlines was the announcement that Iran and Saudi Arabia (two long time adversaries) had reached an agreement to restore diplomatic relations – a deal mediated by China and signed in Beijing. This was after years of unsuccessful attempts by Oman and Iraq.



The New York Times

Iran-Saudi Pact Is Brokered by China ...

Brokering this agreement was a dramatic breakthrough but making it a permanent success will not be easy given the many things that Iran has to do so as not to worsen the relationship, such as, not provoke Saudi Arabia with its nuclear program, not support attacks from Houthis and Iraqi Shiite militants, and not condemn Saudi Arabia's cooperation with the US and Israel.

China's new foreign minister, Qin Gang, recently said that Beijing was ready to mediate peace talks between Palestine and Israel. China's role in these initiatives reflects its position as a great power and a responsible power, drawing contrast to the mainly military role the US played in the Middle East. This could be complicated if the US also seeks to contain China in the Middle East.

Foreign Affairs

A New Order in the Middle East ...

Conclusion:

As the Saudi-Iran deal shows, Beijing's clout in the region is growing. This signals a major policy shift for China, which has traditionally hesitated from involving itself too deeply in efforts to resolve global conflicts. This is part of China's newly launched Global Security Initiative. But it can't substitute US security presence – and might not want to.

Moving forward, China will have to decide what role it wishes to play in the region: diplomatic fixer, military patron, or disinterested economic titan. A multipolar competition in the Middle East may well be in the making.

Chapter 198 – China-EU Relations

Introduction:

Over the past year, China-EU relations have deteriorated, primarily due to a number of issues such as China's counter sanctions against the EU, alleged Chinese economic coercion and China's position on the Ukraine war.

Main Story:

The European Union (EU) took over from the European Community in 1993. The European Community was formed in 1957 as an economic association of six European countries. Prior to the existence of the European Community, many European states had relations with the Ming Dynasty as early as the 16th century. The most important relations were established by Britain, France and Germany. Under the Qing dynasty, China endured a century of humiliation imposed by the Western powers.

Relations between the EU and modern day China, the PRC, were established in 1975. The EU is the PRC's largest trading partner, and the PRC is the EU's largest trading partner. Under the influence of the US, the EU placed an arms embargo on China. China therefore buys much of its arms from Russia. China had turned to Israel for surveillance planes in 2007, but under pressure from the US, Israel did not go through with the deal.

Despite the ban, leaked US cable suggested that in 2003, the EU sold Euro 400 million of defence exports to China, and later approved other sales of military grade submarine and radar technology. There had been some cooperation on the military sphere. In 2018, the EU Naval Force and the Chinese PLA Navy held for the first time ever a joint military exercise at the Chinese military base in Djibouti. It was said to be a success.

China-EU relations have been strained by issues such as human rights and the Covid-19 pandemic. Human rights issues revolve mainly around the alleged use of forced labor of Uyghurs. In 2020, The EC President Ursula von der Leyen angered China when she backed investigation into the coronavirus origin.

China-EU relations became even more challenging following the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine when the US accused Beijing of aligning themselves with Russia.

In April 2023, French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commision president Ursula von der Leyen paid an official visit to Beijing. While Macron underlined the EU's commitment to the One China policy and went even further to announce his position to no longer follow an exclusive American model, and instead develop a European "strategic autonomy", von der Leyen on the other hand accused China for its implied "divide-and-conquer tactics." She spoke about

derisking the relationship with China, but not decouple. To some political leaders, derisking and decoupling meant the same thing.

The push by the US to include the EU in its opposition against Chinese hegemony on the Taiwan matter had split the EU into different opinions among its members.

China sees the EU as being too weak, divided and dependent on the US to be a significant power.

Conclusion:

The EU views China as a partner, a competitor and a systemic rival. There is concern that China poses a threat to the global order. Despite China-EU tensions,

the recent visit by the German chancellor, the French president and the EC president all indicate that it is not possible for Europe to decouple from China.

The US may be exerting pressure on the EU in respect of China. However, the China-EU relations may actually be more important than the US thinks. The EU has a larger market for China than the US and China has a larger market for the EU than the US. The EU may one day go the way of “strategic autonomy” as proposed by Macron.

Centre for European Reform

Europe, the US and China: A love-hate ...

Chapter 199 – China-Russia Relations

Introduction:

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the de facto US-China alliance ended. A China-Russia rapprochement began which in 2022 reach a point of friendship "with no limits."

Main Story:

Relations between China and Russia in the days of the Qing dynasty had not been good. The Qing dynasty failed to drive Russian settlers out of Manchuria and ended up signing the Treaty of Nerchinsk in 1689. This treaty gave the lands of the upper Amur to China and called for the destruction of Russian settlements at Albazino, with the Chinese promising not to populate the Amur basin.

Epic World History

Epic World History: Treaty of Nerchinsk

This treaty signed in a town in Russia was the first treaty China signed with a western power. Drawn up in Latin by Jesuits from the Chinese emperor Kangxi's court, the treaty fixed the Sino-Russian frontier well to the north of the Amur River. As a result, China lost the region known as Russian Manchuria (an area of almost 1 million square kilometers or four United Kingdom) and access to the Sea of Japan.

Although both are Communist countries, they had vied for leadership of the Communist world. That resulted in the Sino-Soviet split in 1961 (see chapter 121).

When China attempted to build closer relations with Russia prior to 2014, the Russian government initially had reservations. However, the US sanctions against Russia for its 2014 annexation of Crimea helped push Russia to a warmer relationship with China.

Why there won't be a 'Hollywood ending' to the Ukraine war | The Bottom Line Watch

Xi Jinping and Putin met in Beijing during the run up to the 2022 Beijing Olympics. At that time there was a massive Russian build-up of forces on the Ukrainian border. Xi and Putin expressed that their two nations shared "no limits" in their friendship. Western media claimed that China had asked Russia to wait to invade Ukraine until after the Beijing Olympics.

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, China refused to condemn the invasion and abstained or sided with Russia in UN votes on the war in Ukraine. The unfriendly attitude of the US under the Trump and then the Biden administration towards China had helped to bond the relationship between the two countries. Russia and China had strong trade ties which were further strengthened by the Ukraine War.

Even prior to the war, the two countries had been partners in organizations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (chapter 145) and BRICS (chapter 188). Russia supports China's BRI which passes through Russian territory.

After the EU arms embargo on China following the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, China had become a reliable client for Russian military exports. In April 2023, Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu met Putin purportedly to discuss the

sharing of critical weapon technology. Russia's dependence on the Chinese yuan increased heavily after the invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

ET The Epoch Times
Sixth Russia-China Alliance ...

Conclusion:

From systemic rivals, China-Russia relations had progressed from rapprochement, to "constructive partnership", to "strategic partnership", to "friendship and cooperation" and today's friendship "without limits."

Chapter 200 – China-US Relations 中美关系

Introduction:

Historically, relations between the two major world powers have been stable with some periods of open conflict, most notably the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Currently, the US and China have intertwined political, economic, and security interest, such as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but there are unresolved issues relating to Taiwan, human rights in China and the South China Sea.

Main Story:

The US did not formally recognize the PRC for 30 years after its founding. In 1971, an unexpectedly friendly encounter between the American and Chinese ping-pong athletes, Glenn Cowan and Zhuang Zedong 庄则栋, in Japan opened the way for President Nixon to visit China and establish diplomatic relations （chapter134）. In July 1971, Henry Kissinger feigned illness while on a trip to Pakistan and did not appear in public for a day. He was actually on a top-secret mission to Beijing to negotiate with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai 周恩来.

The announcement of President Nixon's visit to China angered the political hawks from within both the US and China, and around the world. In the PRC, opposition was allegedly led by Lin Biao 林彪 (chapter 118), head of the military. He died in a mysterious plane crash over Mongolia while trying to defect to the Soviet Union. His death silenced most internal dissent over the visit.

Japan was also annoyed that it had not been told of the announcement until 15 minutes before it had been made, and feared that the US was abandoning them in favor of the PRC.

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union removed the original motivation underlying the rapprochement between China and the US. The warm relations established since the 1972 visit of Richard Nixon steadily deteriorated due to the hegemonic great power rivalry between US and China. Although the US established diplomatic relations with the PRC in 1979 and recognized the PRC as the sole legitimate government of China, it continued unofficial warm relations with Taiwan within the framework of the Taiwan Relations Act. The political status of Taiwan continues to be a major source of contention.

The Yinhe incident of 1993 (chapter 144), the 1999 bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade (chapter 147)， and the Hainan Island incident of 2001 (chapter 149) all served to sour the relations between China and the US. However, the September 11 terrorist attacks and North Korea's nuclear weapons program did

help to bring the US and China closer together in their joint fight against terror and in their common opposition to North Korea's decision to withdraw from the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. So did the 2007-2008 global financial crisis when China helped the US by buying US Treasury bonds.

In recent years, the East Asia pivot strategy of Obama strained relations between the two big powers. Relations worsened sharply following the election of Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential elections. Trump's harsh political rhetoric regarding China both during his campaign and into his early presidency was soon followed by actions, the chief of which was the trade war against China. The US then banned American companies from selling equipment to Huawei (even arresting Huawei's CFO Meng Wanzhou 孟晚舟, the Chairman's daughter in 2018, which corresponded with the suspicious death on that same day of a leading Chinese national quantum physicist and venture capitalist at Stanford University, Shoucheng Zhang 受成长. The US also revoked preferential treatment towards Hong Kong, increased visa restrictions on students from China, and upgraded relations with Taiwan. Trump expanded the duties of the US de facto embassy in Taipei – the American Institute in Taiwan, and even made a personal phone call to Tsai Ing-Wen 蔡英文, which angered China.

By early 2018, a new Cold War had already started. Trump accused China of spreading the coronavirus which he called the Wuhan virus and Kong Flu. On the last day of the Trump administration in 2021, the US officially labelled China's treatment of Uyghurs as a "genocide." The aggressive attitude of the US forced China to push back more robustly than ever before, and China was in turn accused of "wolf warrior diplomacy." China's Xi Jinping administration continually insisted that US-China relations should be grounded on the principles of "mutual respect" and "win'win cooperation."

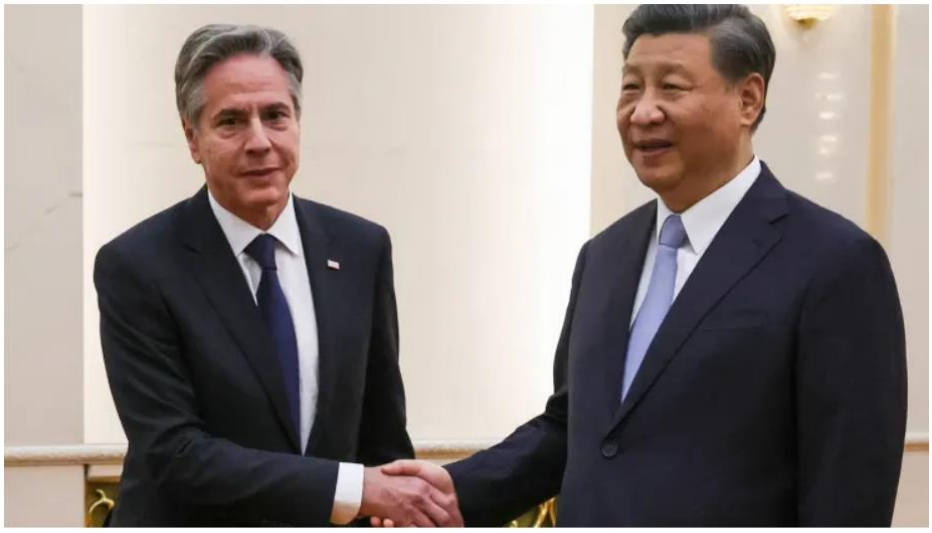
In a push back against the US, China stepped up military activities in the contested South China Sea, denounced the American Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (who

together with his family members were sanctioned by China), and some Chinese officials publicly speculated that the American military deliberately unleashed the virus in China.

Relations with the new Biden administration in 2021 led to heightened tensions as Biden doubled down on the aggressive stance taken by Trump. Biden's remarks that the US will come to the defence of Taiwan marked a major shift in US policy from strategic ambiguity to strategic clarity, although Biden's aides walked back on his remarks. The US, UK and Australia formed AUKUS and Australia will be provided with conventionally-armed submarines powered by nuclear energy. The US diplomatically boycotted the Beijing Olympics of 2022. The Quad was also formed as an alliance between the US, Australia, India and Japan.

The US blamed China for aligning with Russia in the Ukraine War. House speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan led to the PRC staging military exercises simulating the blockade of Taiwan. In February 2023, a suspected Chinese reconnaissance balloon was shot down. The US claimed that it was collecting information related to the nuclear silos in the state of Montana. Subsequent investigations revealed that no data was collected by the ballon. The Biden administration initiated "friend shoring" which sought to maintain critical-sector supply chains independent from China. The US looked at banning TikTok. There was a near collision between a Chinese jet fighter and a US spy plane in the South China Sea, a stark reminder of the Hainan Island incident.

In June 2023, US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken paid a visit to China where he had discussions with his counter-part Qin Gang 秦刚. Xi Jinping also met with Blinken in a show of mutual respect. This served to cool tensions somewhat but just days after the visit Biden passed a comment during a campaign fundraiser calling Xi Jinping a "dictator."



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (L) shakes hands with China's President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on June 19, 2023.

Conclusion:

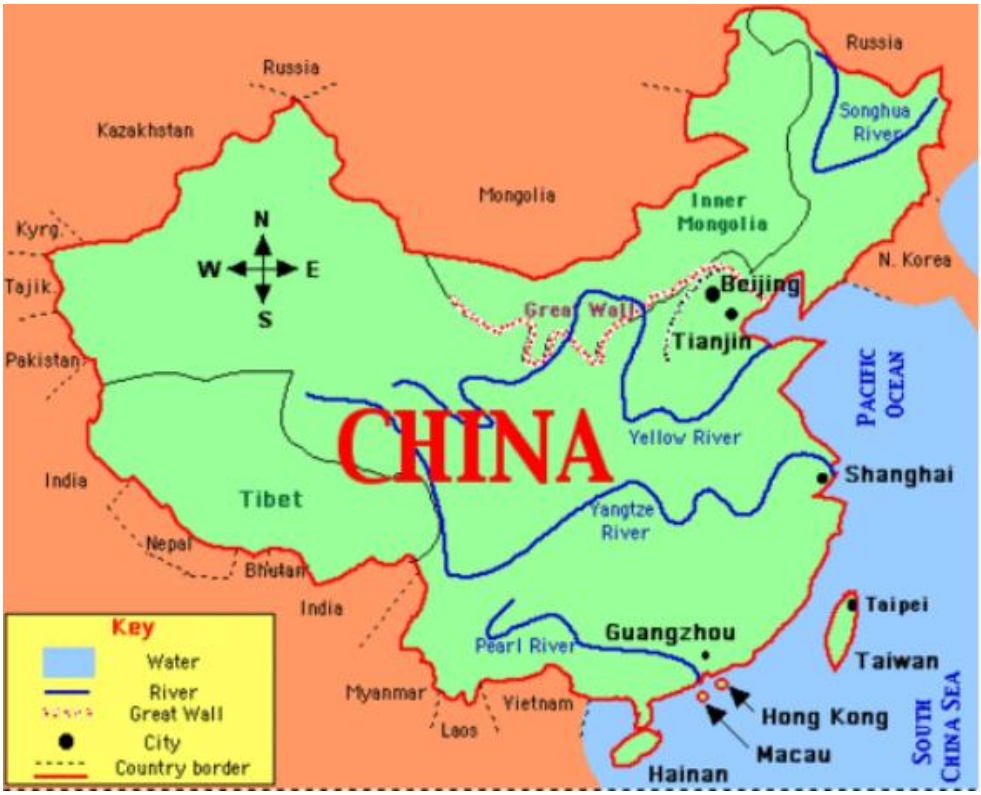
The question on everyone's mind now is whether war will break out between the US and China. There is a power transition theory (Thucydides Trap) that there is a tendency towards war when an emerging superpower threatens to displace an existing superpower.

However, what can prevent this scenario is the doctrine of MAD (Mutual assured destruction) which posits that a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by an attacker on a nuclear-armed defender with second-strike capabilities would cause the complete annihilation of both the attacker and the defender, and of mankind as we know it.

EPILOGUE

The discovery of ancient Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures at the Yangtze basin attests to the Yangtze River being the cradle for Chinese civilization. The Yangtze civilization and a parallel civilization along the Huang He (Yellow River) date back to around 5,000 BC, more than 7,000 years ago.

The Yangtze and Huang He rank as the second and sixth longest rivers in the world. Unlike other great rivers in the world which flow through multiple countries, both the Yangtze and Hwang He rivers flow only through one country – China.



For 5000 years, the Chinese people had struggled with adversities and learnt to bear hardship – 吃苦. They endured devastating earthquakes, severe floods, prolonged droughts and widespread famines, debilitating epidemics and pandemics, internal conflicts and political revolutions, foreign invasions and occupations and,

in recent years, international sanctions. This had created a people who are stoic and resilient in the face of trials and tribulations. The ability to endure hardship has become a virtue unto itself. According to a popular Chinese proverb, “only those who can endure the toughest of life’s challenges shall emerge head and shoulders above others” 不受苦中苦， 难为人上人。

Of all the natural disasters, severe flooding is the one most frequently faced by the Chinese throughout history. In Chapter 5 Pre-History (Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors 三皇五帝), we learned that Yu (大禹) was given the throne to the kingdom although he was not the son of the emperor. Yu was famed for the first state efforts at flood control. It was Yu who founded the Xia dynasty 夏朝, the first great Chinese dynasty (2100-1600 BC). Yu is one of the few Chinese monarchs posthumously honored with the epithet “the Great”. Several statues and temples have been built to honor him.

The huge land mass of China needed a strong leader to bring order to chaos. In the earliest time of recorded Chinese dynastic history, it was Qin Shihuang 秦始皇, who emerged as such a leader. He put an end to the endless warfares of the Spring and Autumn, and Warring States periods (770 – 221 BC) and established the foundation of a unified China (Chapter 18).

The famous opening lines of the novel, Romance of the Three Kingdoms, state that: “The empire, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide. Thus it has ever been. 话说天下大势，分久必合，合久必分。The passing of Qin Shihuang robbed China of a strong leader and led to the Chu-Han Contention 楚汉战争 (chapter 19.) The Han dynasty emerged the victor and reigned supreme until China was again divided into The Three Kingdoms 三国 ((chapter 30). And so it went on in cycles, unified and divided, divided and again unified.

Dynasties that unified China included the Qin dynasty (chapter 17), the Han dynasty (chapter 20), the Western Jin dynasty (chapter 32), the Sui dynasty (chapter 40), the Song dynasty (chapter 53), the Yuan dynasty (chapter 69), the Qing dynasty (chapter 88), and in modern times, the Republic of China (chapter 101) and the People’s Republic of China (chapter 115). Currently, the PRC is a

strongly unified entity that emerged out of ashes of the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949.)

The Chinese are actually not a war-like people, preferring to lead their own quiet life. Exposed for millennials to the thoughts of Confucius (551 – 479 BC), every Chinese knows the golden rule of Confucianism: “Do not do unto others what you would not want others to do unto you.”

However, much as they wanted to, it was never possible for the Chinese to live peacefully in isolation. All through the millennials, China faced foreign incursions, invasions and even occupations. There were the Xiongnus 匈奴 and other “barbarian” tribes during the Han dynasty and many subsequent dynasties, the Khitans 契丹 during the Northern Song dynasty, the Mongols 蒙古 during the Southern Song dynasty, the Jurchens 女真 during the Ming dynasty, the great Western imperial powers during the Qing dynasty, the Empire of Japan during the Republic of China period, and the Western powers and their Asian allies during the current People’s Republic of China period.

To defend against the depredations of nomadic horse-riding tribes to the north, the Chinese had built and relied on the Great Wall of China. Even during the Sino-Japanese war/World War II, the Great Wall was used in a desperate defensive battle against a foe armed with tanks and artillery. In this battle, the Japanese invaders blew up part of the wall for a photo op to symbolize their conquest.

At the core of the Chinese civilization is the Huaxia 华夏 people which evolved into a stable ethnic group during the Qin dynasty alongside many other minority ethnic groups. During the Han dynasty, the term Han became an alternative name of Huaxia. Today, more than 92% of the Chinese people are Han people. They are a distinctly unified group sharing a common language, a common culture and also common heroes. Despite conquest and occupation by foreign powers from time to time, the foreigners had never been able to successfully supplant their language and culture onto the Chinese people. Contrarily, the foreign occupiers (notably the Xiongnus, the Khitans, the Jurchens, the Mongols, and the Manchus) were all absorbed into the fabric of Han Chinese culture by the process known as Sinicization.

In modern times, the US saw a chance to bring China into its orbit. At the time of President Nixon's visit, China was weak and its economy was even smaller than that of Taiwan. Like the quintessential missionary, the US believed that they could convert the Chinese into Americans, changing their core values and way of life to those of the Americans. And that should happen after the Chinese have tasted the sweet fruits of the western capitalist system. They were utterly disillusioned. In 2017 (after the election of Trump), the US woke up to find that while the Chinese economy had grown to a size bigger than that of the US (in PPP terms), the Chinese still remain Chinese.

The internal convulsions in China through the ages had created a vast Chinese diaspora of roughly 50 million ethnic Chinese 华侨 around the world. When the Khitan-established Liao dynasty 辽朝 fell to the Jurchens of the Jin dynasty 金朝, Yelu Dashi 耶律大石 brought his army to the west and established the vast Western Liao empire (chapter 64). Khazakhstan and Kyrgyszstan were part of Western Liao and, up to now, the Kazakh and Kirgiz peoples have retained independent Khitan traditions. Zheng He 郑和, the special envoy of the Ming dynasty, brought many Chinese (mainly Cantonese and Hokkien) to explore and trade in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. The gold rush in California attracted thousands of Chinese, many of whom helped to build the railways in the Wild West. Wars and famines drove many Chinese to come to Southeast Asia, known then as Nanyang 南洋 the South Seas, to search for a livelihood. Different waves of immigration saw overseas Chinese going to Oceania, the Caribbean, South American and South Africa. In modern times, many Chinese also went to the West to seek a better education.

Chinese culture has had a deep imprint in East Asia. Korea adopted the Chinese language for 500 hundreds years prior to 1443. Japan still has Chinese characters as part of their writing system. Hongkong and Macao (chapters 146 and 148) which were separated from China were reunified in 1997 and 1999 respectively. As for Taiwan, it is still left to be seen whether the opening lines of the Romance of the Three Kingdom will come true – that Taiwan will be reunited with the motherland. One thing is for sure: the mother has no intention to disown the son and will do anything to bring him home (chapter 185). Chinese chopsticks are ubiquitously used in the more advanced parts of Asia, leading to the coinage of the

term “chopstick economies”, referring to the economies of China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. The Chinese business community of Southeast Asia is known as the “bamboo network.”

Owing to their economic success, the overseas Chinese have often experienced hostility and discrimination in countries where they are only a small ethnic minority. For example, ethnic Chinese made up just 1% of the population in the Philippines and 4% in Indonesia. Yet they dominated the economy which aroused deep resentment amongst the indigenous majority. The Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) provided a 10-year ban on Chinese immigrating to the US.

Major powers plan to cut up China for themselves; Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Austria, the United States, Russia, and France are represented by Wilhelm II, Umberto I, John Bull, Franz Joseph I (in rear), Uncle Sam, Nicholas II, and Émile Loubet. *Puck* Aug 23, 1899, by J. S. Pughe

China had seen a number of golden ages, primarily during the Han, the Tang, and the Song dynasties, and even during the Qianlong 乾隆 era of the Qing dynasty (before the Century of Humiliation 百年国耻 set in). At different time, China was called the Middle or Central Kingdom, implying its superior role in the world. Today, as a rising superpower, Xi Jinping is sounding the call for a Chinese Renaissance that will restore China's Preeminence in the world.

In conclusion, one can say that China is one of the few existing countries that had also flourished economically and culturally in the earliest stages of world civilization. Despite the political and social upheavals that had frequently ravaged the country, China is unique among nations in its longevity and resilience as a distinct politico-cultural unit.

China is not just a country, but a civilization.

Tai

22 July 2023

A Modern History of China covers over
100 years of modern Chinese history,
from the establishment of
the Chinese Republic in 1912 to present time.

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