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# **The Fall and Rise of China**

**Professor Richard Baum**

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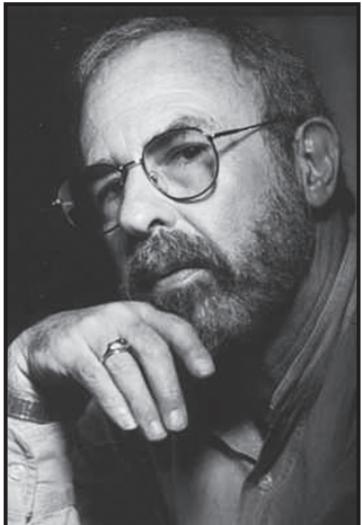
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Professor Baum has lived and lectured extensively throughout China and Asia. In recent years, he has served as visiting professor and visiting scholar at a number of leading universities, including Peking University; Meiji Gakuin University; The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Delhi University; Leiden University; Princeton University; and Arizona State University, where he was honored as the university's Distinguished Visiting Scholar for 2008.

For many years, Professor Baum was the director of the UCLA Center for Chinese Studies. Throughout his 40-year career, he has served on the boards of several leading organizations in his field, including the National Committee on United States–China Relations and the Joint Committee on Contemporary China of the Social Science Research Council. He has been a consultant to numerous public and private agencies, including the White House, the United Nations, and the Rand Corporation. He is also a frequent commentator on Chinese and East Asian affairs for several leading newspapers, the BBC World Service, Voice of America, CNN International, and National Public Radio.

Professor Baum has written or edited nine books and has published more than 100 articles in professional and popular journals. His books include *China in Ferment: Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution; Prelude*

*to Revolution: Mao, the Party, and the Peasant Question, 1962–1966; China's Four Modernizations: The New Technological Revolution; Reform and Reaction in Post-Mao China: The Road to Tiananmen; Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping;* and a personal memoir, *China Watcher: Confessions of a Peking Tom.*

Professor Baum is an avid traveler, outdoorsman, and tennis enthusiast. Three of his peak experiences to date have been an ascent of Japan's Mount Fuji by moonlight, exploration of the exquisite Cambodian temple ruins at Angkor Wat, and holding a center-court seat at the Wimbledon lawn tennis championships.

Professor Baum currently divides his time between teaching at UCLA and living and writing in the village of Les Michels in Provence, France. With help from his wife, Karin, a professional restaurateur, and their Basset hound, Millie, he is striving heroically to improve his rudimentary knowledge of French food, wine, cheese, and language. ■



# Table of Contents

---

## INTRODUCTION

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Professor Biography ..... | i |
| Course Scope .....        | 1 |

## LECTURE GUIDES

### LECTURE 1

|   |   |
|---|---|
| The Splendor That Was China, 600–1700 ..... | 9 |
|---|---|

### LECTURE 2

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Malthus and Manchu Hubris, 1730–1800..... | 12 |
|---|----|

### LECTURE 3

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Barbarians at the Gate, 1800–1860 ..... | 14 |
|---|----|

### LECTURE 4

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Rural Misery and Rebellion, 1842–1860 ..... | 18 |
|---|----|

### LECTURE 5

|   |    |
|---|----|
| The Self-Strengthening Movement, 1860–1890..... | 21 |
|---|----|

### LECTURE 6

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Hundred Days of Reform and the Boxer Uprising ..... | 24 |
|---|----|

### LECTURE 7

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| The End of Empire, 1900–1911 ..... | 28 |
|------------------------------------|----|

### LECTURE 8

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| The Failed Republic, 1912–1919..... | 31 |
|-------------------------------------|----|

### LECTURE 9

|  |    |
|--|----|
| The Birth of Chinese Communism, 1917–1925..... | 34 |
|--|----|

### LECTURE 10

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Chiang, Mao, and Civil War, 1926–1934 ..... | 37 |
|---|----|

# Table of Contents

---

## **LECTURE 11**

- The Republican Experiment, 1927–1937 ..... 40

## **LECTURE 12**

- “Resist Japan!” 1937–1945 ..... 44

## **LECTURE 13**

- Chiang’s Last Stand, 1945–1949 ..... 47

## **LECTURE 14**

- “The Chinese People Have Stood Up!” ..... 51

## **LECTURE 15**

- Korea, Taiwan, and the Cold War, 1950–1954 ..... 55

## **LECTURE 16**

- Socialist Transformation, 1953–1957 ..... 58

## **LECTURE 17**

- Cracks in the Monolith, 1957–1958 ..... 62

## **LECTURE 18**

- The Great Leap Forward, 1958–1960 ..... 66

## **LECTURE 19**

- Demise of the Great Leap Forward, 1959–1962 ..... 70

## **LECTURE 20**

- “Never Forget Class Struggle!” 1962–1965 ..... 74

## **LECTURE 21**

- “Long Live Chairman Mao!” 1964–1965 ..... 77

## **LECTURE 22**

- Mao’s Last Revolution Begins, 1965–1966 ..... 81

## **LECTURE 23**

- The Children’s Crusade, 1966–1967 ..... 85

# Table of Contents

---

## **LECTURE 24**

- The Storm Subsides, 1968–1969 ..... 89

## **LECTURE 25**

- The Sino-Soviet War of Nerves, 1964–1969 ..... 93

## **LECTURE 26**

- Nixon, Kissinger, and China, 1969–1972 ..... 96

## **LECTURE 27**

- Mao’s Deterioration and Death, 1971–1976 ..... 99

## **LECTURE 28**

- The Legacy of Mao Zedong—An Appraisal ..... 102

## **LECTURE 29**

- The Post-Mao Interregnum, 1976–1977 ..... 106

## **LECTURE 30**

- Hua Guofeng and the Four Modernizations ..... 109

## **LECTURE 31**

- Deng Takes Command, 1978–1979 ..... 112

## **LECTURE 32**

- The Historic Third Plenum, 1978 ..... 115

## **LECTURE 33**

- The “Normalization” of U.S.-China Relations ..... 119

## **LECTURE 34**

- Deng Consolidates His Power, 1979–1980 ..... 122

## **LECTURE 35**

- Socialist Democracy and the Rule of Law ..... 125

## **LECTURE 36**

- Burying Mao, 1981–1983 ..... 128

# Table of Contents

---

## **LECTURE 37**

- “To Get Rich Is Glorious,” 1982–1986 ..... 132

## **LECTURE 38**

- The Fault Lines of Reform, 1984–1987 ..... 136

## **LECTURE 39**

- The Road to Tiananmen, 1987–1989 ..... 140

## **LECTURE 40**

- The Empire Strikes Back, 1989 ..... 143

## **LECTURE 41**

- After the Deluge, 1989–1992 ..... 147

## **LECTURE 42**

- The “Roaring Nineties,” 1992–1999 ..... 151

## **LECTURE 43**

- The Rise of Chinese Nationalism, 1993–2001 ..... 155

## **LECTURE 44**

- China’s Lost Territories—Taiwan, Hong Kong ..... 159

## **LECTURE 45**

- China in the New Millennium, 2000–2008 ..... 163

## **LECTURE 46**

- China’s Information Revolution ..... 167

## **LECTURE 47**

- “One World, One Dream”—The 2008 Olympics ..... 170

## **LECTURE 48**

- China’s Rise—The Sleeping Giant Stirs ..... 173

# Table of Contents

---

## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Timeline .....           | 176 |
| Glossary .....           | 184 |
| Biographical Notes ..... | 202 |
| Bibliography.....        | 214 |



# The Fall and Rise of China

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## Scope:

This course traces China's tumultuous 200-year journey from collapsing 19<sup>th</sup>-century empire to aspiring 21<sup>st</sup>-century superpower. The journey begins with the decline and fall of the Manchu dynasty under the dual stresses of increasing foreign penetration and rising domestic disorder and culminates in China's rise, phoenix-like, from the ashes of radical, revolutionary Maoism to become a globalized, marketized economic—and potential military—powerhouse.

### **The Demise of the Ancien Régime and the Struggle for Revolutionary Renewal (1793–1945)**

The foundational lectures introduce the last days of imperial splendor in 19<sup>th</sup>-century China and the rising military and mercantile power of an awakening Europe. Two midcentury Opium Wars cripple the Manchu dynasty, rendering it an easy mark for Western penetration and predation. By the end of the century, a series of “unequal treaties” has reduced the once-proud Middle Kingdom to a hollow shell of its former splendor. China is now bankrupt and adrift, at the mercy of foreign interests.

A conservative Chinese Self-Strengthening movement, launched in the 1860s, aims at studying—and emulating—the secrets of Western technological and military prowess; but reactionary Manchu oligarchs, fearful of losing their traditional status, succeed in blocking progressive reform of China's Confucian-dominated educational, cultural, economic, and political institutions. By the end of the century, frustrated reformers begin turning to revolutionary means to effect necessary societal changes.

The moribund Manchu dynasty crumbles in 1912, and for next 37 years, China is wracked by revolution, foreign invasion, and civil war. Externally, a rising imperial Japan is exerting great military pressure on China, while internally, two revolutionary movements fight for political domination: the Guomindang (GMD; a.k.a. Nationalist Party) under Sun Yat-sen and his successor, Chiang K'ai-shek; and the Communists, who rally under the leadership of Mao Zedong.

With Japanese forces preparing to overrun China, the Nationalists and Communists enter into a united front late in 1936, aimed at resisting Japan. Japan attacks in July 1937, easily overrunning the cities of North and East China. Chiang retreats, moving his Nationalist government to Chongqing, deep in China's interior, while the Communists melt into the North China countryside, out of harm's way.

During eight years under Japanese occupation, 1937–1945, the Communists grow stronger, while the Nationalists, beset by rampant inflation, widespread corruption, and incompetent leadership, grow weaker. When the United States enters the anti-Japanese war in December 1941, the tide of battle begins to turn against Japan. In August 1945, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brings the war to a sudden, decisive end. With Japan's surrender, Mao and Chiang begin preparations for a final showdown.

### **The Age of Mao Zedong (1945–1968)**

By the end of World War II, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has won the loyalty of China's poor peasants, while the GMD has squandered the good will of the urban Chinese. In the civil war that follows, the tide of battle turns decisively in Mao's favor. Beijing falls on January 1, 1949, and Mao declares the birth of the People's Republic of China.

The early years of the new regime are devoted to political consolidation and economic recovery. A nationwide land reform program is introduced in 1950, marked by massive land confiscations and violent struggles against "evil landlords." In China's cities, the transfer of power in 1949 witnesses stepped-up political struggles against "reactionary classes," including Guomindang collaborators, foreign agents, and wealthy capitalists.

The outbreak of war in Korea in 1950 puts added strain on China's war-weakened economy while forcing Mao more firmly into Stalin's embrace, thereby hardening the lines of Cold War conflict between East and West.



**Mao Zedong, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, 1935–1976.**

© Corel Stock Photo Library.

In 1954, Soviet-style political and legal institutions are imported into China. A new constitution is promulgated, and China officially becomes a “people’s democratic dictatorship.” Now the CCP launches a program of agricultural collectivization designed to eliminate private ownership of land and other productive assets in the countryside. By 1956, the socialist transformation of the Chinese economy is complete. All rural villages have been collectivized, and all urban industrial and commercial firms have been converted from private to state ownership. But many people resent the power and privileges monopolized by Communist Party members and cadres.

To prevent a Hungarian-style revolt and to assuage the CCP’s critics, Mao in 1956 initiates a campaign to “let a hundred flowers blossom.” China’s intellectuals respond with a torrent of criticism against CCP leadership. Stung by this rebuke, Mao terminates the Hundred Flowers campaign and introduces an Anti-Rightist Rectification movement.

Increasingly concerned with the “revisionist” policies of Nikita Khrushchev in the USSR, Mao in 1958 launches a radical program of social engineering known as the Great Leap Forward. Hastily designed and poorly planned, the Great Leap causes enormous economic hardships. Between 1959 and 1961, upward of 30 million people die of malnutrition and related causes. Seeking to limit the damage, two of Mao’s lieutenants, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, begin dismantling the Great Leap. In doing so, they run afoul of Mao, who believes them to be following in Khrushchev’s footsteps.

Intent on preventing a restoration of capitalism in China, Mao launches the Socialist Education movement. But many of his comrades have become disillusioned with his radical policies, and they pay little attention to his exhortations. In response, Mao launches the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Encouraging Chinese students to boldly expose hidden “bourgeois powerholders” in Chinese society, Mao unleashes the Red Guards in the fall of 1966. Schools are dismissed, and young people are urged to “make revolution” against Chairman Mao’s enemies. By the spring of 1967, the Cultural Revolution has spread to the CCP itself, with tens of thousands of

Party officials at all levels—including Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping—being purged. China is in disarray, poised on the brink of anarchy.

### **Burying Mao (1968–1982)**

With the country on the brink of anarchy, Mao in late 1968 calls on the People's Liberation Army to restore order. Millions of urban Chinese youths are sent to rural areas to “remold” themselves through labor. Meanwhile, Sino-Soviet tensions reach the breaking point with an outbreak of shooting along the Manchurian border in March 1969. In midsummer, Soviet officials drop hints of a possible airstrike on China's nuclear facilities.

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**By 1956, the socialist transformation of the Chinese economy is complete. ... But many people resent the power and privileges monopolized by Communist Party members and cadres.**

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Convinced that his enemies are trying to do him in, Mao turns against his erstwhile heir apparent, Lin Biao, accusing him of plotting a seizure of power. In a panic, Lin takes flight with his wife and other members of the army high command. Their plane crashes and burns, killing all aboard. Lin is denounced in a nationwide campaign of vilification.

Next, the ever unpredictable Mao, now 80, decides to rehabilitate the disgraced Deng Xiaoping to help revive China's paralyzed

political institutions. This irritates Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, and a group of her radical associates, later known as the Gang of Four. Viewing Deng as a rival, they plot to discredit him. But Mao, growing weary of factional struggles, surprises everyone by anointing an unheralded outsider as his successor—Hua Guofeng.

In Mao's final years, the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations presents China's leader with an opportunity to improve relations with the United States. Seeking to enlist American help in containing Soviet expansion, Mao invites a U.S. ping-pong team to Beijing for “friendly competition.” This is followed by an invitation to President Richard Nixon to visit China. Although the Sino-American rapprochement is strongly opposed by Jiang Qing, Mao prevails, and the Shanghai communiqué is signed in February 1972.

With Mao's death in September 1976, the succession struggle heats up. The widely despised Jiang Qing and her three radical associates are arrested and charged with conspiring to seize power. With the Gang of Four behind bars, Deng Xiaoping attempts a second comeback, only to have his path blocked by Hua Guofeng, who sees Deng as his principal rival. The two men jockey for position, with Deng enjoying the support of key elder statesmen within the party and army. By 1978, the tide turns in Deng's favor. His ascendancy is confirmed by the CCP Central Committee in November 1978, and a number of sweeping policy initiatives are introduced to reform the stagnant Chinese economy, restore China's shattered legal institutions, and open up China to the outside world.

Mao's death leaves China exhausted and demoralized. Cautiously, Deng sets about reversing Mao's failed economic policies and dismantling the radical legacy of the Cultural Revolution. He rehabilitates large numbers of overthrown cadres, destigmatizes the un-Maoist notions of market competition and profit making, dismantles China's collective farms, and encourages peasants to farm their own family plots. Four Special Economic Zones are opened along China's eastern seaboard, designed to stimulate foreign investment and technology transfer. The age of Mao has ended.

### **China Rises from the Ashes (1982–2010)**

In the early 1980s, a number of senior CCP conservatives criticize Deng Xiaoping's reforms as "capitalist" and accuse members of Deng's reform coalition of fostering "spiritual pollution" in ideology and culture. For the remainder of the decade, the government oscillates uncertainly between reform and retrenchment, resulting in a series of stalled initiatives and partial reforms. Tensions between reformers and conservatives grow stronger, culminating in the January 1987 removal of Deng's liberal-minded protégé, CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang. Hu is accused by Party hard-liners of being excessively tolerant of "bourgeois liberalization."

In 1989, a number of reform-related stresses and strains converge. The sudden death of Hu Yaobang in April causes thousands of college students to take to the streets in Beijing, demanding that Hu's good name be restored. Party leaders conspicuously ignore the students, accusing their leaders of being unpatriotic and of fomenting turmoil. Insulted, the students redouble their

protests. By early May, hundreds of thousands of people—the vast majority nonstudents—fill the streets of Beijing in sympathy with the protesters. With Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev due to arrive in Beijing in mid-May, student leaders launch a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square. Enraged by the temerity of the students, senior Chinese leaders vow to put an end to the occupation of Tiananmen Square. Premier Li Peng declares martial law on May 19. A standoff ensues as civilian crowds pour into the streets to block the progress of military convoys.

The students' triumph is short-lived. On June 3, massive waves of government troops, backed by tanks and armored personnel carriers, converge on Tiananmen Square. When civilian crowds try to block their progress, the troops open fire. In the ensuing melee, hundreds of civilians are killed and thousands wounded. When the sun rises over Beijing on June 4, the army has secured Tiananmen Square.

For weeks thereafter, student leaders and others accused of taking part in violence are rounded up and imprisoned. At least two dozen “hooligans” are executed, as a reign of political terror blankets Beijing and other Chinese cities. Meanwhile, Deng Xiaoping congratulates army leaders for their bravery and heroism in defending the government and the party.

Taking advantage of the post-Tiananmen atmosphere of political repression, CCP hard-liners seek to abort Deng's economic reforms. Pointing to the collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe in the last half of 1989, they blame Gorbachev's policy of glasnost for encouraging the spread of bourgeois liberalization. The shocking collapse of the Soviet Union two years later further emboldens them to demand a complete reversal of China's “capitalist reforms.”

Though ailing and infirm, the 86-year-old Deng Xiaoping fights back. In January 1992, he embarks on a five-week Southern Tour of China's dynamic coastal cities and Special Economic Zones. Mobilizing support for his reforms at every stop, he disparages those who would reverse them as “women with bound feet.” Though he manages to rescue his embattled economic reforms, Deng rules out political reform. Citing the importance of unity and stability as preconditions for China's development, he insists on upholding the four cardinal

principles: unquestioning support for the people's democratic dictatorship, CCP leadership, socialism, and Marxism–Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought.

Deng's chosen successor, Jiang Zemin, eases slowly into power, remaining in Deng's shadow until the latter's formal retirement at the end of 1992.

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**The Communist Party maintains its exclusive monopoly on political power, and no dissent is tolerated.**

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Thereafter, Jiang and his chief economic troubleshooter, Vice-Premier (later Premier) Zhu Rongji successfully resolve a series of growing economic problems by taming rampant inflation, marketizing China's state-owned enterprises, and reforming China's dysfunctional banking and tax systems. By the time Deng dies in 1997, China's economy is humming on all cylinders, averaging 10 percent annual growth.

Early in the new century, Jiang attempts to reform the Communist Party. Introducing his "theory of the three represents," Jiang encourages recruitment of members of China's "new class" of capitalist entrepreneurs into the CCP. Several million capitalists respond to his call.

With Jiang's retirement in 2003, a new generation of "socialist technocrats" assumes power. Led by the new PRC president and party chief Hu Jintao, China's leaders begin to address burgeoning problems of unbalanced economic growth, extreme income polarization, environmental degradation, and bureaucratic corruption. Under the slogan "building a harmonious society," the new leaders begin to restore welfare benefits eliminated during the headlong rush to privatize the economy in the 1990s. Hu pledges to restore tuition-free public education; subsidized health care; unemployment benefits; and retirement pensions for workers, peasants, and migrant laborers.

Though they promote progressive social policies, the new Chinese leaders do not initiate significant political reforms. The Communist Party maintains its exclusive monopoly on political power, and no dissent is tolerated. The mass media in China remain routinely subject to censorship, and all putative challenges to CCP leadership are met with repressive force. Examples of such repression were readily seen during the run-up to the Beijing Olympics

of 2008, as dissident journalists, political activists, and social critics were systematically harassed and intimidated.

Meanwhile, China's ongoing economic dynamism has raised concerns of a growing "China threat" in Europe, America, and Japan. The PRC's dramatic rise has generated widespread fears of lost or outsourced jobs and has heightened global competition for energy resources, minerals, and industrial raw materials. Despite repeated Chinese assurances that the country's intentions are entirely peaceful, China is viewed by many as a peer competitor and potential adversary.

Notwithstanding worrisome projections of growing Chinese economic and military power and nationalistic fervor, recent Chinese behavior provides some grounds for cautious optimism. Since joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China has conformed rather closely with prevailing international norms and standards in its legal, commercial, and financial dealings. China's relations with Taiwan have calmed down considerably since 2005. And China has supported initiatives against nuclear weapons in Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. In all these respects, China is seen as behaving as a "responsible stakeholder." ■

# The Splendor That Was China, 600–1700

## Lecture 1

Legend has it that the Emperor Napoleon once said of China, “There lies a sleeping giant. Let it sleep, for when it wakes it will shake the world.”

For two millennia in the premodern world, the Chinese empire enjoyed cultural and political supremacy. The **Middle Kingdom** dealt with surrounding states as tributaries and regarded all non-Han Chinese peoples as barbarians. A unique combination of advanced water-management techniques, a meritocratic imperial bureaucracy, and a **Confucian** code of virtuous conduct reinforced by laws and unchallenged military prowess enabled the Chinese empire to prosper long after other ancient civilizations disappeared. Though twice invaded by northern barbarians—the Mongols in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the Manchus in the 17<sup>th</sup>—China managed to retain its imperial institutions and culture.

The opening of several **Silk Road** trade routes from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries brought China into limited commercial and religious contact with peoples and cultures from Central Asia and beyond, but these routes were



The Silk Road was a network of overland trade routes that linked western China with Central Asia and the world beyond.

largely abandoned following the Mongol Empire's disintegration after 1360. A brief blossoming of Chinese maritime navigation occurred under Ming emperor **Yongle** early in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but this age of exploration ended when Yongle's narrow-minded successors decreed an end to oceanic exploration.

From the death of Yongle until the dawn of the modern era, China turned inward, remaining largely indifferent to—and untouched by—the world beyond its immediate periphery. This course spans more than 200 years, from the decline of Chinese imperial power to the contemporary rebirth of modern China. ■

### Names to Know

**Yongle** (1360–1424): The third emperor of the Ming dynasty (r. 1402–1424), who commissioned seven major oceanic expeditions, led by Zheng He. With Yongle's death in 1424, maritime exploration ceased for 400 years.

**Zheng He** (c. 1371–1433): A Hui Muslim and imperial eunuch, Admiral Zheng launched seven oceanic expeditions between 1405 and 1433. His fleet of 200 six-masted ships reached ports in Southeast Asia, India, Ceylon, the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and the Horn of Africa.

### Important Terms

**Confucianism:** Classical Chinese philosophical doctrine holding that society is best regulated via internalized moral precepts of virtue and benevolence, rather than compulsion.

**Middle Kingdom:** This literal translation of “Zhongguo” (China) refers to the traditional Chinese belief in a Sinocentric universe.

**Silk Road:** The network of ancient trade routes linking western China to the Near and Middle East.

## Suggested Reading

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Huang, *1587: A Year of No Significance*.

Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What were the key sources of Chinese imperial longevity, and which of these were unique to China?
2. Who was Admiral Zheng He, and how did he play a critical role in closing China to the outside world for 400 years?

# Malthus and Manchu Hubris, 1730–1800

## Lecture 2

Middle Kingdom complex—a constellation of attitudes marked by extreme cultural self-satisfaction, economic insularity, military complacency, and, above all, a xenophobic contempt for all things “barbarian”—i.e., foreign.

In the mid-1700s, two parallel developments began to undermine China’s imperial grandeur: a demographic explosion and the introduction of opium. These factors, combined with the arrogance and complacency of China’s ruling elite, precipitated the empire’s sharp and tragic decline.

An extended period of peace that began in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century led to a decline in domestic mortality rates. It also gave the imperial government the opportunity and resources to improve the nation’s water management; this in turn resulted in fewer fatalities from flood, draught, water-borne disease, and malnutrition. Thus China’s population doubled in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and again in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But in this same period, agricultural productivity stagnated, causing a **Malthusian crisis** in which millions of Chinese farmers and laborers lived in dire poverty. Grain surpluses vanished, and agricultural tax revenue dwindled.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, European demand for Chinese tea, silk, spices, and porcelain rose dramatically. For a time, this trade revenue shored up the imperial treasury. But Europeans brought more than money to China; they also brought opium. English merchants and Chinese middlemen grew rich off this illicit commerce, but the drug wreaked havoc on China’s legitimate economy through addiction, inflation, and the destruction of China’s favorable trade balance with Europe.

When China finally opened itself to formal trade relations with Europe, several cultural misunderstandings, as well as Chinese xenophobia, soured China’s trade negotiations with Britain in 1793. **Emperor Qianlong** ultimately and arrogantly rejected the overtures of Britain’s trade representative, **Lord George Macartney**, further weakening the Chinese economy. China’s belief in its own superiority was about to be put to the test. ■

## Names to Know

**Macartney, Lord George** (1737–1806): Irish-born diplomat who led the failed British trade delegation from King George III to the court of Qianlong in 1793. He offended the emperor by refusing to perform the traditional kowtow.

**Qianlong** (1711–1799): Fifth emperor of the Manchu dynasty. Citing China’s “celestial supremacy,” Qianlong contemptuously rejected a 1793 request for normal trade relations from Great Britain.

## Important Term

**Malthusian crisis:** A situation in which a population has outstripped its potential productivity.

## Suggested Reading

Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Huang, *1587: A Year of No Significance*.

Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*.

Waley, *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What were the main causes of China’s dynastic decline?
2. How did the British reverse their unfavorable trade balance with China at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century?

# Barbarians at the Gate, 1800–1860

## Lecture 3

I have heard that the smoking of opium is ... strictly forbidden by your country. ... Why do you let it be passed on to the harm of other countries?

—Lin Zexu's letter to Queen Victoria in 1839

The British increasingly flouted Chinese law by smuggling larger and larger quantities of opium into the Middle Kingdom. By 1820, opium had surpassed all other commodities as China's chief import. The main port of entry was Canton, on China's southeast coast. As Chinese silver flowed out of the country in ever-larger quantities, the Manchu began executing Chinese opium traffickers.

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**By 1820, opium had surpassed all other commodities as China's chief import.**

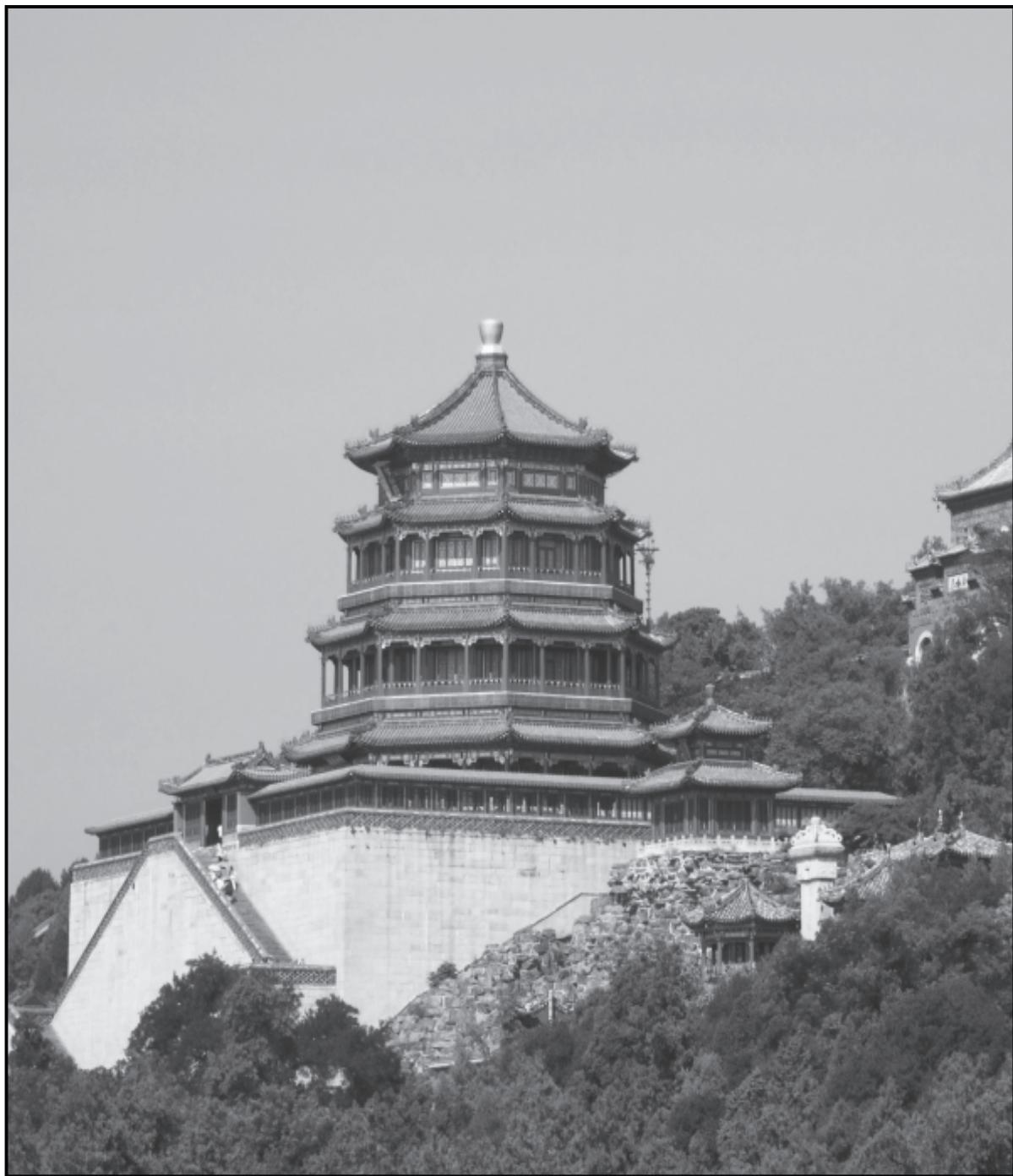
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In 1839, the Chinese commissioner in Canton seized 20,000 British opium chests and dumped them into the sea. England demanded retribution for the seized opium, dispatching 16 steel-hulled warships and 4,000 soldiers to blockade Canton. Thus began the first of two **Opium Wars**. In 1841, after the Chinese refused to pay compensation and reopen seaports to British trade, British ships attacked Chinese fortifications and wooden

warships along the coast. By 1842, British military superiority was clear, and China sued for peace, ending the First Opium War. The British extracted territorial, trade, and financial concessions from China.

By the late 1850s, French, Russian, and American merchants and missionaries joined England in demanding further concessions from China. In October 1856, Chinese soldiers seized a private British sailing vessel and charged the captain with engaging in coastal piracy. Thus began the Second Opium War. When the Manchu refused to provide additional financial indemnities and concessions, British and French forces invaded Beijing, destroying **Yuanmingyuan**. The wanton destruction of Yuanmingyuan remains today as a major symbol of the viciousness of Western aggression against China. The war ended in 1860, and China was

forced sign the treaty they had rejected two years earlier as excessively humiliating, granting Europeans additional privileges and concessions. With the conclusion of the Treaty of Beijing, some 1,200 years of Chinese imperial supremacy effectively came to an end. China was now weakened and a tempting target—for both foreign predators and domestic rebels. ■



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**Yuanmingyuan, the Manchu Summer Palace in Beijing. The palace was destroyed in 1860, during the Second Opium War.**

## Names to Know

**Elliot, George** (1784–1863): Admiral Elliot commanded the British naval force in Canton in 1839–1840. Seeking retribution for Lin Zexu’s seizure of British opium, Elliot engaged his warships in a show of military force, precipitating the First Opium War.

**Lin Zexu** (1785–1850): The imperial commissioner appointed by the Manchu emperor in 1838. Lin sought to suppress the British opium trade in Canton (Guangzhou). His efforts triggered the First Opium War in 1839.

**Qishan** (1790–1854): The Manchu imperial envoy known as the “manager of barbarians.” His diplomatic efforts to limit British military forays in 1840–1841 failed, and he suffered permanent exile.

**Qiying** (1787–1858): Qiying replaced Qishan as the chief Chinese “barbarian handler” in 1841. He employed dilatory tactics to slow British encroachments. Failing to deter Britain, he was recalled in disgrace.

## Important Terms

**Opium Wars:** Wars launched by European powers in 1839 and 1856 to punish the Manchu government for restricting foreign commercial access to China.

**Yuanmingyuan:** The Manchu Summer Palace in Beijing, which was destroyed by the British and the French in 1860.

## Suggested Reading

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*.

Wakeman, *Strangers at the Gate*.

Waley, *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What role did opium play in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century subjugation of China by the West?
2. How did Chinese court officials deal with “barbarian” incursions in the period from 1830 to 1860?

# Rural Misery and Rebellion, 1842–1860

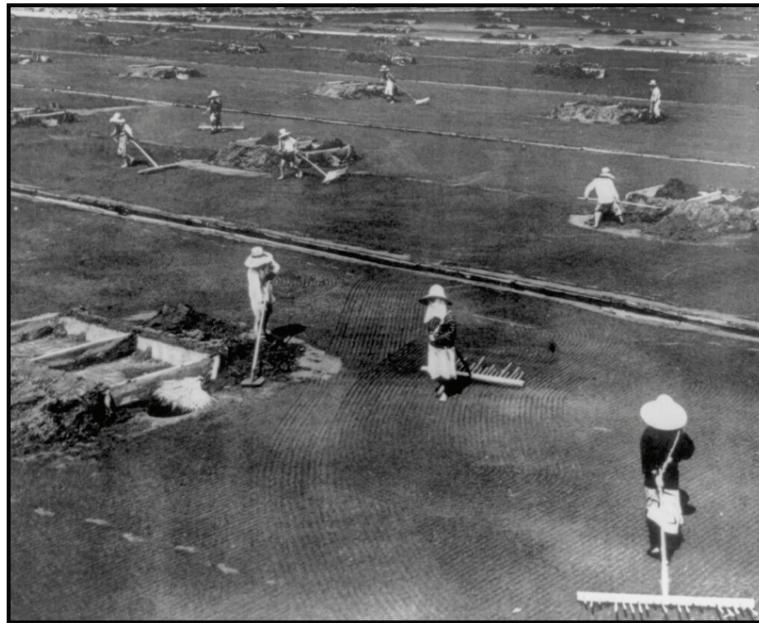
## Lecture 4

The ruling elite is like the wind, the little people are like the grass. When the wind blows, the grass bends.

— Traditional proverb

Alongside the Western military humiliation of China, internal disturbances were emerging in China's rural heartland. The Malthusian crisis begun in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was intensifying, with tens of millions of farmers driven into debt. Chinese farmers were heavily taxed and intimidated by district magistrates. If a magistrate ignored their petitions, farmers' only recourse was rebellion.

Peasant rebellions were not new in China, and when a series of devastating floods occurred in the early 1850s in North China's Yellow River basin, a major uprising—the **Nian Rebellion**—broke out in several provinces. At almost the same time, an even larger rebellion broke out in South China, where a charismatic but mentally unstable young Chinese religious scholar named **Hong Xiuquan** led an uprising of impoverished farmers. At the height of the **Taiping Rebellion** in the mid-1850s, its rebel armies controlled seven provinces and had half a million fighters. When the Taipings tried to conquer North China, their advance failed due to their overconfidence, logistical overextension, and severe winter weather. Weakened by growing internal divisions and rivalries, the Taiping rebels were ultimately subdued in the early 1860s by a combined force of elite imperial troops and European-trained military units.



Peasants in rural China faced a mounting agrarian crisis in the mid-1800s.

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With the Taipings decisively defeated and Western troops gone from Beijing, the Manchu dynasty would attempt a revitalization. But time would show that agrarian rebellion, combined with the encroachment of Western powers, had fatally weakened the Manchu's hold on the empire. ■

## Names to Know

**Hong Xiuquan** (1814–1864): The charismatic founder and delusional leader of the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864). Hong believed himself to be the brother of Jesus Christ and ruled the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom until his death in 1864.

**Ward, Frederick Townsend** (1831–1862): An American soldier of fortune hired to recruit and train foreign mercenaries to help suppress the Taiping Rebellion. Ward was fatally wounded at the battle of Cixi in 1862.

**Zeng Guofan** (1811–1872): The commander of the imperial Hunan army that defeated the Taiping Rebellion. Zeng later became a leading figure in the Self-Strengthening movement.

## Important Terms

***laobaixing***: Ordinary Chinese people (literally, “old hundred names”).

**Nian Rebellion** (1853–1868): A massive peasant rebellion triggered by the extensive collapse of imperial flood-control works and subsequent famine in the Yellow River region.

**Taiping Heavenly Kingdom** (1853–1864): A rebel state encompassing several provinces and tens of millions of uprooted peasants, with its capital in Nanjing. Founded by Christian zealot Hong Xiuquan.

**Taiping Rebellion** (1850–1864): A rebellion begun in Southeast China that was an even greater threat to Manchu rule than the Nian Rebellion.

## Suggested Reading

Chesneaux, *Peasant Revolts in China*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

Spence, *God's Chinese Son*.

———, *The Search for Modern China*.

Wakeman, *Strangers at the Gate*.

Waley, *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*.

Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did rural poverty spread so widely in 19<sup>th</sup>-century China?
2. How did rural unrest contribute to the downfall of the Manchu dynasty?

# The Self-Strengthening Movement, 1860–1890

## Lecture 5

We should carefully watch and learn their superior techniques and also observe their shortcomings. ... If they abandon good relations and break their covenant, we would then have the weapons to oppose them.

— Zeng Guofan, on studying the West

**A**fter the Second Opium War and the defeat of the Taiping and Nian rebellions, the faltering Manchu dynasty enjoyed a brief respite. In the early 1860s, scholars sought to redress Chinese vulnerability with respect to the European powers. China launched a series of initiatives aimed at adopting the techniques of Western science and industry while preserving Chinese culture.

Prince Gong's internal reforms, collectively known as the **Self-Strengthening movement**, were introduced to manage rural unrest and to learn from foreigners how to produce modern weapons. Indeed, by the mid-1870s, China was manufacturing thousands of small arms comparable to those used by Europeans.

But the reforms had unintended consequences: Young scholars sent abroad to study Western industrial technology returned and began advocating sweeping educational reforms, including the study of mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, and foreign languages. This rankled many conservative Chinese Confucian scholars, who feared the loss of their traditional lifestyles and intellectual privileges. Within the Manchu court, resistance to reform was led by the powerful **Dowager Empress Cixi**, who conspired at every turn to undermine Prince Gong's proposed reforms.

With reform stalled, China's imperial decline continued unabated—now marked by a highly ambivalent relationship between China and the West, in which Chinese admiration of Western science, technology, and economic progress was offset by deep-seated resentment of Western aggression and bullying. Such ambivalence endured for over a century, flaring up periodically down to the present day.

Between 1860 and 1898, foreign powers established territorial enclaves in dozens of Chinese cities. Japan's more successful modernization and incorporation of Western technology would soon become a threat to the Middle Kingdom. ■

### Names to Know

**Cixi** (1835–1908): This archconservative dowager empress dominated Manchu court politics in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Operating behind the scenes, she effectively manipulated youthful emperors and undermined all efforts at reform.

**Gong, Prince** (1833–1898): The principal patron of the Self-Strengthening movement of the 1860s, Gong promoted educational reforms and foreign military technology, thereby running afoul of Cixi.

### Important Term

**Self-Strengthening movement** (a.k.a. **Tongzhi Restoration**; 1862–1875): A reform movement initiated by Manchu Prince Gong, designed to defend China against foreigners by studying the secrets of Western military success.

### Suggested Reading

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Spence, *God's Chinese Son*.

———, *The Search for Modern China*.

Teng and Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*.

Wakeman, *Strangers at the Gate*.

Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How did China's early modernizers understand the sources of Western military power?
2. What were the modernizers' prescriptions for overcoming Western technological superiority?

# Hundred Days of Reform and the Boxer Uprising

## Lecture 6

**When the power of the empire comes from one person, it is weak. When it comes from millions of people, it is strong.**

—Reform scholar Wang Kangnian

The self-strengtheners' failure woke up progressive Chinese intellectuals, who began to push for more fundamental changes in Chinese society. In 1898, at the reformers' urging, the young emperor **Guangxu** introduced systemic changes, known as the **Hundred Days of Reform**. He issued 40 imperial edicts abolishing the ancient civil service exams, creating China's first national university, reforming legal codes, promoting foreign trade and economic entrepreneurship, and involving citizens in policy deliberations. The reforms would have changed the face of imperial China.

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**From 1898 to  
1900, the Boxers,  
a fanatically  
xenophobic secret  
society who  
believed themselves  
impervious to bullets,  
rampaged throughout  
North China.**

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But just as she had 25 years earlier, the archconservative Dowager Empress Cixi intervened to stop the reforms. She ordered her retainers and eunuchs to raid the emperor's palace and seize the reform decrees. The emperor was imprisoned, and several proreform scholars-officials were banished from Beijing.

Meaningful reform from within was now blocked, and xenophobia flourished under Cixi's rule. Fresh challenges arose, in particular, the **Boxer Rebellion**. From 1898 to 1900, the Boxers, a fanatically xenophobic secret society who believed themselves impervious to bullets, rampaged throughout North China, burning Western churches and slaughtering missionaries and Chinese Christians. In 1900 in Beijing, 10,000 Boxers armed with swords and spears attacked the foreign diplomatic legations for 55 days before 18,000 foreign troops moved in to crush them. In the aftermath of the Boxer uprising, Western powers exacted still greater indemnities from Beijing. ■

## Kang Youwei's Audience with Emperor Guangxu Leads to Hundred Days of Reform

After sending five requests to Emperor Guangxu, reformer Kang Youwei was granted a private audience with the emperor in late January 1898. The remarkable conversation, which led to the Hundred Days of Reform, lasted five hours—the longest imperial audience in recorded history. Their conversation was recorded by a scribe and is excerpted below.

**Guangxu:** Today it is really imperative that we reform.

**Kang:** In recent years we have ... talked about reform ... but it was only a slight reform. ... The prerequisites of reform are that all the laws and the political and social systems be changed and decided anew.

*At this point, Guangxu cast a sidelong glance at the screen next to him, where Dowager Empress Cixi often lurked.*

**Guangxu:** What can I do with so much hindrance?

**Kang:** Today most of the high ministers are very old and conservative, and they do not understand matters concerning foreign countries. If Your Majesty wishes to rely on them for reform it will be like climbing a tree to look for fish. ... If Your Majesty wishes reform, the only thing to do is to promote and make use of lower officials. ... The trouble today lies in the noncultivation of the people's wisdom, and the cause ... lies in the civil service examinations based on the eight-legged essay.

**Guangxu:** It is so. Westerners are all pursuing useful studies, while we Chinese pursue useless studies.

**Kang:** Since Your Majesty is already aware of the harm of the eight-legged essay, could we abolish it?

**Guangxu:** We could. If you have something more to say you may prepare memorials ... and send them here to me later on.

## Names to Know

**Guangxu** (1871–1908): Influenced by liberal intellectuals Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, this youthful Manchu emperor introduced 40 major domestic reforms in 1898. He was deposed and imprisoned by Cixi following the Hundred Days of Reform.

**Kang Youwei** (1858–1927): Kang was the leading liberal reformer in the last decades of the Qing dynasty. He persuaded Emperor Guangxu in 1898 to introduce major innovations in education, civil service exams, medical training, and foreign affairs.

**Liang Qichao** (1873–1929): This student of Kang Youwei worked with Kang to enact the reforms of 1898. Both men fled to Japan in 1898 after Cixi suppressed the reforms and imprisoned Emperor Guangxu.

## Important Terms

**Boxer Protocol** (1901): The treaty that ended the Boxer Rebellion; it exacted large financial indemnities from the Manchus as punishment for their complicity in Boxer attacks on foreigners.

**Boxer Rebellion** (1899–1900): Insurrection by secret society of “harmonious fists” aimed at killing all foreigners and punishing the Manchus for China’s weakness.

**Hundred Days of Reform** (1898): Abortive effort by Emperor Guangxu to reform the Manchu dynasty from within. Spearheaded by Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, the reforms were blocked by Dowager Empress Cixi.

**Open Door policy** (1898): The policy initiated by President William McKinley that was designed to morally restrain foreign powers from dominating China and to maintain equal access among foreign countries.

## Suggested Reading

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion*.

Schrecker, *The Chinese Revolution in Historical Perspective*.

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*.

Teng and Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*.

Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Chinese reformers become radicalized toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
2. In what sense did the Boxer uprising represent the last instance of premodern rebellion in China?

# The End of Empire, 1900–1911

## Lecture 7

In this lecture we witness the final throes of a dying dynasty, and the concurrent rise of the first truly modern Chinese revolutionary political party—the Guomindang of Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

With the collapse of the 1898 reform movement and the suppression of the Boxers, China's government was essentially impotent and rudderless. A group of Western-trained Chinese intellectuals, weary of partial, ineffective reforms, now began to organize themselves in earnest to overthrow the Manchu dynasty and replace it with a progressive, Western-style political movement.



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Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

Their leader was **Sun Yat-sen**, a medical doctor trained in Hawaii and Hong Kong. Unlike the rebels discussed in previous lectures, Sun was distinctly modern and proposed a coherent political plan for China. After leading an abortive uprising in Canton in 1893, Sun was forced to flee to the West, where he formulated his political ideology,

the **Three People's Principles**. As the Manchu dynasty grew weaker, Sun's popularity grew both inside China and among overseas Chinese.

### The Three People's Principles (*sanmin zhuyi*)

*Written in Chinese*

三民主義

民族主義

民權主義

民生主義

Seeking recruits and foreign support, Sun planned at least 10 failed anti-Manchu uprisings between 1906 and 1911. The Chinese Republican Revolution of 1911 began quite accidentally, without

any master plan at all, and with its principal architect, Sun, thousands of miles away. A revolutionary bomb exploded unintentionally in October

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1911, leading Sun's followers in Hankow (modern Wuhan) to mutiny against the local imperial command, causing the local garrison commander to flee. The rebels found themselves in control of the city, and soon afterward Manchu authority began to crumble throughout the country.

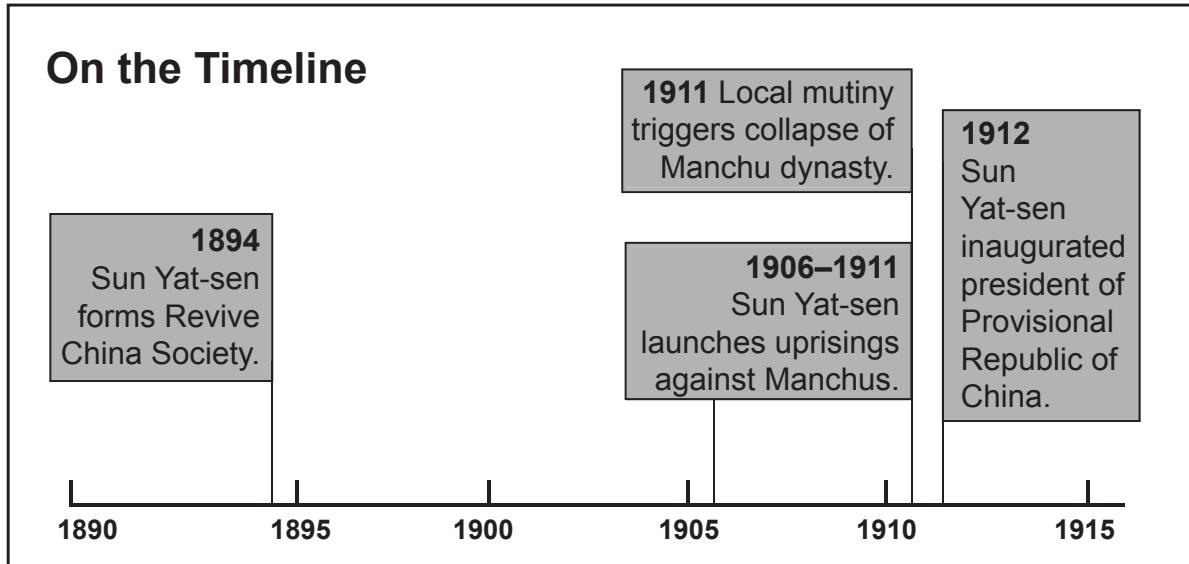
**The Chinese  
Republican  
Revolution of  
1911 began quite  
accidentally, without  
any master plan  
at all, and with its  
principal architect,  
Sun, thousands of  
miles away.**

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Sun returned to China and christened the Provisional Republic of China, of which he was inaugurated provisional president on January 1, 1912. He also renamed his revolutionary movement the Guomindang, or National People's Party. Without a disciplined, reliable army of his own, however, Sun could not consolidate power. He turned to the former imperial commander in chief, Yuan Shikai.

Yuan was willing to collaborate with Sun's Nationalists, but in return Yuan demanded the presidency of the new Republic of China. Sun reluctantly agreed, and he abdicated in Yuan's favor in February 1912, the same month it was announced that the Manchu court had abdicated power to the new republic. ■

### On the Timeline



## Names to Know

**Puyi** (1906–1967): China’s “last emperor.” As a toddler, he was placed on the Manchu throne as a figurehead by Cixi in 1908. Puyi was later installed by Japan as the puppet ruler of Manchukuo.

**Sun Yat-sen** (1866–1925): A medical doctor trained in Hawaii and Hong Kong, Sun led efforts to overthrow the Manchu dynasty. When the dynasty collapsed in 1911, Sun founded China’s first modern political party, the Guomindang, and became the first president of the Republic of China. He is revered as the father of modern China.

**Yuan Shikai** (1859–1916): The last commander of the Manchu imperial army. Yuan transferred his loyalty to Sun Yat-sen after the revolution of 1911, only to seize power from Sun a few months later. Yuan died after an unsuccessful attempt to restore the dynastic system.

## Suggested Reading

Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Schrecker, *The Chinese Revolution in Historical Perspective*.

Spence, *The Search for Modern China*.

Teng and Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Did the Manchu dynasty jump, or was it pushed?
2. Why did the revolution of 1911 fail to lead to a viable republican government?

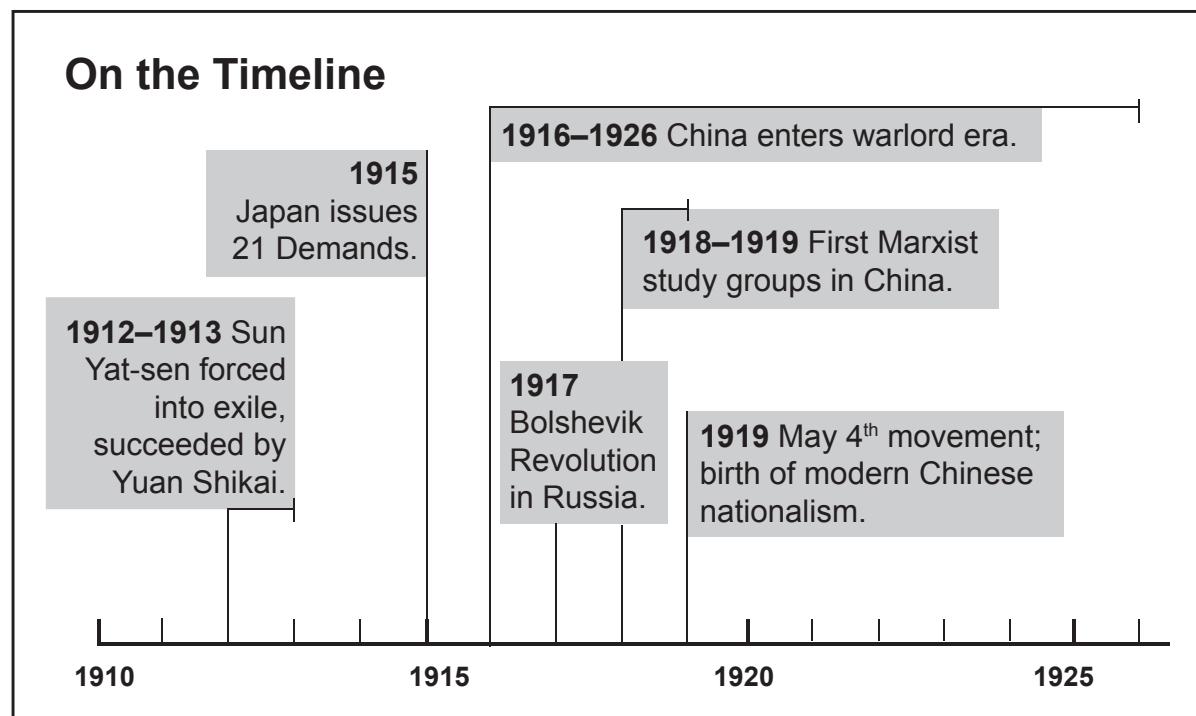
# The Failed Republic, 1912–1919

## Lecture 8

**When lack of a legal quorum prevented the parliament from convening, Yuan [Shikai] did what any self-respecting autocrat would do; he dissolved the parliament.**

**C**hina's republican experiment was short-lived: President Yuan Shikai moved to marginalize the Guomindang, buying off some legislators and intimidating others. He arranged the assassination of the GMD's prime minister, Song Jiaoren. By 1913, Sun Yat-sen was again forced into exile. Yuan then set about restoring the Chinese empire, with himself as emperor.

He might have succeeded but for the outbreak of World War I. With the Western powers distracted in Europe, Japan in 1915 presented Yuan with its **21 Demands**, designed to expand its foothold in China. When word of the Japanese demands leaked out, a wave of anti-Japanese, anti-Yuan Shikai nationalism erupted in China. Angered by President Yuan's willingness to capitulate to Japan, Chinese provinces began declaring their independence



one by one. Japan's demands could not be implemented, and Yuan's plans for a restored empire were aborted. He died a year later, a broken man.

Soon after, China devolved into an extended period of political fragmentation. Without a strong central government, China's provincial military chieftains—known as warlords—reigned supreme in their regional strongholds. When World War I ended, China, which had nominally joined the victorious Franco-British-American alliance, expected to be rewarded with the return of Germany's concessions in Shandong Province and elsewhere. But the Treaty of Versailles in April 1919 transferred the German concessions to Japan.

Outraged students and workers held mass demonstrations in several Chinese cities. The **May 4<sup>th</sup> movement**, as these demonstrations were called, lasted for over a month and marked the birth of modern Chinese nationalism. In its aftermath, the New Culture movement deepened the national determination to cast off foreign domination and make China modern, wealthy, and strong. ■

### Names to Know

**Song Jiaoren** (1882–1913): An expert on parliamentary government, Song was the first prime minister of the Republic of China. A year after he orchestrated the GMD's first electoral campaign in 1912, he was assassinated on Yuan Shikai's orders.

**Soong Ching-ling** (1893–1981): The American-educated second wife of Sun Yat-sen. She was the daughter of Sun's key financial backer, Charlie Soong, and the sister of Soong Mei-ling (Madame Chiang K'ai-shek).

**Soong Mei-ling** (1897–2003): The younger sister of Soong Ching-ling, and wife of Chiang K'ai-shek. Educated in the United States, she acted as a go-between in the early 1940s, rallying the support of the American people for China's struggle against Japan.

**Zhang Zuolin** (1875–1928): This Manchu warlord ruled Manchuria from 1916 to 1928, when he was assassinated by a Japanese army officer. His son, Zhang Xueliang, famously kidnapped Chiang K'ai-shek in 1936.

## Suggested Reading

Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*.

Pye, *Warlord Politics*.

Schrecker, *The Chinese Revolution in Historical Perspective*.

Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What was warlordism's legacy in China?
2. How did the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement affect the course of modern Chinese history?

# The Birth of Chinese Communism, 1917–1925

## Lecture 9

**Let us rise and fight together! The revolution is not yet accomplished!**  
— The last words of Dr. Sun Yat-sen

While one group of Chinese nationalists gravitated toward Western liberalism, another group was strongly attracted to its Bolshevik antithesis, represented by the triumph of the Russian Revolution. In the theories of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin, radical Chinese intellectuals found both an explanation for China's 19<sup>th</sup>-century misfortunes (capitalists competing abroad for markets, resources, and raw materials) and a prescription for how to end them (proletarian revolution).

China's first Marxist study group was formed in 1918 at Peking University and included 24-year-old **Mao Zedong**. Mao believed that the main force for China's national salvation would be the country's long-suffering rural masses—the peasantry. This went against the grain of orthodox Marxism, which placed its revolutionary hopes on a violent upheaval by the urban working class, the proletariat.

In 1920, Lenin's Third **Communist International** (Comintern) sent agents to meet with China's fledgling Marxists and train them in proletarian revolution. Under their tutelage, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was formed in 1921.

Meanwhile, Sun Yat-sen, taking advantage of conflict among regional Chinese warlords, returned to Canton and rebuilt the GMD. Recognizing that his failure in 1912 had been due in large measure to the lack of a loyal, well-trained army, Sun placed high priority on organizing and training a revolutionary military force.

Mao believed that the main force for China's national salvation would be the country's long-suffering rural masses—the peasantry.

In 1921, Sun met with agents of Lenin's Comintern, who became his advisers. Under their influence, he reorganized his Guomindang along Bolshevik lines, and in 1923 he entered into a united front with the fledgling CCP to oppose the "three big evils": warlords, imperialists, and feudal landowners.

With Comintern guidance and Soviet equipment, Sun set up a Peasant Movement Training Institute and a military academy in Canton in 1924. But he died of cancer in 1925, before he could succeed in reunifying China. A struggle for power ensued among Sun's lieutenants, eventually yielding a successor: the strong-willed, right-wing general **Chiang K'ai-shek**. ■

### Names to Know

**Chen Gongbo** (1892–1946): A founding member of the CCP, Chen quit the party in 1922 and joined the Guomindang. After the Japanese invasion, Chen collaborated with Japan. At war's end, he was tried as a traitor and executed by firing squad.

**Chiang K'ai-shek** (1887–1975): The leader of the GMD after Sun Yat-sen's death, Chiang led the Northern Expedition to end warlordism. An ardent anti-Communist, Chiang sought to destroy the CCP at all costs—even while tolerating early Japanese encroachments. After World War II, Chiang suffered a humiliating defeat by Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army (PLA); Chiang fled to Taiwan in December 1949.

**Mao Zedong** (1893–1976): Political theorist, military strategist, and chairman of the CCP Central Committee from 1935 until his death, Mao adapted Vladimir Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution to the needs of China's rural society. He defeated Chiang K'ai-shek in China's civil war and led the People's Republic of China for 40 years. His radical policies in the 1950s and 1960s caused enormous suffering, leading to major reforms in the 1980s.

### Important Term

**Communist International (Comintern)**: Organization founded by Vladimir Lenin in 1919 to promote revolutionary movements in colonial and semicolonial countries.

## Suggested Reading

Chang, *Wild Swans*.

Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*.

Schrecker, *The Chinese Revolution in Historical Perspective*.

Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What was the appeal of Marxism-Leninism to Chinese intellectuals of the May 4<sup>th</sup> era?
2. How was Soviet influence manifested in China in the early 1920s?

# **Chiang, Mao, and Civil War, 1926–1934**

## **Lecture 10**

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**A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.**

— Mao Zedong

In 1925, Sun Yat-sen's death triggered a severe power struggle among senior leaders of the Nationalist Party that took a full year to resolve. Once Chiang K'ai-shek had political and military leadership of the Guomindang firmly in his hands, he quickly prepared a massive military campaign against the warlords.

Chiang launched the **Northern Expedition** in 1926 with the goal of crushing the warlords and unifying China. From the outset, the military

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campaign was stunningly successful: Within half a year, the Nationalist Army controlled seven southern provinces. But as GMD-CCP united front forces reached the Yangzi River, serious strains emerged between Chiang, the CCP, and left-wing elements within the GMD.

**In 1930, the Communists established the Jiangxi Soviet**

**Republic, which by 1934 encompassed a civilian population of more than 3 million people.**

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When Chiang's troops reached Shanghai, workers there were ordered by their Communist labor organizers to embrace the Nationalist Army as liberators. The workers turned the city over to Chiang without a single shot being fired. But after the Nationalist Army took control of Shanghai in April 1927, it launched a coup against Shanghai's left-wing labor unions,

killing or arresting thousands of suspected Communists, and forcing the survivors to flee. Within days, Nationalists killed thousands more Communists in Nanjing, Hangzhou, Fuzhou, and Canton.

In the course of their retreat, the Communists led spontaneous insurrections in Canton, Nanchang, and Hunan. Nationalist forces quickly suppressed these **Autumn Harvest Uprisings**, and the CCP survivors retreated into the mountainous hinterland on the Jiangxi-Hunan border. There, under the leadership of Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong, and Zhu De, they formed a Red Army and developed a new strategy of revolution, known as people's war.

In 1928, Nationalist forces attacked and forced the Red Army to retreat yet again, to a new headquarters along the Jiangxi-Fujian border. There the Red Army built a mass following among the peasants by confiscating and redistributing the land of wealthy landlords. In 1930, the Communists established the **Jiangxi Soviet Republic**, which by 1934 encompassed a civilian population of more than 3 million people. In that same period, the Red Army fought off four successive campaigns launched by Chiang K'ai-shek. ■

### Name to Know

**Wang Jingwei** (1883–1944): He was initially a leader of the left wing of the GMD, but Wang's disdain for Chiang K'ai-shek led him to collaborate with the invading Japanese in 1937. Wang died in disgrace in Japan at the end of World War II.

### Important Terms

**Autumn Harvest Uprisings** (1927–1928): A series of ill-fated, armed insurrections carried out by the CCP in a desperate attempt to avoid annihilation by Chiang K'ai-shek's Nationalist army.

**Jiangxi (Kiangsi) Soviet Republic** (1930–1934): The Red Army regional base in South China led by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De.

## Suggested Reading

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*.

Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*.

Short, *Mao*.

Taylor, *The Generalissimo*.

Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did the 1923–1927 united front between the GMD and the CCP eventually end in bloodshed?
2. How did the CCP's forced rural exile after 1927 affect its ideological orientation and leadership?

# The Republican Experiment, 1927–1937

## Lecture 11

In its essentials, the Maoist version of people's war was the military equivalent of Muhammad Ali's strategy for subduing a larger, more powerful opponent: "Float like a butterfly; sting like a bee."

While the CCP mobilized peasant support in rural Jiangxi, Chiang K'ai-shek established his Nationalist government in the city of Nanjing. Over the next several years, Chiang—increasingly supported by industrialists, financiers, and rural landowners—turned the GMD from a progressive political organization into an authoritarian one. Although the regime Chiang and his associates established in Nanjing was nominally republican in nature, it proved to be increasingly corrupt and ineffectual.

Meanwhile, Japanese militarists were putting increasing pressure on China. Under Western pressure, Tokyo had withdrawn its odious 21 Demands,

### On the Timeline

**1927** Chiang K'ai-shek attacks Chinese Communist Party; surviving Communists flee and form Red Army.

**1927** Chiang K'ai-shek establishes Nationalist government in Nanjing.

**1928–1934** Chiang K'ai-shek attacks Chinese Communist Party base area; Mao Zedong introduces people's war.

**1931** Japan occupies Manchuria.

1927

1928

1929

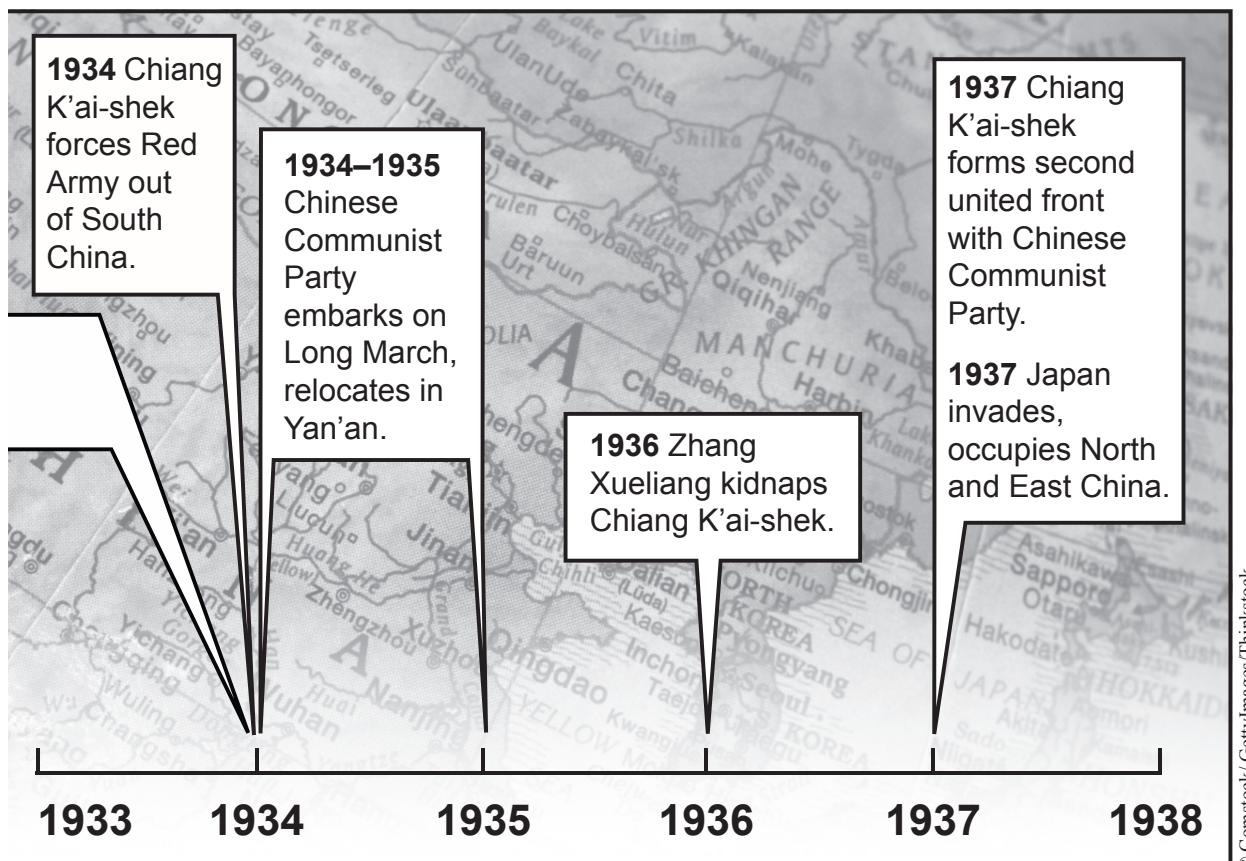
1930

1931

1932

and the process of political liberalization had brought to power a new and more progressive Japanese government. But even as Japan was emulating Western political and socioeconomic institutions, Japanese military power was growing steadily. Despite the opposition of Japan's civilian authority, its military commanders openly coveted the rich mineral, industrial, and agricultural resources of Manchuria. In 1931, they invaded Manchuria, setting up a puppet regime with the now 26-year-old Puyi as chief executive. When neither the League of Nations nor the United States forcefully resisted Japan's aggression, Tokyo was emboldened to commit further acts of aggression against China.

Caught between relentless Japanese pressure in the north and a growing Communist movement in the south, Chiang made a fateful decision: He would first concentrate on exterminating the Communists and then resist the Japanese. As he put it, "The Japanese are a disease of the skin; Communists are a disease of the heart." Between 1930 and 1934, Chiang launched four successive encirclement campaigns against the Jiangxi Soviet Republic. But by then, the Red Army was applying Mao's principles of people's war,



which allowed them to repel the larger, better-armed Nationalist troops. In its essentials, the Maoist version of people's war was the military equivalent of Muhammad Ali's strategy for subduing a larger, more powerful opponent: "Float like a butterfly; sting like a bee."

In 1934, with half a million GMD troops encircling the Red Army's Jiangxi stronghold, the Communists faced annihilation unless they abandoned the Jiangxi Soviet Republic. In October, 100,000 Communists broke out of the Nationalist encirclement and began the Long March. In 15 months, they covered 6,000 miles of difficult terrain, eventually resettling at Yan'an, in North China. Only one-tenth of those who started the trek completed it. During the Long March, Mao Zedong blackmailed **Zhou Enlai** into giving Mao full command of the CCP, which he held until his death in 1976.

In the fall of 1936, Chiang sent his best-trained army to destroy the Communists in Yan'an. But the officer Chiang chose to lead the campaign, **Zhang Xueliang**, had no interest in fighting fellow Chinese, Communist or otherwise. Ever since Japanese militarists had assassinated his father, the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, the younger Zhang had been eager to fight Japan. Zhang refused Chiang's orders, instead kidnapping Chiang and demanding a second GMD-CCP united front against the Japanese. Reluctantly, Chiang complied. Fearing a unified Chinese resistance, Japan struck the Chinese heartland in the summer of 1937, igniting World War II. ■

### Names to Know

**Zhang Xueliang** (1901–2001): Son of the assassinated Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, Zhang Xueliang was known as the Young Marshal. He led a mutiny against Chiang K'ai-shek in December 1936 (the Xi'an Incident), demanding a GMD-CCP united front to resist Japan.

**Zhou Enlai** (1898–1976): The first premier and foreign minister of the People's Republic of China, Zhou was China's foremost diplomat. Ever loyal to Mao Zedong, he was the chairman's right-hand man and chief troubleshooter. Before succumbing to cancer, he paved the way for the Sino-U.S. détente.

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*.

Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*.

Snow, *Red Star over China*.

Sun, *The Long March*.

Taylor, *The Generalissimo*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Chiang K'ai-shek's Nationalist government fail to govern effectively from 1927 to 1937?
2. In what respect can it be said that a mutinous act by Chiang's top general in 1936 altered the course of modern Chinese history?

# “Resist Japan!” 1937–1945

## Lecture 12

In their effort to counteract growing Communist influence in the villages of North China, Japanese commanders pursued a scorched-earth policy of “kill all, burn all, destroy all.”

Had Zhang Xueliang obeyed Chiang K’ai-shek’s order to attack the Communist stronghold in Yan’an in December 1936, there is little doubt that the CCP would have been wiped out in short order. But Zhang Xueliang rebelled, and the Communists were spared a final, fatal Nationalist assault. In the negotiated truce that followed, the CCP was able to revive itself, regroup, and gradually regain its lost momentum. The CCP went from near annihilation in 1936 to near victory a decade later. While several factors contributed to this reversal, Japan’s invasion proved highly instrumental, along with Chiang’s inept leadership.

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**With her sophisticated good looks, her Christian missionary background, her American education, and her flawless English, Soong Mei-ling was the perfect goodwill ambassador.**

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In July 1937, Japan seized the Marco Polo Bridge, and Japanese troops swept down from Manchuria. Japanese brutality, epitomized by the Nanjing Massacre, served to rally the people of northern China to the Communist cause. The force of the invasion shocked Chiang, who ordered his troops to retreat. When Japanese troops assaulted the Yangzi

River Delta, Chiang moved his capital from Nanjing to Chongqing, 800 miles up the Yangzi River. With foodstuffs and industrial and consumer goods in short supply in Chongqing, inflationary pressures began to mount. Unable to support themselves and their families, hundreds of thousands of impoverished GMD conscript soldiers deserted; countless others survived by preying on civilians in the countryside. To make matters worse, some GMD industrialists and financiers—including members of the Soong family—reaped windfall profits by monopolizing scarce commodities.

By contrast, the CCP adopted a rigid code of ethical conduct for its cadres and soldiers. The Red Army—now called the People’s Liberation Army (PLA)—paid great attention to the political indoctrination of its recruits, so that they would not exploit local farmers, steal food or supplies, or abuse peasant women. In this respect, their wartime behavior compared quite favorably with that of their undisciplined—and increasingly predatory—Nationalist counterparts.



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**Soong Mei-ling won U.S. political and financial support for the anti-Japan war effort during her 1943 speaking tour of the United States.**

In the early stages of the Sino-Japanese War, President Roosevelt’s declared policy of neutrality limited American aid to Chiang, but when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Washington poured billions of dollars in military aid into China. In order to keep American goodwill—and material assistance—flowing to Chongqing, Chiang K’ai-shek sought an invitation for his wife, Soong Mei-ling, to visit the United States. With her sophisticated good looks, her Christian missionary background, her American education, and her flawless English, Soong Mei-ling was the perfect goodwill ambassador. By the end of her coast-to-coast speaking tour, she had won the hearts of the American people as well as the U.S. Congress. In the process, she raised tens of millions of dollars in private donations for her charitable fund, United China Relief.

Although the United States was now closely allied with Chiang and the GMD, an American advisory group called the Dixie Mission visited the CCP’s Yan’an headquarters in 1944, at Mao Zedong’s invitation. Impressed by what they saw there, and put off by Chiang’s ineffective leadership,

some State Department officials predicted an eventual Communist victory. Popular support for the CCP grew dramatically between 1937 and 1945—CCP membership increased from 50,000 to 1.2 million, while the PLA increased in size from 80,000 to more than 900,000 troops. And when the war against Japan ended, the CCP was in the position to challenge Chiang for control of China. ■

## Suggested Reading

Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution*.

Esherick, *Lost Chance in China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*.

Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*.

Johnson, *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution in China*.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*.

Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty*.

Short, *Mao*.

Snow, *Red Star over China*.

Taylor, *The Generalissimo*.

Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*.

Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What unintended role did Japan play in shaping the outcome of the Chinese Revolution?
2. How did Chiang K'ai-shek's wife, Soong Mei-ling, influence U.S. support for China during World War II?

# **Chiang's Last Stand, 1945–1949**

## **Lecture 13**

**We will give Yan'an to Chiang, but he will give China to us.**

— Mao Zedong

**W**hen the war against Japan ended, there was a brief period in which all sides held their collective breath, uncertain about the future. Could the uneasy truce between Mao Zedong and Chiang K'ai-shek be extended, or would the bitter enemies renew their long-standing civil war, with unknown consequences for China and the outside world?

Eager to stabilize the situation in China, the United States sent General George C. Marshall to Chongqing to try to convince the CCP and the GMD to form a coalition government. Though Mao and Chiang paid lip service to the idea of a coalition, each set about preparing for the ultimate military showdown. With U.S. airlift support, Chiang's forces reoccupied most of China's major northern and eastern cities from the defeated Japanese. Almost immediately, they began plundering these cities. Inflation surged as GMD officials confiscated properties, factories, and funds and indulged in various vices.

Meanwhile, PLA troops, concentrated in the rural areas of northern and northeastern China, sought to consolidate their control over the countryside. This allowed them to disrupt vital Nationalist rail and communications links, effectively cutting off and isolating the GMD's urban strongholds. Though the Nationalist armies still enjoyed roughly a 2:1 numerical advantage over the PLA, and though their U.S.-made weapons were far superior to anything possessed by the Communists, the bare military odds had begun to narrow rapidly.



**Chiang K'ai-shek.**

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When the Soviet Union ended its occupation of Manchuria in 1946, PLA guerrillas fell heir to large numbers of captured Japanese weapons. The CCP-GMD civil war resumed in earnest in 1946, with

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### Could the uneasy truce between Mao Zedong and Chiang K'ai-shek be extended, or would the bitter enemies renew their long-standing civil war?

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PLA troops cutting major Nationalist supply lines to the cities of the northeast, thus isolating GMD troops there. Practicing the Maoist strategy of “surrounding the cities from the countryside,” the PLA took the offensive in 1947, attacking isolated GMD strongholds one after another. GMD troop morale was severely eroded when Chiang ordered field commanders to blow up their own arsenals, bridges, and food, rather than letting them fall into the hands of the PLA.

By 1948, Nationalist armies began defecting en masse. One by one, China’s major cities fell to the Communists during their victorious southward

march in 1949. Choosing Beijing as his new capital, on October 1, Mao Zedong ascended a platform atop the Gate of Heavenly Peace at the southern entrance to the Forbidden City. Looking down from the same majestic edifice where a succession of Chinese emperors and court officials had displayed the awesome might of the Middle Kingdom, Mao proudly proclaimed the birth of the People’s Republic of China. ■

### On the Timeline

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>1945</b><br>President Harry S. Truman sends General George C. Marshall to China. | <b>1946–1947</b><br>Civil war breaks out in Manchuria.                   | <b>1948–1949</b><br>Communists go on offensive, rout Chiang K'ai-shek's forces.   |
| <b>1945</b><br>Japan surrenders.  | <b>1946</b> Mao Zedong and Chiang K'ai-shek talk peace, prepare for war. | <b>1949</b> Mao Zedong announces birth of People's Republic of China (PRC).<br><br><b>1949</b> Chiang K'ai-shek retreats to Taiwan. |

## The Battle of Huai Hai: End of the Road for the Nationalists

The decisive blow to the Nationalists was delivered at the Battle of Huai Hai, which commenced in November 1948. There the Communists surrounded half a million Nationalist troops in the city of Xuzhou, a major railway hub in northwest Jiangsu Province.

The battle was conducted in three distinct phases, over a two-month period. In the course of the battle, five entire Nationalist army groups were decimated, hundreds of thousands of GMD conscripts defected (along with their officers), and vast stores of American-supplied weapons fell into the hands of the Communists.

As the two-month battle ground toward its inevitable conclusion, a PLA advance unit approached the northern bank of the Yangzi, just across the river from Nanjing. Nanjing had been restored as the Nationalist's capital city in 1946 and was bustling with government activity. But with Communists now on the far bank of the river, Nanjing's ruling class experienced massive precombat jitters.

Anticipating an imminent PLA attack, hundreds of high-level Nationalist officials and military officers beat a hasty retreat by air, while thousands of others, less well-connected, jammed onto "dispersal trains" heading south.

Left without an effective government apparatus, Nanjing became chaotic. Chiang K'ai-shek announced that he was stepping down as president, in favor of Vice President Li Zongren.

Before evacuating his Nanjing headquarters in January of 1949, Chiang visited the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, at the edge of the city, one last time. Ascending its 392 steps, he bowed three times before the stately marble likeness of the founder of the Republic of China.

Visibly dispirited, Chiang then flew off to Hangzhou, in preparation for his eventual retreat to the island of Taiwan. Even the habitually upbeat *Time* magazine now observed that Chiang's prestige had "sunk lower than the Yangzi."

## Suggested Reading

Barnett, *China on the Eve of Communist Takeover*.

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Esherick, *Lost Chance in China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*.

Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

Snow, *Red Star over China*.

Taylor, *The Generalissimo*.

Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What were the key determinants of the final outcome of the Chinese civil war?
2. How did the behavior of GMD reoccupation forces influence the popularity of the Nationalists after the Japanese surrender?

# “The Chinese People Have Stood Up!”

## Lecture 14

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Along with their sons, daughters, and even their grandchildren, these former landlords carried with them an indelible political stigma, a scarlet letter that could not be altered or erased—the label of “class enemy.” Thereafter, their lives would never be the same.

A few days before Mao Zedong proclaimed the birth of the People’s Republic of China, he addressed a political meeting in Beijing. In his speech, Mao famously claimed that “the Chinese people ... have stood up.” For all his theatrical dramatics, however, Mao spoke only a half-truth.

To be sure, the upstart Chinese Communist Party had come from nowhere, out of the wilderness, to defeat the much larger, U.S.-backed forces of Chiang K’ai-shek. They had done it by stressing ingenuity, improvisation, and self-reliance, making use of whatever materials they had at hand, while receiving little assistance from the Soviet Union. But though the Chinese Communists won their civil war, they had not yet secured the civil peace. Devastated by more than three decades of revolution, foreign invasion, and civil war, the Chinese economy was a shambles. Having operated in the rural hinterland for more than 20 years, the CCP knew little about how to run an urban economy. Indeed, it would take several more decades for the Chinese people to truly stand up.

Desperately in need of foreign assistance to rebuild China’s shattered economy, Mao swallowed his pride and bowed in the direction of the Soviet Union. “Forty years of experience have taught us [that] ... all Chinese without exception must lean either to the side of imperialism or to the side of socialism.” With this important statement, Mao established that China would align itself with the “socialist camp,” led by the USSR, and would eschew collaboration with the “imperialist camp,” headed by the United States.

With the final defeat of the Nationalists in 1949, the CCP set about consolidating its control of the country. The Maoists promulgated a new

form of government, the “people’s democratic dictatorship,” in which the rectification campaign model first devised in Yan’an was applied to Chinese society as a whole. “The people” and their “enemies” were now sharply delimited, with the former category encompassing not just workers and peasants, who formed the core of the party’s support base, but also patriotic, law-abiding members of the intelligentsia, the petit bourgeoisie, and even the national bourgeoisie (including patriotic businessmen, managers and entrepreneurs). In extending an olive branch to members of these “impure” classes, the party aimed to enlist their talents in the important task of restoring China’s shattered economy. Only the people were granted full rights of citizenship.

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**Devastated by more than three decades of revolution, foreign invasion, and civil war, the Chinese economy was a shambles.**

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For those labeled as enemies of the people, the future was decidedly more bleak, as they were earmarked for suppression and dictatorship. A campaign to suppress counterrevolutionaries was launched in Chinese cities in 1950, in the course of which 2.3 million people were detained and 710,000 were executed. In addition, tens of thousands of “bourgeois intellectuals” were subjected to mandatory “thought reform,” in which independent thinkers were targeted for harsh criticism.

Two other mass movements were initiated in the early 1950s. The first of these was the Three Anti campaign, which targeted the growing problems of corruption, waste, and bureaucratism among the party’s basic level cadres. This campaign was relatively mild and seldom involved coercive struggle. The second campaign—known as the Five Antis—was far more intensive and more coercive. It was designed to expose and punish crimes of bribery, tax evasion, embezzlement, theft of state property, and theft of state secrets by non-Communist industrialists, entrepreneurs, and merchants. In the course of the Five Anti campaign, a pattern was established that would be repeated again and again in mass campaigns over the next two decades: neighbors informing on neighbors, children denouncing parents, workers spying on colleagues, and the compilation of detailed political dossiers on virtually everyone.

In rural areas, a land reform movement was initiated in 1950. Peasants were classified according to their land holdings, and members of the landlord class had their property confiscated. Peasant anger frequently erupted into physical abuse as landlords were paraded before them and “struggled against” for their past crimes. Violence often got out of hand, and upward of 800,000 landlords were killed in the course of the campaign. The confiscated lands were given to poor and lower-middle-class peasants. In this manner, the CCP cemented its popularity among the broad masses of rural dwellers. By 1952, the CCP had penetrated all of rural China, and the landlord class had virtually ceased to exist. ■

### The Rectification Campaign Model Developed at Yan'an

Mao Zedong stressed the need to “rectify” the incorrect thoughts and class standpoints of all party members in order to ensure that “correct” ideas and actions would prevail. To do that, all CCP members at Yan'an in the 1940s were required to undergo intensive, group-oriented “study and criticism.”

At these sessions, trained cadres would read aloud key party texts, highlighting their main ideas and explaining their significance. Then each participant would be required to “speak from the heart,” revealing their innermost thoughts and feelings. In the course of this process of self-examination, party members were expected to acknowledge any lingering doubts or uncertainties they might have about the party’s principles and policies. They were further required to expose and criticize any politically incorrect behavior on the part of their friends, family members, and coworkers. Finally, they were required to disclose any errors or imperfections in their own work. This latter process was called “dumping burdens.”

Those who unburdened themselves to the satisfaction of the group’s leaders were considered “rescued” and were welcomed back into the embrace of the Communist Party. But those who were stubborn or insincere in their self-examinations or who were suspected of harboring reactionary views were subjected to varying degrees of discipline, including incarceration, physical abuse, and even torture.

## Suggested Reading

Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Johnson, *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution in China*.

Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How did the CCP consolidate power in the early 1950s?
2. What role did coercion play relative to populist mass mobilization in that period?

# Korea, Taiwan, and the Cold War, 1950–1954

## Lecture 15

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If you should get kicked in the teeth [by the Americans], I shall not lift a finger. You'll have to ask Mao for all the help. — Joseph Stalin's warning to Kim Il-sung before the outbreak of the Korean War

By 1949, the Cold War was well underway. The Soviet Union had dropped an iron curtain over Eastern and Central Europe, and President Harry S. Truman had announced the birth of the Marshall Plan, designed to accelerate the economic recovery of Western Europe and thereby counteract rising Soviet power and influence.

After 28 years of civil war and foreign aggression, China badly needed international assistance. Unable to turn to the United States (i.e., the “imperialist camp”) because of the deepening Cold War, Mao Zedong went to Moscow (i.e., the “socialist camp”) in December 1949. After six weeks of arduous haggling, Mao and Joseph Stalin struck a bargain in February of 1950. Its terms clearly revealed Stalin’s ambivalence toward his Chinese “comrades.” Stalin extended to Mao credits worth \$300 million, half earmarked for the purchase of Soviet military hardware, half for the purchase of Soviet heavy industrial plant and machinery. But to Mao’s dismay, the Soviet credits amounted to far less than Stalin had given to the new Communist governments in Eastern and Central Europe in the late 1940s. Worse yet, whereas the aid to Stalin’s European satellites had been in the form of outright grants, the credits to China were written up as loans, to be repaid over a 10-year period—with 1 percent annual interest.

The first major test of the Sino-Soviet alliance came in 1950, when North Korea’s Kim Il-sung asked Stalin for permission to reunify Korea by force. After a good deal of initial skepticism, both Stalin and Mao approved Kim’s plan of attack, and in June 1950, North Korean troops invaded South Korea. The United Nations condemned the invasion, and President Truman ordered the U.S. Navy to patrol the Taiwan Strait to prevent a PRC attack on Taiwan. Under **General Douglas MacArthur**, UN troops repelled the North Korean attack, but Truman and MacArthur disagreed on the aims

of the war. When MacArthur's troops advanced to the North Korea–China border in violation of Truman's orders, the Chinese People's Volunteers Army entered the war and successfully repelled the UN forces. A stalemate ensued.

Early in 1951, Truman fired MacArthur for insubordination, and the Chinese side began to show interest in negotiating a cease-fire agreement with the UN command. But Stalin refused to go along. Although neither side was winning the war, the fact that several hundred thousand American troops were bogged down in Korea meant that the United States could not utilize these troops to counter Soviet actions in Europe. Consequently, Stalin was content to let the war drag on for another two years, with heavy casualties on both sides but little advantage gained by either. The deadlock was not broken until Stalin died in March 1953, after which a cease-fire was quickly arranged. The cease-fire line was the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel—an exact reversion to the status quo ante. Three years of deadly warfare had ultimately changed nothing.

In the aftermath of the Korean War, the U.S government sharply revised its strategic calculus with respect to Taiwan. Chiang K'ai-shek was now a vital “free world” ally in the struggle against Communism. Accordingly, in December 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed a Treaty of Mutual Defense with Chiang’s government-in-exile.

If the Korean War served to bolster Taiwan’s relations with the United States, it had a far more negative impact on China’s national security. For one thing, China lost the opportunity—perhaps forever—to conclude its civil war by “liberating” Taiwan. We now know that Mao had authorized



**General Douglas MacArthur,  
commander of UN forces in Korea,  
1950–1951.**

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a cross-Strait invasion of Taiwan in the fall of 1950, which had to be postponed when Truman ordered the Seventh Fleet to patrol the Taiwan Strait. Second, the PRC was condemned as an aggressor by the United Nations for its decision to intervene in Korea. Because of this, China lost its chance to replace the ROC in the United Nations. Two full decades would elapse before China would gain admission to the UN in 1971. Third, as a result of the war, the United States entered into a series of military treaties in Asia designed to contain Chinese Communism, including the U.S.-Taiwan Defense Treaty, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and the ANZUS Pact. Finally, Chinese troops suffered more than 1 million casualties, including 300,000 killed in the last two years of the war, during the prolonged stalemate engineered by Stalin. ■



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**President Harry S. Truman.**

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Schaller, *The U.S. and China*.

Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Was Mao Zedong's post-1949 alliance with Joseph Stalin (and against the United States) inevitable?
2. How did the Korean War influence Sino-Soviet relations?

## Socialist Transformation, 1953–1957

### Lecture 16

Writing in July of 1955, Mao strongly criticized those of his comrades who had retreated meekly in the face of pressure from rich peasants to abandon the co-ops. Mao accused these comrades of “tottering along like women with bound feet.”

The new stage of China’s development began with the promulgation in 1953 of a Soviet-style Five-Year Plan for economic development. Its principal content was a blueprint for achieving the realization of socialism in China. The centerpiece of the First Five-Year Plan was the wholesale Chinese adoption of Stalinist techniques of centralized economic planning and agricultural collectivization and the rapid growth of urban heavy industry.

Joseph Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev, needed China’s support in his drive to be recognized as the undisputed leader of the socialist camp. In a display of solidarity with his Chinese “little brothers,” Khrushchev generously promised several hundred million dollars in Soviet economic and military aid to China and further agreed to send thousands of technical specialists to China to build new industrial facilities. As a result of this fresh burst of Soviet generosity, more than 150 major new industrial projects were initiated in China in the mid-1950s, and several thousand Chinese students were sent to the Soviet Union for advanced training, mainly in engineering and the applied sciences.

Soviet military aid to China also increased: The Soviet Union built several new aircraft and munitions factories in China from 1953 to



Nikita Khrushchev, first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

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1957. Khrushchev also agreed to share Soviet blueprints for an atomic bomb—and to provide China with a prototype nuclear weapon. This fresh burst of Soviet largesse ushered in a new era of Sino-Soviet friendship and cordiality, as the Chinese Communists openly embraced their “big brothers” to the north. And from 1954 to 1957, the Chinese emulated their Soviet senior siblings in almost every respect.

Under the guidance of Soviet advisers, China’s urban economy underwent a two-stage transition to socialism. Beginning in 1955, shares in private Chinese companies were purchased by the state, with payment to the former owners amortized over a period of several years. This created an

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**The coercive aspect of accelerated collectivization meant that there was now—for the first time since 1949—widespread alienation and resentment in rural China.**

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intermediary form of ownership, known as joint state-private ownership. A year later, the second stage kicked in, with all urban industrial and commercial assets now converted entirely into state property. By the end of 1956, virtually the entire urban economy had been nationalized. Although there was a good deal of grumbling among former factory owners and managers, few dared to openly resist the state’s takeover of their productive assets.

### **collectivized farming.**

In the countryside, the process of socialist transformation was more complex and took longer to complete. The process of agricultural collectivization was divided into three sequential stages: **mutual aid**, **cooperative farming**, and **collectivized farming**. In the first stage, several neighboring families formed “mutual aid teams,” sharing tools, animals, and labor. In the second stage, four or five such teams were combined, and their property was “invested” in a new cooperative farm. Because these co-ops were voluntary, many rich peasants refused to join, fearing that their assets would be used to subsidize their poorer neighbors.

At this point, Mao stepped in to order the next, higher stage: full collectivization. Writing in July of 1955, Mao strongly criticized those of his comrades who had retreated meekly in the face of pressure from rich

peasants to abandon the co-ops. Mao accused these comrades of “tottering along like **women with bound feet.**” Rich peasants were required to contribute their property to the new, larger-scale collective farms.

The coercive aspect of accelerated collectivization meant that there was now—for the first time since 1949—widespread alienation and resentment in rural China. Rich and upper-middle peasant families, accounting for perhaps 20 percent of the rural population, deeply resented their enforced pauperization. Even the poor and lower-middle peasants, presumptive beneficiaries of socialist agriculture, suffered from diminished motivation to work in the new, large-scale, impersonal collectives.

In a classic case of the **free-rider problem**, each family’s income depended in substantial measure on the quality of the labor performed by all other farmers in the collective. Hence, the incentive to work diligently was correspondingly diminished for each individual, with the strength of that disincentive being directly proportional to the size of the collective.

Largely as a result of these two factors—resistance to collectivization on the part of rich peasants and the widespread free-rider problem—the tide of collectivization of the mid-1950s failed to yield the anticipated leap forward in farm output. Growth rates barely reached 2 to 3 percent annually—hardly enough to keep pace with China’s burgeoning population.

A split now developed between Mao, who wanted to push ahead even faster with economic transformation, and some of his more cautious colleagues, who wanted to take more time to consolidate previous gains. In 1956, these emerging differences were reflected in the speeches and documents of the CCP’s Eighth National Party Congress. ■

### Important Terms

**collective farms** (1955–1957): The highest stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by the abolition of private ownership and the large-scale pooling of land and labor among 100–200 families.

**cooperative farms** (1953–1954): The intermediate stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by the introduction of work points and year-round sharing of land and tools by 20–30 households.

**free-rider problem**: Classic dilemma posed when all members of a large group share equally in the benefits of membership without adequate monitoring of individual contributions.

**mutual aid** (1952–1953): The first stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by small-scale, seasonal sharing of tools, animals, and labor by six or eight neighboring families.

**“women with bound feet”**: Classical Maoist reference to conservative cadres who are afraid to boldly innovate.

### Suggested Reading

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 1.

Short, *Mao*.

### Questions to Consider

1. What were the key policies for the transformation of the national economy in China’s First Five-Year Plan?
2. What sociopolitical stresses and antagonisms were engendered in the process of transforming China’s national economy?

# Cracks in the Monolith, 1957–1958

## Lecture 17

We have given our blood, sweat, toil and precious lives to defend not the people, but the bureaucrats who oppress the people and live off the fat of the land. They are a group of fascists who employ foul means, twist the truth, band together in evil ventures, and ignore the people's wish for peace.

— From an anonymous pamphlet entitled *J'accuse*, written during the Hundred Flowers movement

By the fall of 1956, the twin pillars of China's socialist transformation—the Sino-Soviet alliance and the socialization of the national economy—were basically complete. But soon afterward, the facade of national harmony and well-being began to show cracks; and by 1957, a series of deepening domestic and international fault lines could no longer be ignored.

Shortly after Nikita Khrushchev famously denounced Stalin's "cult of personality" in 1956, a group of Mao Zedong's own close comrades—including Zhou Enlai, **Liu Shaoqi**, and **Deng Xiaoping**—began to downplay the role of individual leaders in their speeches and writings; and at the Eighth Party Congress, they collaborated in excising from the Chinese constitution all references to the guiding role of "the thought of Mao Zedong."

Mao had other reasons for concern as well. Throughout the Communist bloc, the fall and winter of 1955–1956 had brought a general relaxation of heavy-handed Stalinist policies toward intellectuals. Khrushchev was the trendsetter in this liberalization movement, promising Russia's creative intellectuals greater freedom of expression.

In China, intellectual ferment was also on the rise. After years of rigid ideological and political control, Chinese writers, teachers, scientists, and students were growing visibly restless. Dusting off an ancient Chinese aphorism, CCP leaders introduced a new policy of tolerance toward China's "thinking class." Under the slogan "Let a hundred flowers blossom; let a

hundred schools of thought contend,” they encouraged intellectuals to speak their minds and pledged to listen carefully. Thus began China’s **Hundred Flowers campaign**. Although it was initially proposed by Premier Zhou Enlai, the campaign was soon appropriated by Mao Zedong.

The CCP sponsored a series of open forums in May and early June of 1957, in which they sought to engage intellectuals in open debate. At around the same time, a new form of political expression—called *dazibao*—made its

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debut on billboards and walls on Beijing’s college campuses. Using *dazibao*, intellectuals started to express themselves—cautiously at first, but then with growing boldness. Among other things, they accused Communist Party officials of being doctrinaire, arrogant, opportunistic, and corrupt; some even directly criticized Chairman Mao.

**Teachers were paraded in front of their students, made to wear dunce caps identifying their alleged crimes, and forced to sign confessions.**

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Stung by the mounting intensity and ferocity of the intellectuals’ attack, Mao struck back, instituting the **Anti-Rightist Rectification movement**. Mao instructed his associates to punish all those who had dared to attack the party. Led by Deng Xiaoping (who had evidently opposed the liberal Hundred Flowers policy from the outset), the new movement witnessed a harsh crackdown on China’s

“bourgeois intellectuals.” Hundreds of thousands of non-Communist teachers, writers, scientists, and artists were now subjected to intensive “criticism and struggle.” Teachers were paraded in front of their students, made to wear dunce caps identifying their alleged crimes, and forced to sign confessions. Tens of thousands were beaten; many were imprisoned; and more than a few died, some by their own hand. Moreover, the majority of those who were labeled as rightists were dismissed from their jobs and sent to the countryside to be reformed through physical labor. Much later, Deng Xiaoping estimated that up to half a million people were falsely accused and punished as rightists in the course of the rectification movement, which continued until 1958.

Meanwhile, China’s relations with the Soviet Union grew increasingly strained. Mao believed Khrushchev’s brand of socialism was leading not

to Communism but to a rebirth of bureaucratic capitalism in the USSR. Terming this alarming trend **modern revisionism**, Mao began to contemplate a dramatic break with the Soviet model.

Worried about the spread of revisionist influences within his own Party, Mao in the fall of 1957 expanded the targets of the Anti-Rightist Rectification movement from the bourgeois intellectuals to the Communist Party itself. By the time the movement ran its course in 1958, over 1 million party members and cadres had been investigated, reprimanded, put on probation, or expelled from the party for their alleged rightist errors. By the spring of 1958, Mao's thinking had undergone a profound shift toward the left. He now began to envision an entirely new form of socialist economic construction based on the twin ideas of "continuing the revolution" and liberating the subjective energies of the Chinese masses: The Great Leap Forward was at hand. ■

### Names to Know

**Deng Xiaoping** (1904–1997): A veteran CCP leader and economic pragmatist, Deng introduced sweeping market reforms after Mao Zedong's death. Twice purged as a "revisionist," Deng supplanted Hua Guofeng as China's top leader in December 1978. Best known for his 1962 slogan: "It doesn't matter if the cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice."

**Liu Shaoqi** (1898–1969): A CCP organizational specialist and one of Mao Zedong's top lieutenants, Liu became Mao's heir apparent in the mid-1950s. Teaming with Deng Xiaoping to dismantle Mao's Great Leap Forward in 1961–1962, Liu was later accused of "taking the capitalist road." He was purged by Mao in 1966 and died in captivity in 1969.

### Important Terms

**Anti-Rightist Rectification movement** (June 1957–1958): The struggle against "bourgeois intellectuals" and wayward CCP members following the termination of the Hundred Flowers campaign.

**dazibao (big-character posters):** Large hand-written posters, often anonymous, espousing political principles or accusing others of wrongdoing. Widely used in the Hundred Flowers movement and later during the Cultural Revolution and Democracy Wall period.

**Hundred Flowers campaign (1956–1957):** Mao Zedong's invitation to Chinese intellectuals to freely air grievances. When complaints turned to attacks on the CCP, Mao launched the Anti-Rightist Rectification movement.

**modern revisionism:** The Maoist charge that Nikita Khrushchev and his successors abandoned revolutionary Leninism in favor of peaceful coexistence and restoring capitalism in the USSR.

### Suggested Reading

Chang, *Wild Swans*.

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 1.

Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

Short, *Mao*.

### Questions to Consider

1. What were the main issues in Mao Zedong's dispute with Nikita Khrushchev?
  
2. Did Mao set a trap for China's intellectuals when he initiated the Hundred Flowers movement?

# The Great Leap Forward, 1958–1960

## Lecture 18

**When the Chinese men’s table tennis team won the world championship in 1958, their victory was officially attributed to “the emancipation of mind wrought by the [Great Leap’s] mass education in socialist relations and values.”**

In 1958, Mao Zedong attempted to dramatically accelerate China’s economic development with the **Great Leap Forward**. Distrustful of Khrushchev’s revisionism, Mao abandoned the Soviet model of socialist construction and struck out in an uncharted direction, hoping to leapfrog the Russians and beat them to the promised land of Communism. It was an audacious gamble. And it failed, miserably.

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**It was an  
audacious gamble.  
And it failed,  
miserably.**

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Despite China’s severe shortages of capital and technology, Mao believed that given the proper (“red”) ideological motivation and leadership, China’s peasant masses could overcome all obstacles to economic development. The first major innovation, at the end of 1957, mobilized tens of millions of collective farmers during the winter season, when the demand for field labor was low. The peasants were put to work building large-scale water conservation projects—dams, reservoirs, dykes, and canals.

In some cases, as many as 10,000 peasants were transported to a single work site. Since the distances involved were great, temporary barracks were erected at the work sites, where the laborers would remain for weeks or months at a time. To maintain discipline and morale among the work force, a rudimentary military-style regimen was introduced: Workers arose at dawn to recorded bugle calls, ate their meals in communal canteens, and marched in step to the work sites. Participating laborers received no monetary compensation for their work—only meals, housing, and transportation were provided. The entire enterprise was portrayed in the state media as a “people’s war against nature.” This, in turn, set a militaristic tone for the entire Great Leap Forward.

To facilitate mass mobilization of labor, peasants were organized into huge, impersonal **rural people's communes**, each with an average size of more than 20,000 people. To prove their ideological superiority, communes distributed income according to need, rather than labor. Innovations in farming techniques began to be widely reported and popularized. Almost immediately, claims of doubled or even tripled, crop yields were reported in the party press, as rural officials competed to meet and exceed established norms of crop production.

With the new, larger size of the people's communes, it became possible, at least in theory, to broadly diversify the rural economy. By introducing a large-scale division of labor involving thousands of peasants, the people's communes were to become entirely self-sufficient. Perhaps the most notorious example of rural economic diversification during the Great Leap Forward was the campaign to create large amounts of high-quality steel in **backyard blast furnaces**. Working day and night, China's mobilized peasants smelted scrap iron of all kinds—including tools, bicycles, and household utensils.



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**Mao Zedong and Nikita Khrushchev.** Distrustful of Khrushchev's "revisionist" policies, Mao chose to diverge from the Soviet model of development.

In their eagerness to please Mao and demonstrate the superiority of China's new "shortcut to Communism," Chinese officials made grossly exaggerated claims of China's various economic miracles. But the Great Leap could not be sustained. With the first heavy summer rains of 1958, many of the water conservation structures constructed the previous winter began to fail, inundating hundreds of thousands of acres of cropland. The 1958 experiment with farming innovations also proved a failure, as did the backyard steel furnaces. Although large amounts of scrap metal were successfully melted down and forged into crude steel, the resulting products were unusable. To make matters worse, the obsessive drive to keep the furnaces firing around the clock had created a severe shortage of fuel for cooking and heating, as well as massive soil erosion.

By the winter of 1959, the Party Central Committee—and even Mao himself—recognized that something had gone seriously wrong. Although Mao gave ground on some of the particulars of the Great Leap, he was too stubborn to acknowledge failure. In the face of a growing crisis, a few of Mao's lieutenants began to raise their voices in dissent. And in the summer of 1959, their newfound courage presented Mao with the single biggest challenge of his career to date. ■

### Important Terms

**backyard blast furnaces** (1958–1959): Indigenous kilns used in rural areas to smelt crude steel during the Great Leap Forward. Most of the steel was unusable.

**Great Leap Forward** (1958–1962): Mao Zedong's ill-fated attempt to reach Communism ahead of the USSR by relying on subjective factors—mass ideological mobilization, selfless devotion to labor, and "red" leadership. This movement resulted in great famine and 30 million deaths.

**rural people's communes:** First introduced in 1958, these communes encompassed as many as 10,000 families, all of whom shared equally in communal income and contributed voluntary labor to backyard steelmaking and other nonagricultural tasks.

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 2.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao Zedong abandon the Soviet model of socialism in 1958?
2. To what extent were the radical innovations of Mao's Great Leap Forward planned in advance, as opposed to being spontaneous experiments?

# Demise of the Great Leap Forward, 1959–1962

## Lecture 19

Grain scattered on the ground.  
Potato leaves withered.  
Strong young people have gone off to make steel.  
Only children and old women harvest the crops.  
How can they pass the coming year?  
Allow me to raise my voice for the people.

—Poem composed by Peng Dehuai on the eve of his meeting  
Mao Zedong about the failure of the Great Leap Forward

The bubble of unreality that enveloped China during the Great Leap Forward caused a number of senior party leaders to question the wisdom of the entire enterprise. As reports of peasant hunger and malnutrition began to filter up to Beijing from the provinces, a few bold souls dared to speak out. The most fearless of these was China's plain-speaking minister of national defense, Peng Dehuai.

In truth, people  
were beginning  
to starve in large  
numbers.

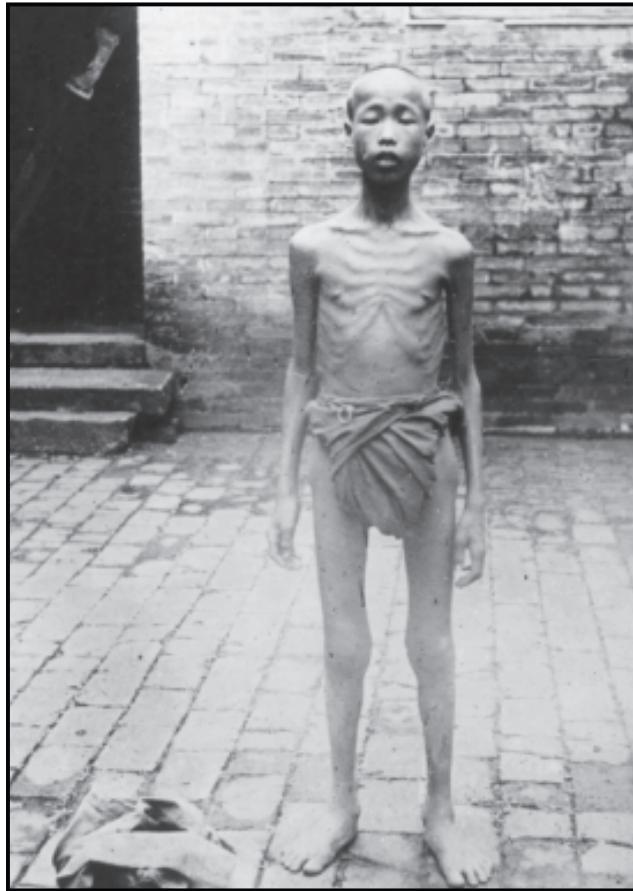
Hearing reports of severe rural hardship, Peng made an inspection tour of people's communes in a number of provinces in the late fall and winter of 1958. He was dismayed to find that conditions on the ground did not resemble the idyllic portrait being painted in the party's media. He discovered widespread malnutrition, cadres beating exhausted peasants, poorly run communal dining halls, and backyard furnaces squandering resources.

At a Central Committee meeting in the summer of 1959, Peng sent Mao Zedong a five-page "letter of opinion" detailing the findings from his inspection tour. He noted that the "habit of exaggeration" had spread throughout the country in the summer of 1958 and that "tremendous harm" had been done when reports of "unbelievable miracles" were published in the party press. People had become "dizzy with success," he said, believing that

“communism was [just] around the corner.” He went on to note that despite the masses’ initial enthusiasm for the people’s communes, many communal dining halls had been poorly run; the backyard steel furnaces had “squandered material and financial resources”; and in general, the Great Leap had been launched hastily, without a “plan for achieving necessary balance.”

Mao devised a two-pronged strategy to isolate his Defense Minister. First, he circulated Peng’s letter of opinion to everyone present, to test their loyalty to his leadership. Next, he convened a full plenary session of the conference, in which he threatened those who dared “waver at this crucial point in time.” Peng, famous for his short temper, erupted in anger, and the two had a heated exchange that ended in shouting and profanity. At Mao’s initiative, Peng and his small inner circle of supporters were officially charged with having formed an “anti-party clique” and were subjected to varying degrees of punishment. Peng was stripped of his post as defense minister and placed under house arrest in Beijing.

With opposing voices thus silenced, in the last half of 1959 the “leftist wind” picked up new momentum and cadres at all levels once again displayed exaggerated support for the Great Leap. Throughout the country, grain procurement targets were ratcheted upward yet again. Forced to surrender more and more of their meager harvest to the state, peasants became desperate; meanwhile, local cadres became more coercive than ever in their efforts to meet grain delivery quotas. Although the regime announced record



**Malnourished boy. China's Great Leap Forward led to widespread famine and 30 million deaths.**

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new increases in grain production in 1959, the harvest had actually dropped by 30 million tons from the previous year. Yet in the face of growing food shortages, Mao insisted that the problem was not declining grain production, but willful sabotage.

In truth, people were beginning to starve in large numbers. In the summer of 1959, one top party official conceded that 25 million people were suffering from severe malnutrition. By the end of the year, peasants in many provinces had been reduced to eating the bark off trees. When children died, parents hid their bodies, not reporting the deaths, so that they could continue to get the child's meager food ration. In a few of China's poorest provinces, instances of cannibalism were documented.

In late 1960, Mao retreated to the “second line” of leadership, allowing his top lieutenants, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, to mitigate the damage done by the Great Leap. They divided the communes into smaller units and eliminated the free supply system. They also ended the backyard steel program and reintroduced family ownership of small garden plots and domestic animals. Rural free markets were permitted to reopen, and families were encouraged to supplement their income with sideline occupations. By 1962, China saw the first signs of economic recovery. ■

### Names to Know

**Kang Sheng** (1898–1975): The sinister head of Mao Zedong’s internal security and intelligence apparatus, Kang gained influence by compiling confidential dossiers on thousands of party officials from the 1930s to the 1970s.

**Peng Dehuai** (1898–1974): An outspoken PLA general and China’s defense minister, Peng was purged by Mao Zedong in 1959 for criticizing the Great Leap Forward.

### Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 2.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

Zheng, *Scarlet Memorial*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Why is the “Peng Dehuai affair” regarded as a turning point in CCP history?
2. How did Mao’s lieutenants manage to bypass him in their efforts to mitigate the damage done by the Great Leap Forward?

# “Never Forget Class Struggle!” 1962–1965

## Lecture 20

**It doesn’t matter if a cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice.**

— Deng Xiaoping, in 1962, defending the shift to a more pragmatic, rather than ideological, approach to economic development

In the early 1960s, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping began restoring the Communist Party’s traditional top-down, bureaucratic decision-making procedures. Liu and Deng favored careful planning, centralized leadership, and cautious advance over spontaneous mass mobilization. They also quietly rehabilitated thousands of party members who had been wrongfully persecuted during the Anti-Rightist Rectification. Finally, reversing Mao Zedong’s preference for ideological “redness” over technical expertise, they invited China’s much-maligned intellectuals to once again contribute their ideas and talents to China’s economic construction—this time without fear of reprisal. Defending these pragmatic policy changes in 1962, Deng explained the shift to a more practical, scientific approach to economic development by famously stating, “It doesn’t matter if a cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice.”

In the early 1960s, Mao’s anger at top lieutenants Liu and Deng was increasing. Mao’s contempt for Nikita Khrushchev had been building since 1959, when the Soviet leader openly pursued détente with the United States, repudiated Lenin’s theory of inevitable war, and reneged on his pledge to provide China with a prototype of an atomic bomb. By 1962, Mao’s wrath at Khrushchev had begun to converge with—and spill over onto—his growing distrust of Liu and Deng. (Mao would later confirm this convergence when he scathingly referred to Liu as “China’s Khrushchev.”)

Lumping Liu and Deng together with Khrushchev, Mao in 1962 launched a blistering attack on “creeping revisionism” and demanded an intensified class struggle to prevent the restoration of capitalism at home and abroad. At the Central Committee’s Tenth Plenary Session, he unveiled a new rural mass campaign of ideological education and indoctrination called the

**Socialist Education movement.** Its goal was to immunize peasants against Soviet-style revisionism.

But Liu and Deng had a very different view of what was wrong with China and how to fix it. In their view, the failures of the Great Leap had created not an urgent need for renewed class vigilance, but rather widespread desperation, demoralization, and an epidemic of petty corruption. Responding to conditions of extreme hardship, those rural dwellers with tradable resources—such as money, official position, and control over collective assets—had utilized these assets to secure their own advantage. In the lax atmosphere that enveloped the countryside in the wake of the Great Famine, even gambling and prostitution—which had been stamped out in the early 1950s—reappeared in rural China.

By the end of 1964, Mao had lost patience with Liu and Deng. At a party work conference in December, he angrily confronted Liu, accusing him of undermining the Socialist Education movement by altering both its goals and its means. In January of 1965, Mao expressed his displeasure in a Central Committee directive that made the unprecedented allegation that the central aim of the Socialist Education movement was “to rectify powerholders within the [Chinese Communist] Party who take the **capitalist road**.” While no individual party leaders were singled out as “capitalist roaders,” viewed in the context of his rising irritation with his top lieutenants, there could be little doubt that the chairman’s primary target was his second-in-command and heir apparent, Liu. ■

### Important Terms

**capitalist road:** Mao Zedong’s mid-1960s allegation that many of his comrades were ignoring class struggle and following a “revisionist” path, leading to a restoration of capitalism in China.

**Socialist Education movement** (a.k.a. **Four Cleanups movement**; 1962–1965): Mao Zedong’s attempt to launch a mass campaign to inoculate peasants, workers, and cadres against class enemies seeking a “capitalist restoration.”

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Prelude to Revolution*.

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 3.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao Zedong object so strenuously to the dismantling of his radical policies in the early 1960s?
2. How did Mao express his unhappiness?

# “Long Live Chairman Mao!” 1964–1965

## Lecture 21

**During the revival of the Hundred Flowers campaign from 1961 to 1963 ... a large number of new literary works had been published—many of them in apparent violation of Mao’s cherished style of socialist realism.**

To prepare for his coming struggle with “revisionists” and “capitalist roaders” within the CCP, Mao Zedong needed to enlist the support of the PLA. But the debacle of the Great Leap and the purge of revered war hero Peng Dehuai had seriously undermined army morale. Thus as his first order of business, Mao entrusted to Defense Minister **Lin Biao** the task of leading a campaign to revive Mao’s flagging personality cult.

In 1964, Lin launched a mass movement within the PLA to study the thought of Chairman Mao. To promote the movement, Lin personally edited a collection of Mao’s pithiest precepts, aphorisms, and homilies, which he packaged into a pocket-sized paperback entitled *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*—more popularly known as the **Little Red Book**.

All military units were required to hold regular study sessions, in which selected passages from Mao’s Little Red Book would be collectively recited, analyzed, and sermonized upon. Akin to the worship of deities in fundamentalist religious schools, the study sessions focused on Mao’s strategic brilliance and god-like qualities of omniscience, omnipotence, and benevolence. The mantra “Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to Chairman Mao” had its origins in this campaign, as did the practice of starting public meetings with the phrase “Chairman Mao teaches us.”

With the Mao-study campaign unfolding on a massive scale within the army, the next target audience in the campaign to revive Mao’s personality cult was the younger generation. In 1965, PLA political instructors were sent out to schools, universities, and local branches of the Communist Youth League throughout the country to promote group study of the Little Red Book.

While spreading Chairman Mao’s thoughts among the younger generation, the Maoists also began to attack what they called “unhealthy tendencies” in cultural and literary circles. In the Maoist view, all art and literature must be in the style of **socialist realism**, glorifying the worker-peasant masses and vilifying class enemies. But during the revival of the Hundred Flowers campaign from 1961 to 1963, a large number of literary works appeared that were critical of Mao’s radicalism.

Many writers populated their works of fiction with **middle characters**—characters who were neither perfect prototypes of the “new socialist man” nor degenerate, bloodthirsty villains. Unlike the simplistic cardboard cutout figures of the socialist realism school, these flawed, yet recognizably real figures struggled on a daily basis with complex political situations and moral ambiguities. Heroic solutions were seldom available to them, so they did the best they could. Indeed, their imperfect behavior gave them a distinctly human quality with which readers could identify.

To avoid incurring Mao’s wrath, Chinese intellectuals revived a literary tradition that had been practiced widely in ancient imperial times. Disguising their criticisms of Mao and his policies as historical allegories, fictionalized parables, or satire, they produced a veritable blizzard of politically incorrect works of art and literature. Satirical articles hinted at Mao’s penchant for indulging in “great empty talk” and forgetting what he had said.

Perhaps the deepest literary affront to Mao during this period was a modern Peking opera by **Wu Han**, entitled *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*. When the opera was first written and performed, it received a positive review from Mao, but the chairman’s wife, Jiang Qing, had a very different take on it. In Jiang’s view, the story of Hai Rui was a reactionary allegory for Peng Dehuai’s 1959 dismissal. Both men had been widely esteemed for their integrity and courage; both had confronted local tyrants in an effort to redress wrongs inflicted on peasants; both had petitioned the emperor to relieve peasant burdens; and both had been fired for their efforts. Jiang eventually persuaded Mao that the opera was an indirect defense of Peng Dehuai—and a slap in the face of the chairman. Now utterly convinced that representatives of the bourgeoisie were attacking him from all directions, Mao was ready to take action: The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was about to begin. ■

## Chairman Mao Reforms “Revisionist” Educational System

As another element of Mao Zedong’s critique of revisionism in the cultural sphere in the 1960s, he turned his celebrated wrath against China’s educational system. Back in the mid-1950s, China had modeled its educational system closely upon that of the Soviet Union. It was a hierarchical system, based on rigorous competitive examinations at every level, and offered two distinct educational tracks: an elite academic track and a broad-based vocational track. But now, in the mid-1960s, the Soviet model fell into Maoist disrepute, and the chairman began to severely criticize the “erroneous methods” being used to educate China’s children. Complaining that the Soviet system stressed book learning at the expense of more practical forms of education, Mao urged a shortening of the school curriculum and for classroom education to be combined with two years of hands-on vocational training in a factory or farm, or in military training. The idea was to put all students in direct, daily contact with the day-to-day hardships of ordinary workers and peasants.

Mao’s critique of the educational system also included an attack on the existing school curriculum, which he felt required students to study too much. “This is exceedingly harmful,” said the chairman, “and the burden is too heavy. It puts students in a constant state of tension. ... The [school] syllabus should be chopped in half. ... It is evident that reading too many books is harmful.”

### Names to Know

**Lin Biao** (1907–1971): A senior PLA general and longtime confidant of Mao Zedong, Lin became defense minister after Peng Dehuai’s purge in 1959. Lin died in a plane crash in 1971 following an alleged attempt to assassinate Mao.

**Wu Han** (1909–1969): A playwright, historian, and deputy mayor of Beijing. His writing group published essays critical of Mao Zedong in 1961–1962. His 1961 opera *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* was an allegorical criticism of Mao’s 1959 purge of Peng Dehuai.

## Important Terms

**Hai Rui Dismissed from Office:** An allegorical 1961 opera by Wu Han likening the purge of Peng Dehuai to the Ming dynasty emperor’s dismissal of a loyal minister, Hai Rui.

**Little Red Book** (a.k.a. *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*): A collection of Maoist sayings and writings that was distributed widely to soldiers and students in 1964 and 1965.

**middle characters:** Literary reference in the early 1960s to ordinary people who are neither heroes nor villains; tacitly antithetical to socialist realism.

**socialist realism:** The Stalinist notion, endorsed by Mao Zedong, that art and literature should glorify the working classes and expose the evil machinations of class enemies.

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 3.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao authorize the mass publication and circulation of the Little Red Book in 1964–1965?
2. What was the significance of Wu Han’s *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*?

# Mao's Last Revolution Begins, 1965–1966

## Lecture 22

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Before leaving his Hangzhou hideaway, [Mao Zedong] wrote to his wife in Shanghai, telling her that there would soon be “great disorder under heaven.” It was a most prescient forecast.

In the autumn of 1965, Mao suddenly disappeared from public view. Calculating that he could not launch an effective attack against his adversaries from the nation’s capital, where they enjoyed the strong support of the Communist Party bureaucracy, he had left Beijing for a villa in Hangzhou. With a brain trust consisting of his wife, Jiang Qing, his defense minister, Lin Biao, his security chief, Kang Sheng, his chief theoretician, Chen Boda, and the Shanghai municipal party leader Zhang Chunqiao, the now 72-year-old chairman mapped out his campaign.

The opening salvo was delivered on November 10, 1965, when Yao Wenyuan, a young left-wing propagandist in the Shanghai party organization, published a biting critique of Wu Han’s opera, *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*. An instant chill of anxiety went through the Beijing literary establishment. Most deeply disturbed, aside from Wu Han himself, was Wu’s boss and principal patron, Beijing mayor **Peng Zhen**.

At first, Peng (a close associate of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping) instructed Beijing’s newspapers not to reprint the article. But under pressure from Zhou Enlai, he relented. Peng had a mitigating editor’s note added to the article and also had Wu Han write a self-criticism, acknowledging his failure to understand that “proletarian literature and art must serve contemporary politics.” In defending Wu and opposing publication of Yao’s article, Peng had revealed his loyalty to Liu and Deng. In 1966, Mao labeled Wu’s opera a **poisonous weed**, and members of Peng’s close circle began to feel the heat as well. Moving in for the kill, Mao convened a Politburo meeting at which a strongly worded circular was adopted, announcing Peng’s dismissal. The document further suggested that Mao intended to go after even bigger fish. “People of Khrushchev’s ilk,” it read, are still “nestled in our midst.” Accordingly,

it is necessary to “repudiate and strike down all counterrevolutionary revisionists.” Mao instructed Liu to announce the official verdict on his old friend Peng.

Shortly after the dismissal of Peng, political agitation commenced on the campus of Peking University. On May 25, 1966, a philosophy instructor named **Nie Yuanzi** wrote an inflammatory *dazibao* accusing the university’s president of suppressing the revolutionary masses on the campus. Mao sided with Nie, making her an instant left-wing heroine and inspiring radical students elsewhere to follow her example.

As factional disturbances increased in frequency and intensity in Beijing’s high schools and colleges in the late spring of 1966, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping dispatched work teams to sort through the conflicting claims of rival groups. At Peking University, the work team supported the beleaguered president and strongly criticized unruly student rebels as hooligans. Informed of this latest turn of events in early July, Mao was livid. It was time for him to join the battle in person.

Mao boarded his private train for Beijing, where he proceeded to shake the Chinese political establishment to its very foundation. Mao strongly criticized the work teams, arguing that they had suppressed the masses and terrorized rebellious students at *Beida* and elsewhere. A week later, Mao ordered the work teams to be withdrawn. Henceforth, the Cultural Revolution in schools and universities would be conducted by the revolutionary students themselves, with their leaders selected from below by students and teachers rather than being appointed from above by central authorities. When they learned of Mao’s order, Liu and Deng were deeply distressed. Mao had tested his two top lieutenants by stirring up trouble, and they had failed the test—just as Peng had failed the test Mao had set for him earlier in the year.

Shortly after this incident, Mao wrote a personal note to a student in Beijing, praising him for helping to form a rebel organization at his middle school. The insurgents there had called themselves **Red Guards**. Mao congratulated the young man, and to convey his approval, he coined a new battle cry: “To rebel is justified!” Mao’s words were reprinted in

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**Henceforth, the Cultural Revolution in schools and universities would be conducted by the revolutionary students themselves.**

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student newspapers across the country, quickly becoming the most famous rallying cry of the Cultural Revolution.

In the course of several public appearances by the chairman in August and September of 1996, he received more than 1 million ecstatic young Red Guards. Wearing olive-drab military-style uniforms adorned with bright red armbands and waving copies of the Little Red Book, the students excitedly chanted “Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to Chairman Mao!” Mao’s embrace of the Red Guards would soon lead

China’s impressionable students to undertake a succession of ever more daring—and ever more violent—actions. ■

### Names to Know

**Nie Yuanzi** (b. 1921): A female philosophy instructor, Nie put up a wall poster at Peking University in May 1966, challenging the university’s ban on wall posters and mass meetings. Mao Zedong endorsed her poster, praising her as a “true revolutionary.”

**Peng Zhen** (1902–1997): A veteran CCP revolutionary and mayor of Beijing. Peng was purged by Mao Zedong in 1966 for protecting Wu Han against leftist criticism. He was rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978.

### Important Terms

**Beida:** Nickname for Peking University, a contraction of *Beijing Daxue*.

**poisonous weeds:** Mao Zedong’s 1957 characterization of art and literature that served to undermined socialism, CCP leadership, or Marxism-Leninism.

**Red Guards** (a.k.a. *hongweibing*): High school and college students mobilized by Maoists in 1966 to launch attacks on “bourgeois powerholders.”

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Ling, *The Revenge of Heaven*.

MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 3.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why couldn't Mao Zedong rely on the party organization to unmask and criticize his detractors?
2. How did Mao initially orchestrate his attack on Peng Zhen and other "bourgeois powerholders" in 1965–1966?

# The Children's Crusade, 1966–1967

## Lecture 23

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**At heart I was struggling with myself. Our principal had been very good to me. ... [If I] turned against him ... I would be acting against my own conscience. ... On the other hand, if I wanted to enter a university, I needed “political capital,” which I could acquire only [by attacking] the powerholders.**

**—A high school student, after witnessing the brutal beating of his principal**

In August 1966, Mao Zedong unleashed the Red Guards. At a Central Committee meeting that same month, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were criticized and demoted. Lin Biao replaced Liu as Mao's heir apparent, and top leftists, including Mao's wife, **Jiang Qing**, were named to head a new Central Cultural Revolution Small Group. Mao's decision to include Jiang in the new group raised a number of eyebrows, since it violated the CCP's long-standing ban on her participation in politics. Although Mao and Jiang's relationship was quite stormy and they had stopped living together years earlier, Jiang became a major player in the Cultural Revolution—and a key member of the so-called Shanghai Clique.

With Mao having sounded the call for a nationwide student rebellion, the Cultural Revolution entered its most turbulent stage yet. In September 1966, fall classes were cancelled in all Chinese schools and universities to allow students across the country to form Red Guard detachments and go forth to “make revolution.” Almost immediately, differences of opinion emerged over who was eligible to join the Red Guards. With no central directives available to resolve the question of who was eligible to join, competing organizations of Red Guards sprang up in many schools and universities. To bolster their contention that they

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**We were  
intoxicated with  
our own power.  
We were Chairman  
Mao's “little red  
generals,” and we  
were immortal.  
Who would dare to  
oppose us?**

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were true revolutionaries, students from “bad” class backgrounds often exhibited behavior that was more radical and destructive than that of the “naturally red” students.

Groups of Red Guards humiliated, imprisoned, and tortured thousands of teachers and administrators. Thousands were beaten to death—no one knows just how many—and suicides were common. Once they had finished struggling against their school officials, Red Guards were instructed to “destroy the **four olds**.”

The rampaging students burned books, smashed works of art, and defaced religious icons. They were also given free railroad passes to link up and exchange revolutionary experiences with counterparts from other areas, which led to a good deal of petty vandalism and other inappropriate behavior. As one former Red Guard said, “We were intoxicated with our own power. We were Chairman Mao’s ‘little red generals,’ and we were immortal. Who would dare to oppose us?”

In the winter of 1966–1967, the Cultural Revolution spread to factories and farms, as rival factions took to the streets to settle their differences. The first major city to experience a systematic assault by the mobilized industrial workers—who called themselves **revolutionary rebels**—was Shanghai. In January 1967, a city-wide organization of 100,000 leftist factory workers confronted a 20,000-strong militia organization set up by the municipal government. The insurgents surrounded city hall, and a tense standoff ensued,



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**Jiang Qing and Mao Zedong.** Jiang, Mao's fourth wife, became a powerful leader of the leftist Shanghai Clique.

with each group claiming to represent the true revolutionaries. Mao and Zhou Enlai personally intervened, praising the rebellious factory workers for correctly “grasping revolution.” Thereafter, the entire municipal government apparatus was reorganized.

In the aftermath of the Shanghai uprising, radical Red Guards and revolutionary rebels throughout China began to seize power in factories, offices, commercial establishments, schools, and universities, in emulation of their Shanghai compatriots. As the scope of working-class participation broadened, the motives of participants became murkier and less principled. With violence beginning to edge over into anarchy, Mao intervened once more. In the spring of 1967, he ordered all schools reopened, all Red Guards back to school, and all workers back to work.

Meanwhile, the power struggle in Beijing was entering a new stage. Encouraged by members of the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group, radical students at Tsinghua University captured Liu Shaoqi’s wife, Wang Guangmei, and publicly humiliated her in a mass rally. Liu was also taken captive; suffering from untreated diabetes and pneumonia, he died of medical neglect in 1969. Peng Dehuai also died in captivity, after being brutalized by Red Guards. At Zhou Enlai’s behest, Deng Xiaoping avoided prison and was exiled to a small township.

The Chinese Communist Party was being systematically shattered—its leaders brutalized, its morale crushed. Slowly but surely, Mao’s radical minions were pushing the country toward the brink of anarchy. ■

### Name to Know

**Jiang Qing** (1914–1991): Mao Zedong’s fourth wife and a former movie actress, Jiang met and married Mao in Yan’an in 1938. She became China’s culture czar during the Cultural Revolution, instigating Red Guards to attack “powerholders.” She was convicted of murder and treason in 1980 and hanged herself in her prison cell in 1991.

## Important Terms

**four olds:** The Red Guards were mobilized in 1966 to destroy “old habits, old ideology, old customs, and old culture.”

**revolutionary rebels:** Nonstudent activists in the Cultural Revolution, including workers and peasants.

## Suggested Reading

Chang, *Wild Swans*.

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Ling, *The Revenge of Heaven*.

MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did the Red Guard movement break down into unprincipled factional conflict?
2. How did Jiang Qing and her radical colleagues contrive to expand mass attacks on suspected class enemies?

# The Storm Subsides, 1968–1969

## Lecture 24

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**By the late winter of 1969, the rustication movement had witnessed the largest human migration in Chinese history. Within six months, more than 10 million youngsters, ranging in age from 14 to 23, were sent from Chinese cities to rural areas and remote border regions.**

**A**s China descended into wider and deeper disorder in 1967, two questions began to occur to people: Just what did Chairman Mao know about the extent of the spreading violence and cruelty? And why didn't he do anything to stop it? Without doubt, Mao had personally set in motion the chaotic events of 1966–1967. Moreover, he had not lifted a finger to protect his oldest and closest comrades from extreme physical abuse and even violent death. Based on the testimony of Mao's personal physician, Li Zhisui, the chairman was an aloof and cold-blooded deity, a philosopher-king who professed deep devotion to the popular masses but showed little concern for flesh-and-blood human beings. It is entirely possible that Mao, living inside this imperial cocoon, did not fully comprehend the destructive consequences of his pronouncements.

But there was one person who clearly understood and appreciated the chairman's power to unleash the fury of the masses: Jiang Qing. It was she and her leftist allies who led the brutal assault against the powerholders. Driven partly by pent-up resentment at the party elders who had barred her from politics for 30 years and partly by personal ambition and an evident intoxication with political power, she relished playing the role of patron saint to the Red Guards.

By the spring of 1968, China was perched on the thin edge of anarchy. Governing bodies in virtually all Chinese provinces and municipalities were being replaced by new revolutionary committees, many of which were paralyzed by disputes over who had the authority to do what. To instill a greater sense of discipline, military officers were appointed to fill the top positions in most of the revolutionary committees. Meanwhile, Red Guards and revolutionary rebels throughout the country routinely ignored Beijing's

urgent requests to reconcile their factional differences and create a “great unity.” Resisting all entreaties from above, the rebels engaged in increasingly large-scale, destructive acts.

In 1968, Red Guards looted PLA armories and turned whole cities into battlegrounds. In Wuzhou, Guangxi Province, rival Red Guard factions armed

with light artillery, antiaircraft guns, mortars, and machine guns skirmished in streets, in government buildings, and in private homes: 2,000 buildings were destroyed, and 40,000 inhabitants were left homeless. Also in Guangxi Province, the spring of 1968 brought reports of gruesome forms of ritualized violence, including acts of cannibalism, where one group of rebels would ceremonially carve up and then devour the vital organs of their slain enemies.

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**After repeated Maoist calls for unity and discipline went unheeded, in August 1968 Mao authorized the use of military force to suppress unruly Red Guards.**

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Red Guard violence now took on an international dimension. In June 1968, rebels stormed the North Vietnamese consulate in Nanning. Another group of roving rebels looted trains carrying Soviet arms to North Vietnam. After repeated Maoist calls for

unity and discipline went unheeded, in August 1968 Mao authorized the use of military force to suppress unruly Red Guards. Thousands of PLA-led **Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams** entered schools, factories, and villages. In some places they encountered rebel resistance, but for the most part they brought factional violence to a rapid halt.

In a move designed to permanently disband the Red Guards, Mao revived the program, first introduced during the Great Leap Forward, to send large numbers of urban middle-school students **up to the mountains and down to the villages**. While earlier rustication movements in China had been short-term in nature, this one was to be permanent. Ten million urban students were sent down to villages to learn humility, industriousness, and plain living from the peasantry. The vast majority of these young people would henceforth be classified as rural inhabitants and not be allowed return to their urban homes. Because of this, and because precious few of the sent-down

youths would ever have an opportunity to pursue formal education again, they have been referred to as China's lost generation.

After the Red Guards had been dispersed to the countryside, the next step in restoring political and administrative normalcy in China was to rebuild the badly damaged Communist Party apparatus. By 1969, Lin Biao's PLA—which largely survived the Cultural Revolution unscathed—dominated 23 of 29 provincial revolutionary committees. At the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969, almost half the newly elected Central Committee members were military officers, and Lin himself was formally anointed as Mao's designated successor. Jiang Qing and three other members of the radical Central Cultural Revolution Small Group were also elevated to the Politburo. Soon enough, these two factions would become serious rivals for political power. For now, however, they were allies, each with a major stake in defending the legacy of the Cultural Revolution. Ahead lay the daunting task of restoring a traumatized nation's faith in a badly damaged Communist Party. ■

## Important Terms

**Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams:** Led by the PLA, these disciplinary teams entered schools and factories throughout China in August 1968 to suppress factional violence and punish recalcitrant Red Guards and rebels.

**up to the mountains, down to the villages (*shangshan, xiāxiāng*):** The Maoist rustication movement of late 1968 that urged urban youths to resettle in the countryside to learn humility and discipline from peasants.

## Suggested Reading

Chang and Halliday, *Mao*.

Fenby, *Modern China*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Ling, *The Revenge of Heaven*.

MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*.

Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*.

Short, *Mao*.

Zheng, *Scarlet Memorial*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao Zedong finally decide to curb Red Guard violence and chaos, and what methods did he use?
2. Why did the People's Liberation Army emerge as such a powerful political actor at the end of the Cultural Revolution?

# The Sino-Soviet War of Nerves, 1964–1969

## Lecture 25

**When forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem for the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries.**

— The Brezhnev Doctrine

While the Cultural Revolution was playing out, much was taking place in China's international relations as well. The Sino-Soviet rivalry heated up considerably in the 1960s. During the 1962 Sino-Indian border war, Moscow remained neutral, and by way of payback, Beijing criticized Nikita Khrushchev's backing down to the United States in the Cuban Missile Crisis. The two sides were engaging in a guerrilla war of words.

In mid-October of 1964, amid great patriotic jubilation, China successfully tested its first atomic bomb, a device that had been built entirely without Soviet assistance. The test was a powerful declaration of China's strategic independence from the USSR, and its impact on Moscow was instantaneous. The Soviet Communist Party Presidium abruptly removed Khrushchev from power, citing his repeated blunders in the international arena, including his inept handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis and his botched relations with China. In truth, Khrushchev's reformist tendencies and erratic personal behavior had increasingly alienated many in the top Soviet leadership, and the Chinese nuclear test was merely the last straw.

For a short while, it appeared that Khrushchev's ouster might open the way for a thaw in Sino-Soviet relations. Early in 1965, in response to American escalation of the war in Vietnam, new Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev held out an olive branch to Beijing. He offered to work with China to provide a coordinated flow of military assistance to Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. But Mao Zedong flatly rejected Brezhnev's offer and angrily denounced the idea of peaceful reconciliation with the Soviet "revisionists." To Mao, Khrushchev's ouster didn't change a thing—the Soviets were still heretics.

In 1966–1967, thousands of Chinese Red Guards demonstrated outside the Soviet Embassy in Beijing, shouting antirevisionist slogans and renaming the street leading to the embassy “Struggle against Revisionism Street.” In response to the rising shrillness and intensity of the Red Guards, the Soviets began to quietly reinforce their combat units along China’s northern border. In December 1966, Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi accused the Russians of conspiring with the United States to launch a surprise attack on China.

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**Had Nixon and Kissinger given the Soviets any encouragement at all in August of 1969, the history of the next 40 years might have been written very differently.**

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“The Chinese people are ready for war ... and [we] are confident of final victory. ... [Any] nuclear bombs which fall on China will be returned with interest.”

Moscow and Beijing were openly vying to lead the global Communist movement. Moscow was able to offer commercial credits, modern weapons, and technology, while Beijing could provide only unskilled labor and guerrilla tactics. By the first half of 1968, Sino-Soviet relations had reached the boiling point, with the two sides routinely excoriating each other in the strongest possible language. The breaking point was the Soviet decision to send tanks and troops into Prague, Czechoslovakia, in August 1968.

China condemned Moscow’s invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine of conditional sovereignty for socialist countries. In Mao’s view, it was a convenient rationale that could be invoked by Soviet leaders to legitimize the unilateral use of force against any member of the Communist bloc, at any time.

Moscow reinforced its troops along the Sino-Soviet border and rehabilitated Mao’s old nemesis, **Wang Ming**. In March 1969, PLA troops provoked the first of two short border skirmishes. When Mao balked at negotiating a border settlement, Moscow asked the “hypothetical” question of whether Washington would endorse a preemptive Soviet strike on China’s nuclear facilities. The Cold War had now reached a critical crossroad. A new Republican administration had recently come to power in Washington, headed by President Richard Nixon and his national security advisor, **Henry**

**Kissinger.** This was the biggest, most strategically consequential decision they could be called upon to make—whether to tacitly conspire with the Soviets to neutralize China’s war-making capacity. Had Nixon and Kissinger given the Soviets any encouragement at all in August of 1969, the history of the next 40 years might have been written very differently. But they did not: Nixon and Kissinger categorically rejected the Soviet proposal, pointing out that any attack on the Chinese heartland would have a destabilizing effect on the balance of power in Northeast Asia and would be utterly unacceptable to the United States. This caused Mao to begin to think seriously about the possible benefits of a Sino-American détente. ■

### Names to Know

**Kissinger, Henry** (b. 1923): The national security advisor and later secretary of state under Richard Nixon, Kissinger initiated the U.S.-China rapprochement when he secretly flew to Beijing in July 1971 to meet with Zhou Enlai.

**Wang Ming** (1904–1974): Mao Zedong’s pro-Stalinist rival in the early 1930s. His policies were discredited by Mao at the start of 1934’s Long March. After three decades in the USSR, Wang was publicly lauded in 1968 by the Soviets, who heralded him as the “true” leader of the CCP.

### Suggested Reading

Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*.

MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Why did Vietnam become a major bone of contention in the Sino-Soviet dispute in the late 1960s?
2. Why did Mao Zedong react so strongly to the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia?

# Nixon, Kissinger, and China, 1969–1972

## Lecture 26

The four [senior PLA officers] noted that Nixon seemed to be quite serious about improving relations with China, and they concluded that China's strategic advantage lay in "making use of tensions between the Americans and the Soviets ... to strengthen our position."

The Sino-U.S. détente began in earnest in Warsaw in 1969, when the U.S. ambassador passed to his Chinese counterpart a message indicating that President Nixon was serious about improving relations. Convinced that Moscow was planning an attack on China, Mao was receptive. But Lin Biao and Jiang Qing opposed rapprochement, arguing that the two superpowers were colluding to contain China.

In October 1970, Nixon offered to send a high-level emissary to Beijing. As an indication of his good faith, Nixon promised that the United States would refrain from entering into any anti-Chinese alliances with the USSR. After several months with no response, the breakthrough came unexpectedly. In April 1971, Zhou Enlai sent a message to an American table-tennis team, which was participating in the World Championships in Japan. The American team was invited to stop over in Beijing for "friendly competition" with the Chinese national team. The message had been personally approved by Mao. At the closing banquet of the Americans' visit, Zhou greeted them personally; that same night, Nixon lifted sanctions on nonstrategic trade between the United States and China. Détente was beginning to gain momentum.

In July 1971, Henry Kissinger was on a routine tour of Asia. Midway through the trip, while in Pakistan, he was reported to be suffering from heat exhaustion. When he was taken to an isolated mountain resort, ostensibly for a few days of rest and relaxation, an elaborate ruse was set in motion. Kissinger and a team of hand-picked aides secretly flew to Beijing to meet with Zhou Enlai. Kissinger promised Zhou that Washington would not collude with Moscow, would permit Beijing to take China's UN seat, and intended to withdraw from Vietnam.

Soon after the meeting, the two sides released a joint statement, informing the world that Zhou had invited Nixon to visit China, that Nixon had accepted, and that the leaders of the two countries would “seek a normalization of relations” and an exchange of views “on questions of concern to the two sides.” Despite opposition from Jiang Qing and other Chinese hard-liners, Nixon’s week-long visit to China went off smoothly. Early in the president’s trip, Nixon and Kissinger were granted an audience with a visibly frail and infirm Mao Zedong. The smoothness of the televised images of this meeting shown around the world concealed deep underlying tensions—on both sides.

On the Chinese side, there was considerable confusion and perplexity over Chairman Mao’s sudden change of heart toward the United States. After more than two decades of uniformly hostile Chinese policies and propaganda toward the evil “U.S. imperialists,” the idea of suddenly making peace with the Americans raised numerous eyebrows, including those of Mao’s newest heir apparent, Lin Biao. On the American side as well, there were serious policy disagreements. A bitter turf war had broken out between Kissinger’s National Security Council staff and top officials in the Department of State, including Secretary of State William Rogers. The State Department’s top Asia experts were furious over what they regarded as Kissinger’s ego-driven penchant for making indiscreet revelations to the Chinese and playing fast and loose with America’s treaty commitments to Taiwan. Rogers wanted a firm Chinese pledge to seek peaceful unification with Taiwan. Kissinger believed this to be a deal-breaker, so he resisted.

With the Shanghai communiqué—the cornerstone of the Nixon visit—hanging in the balance, Zhou Enlai personally intervened to smooth out the situation. Paying an impromptu midnight visit to Rogers’s hotel room just hours before the scheduled release of the communiqué, Zhou proposed a makeshift solution: Why not simply eliminate from the final draft all

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**After more than  
two decades of  
mutual hostility,  
marked by  
near-constant  
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confrontations, the  
United States and  
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to move toward  
a “normalized”  
relationship.**

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references to specific American treaty commitments, thereby drawing attention away from the unique exclusion of Taiwan? At 1:40 am, Richard Nixon reluctantly agreed to Zhou's proposal.

As released to the public on February 27, 1972, the Shanghai communiqué was a masterpiece of diplomatic ambiguity and obfuscation. In retrospect, it was all things to all people. For Nixon and Kissinger, as well as for Mao and Zhou, the communiqué represented a major diplomatic step forward. For Lin and Jiang, on the other hand, and for America's right-wing anti-Communists as well, it was a bitter blow. And finally, for Taiwan, it was a devastating betrayal of trust. After more than two decades of mutual hostility, marked by near-constant recriminations and periodic military confrontations, the United States and China had agreed to move toward a "normalized" relationship. What that meant in concrete terms remained to be seen, but for the moment, a major breakthrough had been achieved. ■

### Suggested Reading

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Schaller, *The United States and China*.

Tyler, *A Great Wall*.

### Questions to Consider

1. What were the key factors that ultimately induced President Nixon and Chairman Mao to seek Sino-American détente?
2. How did Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, try to derail the emerging détente even before it got off the ground?

# Mao's Deterioration and Death, 1971–1976

## Lecture 27

In Communist systems, the approaching death of the supreme leader is generally a signal for would-be successors to step up their factional infighting. China in the 1970s was no exception to this rule.

As Mao Zedong grew ill in the early 1970s, China's succession struggle heated up. Lin Biao, Mao's heir apparent, had opposed Sino-U.S. détente. When Lin died in a mysterious plane crash in September 1971, Maoists claimed that Lin had been plotting a coup against Mao and had tried to flee when the plot was revealed. They explained that the plane crashed when it ran out of fuel after the conspirators changed their destination from southern China to heading northwest across the Gobi Desert. But Soviet forensic pathologists disputed the Chinese account, saying that there had clearly been an armed struggle on the aircraft; several of the bodies found on the crashed plane bore bullet holes.

Following Lin's death, he was accused of being "a hidden son of the landlord class," a "swindler like Liu Shaoqi," and a pro-Soviet "revisionist and traitor." In an attempt to wipe the Chinese people's memory banks clean of any references to the traitorous defense minister, all photos of Lin were removed from circulation, and his writings were banned. His departure left two major competitors for Mao's mantle—Jiang Qing, the radical hard-liner, and Zhou Enlai, the moderate.

In 1973, Mao ordered Zhou to bring Deng Xiaoping back from exile. Despite Mao's anger at Deng for having dismantled the people's communes in the early 1960s, Deng was a talented and experienced administrator, with strong personal ties to China's senior civilian and military leaders. In the aftermath of the **Lin Biao affair**, the country was politically adrift, and Mao needed Deng's steady organizational skills to help restore political discipline. Deng was rehabilitated and became Zhou's top deputy and chief of staff of the PLA.

In 1974–1975, Jiang's radical faction launched media campaigns against Zhou and Deng, seeking to undermine their authority. When Zhou died of

cancer in January 1976, Jiang banned all public displays of mourning. But during the annual Qingming Festival in early April, thousands of Beijing residents defied the ban, converging on Tiananmen Square to lay funereal wreaths and post memorial poems to Zhou. Alarmed, Jiang and her clique of radicals ordered the wreaths removed overnight. Angry Beijingers protested, and Jiang called in club-wielding paramilitary “workers’ militias,” who beat dozens and arrested hundreds.

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**Less than a month after Mao’s death, a coalition of “moderate” Chinese military and political leaders, many of them survivors of Red Guard persecution, placed [Jiang Qing] under arrest.**

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Red Guard persecution, placed her under arrest, along with the other three leading members of her clique. Collectively, the quartet of radicals were now openly reviled as the **Gang of Four**. ■

### Important Terms

**Gang of Four:** Radical clique led by Mao Zedong’s wife, Jiang Qing, responsible for launching violent factional struggles during the Cultural Revolution. They were tried and convicted in 1980.

**Lin Biao affair** (September 1971): An aborted coup attempt allegedly masterminded by Lin Biao, which ended with Lin and his wife dying in a plane crash in Mongolia.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Qiu, *The Culture of Power*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao Zedong turn against Lin Biao so suddenly and completely after 1969?
2. Why did Jiang Qing turn to desperate measures to strengthen her political credentials and weaken those of her rivals in the mid-1970s?

# The Legacy of Mao Zedong—An Appraisal

## Lecture 28

**In describing a fight he had with his father when he was only 13, Mao wrote, “I learned that when I defended my rights by open rebellion my father relented, but when I remained weak and submissive he only beat me more.”**

The officially licensed Mao Zedong, as featured in CCP history books, was a brilliant poet and a great statesman, a philosopher and a warrior-king, a master military strategist and an organizational genius. In the words of his official biographer, Mao’s greatest contribution lay in “integrating the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution.” Linking theory and practice was Mao’s forte.

The real Mao, the unofficial Mao, was a deeply flawed human being. His cold-blooded manipulations, conspiratorial fantasies, and callous whims inflicted enormous damage upon his countrymen—while he himself, it seemed, remained appallingly indifferent to the suffering he caused. In truth, Mao was a very complicated human being, and it does both him and the Chinese people a disservice to dismiss him simply as a sadistic thug. To realistically assess Mao’s legacy, we need to examine his full complexity.

Mao Zedong was born in rural Hunan in 1893 to a loving mother and an abusive, rich-peasant father. When his father would mistreat Mao’s mother or their hired hands, Mao would identify with the victims. For this he received periodic beatings from his father. Most biographers reckon that Mao’s early inclination to side with the victims of patriarchal abuse played a major role in shaping his adult identity, when he became a champion of China’s poor, downtrodden masses and a sworn enemy of all landlords, capitalists, and rich peasants.

A tall, handsome youth, Mao was married off at age 14 to a woman six years his senior. In a display of passive aggression against his father, who had arranged the marriage, Mao ignored his bride and refused to consummate the marriage. His personal experience of an arranged marriage also made him a

bitter critic of the subjugation of women. In several of his early writings, Mao strongly advocates for sexual equality. Like many young radical nationalists of his era, Mao viewed the subjugation of women as a repressive function of China's patriarchal-Confucian legacy.

In 1918, on the eve of the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement, Mao moved to Beijing. There, he courted and married **Yang Kaihui**, the daughter of his favorite teacher. Mao and Yang were deeply in love, and she bore him two sons before she was arrested and beheaded by the Guomindang in 1930. Yang was important in Mao's life for another reason as well: It was her father who first introduced the 25-year-old Mao Zedong to **Li Dazhao**, head librarian at Peking University and later cofounder of the CCP.

Li hired Mao as a librarian's assistant. It was menial work, and Mao was rudely treated by some of the distinguished nationalist leaders who came to the library to read newspapers. As Mao himself put it, "I tried to begin conversations with them ... but they were very busy men. They had no time to listen to an assistant librarian speaking southern dialect." On one occasion, Mao attended a lecture by the eminent May 4<sup>th</sup> intellectual Hu Shi. After the lecture, Mao tried to ask a question, but when the "great man" discovered that Mao was merely a librarian's assistant, rather than a *Beida* student, he ignored him. One can only speculate about the impact of such incidents on Mao's latent resentment of intellectuals.

As Mao underwent the process of revolutionary "toughening" in the mid-1920s, he also experienced a certain loss of emotional empathy. In his youth, his humanity, presumably inherited from his gentle, nurturing mother, was widely acknowledged. But as his involvement in revolution deepened, his political views began to harden; his earlier sensitivity to personal suffering began to give way to more abstract, class-based stereotypes. As he wrote in his 1927 essay on the Hunan Peasant movement, "To put it bluntly, it

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**Though he clearly approved of revolutionary violence, Mao seldom gave a direct command for anyone to be killed. He simply let his general wishes be known.**

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is necessary to bring about a ... reign of terror in every rural area. ... To right a wrong, it is necessary to exceed proper limits." Now in his early 30s, Mao began to condone killing class enemies simply because of their class. Though he clearly approved of revolutionary violence, Mao seldom gave a direct command for anyone to be killed. He simply let his general wishes be known, leaving it then to his subordinates to translate these wishes into specific actions.

So what, then, do we finally make of this man, Mao Zedong? What did he accomplish by all this violence? His victory over Chiang K'ai-shek revealed him to be an outstanding military strategist and a gifted tactician. He managed to unify the country and organize it in a way that had not been seen in China for centuries. His record as a revolutionary thus remains largely intact. In retrospect, it is not that Mao's ultimate ends leave us shaking our heads. His utopian vision of a world without individual greed, landlords, capitalists, or bureaucrats has been widely shared by idealistic intellectuals through the ages. Yet the ruthlessness and callousness of the means used by Mao to achieve his visionary ends calls to mind the playwright Molière's poignant warning: "More men die of their remedies than of their illnesses." ■

### Names to Know

**Li Dazhao** (1889–1927): Head librarian at Peking University, he was a cofounder of the CCP and an early mentor to Mao Zedong. When Chiang K'ai-shek turned against the CCP in 1927, Li was executed.

**Yang Kaihui** (1901–1930): Mao Zedong's second wife and the daughter of Mao's favorite teacher. Yang joined the CCP in 1921. In 1930, she was captured, tortured, and executed by the GMD.



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Mao Zedong in 1954.

## Suggested Reading

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*.

Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*.

Short, *Mao*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Should Mao Zedong be remembered primarily as a brilliant revolutionary theorist and military strategist, or as a cruel, manipulative, totalitarian despot?
2. In what respect can it be said that Mao's attitude toward women was enlightened?

# The Post-Mao Interregnum, 1976–1977

## Lecture 29

With you in charge, I'm at ease.

— Mao Zedong's scribbled anointment  
of Hua Guofeng as his successor

By 1976, the original group of CCP guerrilla heroes of the late 1920s and early 1930s was dying off, and a generational shift was in the offing. But where would China's new leaders come from? And how would they be able to restore the shattered trust and confidence of a dispirited nation? Mao Zedong's track record of anointing a series of successors—and then cruelly discarding them—was a source of deep concern to many Party leaders.

A few months before his death, Mao called a relatively unknown cadre to his bedside. At this meeting, on April 30, 1976, Mao anointed **Hua Guofeng** his last heir apparent by scribbling in his halting calligraphy a simple sentence: "With you in charge, I'm at ease." Hua had been the party secretary of Mao's native Hunan Province during the Cultural Revolution. In the early 1970s, he participated in the official commission investigating Lin Biao's conspiracy. In that capacity, he proved to be a man of integrity and independent judgment. In 1974, Hua was promoted to minister of public security. He had a reputation for intelligence and hard work, and he had gained Mao's confidence during the last years of his life by remaining personally loyal to the chairman.

When Mao died, Hua tried bravely to fill the chairman's big shoes. It was a daunting challenge—standing squarely in his path were Jiang Qing and her leftist collaborators. They felt cheated by the chairman's unexpected elevation of an unknown outsider to succeed him. And in a final, desperate effort to block Hua's succession, they contrived to alter Mao's last will and testament in an attempt to prove that Mao had actually intended to have his wife succeed him as party chairman.

It was an audacious move. Jiang managed to gain access to the archives of the Party Central Committee, where Mao's personal papers were kept under

lock and key. Retrieving some notes that the chairman had scribbled in the last few months of his life, she added some marginal notations of her own in a scrawl that was meant to resemble Mao's own shaky calligraphy. Unfortunately for her, one of Mao's most highly trusted lieutenants, a PLA general named **Wang Dongxing**, was in charge of the Central Committee archives and exposed the attempted forgery. Shortly thereafter, Hua and a coalition of senior Chinese military and political leaders arrested her and her three coconspirators, the Gang of Four.

With Mao dead and Jiang under arrest, Hua Guofeng tried to consolidate his newly acquired authority. At that point, his only claim to power was a hastily scrawled bequest from Chairman Mao. Hua soon found himself facing a potentially devastating challenge—not from the Gang of Four, but from a group of senior party and military leaders arguing for the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping.

On the face of it, Deng's supporters made a compelling argument. Deng's purge had been engineered by Jiang and her allies, who themselves now stood accused of committing a series of treacherous crimes. Hua was caught between a rock and a hard place. If he gave in to the demand to exonerate Deng, he might well be setting the stage for Deng to eclipse him. On the other hand, if he upheld Deng's dismissal as a "counterrevolutionary," he would be perceived as in cahoots with the Gang of Four. For Hua it was a no-win situation, and it would eventually help to secure his downfall. ■

### Names to Know

**Hua Guofeng** (1921–2008): An unheralded party secretary from Hunan, Hua rose to become the dark horse successor to both Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong in 1976. He was eased out of power by Deng Xiaoping in 1978.

**Wang Dongxing** (b. 1916): Mao Zedong's principal bodyguard during the Cultural Revolution, Wang was subsequently put in charge of the Central Committee's archives. After Mao's death, he blew the whistle on Jiang Qing for attempting to usurp power.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Link, *Stubborn Weeds*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did Mao Zedong select a relatively unknown “outsider” to succeed him in 1976?
2. Why did Jiang Qing plot to alter Mao’s last will and testament?

# Hua Guofeng and the Four Modernizations

## Lecture 30

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**It would be not be fair to pin the blame for all these misfortunes on Hua Guofeng alone. After all, it was Mao's policies that had kept China in a state of severe economic backwardness; and it was Mao who systematically punished all those who possessed the requisite knowledge, expertise, and experience needed to modernize the country. If Hua and other party leaders were flying blind in their efforts to induce rapid economic development, it was because Mao had applied the blindfold.**

**A**lthough Hua Guofeng was destined to be a transitional figure, his role in jump-starting the Chinese economy after Mao Zedong's death has been widely overlooked. Though he shamelessly wrapped himself in Mao's mantle in an effort to bolster his own authority, he also helped bring to an end some of the worst radical excesses of the Maoist era.

Under Hua, educational standards were raised, and the uniform nationwide college entrance examinations were reinstated. No longer would preferential treatment be given to radical activists or students from worker-peasant-soldier backgrounds. Henceforth, academic performance would be the primary criterion in determining college admissions.

In addition to promoting educational reform, Hua was open to pragmatic economic innovation. With the Chinese economy in a deep stall after a decade of leftist domination, he adapted a series of reform proposals that had first been argued by Deng Xiaoping. Early in 1978, Hua introduced a 10-year plan for national economic development known as the **Four Modernizations**. The plan was designed to comprehensively modernize Chinese industry, agriculture, national defense, science, and technology.

Hua's 10-year plan subtly reversed Mao's traditional emphasis on such virtues as self-reliance, egalitarianism, and the abolition of material incentives. In their place, Hua called for such things as the accelerated acquisition of the latest foreign industrial technology, the expansion of rural free markets, the use of

“economic methods” to guide economic activity (rather than administrative methods), and the widespread adoption of incentive-based wage systems. Previously, each of these proposals had been denounced as “revisionist” by

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**Under Hua,  
educational  
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uniform nationwide  
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China’s leftists. Equally important, Hua advocated a policy of “opening wide” with respect to China’s oft-maligned intellectuals. To overcome what he called the “cultural poverty” that stemmed from the “fascist dictatorship” of the radical left, Hua called for a lively intellectual environment marked by spirited discussions of science, philosophy, literature, and the arts.

At the heart of Hua’s economic plan was a proposal to accelerate China’s modernization by constructing 120 major new industrial projects, including iron and steel complexes, coal mines, oil and natural gas fields, power stations, railroad lines, and harbors. To achieve this ambitious objective, Hua called for opening the country to large-scale, modern technology imports from the West and Japan. But as a result of inattention to such things as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analysis, and due diligence, a series of high-tech industrial fiascoes occurred on Hua’s watch.

In retrospect, it is evident that the very grandiosity of Hua’s 10-year economic plan contributed heavily to its eventual failure—and to Hua’s eventual demise. In addition to a series of industrial boondoggles, Hua’s quick-fix approach to modernization also led to serious imbalances in the national economy. Many of the flawed policy initiatives introduced by Hua in 1978 had first been proposed by Deng Xiaoping, but when they turned out badly, it was Hua who shouldered the blame.

Another problem that created serious difficulties for Hua was the question of how to frame public criticism of the Gang of Four without casting deep shadows on Mao’s own reputation. By late 1977, the gang had become a universal scapegoat for all that had gone wrong during the Cultural Revolution. In Hua’s eagerness to shift blame away from Mao—and thereby to deflect questions about his own tenuous grip on legitimacy and power—he

clearly underestimated the ability of the Chinese people to comprehend what had happened to them, and who had caused it. ■

## Important Terms

**Four Modernizations:** Slogan first coined by Zhou Enlai, and later revived by Hua Guofeng, calling for the rapid modernization of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense.

**granny police:** Urban neighborhood watchdog groups, generally staffed by elderly women.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

\_\_\_\_\_, *China Watcher*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why did the Four Modernizations fail under Hua Guofeng's leadership?
2. Why did Hua issue a blanket endorsement of "whatever Mao said or did"?

# Deng Takes Command, 1978–1979

## Lecture 31

Unlike Mao before him, Deng did not go for the jugular. He did not purge Hua, or humiliate him, or even force him to step down—at least not yet. Deng could afford to be magnanimous: He had won.

By the middle of 1977, Deng Xiaoping’s supporters were pressing strongly for their hero’s rehabilitation. Deng had been framed by Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four, and now the verdict on him would have to be reversed. Hua Guofeng parried and played for time as best he could, but at the 11<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in July 1977, he acknowledged that Deng had been falsely accused by Jiang.

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**Deng next sought to cast doubt on other aspects of the Maoist legacy—including the chairman’s presumptive right to appoint his own successor.**

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By the late summer of 1977, a showdown between Deng and Hua had become all but inevitable. Knowing Hua’s vulnerability on the question of Mao Zedong’s fallibility, Deng played his cards masterfully. Hua, in defensive mode, proclaimed that it was impermissible to question “whatever Chairman Mao instructed or approved.” In response, Deng’s supporters sarcastically labeled Hua and his allies as the **whatever faction**. They argued that no one, not even Chairman Mao, had a monopoly on truth and wisdom. Truth can only be found, they insisted, by analyzing facts on the ground, not by reciting quotations from supposedly infallible leaders.

After opening the door to questions about Mao’s infallibility, Deng next sought to cast doubt on other aspects of the Maoist legacy—including the chairman’s presumptive right to appoint his own successor. Deng’s supporters decried this practice as a remnant of China’s feudal past and a clear violation of the Communist Party’s established principle of collective leadership. Deng also began to question the propriety of Mao’s attacks on China’s hapless intellectuals. In 1978, Deng called for a reclassification of all “brain

workers” (including scientists, engineers, teachers, artists, and writers) away from the ideologically suspect category of “bourgeois intellectuals” to the politically correct category of “working people.”

Deng’s effort to upgrade Chinese education, science, and technology was given further impetus when a group of CCP officials visited Tokyo in the fall of 1978. Since the onset of the Great Leap Forward in 1958, few of China’s top leaders had traveled outside of the Soviet bloc; fewer still had ever visited a capitalist country. So when a group of Chinese leaders—including Deng Xiaoping himself—arrived in Japan, they were stunned by Japan’s advanced levels of industrial development, technological sophistication, and consumer affluence. The delegation returned to China determined to modernize China’s socialist economy as rapidly as possible, and by any means necessary. Soon afterward, the slogan “reform and opening up” became Deng’s new developmental mantra, and his long-discredited 1962 aphorism was revived: “It doesn’t matter if the cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice.”

Throughout the late summer and fall of 1978, Deng’s political machine gathered momentum. Around the country, remnant leftists and their collaborators were dislodged from their local strongholds, and one after another, China’s provincial party and military leaders lined up in support of Deng’s reforms. Sensing Deng’s imminent victory, officials up and down the line cut their losses and signed on to the new regime. Slowly but surely, Hua Guofeng was being politically marginalized. ■

### Important Term

**whatever faction:** The sobriquet given to Hua Guofeng’s supporters in 1977, referring to their habit of blindly upholding whatever Mao Zedong said or did.

### Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why was Hua Guofeng reluctant to reverse the verdict on Deng Xiaoping's 1976 purge?
2. How did Deng eventually manage to wrest effective control of the CCP away from Hua?

# The Historic Third Plenum, 1978

## Lecture 32

Vice-Premier Deng, you are wrong, completely wrong. ... There is no doubt that, a long time ago, the Chinese people took note of Chairman Mao's mistakes. Those who hate the Gang of Four cannot fail to have grievances against Chairman Mao.

— A poster on Beijing's Democracy Wall

The rise of Deng Xiaoping to the status of “paramount leader” was confirmed at the **Third Plenum** of the 11<sup>th</sup> Central Committee, held in December 1978. This meeting has been widely hailed as a major turning point in modern Chinese history—closing out the Mao era and ushering in the era of reform.

Five major new policies were introduced at the Third Plenum. First, party leaders declared an immediate end to the Maoist imperative of deepening class struggle and a shift toward the pursuit of economic growth and modernization. Second, in support of this new developmental priority, it was decided to begin decentralizing, rationalizing, and marketizing China’s national economy. Third was the party’s commitment to abandon Maoist-style mass mobilization campaigns in favor of more routinized, low-key methods of policy implementation. Fourth, many party officials who had been toppled during the Cultural Revolution were to be rehabilitated. Fifth, in an effort to prevent a repetition of uncontrolled autocratic leadership and Cultural Revolution-style chaos, the Third Plenum committed the CCP to strengthening the basic institutions of collective leadership, socialist democracy, and socialist legality. In their bold sweep and far-reaching implications, these reforms represented a wholesale reversal of the policies of the previous two decades.

One of Deng’s attempts to capitalize on his popularity developed into a major political battle. In November of 1978, when the Central Committee first reversed the verdict on Deng and the Qingming Incident, the citizens of Beijing celebrated by posting *dazibao* on a stretch of city wall west of Tiananmen Square. Dubbed **Democracy Wall**, it soon became the focal

point for a remarkable display of unfettered public political discourse. Deng initially was supportive of the new climate of free speech, since it served to reinforce his claim to political legitimacy and to highlight Hua Guofeng's shortcomings. In late November, Deng warmly endorsed the appearance of the wall posters, saying, "We do not have the right to deny ... the blossoming of democracy. ... If the people are angry we must let them blow off steam." All but lost in the excitement over Deng's endorsement was the important caveat he added at the end: Mao Zedong must not be criticized.

When news of Deng's endorsement spread throughout the city, the crowds at Democracy Wall and other public venues in and around Tiananmen Square quickly swelled. Activists were becoming bolder and more outspoken: Posters criticizing Mao began to appear. By early December 1978, as the wall poster movement spread from Beijing to other cities, a unifying theme began to emerge: They began to call for political democracy and respect for human rights as prerequisites of successful economic modernization. One poster read:

China's system of government is modeled on the Russian system [which] produces bureaucracy and a privileged stratum. Without changes in this system, the "four modernizations" will stop halfway. ... We need a state where all delegates are elected and responsible to the people.

Another particularly controversial statement came from **Wei Jingsheng**, whose lengthy wall poster, "Democracy—The Fifth Modernization," appeared on December 5:

[When] Vice-Premier Deng finally returned to his leading post ... how excited people were, how inspired. ... When Deng Xiaoping raised the slogan of "getting down to business" ... the people wanted to "seek truth from facts," to investigate the past. ... But "some people" warned us: ... Chairman Mao is the great savior of the Chinese people. ... If you don't agree with this you will come to no good end! ... Regrettably, the old political system so hated by the people was not changed, the democracy and freedom they hoped for could not even be mentioned. ... When people ask for democracy they are only asking for something they rightfully own. ... [Under such circumstances] are not the people justified in seizing power from the overlords?

By the end of the year, the political climate in Beijing contained a mix of palpable excitement and low-level anxiety. After decades of stifling political conformity, revolutionary chaos, and economic mismanagement, the Chinese capital seemed to be waking from a prolonged slumber. Beijing was coming alive politically, but where would it all lead? ■



Image Courtesy of Dr. Richard Baum.

**Xidan Wall, west of Tiananmen Square, witnessed the open communication of political and personal grievances in 1978–1979.**

### Names to Know

**Fu Yuehua** (b. c. 1947): An unemployed female factory worker who organized the January 1979 Petitioners' movement among victims of leftist persecution in the Cultural Revolution. Fu was arrested and sentenced to three years in jail.

**Wei Jingsheng** (b. 1950): An electrician by training, Wei became active in the Democracy Wall movement of 1978, authoring a series of controversial wall posters, including a critique of Deng Xiaoping's "dictatorial tendencies." Wei was imprisoned in 1979.

## Important Terms

**Democracy Wall** (a.k.a. **Xidan Wall**): The Beijing city wall west of Tiananmen Square that became a haven for free speech in the fall and winter of 1978–1979, as wall posters publicized various political ideas and personal grievances. It was closed by authorities in 1979.

**Third Plenum** (December 1978): This historic Central Committee meeting is celebrated as the birthplace of Chinese “reform and opening up” under Deng Xiaoping.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

———, *China Watcher*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen*.

Link, *Stubborn Weeds*.

Peerenboom, *China’s Long March to the Rule of Law*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. In what ways and to what extent did Deng Xiaoping’s ascent represent a repudiation of Maoist policies?
2. Why did Deng turn against the Democracy Wall movement so soon after endorsing it?

# The “Normalization” of U.S.-China Relations

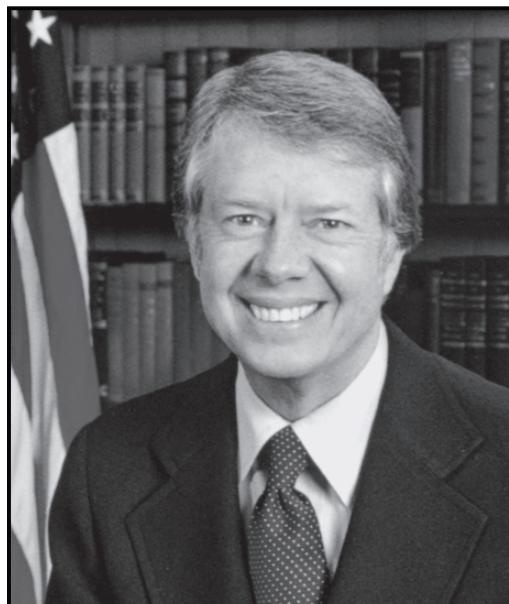
## Lecture 33

**With Mao hovering near death; with China’s political future in limbo; and with Nixon’s successor, Gerald Ford, lacking both the political resources and the political will needed to push U.S.-China relations to the next level, the mid-1970s were marked by a sort of holding pattern.**

When Deng Xiaoping launched his program of reform and opening up in 1978, he made a major strategic calculation: If the program was to succeed, it would need to elicit a positive response from the United States. As the dominant global commercial power, the United States guarded the gates to international trade, technology, and finance. But relations with the United States had hit a snag after the initial spectacular success of the Nixon-Mao “opening” of February 1972. Richard Nixon’s role in covering up the Watergate burglary led to his resignation in disgrace in 1974, and U.S.-China relations drifted inconclusively for three or four years.

When Jimmy Carter won the 1976 U.S. presidential election, there were few indications that a major upgrade in U.S.-China relations was in the offing. Carter had campaigned on a platform that pledged to regain lost momentum in U.S.-China relations, but he made it clear that America’s new friendship with the PRC “must not come at the expense of the independence and freedom of the people of Taiwan.”

In August 1977, Carter sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to Beijing. While there, Vance sounded out the Chinese on a possible compromise arrangement with respect to Taiwan. The essence of his proposal was that the United States was willing, in principle, to derecognize Taiwan and sever its treaty commitment



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**President Jimmy Carter laid the groundwork for normalization.**

to defend the island on two conditions: The Chinese must agree to permit the United States to maintain “unofficial” trade and cultural relations with Taiwan, and the United States would continue to provide military hardware to the ROC government on Taiwan pending a final, peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question. Shortly afterward, Deng told a group of American journalists that the normalization process had suffered a significant setback as a result of Vance’s visit. Deng’s flat-out rejection of the Vance initiative seemed to end any hopes of advancing the normalization process during the Carter presidency.

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**President Carter’s national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, convinced the president that it was time for the United States to “play the China card” against the Soviet Union.**

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more important than ever to Beijing. Second, the Russians had recently been making threatening military noises along China’s northern border, as well as in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia. And third, mirroring Deng’s own balance-of-power logic, President Carter’s national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, convinced the president that it was time for the United States to “play the China card” against the Soviet Union.

In May of 1978, Carter sent Brzezinski on an exploratory trip to China. In the course of that trip, an unexpected diplomatic breakthrough occurred. At an official banquet, Brzezinski proposed a toast in which he specifically acknowledged a mutual Chinese-American security interest in opposing hegemonism. He clearly stated that the United States had “made up its mind” to normalize relations with China. Though he did not mention the Soviet Union by name, the intended target of his remarks was clear. Almost immediately thereafter, the two sides moved into rapid negotiation mode.

Meanwhile, trouble was brewing along China's southern border, where Vietnam had been pursuing a policy of systematic harassment against Vietnam's large Chinese minority population. Already extremely tense, relations between China and Vietnam were further exacerbated by Vietnam's mounting aggressiveness toward Cambodia. Deng Xiaoping wanted to use military force to teach Vietnam a lesson, but as Vietnam had recently signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union, Deng realized he needed a major player on his side as well.

Now Beijing kicked the normalization talks with Washington into high gear. Surprisingly, the Chinese side accepted almost all the terms they had rejected a year earlier, when Cyrus Vance had first offered them. Under the terms of the normalization agreement, which was announced on December 15, 1978, the United States would terminate its diplomatic relations with Taiwan on January 1, 1979, and would thereafter recognize the PRC as the sole legal government of China. President Carter made a verbal declaration of his intention to continue selling U.S. arms of a "defensive nature" to Taiwan. Though Deng loudly protested that this was a clear violation of Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan, he had too much at stake in the normalization process to allow it to become a deal breaker. ■

### Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Schaller, *The United States and China*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

Tyler, *A Great Wall*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Why did Jimmy Carter and Deng Xiaoping push so hard for the full normalization of U.S.-China relations in 1978?
2. What were the major obstacles to normalization, and how were they overcome?

# Deng Consolidates His Power, 1979–1980

## Lecture 34

**When it came to summing up lessons learned from China's Vietnam war  
... the clearest lesson of all was that Deng Xiaoping had suffered his first  
major setback as China's new commander in chief.**

In January 1979, shortly after the normalization of U.S.-China relations, Deng Xiaoping visited the United States. Toward the end of his trip, Deng informed the White House of his solemn intention to “punish” Vietnam for its Christmas Day invasion of Cambodia. President Carter was clearly taken aback, and he argued strongly against Chinese military action. But when push came to shove, Carter too wanted to teach the Vietnamese (and their Soviet patrons) about the perils of invading other countries. And so, having gone on record opposing China’s plan, Carter decided to let the Chinese do what they felt necessary.

The attack proved disastrous. In three weeks of fighting, Vietnamese troops killed 26,000 PLA soldiers and wounded 35,000—and Vietnam remained in control of Cambodia. China’s use of naked military force against Vietnam also served to alarm members of the U.S. Congress. Many on both sides of the isle were already unhappy with President Carter’s failure to extract a Chinese pledge renouncing the use of force against Taiwan. So less than one month after the conclusion of China’s Vietnam War, in April 1979, the U.S. Congress voted overwhelmingly to enact the **Taiwan Relations Act**. At the heart of this important piece of legislation was a clear declaration of the United States’ intention of preventing a Chinese military assault on Taiwan.

Meanwhile, three pressing economic issues preoccupied Deng in the spring and summer of 1979. First was the urgent need to reform China’s dysfunctional agricultural sector; second was the need to introduce concrete productivity-enhancing incentives and quality control standards in industry, education, science, and technology; and third was the need to create a series of special coastal economic zones to lure overseas trade, investment, and technology to China.

By mid-1979, decollectivization was gathering steam in the countryside. Farmers were signing multiyear contracts with village cadres to farm particular parcels of land, with each family undertaking to deliver a specified quota of grain to the state at a low fixed price as a form of annual “rent.” Once the compulsory grain deliveries were fulfilled, families could grow whatever they wanted, consume what they needed, and trade or sell

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**The Special Economic Zones were destined to become the leading edge of China's economic opening to the outside world.**

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the rest on the open market. In another measure designed to strengthen production incentives, the central government granted farmers an across-the-board increase of 20 percent in the purchase price for compulsory grain deliveries. Within one year, the combination of household contract farming, the reopening of rural free markets, and the higher prices paid for state grain purchases had generated substantial increases both in total food production and average rural family income.

New measures were introduced in late 1978 and 1979 to boost productivity and performance in state industries. In factories, across-the-board pay raises were granted to the bottom half of the industrial labor force—the first such raises in well over a decade. At the same time, piece-rate wage systems were introduced to motivate workers. Finally, cash bonuses were paid out to those who exceeded quotas.

The third major focus of economic reform in the spring of 1979, the **Special Economic Zones**, were modeled loosely after export processing zones found elsewhere in Asia. These four coastal zones were expected to become advanced centers of high-tech manufacturing and industrial processing and were geared to the rapid expansion of China’s export trade. Offering foreign investors and joint-venture partners substantially reduced taxes and import duties, as well as low labor costs and flexible terms for repatriating profits, the Special Economic Zones were destined to become the leading edge of China’s economic opening to the outside world—and the engine driving China’s spectacular export manufacturing boom in the 1980s and 1990s.

But the Special Economic Zones also proved to be a major bone of contention between Deng and some less open-minded members of his reform coalition. The emerging dispute over the optimal size of the socialist birdcage—and by extension, the proper limits of economic reform and opening—was destined to grow substantially wider and more contentious as the 1980s progressed. ■

## Important Terms

**household responsibility system:** The system of contracting farmland to individual families for cultivation that was introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978–1979.

**Khmer Rouge:** The radical Cambodian Communist movement that seized power in 1975 and then imposed a reign of terror, killing upward of 1 million people.

**Special Economic Zones:** Four coastal ports in Southeast China—Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Xiamen, and Zhanjiang—became experimental export-processing zones in 1980 as part of Deng Xiaoping’s “open policy.”

**Taiwan Relations Act** (April 1979): The U.S. congressional act clarifying the nature of continuing U.S. economic, cultural, and military ties with Taiwan.

## Suggested Reading

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

Tyler, *A Great Wall*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Was Deng Xiaoping successful in “teaching Vietnam a lesson” in 1979?
2. How was the decollectivization of agriculture achieved under Deng’s leadership?

# Socialist Democracy and the Rule of Law

## Lecture 35

To depart from the four cardinal principles and talk about democracy in the abstract will inevitably lead to the unchecked spread of anarchism, the complete disruption of political stability and unity, and the total failure of our modernization program.

— Deng Xiaoping, March 1979

Early in 1979, the media began to paint a grim picture of a Chinese political and legal system in tatters—paralyzed by the absence of checks and balances and thus vulnerable to gross abuses of power. It was in response to such self-critical revelations that people’s courts at all levels began the arduous task of reviewing a virtual avalanche of allegations concerning political persecution that had occurred during the Cultural Revolution.

To begin building a more orderly and predictable legal system, in March 1979 the National People’s Congress enacted two important new pieces of legislation: a criminal law and a code of criminal procedure. Among other things, these two laws narrowly restricted the definition of counterrevolutionary crimes and limited the scope of arbitrary police powers of arrest and detention. They also mandated speedy public trials for accused criminals and guaranteed the right of defendants to retain legal counsel and confront their accusers.

But even as progressive new legislation was being enacted to protect people from arbitrary abuse, arrest, and detention, behind the scenes an intense debate was taking place within the Communist Party over the proper limits of citizens’ rights of free expression and assembly. With the regime now openly acknowledging that horrendous miscarriages of justice had occurred during the Cultural Revolution, the months of February and March 1979 witnessed a massive increase in the size, scale, and volatility of petitioners’ protests both in Beijing and in the provinces.

In response to these rising tensions, an important split developed within Deng Xiaoping’s reform coalition. Some younger leaders—including two of Deng’s more liberal protégés, **Hu Yaobang** and **Zhao Ziyang**, argued in

favor of relaxing the restrictions on protest by petitioners. More conservative party leaders, on the other hand, showed little sympathy for the petitioners, favoring a firm response to their protests. Deng was caught in the middle of this intense crossfire. Not wanting to curtail the free speech he had so recently endorsed, he was nonetheless growing increasingly impatient with the provocative tactics of political activists like Fu Yuehua and Wei Jingsheng.

Toward the end of March, Wei decided to test the limits of Deng's tolerance by publishing a biting critique of China's new paramount leader entitled "Do We Want Democracy or a New Dictatorship?" Deng was outraged. On March 30, he gave a speech in which he revived Mao's controversial six criteria for distinguishing "fragrant flowers" from "poisonous weeds." Deng distilled Mao's criteria down to what he called the four cardinal principles: Henceforth, the only words and actions that would be deemed politically acceptable were those that upheld socialism; upheld the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party; upheld the people's democratic dictatorship; and upheld Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought.

Wei was found guilty of the crimes of "counterrevolutionary incitement" and conveying "official secrets" to a foreign journalist and was sentenced to 15 years in prison. By the end of 1979, the Chinese democracy movement had been effectively silenced, and the **Petitioners' movement** had been stifled. Deng's coalition was now split right down the middle, with its more progressive members supporting greater political openness and tolerance, while more orthodox cadres emphasized the vital importance of party discipline and the four cardinal principles. It was a fissure that would resurface many times in the 1980s.

Concerned over the rising volatility of China's political situation, liberal members of Deng's reform coalition concluded that a few well-aimed political reforms could go a long way toward disarming popular unrest in China, as they recently had in Poland. Deng was receptive to this argument and in August 1980 proposed a wide-ranging blueprint for systemic political reform. But when Deng's more conservative colleagues fretted that political reforms would stir up more protest and dissent, Deng reversed himself, calling for new legislation to outlaw unauthorized organizations, protest marches, and demonstrations. Defending the need to take decisive action

in the event of serious civil disturbance or acts of sabotage, Deng stated that where necessary, martial law would be imposed. Deng's conservative comrades had carried the day; as a result, China's brief springtime of political liberalization and reform now came to an abrupt halt. ■

## Names to Know

**Hu Yaobang** (1915–1989): A liberal who actively supported Deng Xiaoping's reforms, Hu was tabbed to succeed Hua Guofeng as party chief in 1982. Hu's death in April 1989 triggered the Tiananmen student protests.

**Zhao Ziyang** (1919–2005): The Chinese premier and general secretary of the CCP in the 1980s. He helped design and implement Deng Xiaoping's market reforms. Zhao's prostudent sympathies during the 1989 Tiananmen protests resulted in his ouster and house arrest.

## Important Term

**Petitioners' movement:** The protest movement organized by Fu Yuehua in the winter of 1979 to give voice to victims of Cultural Revolution persecution.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Link, *Stubborn Weeds*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What were some major focal points of policy disagreement between CCP liberals and conservatives in the early years of Deng Xiaoping's reforms?
2. How did events in Poland influence Deng's decision on how to address petitioners' protests in 1980?

# Burying Mao, 1981–1983

## Lecture 36

**When liberals on the committee pushed for a harsh verdict on Mao’s policies during the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution, Deng personally intervened, insisting that “the historical role of Mao Zedong must be affirmed.”**

Deng Xiaoping played two different roles within the reform coalition. One was that of paramount leader; the other, less publicized role was that of power balancer. In this latter role, Deng mediated among the contending factions in his coalition in an attempt to keep the whole thing from flying off the tracks.

In his role as China’s paramount leader, Deng lacked Mao Zedong’s autocratic powers. He was neither party chairman nor prime minister nor president. Instead, his power derived not from any institutionally defined leadership position but from a combination of his personal prestige and seniority within the party. Key decisions were made by Deng in consultation with a small group of a half dozen or so of his senior colleagues. It was Deng’s job to make sure that neither the youthful reformers nor their more conservative elders gained exclusive dominance over the policy-making process. And it was in his role as mediator and political balancer that Deng steered China through a series of deepening policy conflicts and minicrises in the 1980s.

The existence of sharp differences within the reform coalition was clearly revealed when party leaders began to formulate their assessment of Mao Zedong’s role in modern Chinese history. Right from the start, committee members disagreed intensely over whether Mao’s achievements ultimately outweighed his mistakes and whether his sins should be characterized as “high crimes,” ordinary “misdemeanors,” or just mistakes. When liberals on the committee pushed for a harsh verdict on Mao’s policies during the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution, Deng personally intervened, insisting that “the historical role of Mao Zedong must be affirmed.” When the final resolution was approved by the Politburo in the summer of 1981, it treated Mao rather gingerly. The chairman’s “errors” were whittled down to just a

handful; and they were said to be the errors of a “great revolutionary.” Thus the ghost of Mao Zedong was finally laid to rest, but the costs of “burying Mao” were enormous. China had paid dearly for the chairman’s sins, and the country’s 1 billion people would never again put their blind trust in a single godlike figure—or in the party that had followed him so readily. The age of skepticism had begun.

Toward the end of 1979, a number of Chinese artists and writers began to pick at China’s unhealed cultural and political wounds. The result was a spontaneous outpouring of new popular literary forms and genres. One new genre, **wounded literature**, portrayed in graphic terms the personal sufferings of the *laobaixing* during Mao’s decade of destruction. Taking their cues from the downtrodden petitioners at Democracy Wall, writers in this genre took the raw, fragmentary complaints of individual persecution and injustice in everyday life and lent them added literary poignancy and gravitas.

Conservative members of Deng’s reform coalition were not at all happy with such writers. In their view, intellectuals who focused on the darker side of Chinese society were doing their country a grave disservice. By the end of 1980, signs of tightening political censorship were growing increasingly obvious. When Deng withdrew his blueprint for political reform in December 1980, China’s conservatives felt emboldened and launched a new campaign against **bourgeois liberalization** in culture and the arts. Foreign films, fashions, and even hairstyles now came under attack.

From the outset of reform and opening up at the end of 1978, party conservatives had argued that foreign commercial and cultural imports would pollute and corrupt China’s pristine socialist values, but Deng had remained adamant that China would be able to keep such things under control. Now Deng seemed to be having second thoughts. Employing a new term to describe such evil tendencies, Deng referred to them as **spiritual pollution**:

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**With Deng’s  
blessing,  
the party’s  
conservative  
culture warriors  
launched a full-  
blown attack on  
spiritual pollution  
in the autumn  
of 1983.**

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“Do not imagine that a little spiritual pollution doesn’t amount to very much and is not worth making a fuss over. … If we do not immediately … curb these [tendencies] … the consequences could be extremely serious.”

With Deng’s blessing, the party’s conservative culture warriors launched a full-blown attack on spiritual pollution in the autumn of 1983. Initially aimed at liberal intellectuals and humanist theoreticians, the campaign soon spilled over into Chinese society and popular culture at large. Its targets were now expanded to include anything and everything that could be regarded decadent or immoral in bourgeois society.

Given China’s history of catastrophic encounters with foreigners, it is hardly surprising that conservative cultural watchdogs would categorically reject the fetishism of “worshipping foreign things.” But with cultural vigilantism on the rise throughout the country, foreign investors grew decidedly uneasy. Having been induced to invest in China by Deng’s promise of a relaxed, tolerant commercial environment, Western businesspeople began complaining to their Chinese government intermediaries that the campaign against spiritual pollution was undermining their ability to do business. When Deng was informed that a number of foreign firms were threatening to cancel their investments in China, he personally issued an order to terminate the campaign. For the time being, at least, the conservatives were silenced. ■

## Important Terms

**bourgeois liberalization:** A leftist epithet used to denounce the liberal reforms of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang in 1980s.

**spiritual pollution:** In the early 1980s, CCP conservatives used this term to criticize Western cultural influences as decadent, immoral, and materialistic.

**wounded literature (a.k.a. scar literature):** Essays and novels published in the early 1980s depicting the suffering endured by the Chinese people during the Cultural Revolution.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Link, *Stubborn Weeds*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Why was it so important to achieve a balanced consensus within the party on the evaluation of Mao Zedong's role in CCP history?
2. How did conservatives respond to the eager embrace of foreign products, literature, and dress styles by urban Chinese in the early 1980s?

# “To Get Rich Is Glorious,” 1982–1986

## Lecture 37

Recognizing that the word “capitalism” produced intensely negative responses in China, Deng Xiaoping cleverly coined a new, more neutral term to describe his reform program. He called it “socialism with Chinese characteristics.”

Until the early 1980s, all private commercial activity was strictly prohibited in urban China; it was openly derided as a “vestige of capitalism.” But now, with as many as 10 million rusticated youths flooding back into Chinese cities from a decade of enforced exile in the countryside, massive numbers of young people had little or nothing to do. In this situation, government leaders decided that small-scale private commerce could help relieve the pressure of burgeoning unemployment. Thus were born the *getihu*—self-employed individuals and households.

Under socialist ownership, the prices of all goods and services in the urban economy were set by the state, and customers could take or leave them. Sales clerks were state employees: Their jobs, wages, and benefits were guaranteed for life under the regime’s **iron rice bowl** policy. Their firms did not need to turn a profit or provide high-quality goods and services. And since all sales revenues were remitted directly to the state, there was no incentive for enterprise managers to improve the quality of their product or service. Staff employees did not care, because they did not have to. They just put in their time and picked up their paychecks. That, in a nutshell, was the story of China’s centrally planned economy. But now the *getihu* had begun to expose the endemic weaknesses of the planned economy, and it did not take long for enterprising young people to begin challenging state monopolies throughout the service sector.

After 30 years of heavy-handed state socialism, China was finally experiencing Adam Smith’s “invisible hand,” and Chinese reformers were gradually introducing a broad range of urban economic innovations. In addition to permitting small-scale private commerce, the fiscal system was now decentralized to encourage provinces and localities to display greater

entrepreneurial initiative by allowing them to retain a significant share of their own profits.

But reform took longer in China's cities than it had in rural areas. In urban enterprises, the iron rice bowl policy provided every state employee with a guaranteed lifetime job as well as major food and housing subsidies and free health, education, and welfare benefits. Understandably, many state employees were reluctant to exchange these familiar, tangible benefits for the vague and unknown world of market competition, profit motivation, and the attendant risks of unemployment.

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**From just  
over 300,000  
foreign visitors  
in 1979, tourism  
mushroomed to  
almost 1.5 million  
by 1986.**

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Resistance to change was widespread among urban state workers, but it was even more intense among Communist Party traditionalists, who continued to believe in centralized state planning. Recognizing that the word "capitalism" produced intensely negative responses in China, Deng

Xiaoping cleverly coined a new, more neutral term to describe his reform program. He called it "socialism with Chinese characteristics."

The year 1984 was an important watershed for China's urban reforms. The growth-inducing benefits of the four coastal Special Economic Zones were now officially affirmed, and 14 new **open cities** were designated for the purpose of liberalizing the rules and requirements of foreign trade and investment. Henceforth, these cities would be empowered to contract directly with foreign investors for the import of industrial plant and equipment.

Up until 1984, all major administrative and managerial decisions in China's state-owned enterprises were imposed from above and were specified in the annual state plan. Specific planning targets included product selection and pricing, supply and marketing arrangements, staff wages, and promotions. But under Zhao Ziyang's 1984 urban reforms, factory managers were for the first time granted a limited amount of discretion over functions such as product selection and pricing and were allowed to negotiate their own contracts for supply and marketing. They were also empowered to reward

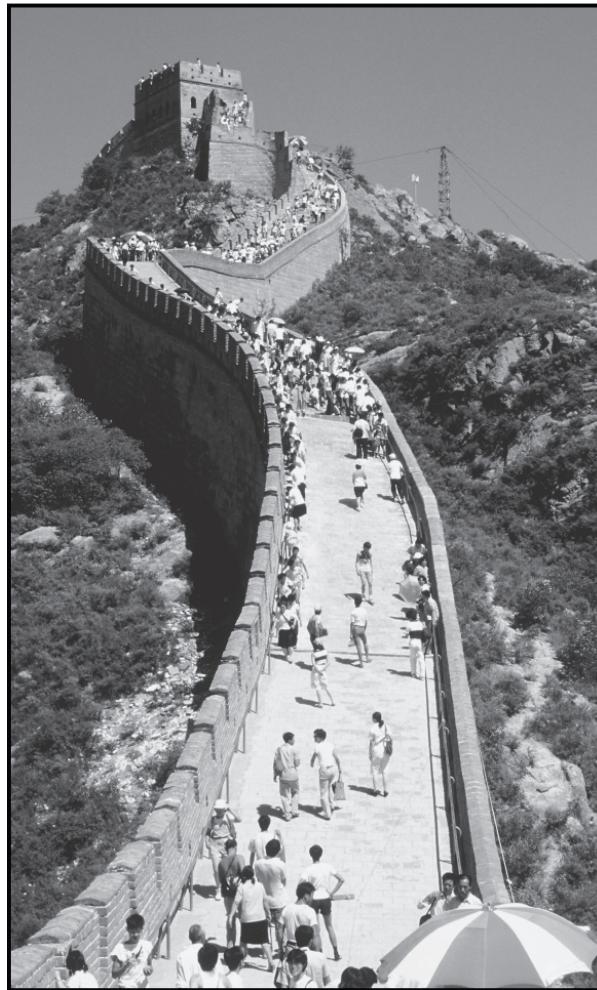
their most diligent workers with bonuses and performance-based pay raises. Finally, they were allowed to retain a portion of their total revenues as a reward for improved productivity and profitability.

While the introduction of market forces spawned an upsurge of domestic entrepreneurship and competition, Deng’s policy of opening up to the outside world also facilitated growing trade and investment ties with more advanced industrial societies. Reversing two decades of Maoist insularity, the Special Economic Zones began to thrive in the 1980s, drawing first millions, then billions of foreign dollars into new manufacturing joint ventures. Another effect of China’s opening up was a rapid expansion in China’s tourism industry. From just over 300,000 foreign visitors in 1979, tourism mushroomed to almost 1.5 million by 1986. The study of Russian declined, as English quickly became the foreign language of choice for a rising generation of ambitious, educated young Chinese. ■

### Important Terms

**getihu (individual households)**: The first private entrepreneurs permitted to engage in small-scale commerce in post-Mao China.

**iron rice bowl**: The policy of providing lifetime employment and welfare benefits to Chinese state employees. This policy was gradually restricted in the 1980s and eliminated in the 1990s.



© Photos.com/GettyImages/Thinkstock

The Great Wall of China. Tourism flourished in China after the late 1970s.

**open cities:** Fourteen Chinese cities that in 1984 were granted discretionary authority to make trade and investment decisions without central authorization.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Gittings, *The Changing Face of China*.

Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen*.

Link, *Stubborn Weeds*.

Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*.

Schell, *Discos and Democracy*.

## Questions to Consider

1. Given the many serious shortcomings of the socialist planned economy, why did China's iron rice bowl policy prove so difficult to eliminate?
2. How did spiritual pollution and bourgeois liberalization manifest themselves in China in the 1980s?

# The Fault Lines of Reform, 1984–1987

## Lecture 38

In the winter of 1984, two of the three highest ranking Communist Party officials in China—Party General-Secretary Hu Yaobang and Premier Zhao Ziyang—appeared in public for the very first time wearing not their traditional Mao jackets, but Western-style suits and ties. It was a fashion statement that spoke volumes about China's desire to join the modern world.

As the ethos of economic competition and individual enrichment spread through China in the mid-1980s, new cultural role models began to replace the stoic model peasants, workers, and soldiers of the Mao era. Young Chinese were now free to emulate successful individuals in various walks of life, from short-order cooks and freelance photographers to trailblazing entrepreneurs. This period also witnessed a proliferation of new avant-garde art forms—ones which a few years earlier would have been condemned for their “bourgeois decadence.”

As China shifted toward a more open economy and society, growing pains were inevitable. Although the country's economic growth rate increased dramatically in the 1980s—averaging almost 9 percent annually—the incomplete nature of policy reforms generated a number of new societal problems and fault lines.

For the first time since the founding of the PRC in 1949, the country was also beginning to experience a significant increase in income inequality, as some people took up entrepreneurship while others remained in fixed-wage state employment. Further compounding the problem of rising income disparities was the growth of urban inflation. Rising consumer demand, coupled with the decontrol of prices for many durable goods, pushed the urban inflation index up into double digits for the first time since the late 1940s.

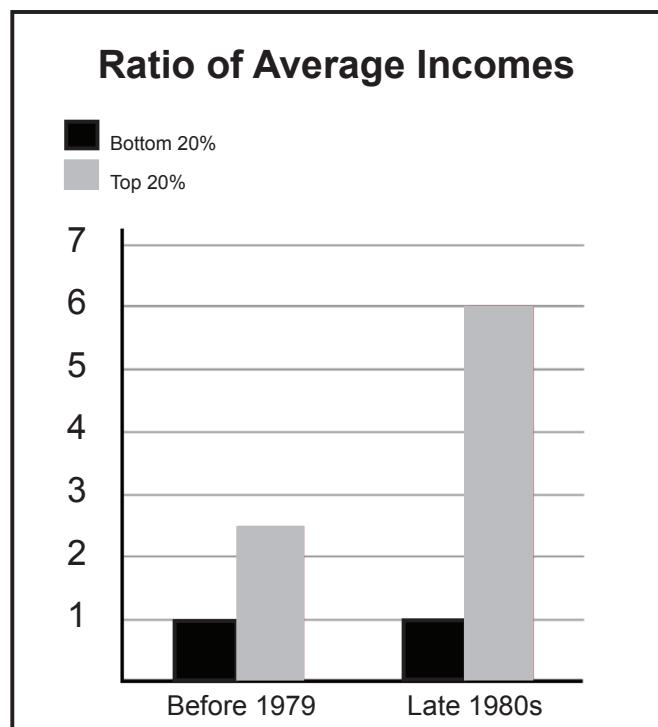
Moreover, a significant income gap had opened between the *getihu*, who were free to charge market prices for their goods and services, and skilled professionals in the state sector, who lived on relatively low fixed incomes.

The term widely used in China to describe the envy and resentment that stemmed from rising income disparities was *hongyan bing*, or “red-eye disease.” *Hongyan bing* was not so much an outgrowth of “some people getting rich before others,” as Deng Xiaoping had anticipated; rather, it reflected the fact that those who were getting rich often did so through no particular talent or virtue of their own.

Before the onset of China’s economic reforms in 1979, the ratio of average incomes earned by people in the top and bottom 20 percent of the Chinese population was only about 2.5:1. By the late 1980s, this ratio had more than doubled, to almost 6:1. In the same 10-year period, China’s **Gini coefficient** rose dramatically, from .18 (one of the lowest in the world) to .38 (which was at that time the highest of any socialist country). When a country’s Gini coefficient nears .40, many economists regard this as a danger sign, portending a rise in social discontent.

Urban distress was rising, and China’s college students—long a barometer of underlying societal tensions—were growing increasingly restive. Throughout most of 1986, there was little overall consistency or coherence to the students’ grievances. But that changed rather suddenly in the autumn of 1986, when campus discontent began to coalesce around a single common denominator: the demand for student empowerment. Two developments served to drive this coalescence. The first was a revival of Deng’s ill-fated 1980 proposals for systemic political reform, and the second was a wildly popular speaking tour undertaken by freethinking university professor **Fang Lizhi**.

During the Mao era, Fang had been repeatedly criticized and persecuted for his political views. He now gave voice to



the feelings of powerlessness and frustration experienced by large numbers of Chinese students. In campus lectures given in November and December of 1986, Fang boldly criticized party leaders for corruption and for denying the people their constitutional right to free expression. Challenging Chinese students to “break all barriers” that served to impede open intellectual inquiry and creativity, he urged young people to take their future into their own hands. Democracy cannot be bestowed paternalistically from above, he said, it must be seized firmly from below.

In the wake of Fang’s speeches at college campuses in Hefei, Shanghai, and Beijing, tens of thousands of students poured out of their classrooms and dormitories into the streets. Altogether, in December 1986, 75,000 students from 150 colleges in 17 Chinese cities took part in prodemocracy rallies and demonstrations. Not surprisingly, party leaders were divided over how to view these events. But after students burned copies of the *Beijing Daily* in Tiananmen Square, the CCP’s hard-liners began to fume. The students had impudently thumbed their noses at authority—and had gotten away with it. Even the usually mild-mannered Deng was furious. Blaming Fang for inflaming student passions, Deng demanded his expulsion from the CCP.

In remarks that ominously foreshadowed the events of May and June 1989, Deng raised the question of how to deal with students intent on provoking a confrontation:

[I]f they are determined to create a bloody incident, what can we do? ... We [want to] avoid bloodshed. ... But the most important thing is to firmly grasp the [object] of struggle. ... If we do not take appropriate steps and measures, we will not be able to control such incidents. If we pull back now, we will encounter even more trouble later on. ... Don’t worry if foreigners say we have stained our reputation. ... We must show foreigners that the political situation in China is stable.

Though Deng was prepared to take firm action, the situation fortuitously resolved itself without resort to violence. With that, the crisis went into remission, and Deng’s dark side was once more hidden from view. When next it surfaced, in the spring of 1989, the consequences would be far more serious. ■

## Important Terms

**Gini coefficient:** An index of the degree of inequality in income distribution. A coefficient of less than .30 indicates relatively modest inequality; greater than .45 indicates a high level of inequality.

***hongyan bing* (“red-eye disease”):** The envy displayed by low-paid white collar workers in the state sector toward self-employed private entrepreneurs in 1980s.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Nathan and Link, *The Tiananmen Papers*.

Schell, *Discos and Democracy*.

## Questions to Consider

1. What were some of the key socioeconomic problems that emerged from China’s piecemeal economic reforms in the mid-1980s?
2. How did unscrupulous cadres and state enterprise managers exploit the two-track pricing system to their own benefit?

# The Road to Tiananmen, 1987–1989

## Lecture 39

The spike in commodity prices even led some city dwellers to long for a return to the “good old days” of Maoist egalitarianism. As one urban housewife lamented in the late summer of 1988, “Under Mao, society was in chaos, but prices were stable; under Deng, society is stable, but prices are in chaos.”

Although cold weather helped bring a nonviolent end to the student demonstrations of December 1986, the underlying social and political tensions were growing visibly deeper. More ominous still, the split between liberals and hard-liners within the Chinese Communist Party was

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growing visibly deeper. Though no one could know it at the time, the volatile social chemistry of rising student unrest, urban frustration, and the vindictiveness of party elders was fast becoming a recipe for disaster.

**The *laobaixing* were getting very angry, and they had good reason to be.**

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When elderly conservatives demanded the ouster of Deng Xiaoping’s liberal-leaning protégé Hu Yaobang for his alleged role in aiding and abetting student demonstrations, Deng went along with them. But Deng was not willing to allow hard-liners to roll back his hard-won economic reforms, so he insisted that the post of party general secretary go to Zhao Ziyang. Conservative party elders made a countermove of their own, nominating Li Peng to succeed Zhao as premier of the state council.

With a certified hard-liner now in the premier’s office, the conservative wing tried to press its advantage. In the spring of 1987, they launched a new campaign of criticism against “bourgeois liberalization,” taking up where they left off seven years earlier. As Deng struggled to hold party hard-liners in check, tensions between Zhao and Li continued to mount. In the fall of 1987, Zhao issued his long-awaited report on political reform. Although Zhao’s proposals fell short of being “democratic” in the full Western sense of

that term, they broke important new ground. Unfortunately, party hard-liners managed to block the proposals from being formally adopted.

Meanwhile, urban discontent continued to mount. In addition to widespread fears of inflation, labor problems began to increase in 1988. By the middle of that year, more than half a million workers had been laid off from state-owned enterprises, and it was announced that the nation's unemployment rate had doubled from the previous year. Under the new rules of market competition, inefficient and poorly managed state enterprises found that they were unable to earn sufficient income to meet their tax obligations. Enterprise failures were most common in rural townships and villages, where large numbers of indigenous, low-tech manufacturing ventures had sprung up in the early 1980s to serve local needs in the aftermath of agricultural decollectivization. By the end of the 1980s, tens of millions of rural dwellers were migrating to urban areas in search of employment.

With the threat of industrial layoffs and bankruptcies now looming larger, labor unrest also began to spike. To cap off this picture of growing societal distress, a major upsurge in corruption, commercial speculation, and profiteering by party members and their families was also reported. In the spring of 1988, a leading Communist Party newspaper published an editorial commentary listing several types of economic crimes and misdemeanors that had recently reached epidemic proportions. According to the commentary, the *laobaixing* were getting very angry, and they had good reason to be.

The people's anger soon found an outlet: When Hu Yaobang died suddenly of a heart attack in April 1989, thousands of Beijing students took to the streets, demanding his posthumous rehabilitation. When the government refused to acknowledge the students' demands, the demonstrations grew larger and spread to other cities. Concerned about China's fragile political unity and stability, Deng cautioned the protesting students—who now numbered in the many tens of thousands—that they were being manipulated by “unpatriotic elements” and that their protests had created “turmoil.” Far from calming the situation, however, Deng’s warning served to catalyze even larger, more widespread urban protests. Daily demonstrations at Tiananmen Square now drew more than a hundred thousand participants and supporters.

In the second week of May, a student hunger strike was initiated in Tiananmen Square. Timed to coincide with the first official visit to China by the new Soviet Party chief, Mikhail Gorbachev, the strike captured the attention, and sympathy, of the world's media. Deng was humiliated, and he was furious. Refusing to negotiate with the rebellious students until they first called off their hunger strike and left Tiananmen Square, Deng was determined not to back down. The stage was being set for a violent showdown. ■

### Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen*.

Nathan and Link, *The Tiananmen Papers*.

### Questions to Consider

1. What were the main causes of the 1989 student protest movement?
2. How did Deng Xiaoping attempt to balance soft- and hard-line demands within the CCP during the run-up to the 1989 student protests?

# The Empire Strikes Back, 1989

## Lecture 40

We restored order, but lost the hearts of the people.

— Deng Xiaoping, shortly after the Tiananmen Square crackdown

For more than two weeks, Zhao Ziyang tried to orchestrate a peaceful resolution of the mounting crisis in Tiananmen Square. He affirmed the patriotic motives of the students, and he pleaded with Deng Xiaoping to give him more time to persuade the students to end their hunger strike. But some of the more radical students remained distrustful of Zhao, fearing that he was a captive of the hard-liners, and they rejected his proposal that they leave the square in advance of any negotiations with the government.

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**In the aftermath  
of the Tiananmen  
trauma,  
conservatives were  
in the driver's seat.**

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In the predawn hours of May 19, 1989, Zhao addressed the students through a megaphone. "I've come too late," he said. His eyes filled with tears. "I've let you down."

Downcast over his inability to broker a peaceful resolution, Zhao submitted his resignation—but Deng refused to accept it. Deeply distraught, Zhao next did something unexpected and quite remarkable. He commandeered a minibus and paid an unauthorized, unscheduled visit to the hunger strikers in Tiananmen Square. There, in

Enraged by Zhao's tearful farewell to the students, Deng invoked his emergency override powers. Convening an extraordinary meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee, Deng stripped Zhao of his formal authority as general-secretary and personally authorized Li Peng to proclaim martial law. The next day, May 20, something equally remarkable happened. As thousands of uniformed PLA troops poured into Beijing in truck convoys to enforce the martial law declaration, they found their path blocked by tens of thousands of irate citizens, students and nonstudents alike. Jamming Beijing's major access roads and thoroughfares, dense crowds of people sat down in the middle of the street, refusing to budge. The truck convoys were

stopped in their tracks. The people of Beijing had spoken. And their verdict frightened the wits out of the government.

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 3, reports came that Chinese army units were using tear gas against demonstrators in Beijing. The demonstrators fought back with rocks and bottles. Shortly afterward, CNN reported that an army jeep had run over three civilians near Tiananmen Square, killing them. Other acts of scattered violence followed. Things had reached the point of no return.

The PLA's deadly drive to recapture Tiananmen Square from student demonstrators commenced shortly after dark on June 3. From several outlying muster points, armored military columns slowly converged on the center of the city. Their instructions were to clear the square by dawn, using all necessary force. The order had been given by Deng himself—chief architect of the very reforms that had inspired China's students to question the autocratic power of the Communist Party.

The horror that followed was surreal. Scratches news film showed tracer bullets flying overhead as PLA soldiers fired into crowds of civilians, blocking their advance on Chang'an Boulevard. Pedicarts hauled the civilian dead and wounded to city hospitals as armored personnel carriers ran amok, scattering crowds before

### On the Timeline

#### April 15, 1989

Death of Hu Yaobang triggers student demonstrations.

#### April 26, 1989

Deng Xiaoping labels student movement “unpatriotic.”

#### May 1–15, 1989

Student demonstrations grow larger; hunger strike begins.

#### May 19–20, 1989

Martial law imposed in Beijing; citizens block army convoys.

#### June 3–4, 1989

Deng Xiaoping orders People's Liberation Army to clear Tiananmen Square; hundreds are killed.

#### June 14, 1989

Zhao Ziyang purged for “splitting party,” replaced by Jiang Zemin.

them while being attacked from the rear by angry citizens armed with iron rods, bricks, and makeshift Molotov cocktails. Hundreds of buses and trucks were set ablaze. In the confusion, a few dozen PLA soldiers became separated from their units, only to be set upon by enraged mobs.

When the dust settled at dawn, Tiananmen Square had been physically “liberated,” but at a dreadful cost: Hundreds of civilians—perhaps more than a thousand—had been killed and several thousand wounded. The real totals may never be known. Forty soldiers also died, and up to a thousand others were injured. But the damage to China’s national psyche—and international image—was greater still. As Deng was heard to comment shortly after June 4, “We restored order, but lost the hearts of the people.”

Almost immediately after the carnage ended, the government circulated a list of most-wanted “counterrevolutionary criminals.” The list was topped by a number of prominent intellectuals, students and labor activists. Among them were **Wang Dan**, **Wu’er Kaixi**, and Fang Lizhi. Thousands of Chinese students in the United States, Australia, and Western Europe demonstrated nightly in front of Chinese embassies and consulates. A handful of Chinese diplomats abroad defected, while China’s highly esteemed minister of culture resigned in protest. At least one senior government official, the widely respected Deputy Foreign Minister Zhang Wenjin, committed suicide, despondent over the brutal suppression of the student movement.

Throughout the last half of 1989 the Chinese government made a massive effort to suppress any questions or criticisms of its behavior during the crackdown. Deng personally praised the “heroic” actions of the PLA in putting down the “counterrevolutionary turmoil” in Tiananmen Square. And Zhao was now officially condemned and stripped of all his posts for having “split the party” through his show of support for the students. In the aftermath of the Tiananmen trauma, conservatives were in the driver’s seat. Hu Yaobang was dead; Zhao Ziyang was in disgrace; Li Peng was in Deng’s good graces; and political reform was taken off the table, indefinitely. The delicate balance that Deng had maintained so carefully throughout the 1980s was now destroyed. ■

## Names to Know

**Wang Dan** (b. 1969): A leader of the Tiananmen student protest movement of 1989. Wang was arrested shortly after June 4 and served four years in prison before being granted compassionate release. He later earned a Ph.D. in History from Harvard University.

**Wu'er Kaixi** (b. 1968): A college student of Uyghur ethnicity who gained prominence in the 1989 Tiananmen protests as a leader of the student hunger strike. Wu'er enraged Chinese premier Li Peng by rebuking him on national television.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Nathan and Link, *The Tiananmen Papers*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*.

## Questions to Consider

1. In view of the disastrous consequences of the Chinese government's bloody crackdown at Tiananmen Square, could violence reasonably have been avoided?
2. If so, who do you think should be held responsible for the debacle of June 3–4, and why?

# After the Deluge, 1989–1992

## Lecture 41

Toward the end of his Southern Tour, Deng issued a pointed warning to his conservative senior colleagues. Old age, he said, tends to make people more rigid and stubborn, rendering them afraid to make mistakes. If such people cannot display greater flexibility and tolerance in their thinking, he admonished, they would be well-advised to lie down and “take a nap.”

In the wake of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, hard-liners nominated Li Peng to replace Zhao Ziyang as party general secretary. But Deng Xiaoping wanted a more moderate pick; after waffling for a while, he turned to Shanghai’s “centrist” party secretary, **Jiang Zemin**. A colorless but competent technocrat, Jiang had helped Shanghai achieve rather enviable rates of economic growth in the 1980s. Equally important, he had impressed Deng with his display of grace under fire. In the spring of 1989, for example, he had remained cool and level-headed, refusing to call PLA troops into Shanghai to crack down on protesters at the height of the “turmoil.”

As Jiang took office, Deng began to falter. China’s “paramount leader” had aged noticeably under the stresses of the past few years. Now in his early 80s, Deng had developed a Parkinsonian tremor and was unsteady on his feet. As his public appearances became fewer, his grip on day-to-day policy making also appeared to wane. Meanwhile, Jiang did his best to play it safe. Aware that factional rivalries had undone his three predecessors, he tried to position himself in the “floating center” of the political spectrum.

In the late summer and fall of 1989, the Soviet bloc erupted in turmoil, as a massive popular revolt against Communism spread throughout Eastern and Central Europe. Chinese leaders watched in morbid fascination as the aptly-named **Velvet Revolution** swept through the region, toppling Communist governments one after another, from Berlin and Budapest to Prague and Warsaw. Seeking to assuage their discomfort, Beijing’s hard-liners began to spin the story of Eastern Europe’s collapse: It wasn’t the failure of

communism that caused the collapse, but rather the reformist liberal programs of Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, they argued, had fueled massive popular demands for political and economic liberalization throughout the Soviet bloc.

As the antireform backlash gathered momentum in China, it was given an enormous boost by the stunning collapse of the USSR itself in the fall of 1991. Gorbachev had badly underestimated the growing mood of popular disaffection in Russia, and when he tried to reassert the Communist Party's authority, he was ousted and replaced by liberal democrat Boris Yeltsin. Thereafter, the Soviet Communist Party lost whatever remaining legitimacy it might have had, and the USSR simply collapsed. Now Gorbachev could be blamed not only for the loss of Eastern Europe, but for the destruction of the Bolshevik homeland as well. In a very real sense, the Soviet collapse seemed to prove the validity of Deng's nightmare scenario, that is, "give liberal reformers an inch, and they'll take a mile."

Caught in the middle of a mounting ideological firestorm, Jiang tried to hold tightly to the unstable center of an increasingly polarized political spectrum. Leaning first one way and then the other, Jiang sought to balance the conflicting demands and agendas of Deng and the hard-liners. But splitting the difference between them proved extremely difficult. For example, while strongly reaffirming the Central Committee's 1981 verdict on the "disastrous" nature of the Cultural Revolution, Jiang nonetheless endorsed the call for stepped-up class struggle against bourgeois liberalization at home and abroad. In one speech, Jiang went so far as to repeat hard-line allegations that "hostile foreign forces" were infiltrating China in an attempt to subvert socialism and promote bourgeois democracy through **peaceful evolution**.

As the political pendulum swung sharply toward the left in the last half of 1991, rumors began to circulate about Deng's declining health. Conservatives saw this as an opportunity to ratchet up their attacks on his economic reforms. In journals controlled by the party's orthodox propagandists, they began openly referring to Deng's promarket policies as "*capitalistic* reform and opening up."

From the sidelines, an infirm Deng watched uncomfortably as the hard-line offensive gathered momentum. Convinced that he had to act decisively to stem the growing leftist assault, Deng summoned his remaining energy to undertake what was to be the final, and perhaps the most important, political campaign of his entire career. Unable to walk without assistance, his Parkinsonian tremors worsening noticeably, China's iron-willed patriarch set out in January 1992 on a five-week **Southern Tour** of China's bustling coastal cities and Special Economic Zones. By calling attention to the remarkable economic prosperity of the special zones and open cities, Deng hoped to refute the claims of the hard-liners and bolster his own, contrary claim that reform and opening up were all that stood between China and a Soviet-style political meltdown.

Claiming that China's leftists had gotten it exactly backward, Deng maintained that it was not too *much* economic reform, but rather too *little*, that had led to the collapse of Communism in Europe and the USSR. "Without the economic results of reform and opening up," he insisted, "we would not have survived past June 4." Deng had won. Though ill and infirm, at the age of 84, he had almost single-handedly fought off a potent leftist challenge. Now it was full speed ahead on economic reform and opening up. By mid-year 1992, the austerity measures of 1989–1990 had been fully repealed. A new era of rapid economic growth was at hand. ■

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### Name to Know

**Jiang Zemin** (b. 1926): This former Shanghai party secretary was brought to Beijing in May 1989 to replace the discredited Zhao Ziyang as CCP general secretary. Jiang is best known for his 2001 "theory of the three represents," which encouraged Chinese capitalists to join the CCP. He retired in 2003.

## Important Terms

**peaceful evolution:** China's fear that Western countries will undermine Communism by introducing bourgeois culture, values, and institutions.

**Southern Tour (*nanxun*):** Deng Xiaoping's emergency five-city tour of prosperous coastal zones in January 1992, undertaken to rekindle support for his economic reforms and open policy.

**Velvet Revolution** (1989–1991): The sudden, peaceful collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, culminating in the disintegration of the USSR.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *Burying Mao*.

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Shambaugh, *Deng Xiaoping*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How did the Velvet Revolution of 1989–1991 affect China's domestic politics?
2. If Deng Xiaoping hadn't initiated his Southern Tour, is it likely that conservatives would have been able to roll back his reforms?

# The “Roaring Nineties,” 1992–1999

## Lecture 42

To the very end, China’s paramount leader persisted in his view that the party’s monopoly of power must never be relinquished. And in his last known verbal instruction, issued in the summer of 1994, Deng exhorted his comrades to “draw the proper lesson from the former Soviet Union. ... The Chinese Communist Party’s status as the ruling party must never be challenged.”

After Deng Xiaoping’s Southern Tour, the leftists were temporarily weakened. Deng stripped Li Peng of his responsibility for economic policy, giving it instead to Vice-Premier **Zhu Rongji**. Zhu had been mayor of Shanghai in the late 1980s and had a reputation for being a tough-minded, no-nonsense pragmatist. Like Deng, Zhu valued results over doctrines.

With Zhu at the helm, the State Council in July 1992 issued a major decree on enterprise autonomy, one that went well beyond Zhao Ziyang’s 1984 urban reforms. The new regulations gave provinces and municipalities greater control over the collection and allocation of local tax revenues and gave enterprises far greater autonomy over managerial decisions affecting their performance. Finally, the decree clarified the conditions under which chronically inefficient or debt-ridden firms would be required to cease production and be merged, acquired by others, or declared bankrupt.

In October 1992, the National Party Congress formally adopted Deng’s proposal to change the label applied to China’s national economy from a socialist *commodity* economy to a socialist *market* economy. But if market reform was given the green light to proceed with all due speed, the same was by no means true for political reform. The history of the Velvet Revolution and the Soviet meltdown had demonstrated to China’s leaders that too much political reform, too soon, could be fatal to a Communist regime. Accordingly, in 1992 Deng affirmed that throughout the period of market transition, strong party leadership would be necessary to keep the country on the path of “stability and unity.”

With official curbs on market activity now loosened or removed, China’s economy surged in the second half of 1992. Credit controls were relaxed on new industrial and real-estate investments, and state enterprises were given ready access to new loans from state banks. The two-tier pricing system was eliminated, and the housing market was privatized. Regulatory obstacles to foreign investment were also greatly relaxed. Stock markets in Shanghai and Shenzhen flourished. As commerce accelerated in and around China’s special zones and open cities, exports surged and consumer demand skyrocketed. For almost two years, the economy expanded at an unprecedented annual rate of 14 percent. Industrial output grew even more rapidly, expanding by 25 percent in 1993. In that same year, retail sales also increased by 25 percent.

Under the impact of Deng’s fiscal decentralization initiatives, however, regional economic differences grew significantly wider. The eastern seaboard prospered, while the interior provinces stagnated.

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Writing in 1993, two Chinese social scientists noted that disparities in wealth between China’s coastal and interior provinces had reached levels equal to or greater than those existing in socialist Yugoslavia on the eve of its disintegration in 1991–1992. The authors warned that unless steps were taken quickly to remedy this situation, “it is possible that a situation similar to that in post-Tito Yugoslavia will emerge. ... [With]in a few years ... the country ... could move from economic collapse to political disintegration.”

To prevent such an implosion, the scholars urged the central government to reclaim some of the fiscal and financial powers previously relinquished to the provinces.

Alongside economic overheating, spiraling inflation, regional income polarization, and rising rural anger, the early 1990s also witnessed a sharp increase in the number of party and government officials charged with bribery, embezzlement, and other forms of corruption. But the CCP’s traditional double-standard for dealing with criminal suspects remained in effect: Notwithstanding Zhao’s 1987 promise to treat all criminal suspects

“equally before the law,” party members and cadres continued to escape serious punishment for their misdeeds.

With more and more people feeling anxious about the future, by the mid-1990s most stress indicators had turned strikingly negative, necessitating a cautious assessment of the country’s outward appearance of economic prosperity and dynamism. The coexistence of high industrial and commercial growth rates alongside swelling armies of impoverished rural migrants descending on corruption-plagued cities lent the country an unsettled, agitated air. And this, in turn, lent a certain poignancy to the fading cries of alarm sounded by China’s few remaining elderly conservatives. With China now seemingly perched on an overheated economic bubble, it was unclear just how, or when, the bubble might burst. To prevent a sudden rupture and to achieve a soft landing, Zhu unveiled in July of 1993 a 16-point program designed to curtail credit, limit new investment, reduce inflation, and generally cool down China’s overheated economy. Just one year after stepping on the accelerator of reform, Zhu now began to apply the brakes.

Zhu’s two most important contributions to China’s soft landing in the 1990s, however, came after he was promoted to replace Li Peng as premier in 1998: He tackled the tasks of reorganizing China’s debt-ridden **state-owned enterprises** and bringing China into the World Trade Organization. Although Zhu was widely reviled within China for giving up a number of China’s traditional sovereign prerogatives in exchange for World Trade Organization (WTO) membership, most economists agree that it was China’s entry into this exclusive international “club” that spurred China’s rise from a mildly impressive regional trading power to a global economic powerhouse. ■

### Name to Know

**Zhu Rongji** (b. 1928): As China’s economic czar in the early 1990s, Zhu inherited a series of economic crises, including an excessive money supply, rising inflation, and chaotic financial markets. After achieving a successful soft landing, he was named premier in 1998. The unsung hero of China’s economic miracle, Zhu restructured China’s tax, banking, and state enterprise systems and steered China into the WTO.

## Important Term

**state-owned enterprises (SOEs)**: The backbone of China's socialist industrial economy. Under Zhu Rongji, SOEs were consolidated and converted to shareholding enterprises.

## Suggested Reading

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*.

Yang, *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How did cadres' misuse of funds undermine rural economic confidence in the 1990s?
2. What were Zhu Rongji's principal contributions to China's post-1993 economic miracle?

# The Rise of Chinese Nationalism, 1993–2001

## Lecture 43

As China rose, phoenix-like, from the ashes of revolutionary Maoism, Chinese pride began to reassert itself—and along with it came a new Chinese assertiveness.

China's economic explosion in the 1990s had two particularly fascinating by-products. The first of these was the visible rekindling of Chinese national pride and patriotism. Not since the early 1950s, when Mao reclaimed the wounded dignity of the Chinese people, had the *laobaixing* displayed such unabashed pride in their country and its accomplishments. The second by-product involved a revival of the darker side of Chinese nationalism—xenophobia—and a venting of long-repressed resentments against those countries that had victimized China in the past.

As China rose, phoenix-like, from the ashes of revolutionary Maoism, Chinese pride began to reassert itself—and along with it came a new Chinese assertiveness. One of the first clear indicators was a rise in Beijing's threatening posture toward Taiwan. In the summer of 1995, Taiwan's proindependence president, Lee Teng-hui, delivered a speech in which he insisted that Taiwan was an independent country. The Chinese government reacted angrily and, in a show of bravado, conducted extensive military exercises—including guided missile tests—in the Taiwan Strait. Responding to China's escalating military intimidation, the United States rattled a few sabers of its own, as President Clinton dispatched two aircraft carrier groups to the vicinity of the Taiwan Strait.

In the angry aftermath of this episode, a bestselling book appeared in Chinese bookstores with the provocative title *China Can Say No*. Its defiant message was loud and clear: The United States should not take Chinese good will for granted and must treat China with greater respect and dignity. Citing the examples of the *Yinhe* incident and U.S. aircraft carrier intrusions into the Taiwan Strait, the authors argued that despite American talk about “constructive engagement,” the United States was really out to “contain” China: The United States wanted China to fail.

On both sides of the Pacific, the Sino-American military buildup in the Taiwan Strait fueled growing distrust. In the aftermath of the 1996 U.S. presidential election, Republican members of Congress began to accuse the Clinton Administration of being soft on China. First, they charged the Clinton-Gore reelection campaign of accepting illegal campaign contributions from a variety of Chinese special interests. Soon afterward, in 1998, a Taiwanese-American nuclear scientist at the Los Alamos National

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Laboratory, Dr. Wen Ho Lee, was dismissed from his job amid allegations that he had provided Beijing with the designs and codes for America's latest nuclear warheads. (The charges were later reduced to unauthorized possession of classified documents.) A few months later, a Congressional investigative commission headed by Republican Congressman Christopher Cox issued an explosive report alleging that China had been engaging in systematic nuclear espionage against the United States. Beijing bristled angrily at such allegations. But it wasn't just the Chinese government that reacted strongly. Equally important, the *laobaixing* now turned distinctly negative toward the United States, as Chinese

opinion polls showed a sharp rise in feelings of resentment and distrust. In America, too, the atmosphere soured substantially, and a sudden spurt of provocative books attacking China appeared in U.S. bookstores.

Things went from bad to worse in May 1999, when an American stealth bomber, flying under the NATO flag in the former Yugoslavia, accidentally bombed the Chinese embassy in the Serbian capital of Belgrade. Three Chinese journalists were killed in the attack, and 20 embassy staffers were wounded. The official American explanation for the mishap was that U.S. intelligence officers had used outdated maps in selecting their bombing targets and that the building in question had previously been identified as a Serbian electronic air-support facility. The American explanation was indignantly rejected by the Chinese government, which called the embassy attack "barbarous." Massive anti-American protests followed, as students armed with rocks and crude Molotov cocktails demonstrated outside the

U.S. embassy in Beijing. Shortly afterward, Chinese newspapers published a number of commentaries angrily accusing America of bullying others and deceiving the world about its hegemonic intentions.

In the wake of the Belgrade embassy bombing and anti-American demonstrations in China, opinion polls in the United States registered a four-fold increase in the number of Americans who viewed China as a “serious” or “moderately serious” threat. From just 21 percent in 1998, the figure jumped to 73 percent in the first half of 1999. By the turn of the new millennium, the revival of Chinese nationalism, along with China’s growing economic and military power, were a source of deep concern in the United States. In the run-up to the U.S. presidential election of 2000, Republican Party candidate George W. Bush appeared to veer sharply away from the traditional U.S. policy of “constructive engagement” with China toward a more openly confrontational approach—specifically identifying the PRC as a “strategic competitor” of the United States.

Coming on the heels of China’s angry reaction to the Belgrade embassy bombing, such a clear rhetorical shift appeared to augur poorly for the future tranquility of U.S.-China relations. But by mid-summer 2001, Sino-American relations had moved back onto a more conciliatory path. And when the devastating attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, occurred, Beijing and Washington quickly closed ranks, affirming their mutual desire to combat global terrorism and preserve their long-standing relationship of “constructive engagement.” Although a potentially serious crisis had been averted, Napoleon’s “sleeping giant” had begun to stir. ■

## Important Terms

**Belgrade embassy bombing** (May 1999): The accidental destruction of the PRC embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, by a U.S. stealth bomber. The United States claimed that outdated maps caused an error in targeting.

**EP-3 incident** (April 2001): A U.S. spy plane collided in midair with a Chinese fighter jet, forcing the U.S. plane to land in South China. The incident sparked anti-American protests in China.

***Yinhe***: A Chinese cargo ship suspected of carrying chemical weapons to the Middle East in 1993. The ship was searched at the behest of the U.S. CIA, but no weapons were found.

### Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Deng, *China's Struggle for Status*.

French, *Tibet, Tibet*.

Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*.

Kynge, *China Shakes the World*.

Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*.

Tyler, *A Great Wall*.

### Questions to Consider

1. How has resurgent Chinese nationalism since the early 1990s differed from the type of nationalism prevalent in the May 4<sup>th</sup> era?
2. If envy and resentment are two sides of the same coin, how should we best understand China's continuing love/hate relationship with the United States (and the West)?

# China's Lost Territories—Taiwan, Hong Kong

## Lecture 44

**By 2003, President George W. Bush's foreign policy advisers had come to the conclusion that Chen Shui-bian was a “loose cannon,” a provocateur who, if left to his own devices, could wind up dragging the United States into a military confrontation with China.**

**S**ince the onset of the Deng Xiaoping era 30 years ago, no single issue has signified China's drive to restore its damaged national pride more than the quest to reunify the two lost Chinese territories of Taiwan and Hong Kong.

For more than 150 years, Hong Kong was a symbol of imperialist aggression against China. Seized by Great Britain at gunpoint after the Opium Wars, Hong Kong remained a British colonial enclave until 1997. Under the Sino-British “Joint Declaration on Hong Kong,” signed in 1984, China agreed to allow Hong Kong a “high degree of local autonomy” and to not interfere with Hong Kong's existing economic, administrative, and legal institutions for a period of 50 years. The general framework known as “**one country, two systems**,” gives Hong Kong substantial autonomy over its domestic affairs and commercial relations while reserving to Beijing sovereign authority over diplomatic and military affairs.

Since the 1997 handover, Beijing has made no attempt unilaterally to change Hong Kong's political, legal, administrative, or economic institutions; and the basic legal rights and political and civil liberties of Hong Kong's citizens have been retained largely intact. Despite early fears that the handover would spell the death of Hong Kong, in most respects it has been business as usual since 1997.

Despite their many similarities, the cases of Taiwan and Hong Kong are quite different. Taiwan's long separation from mainland China was a de facto situation based not on a binding legal obligation but on the vicissitudes of a bitter civil war. Indeed, the very bitterness of that civil war ensured that many Taiwanese would reject the idea that their fate should be dictated by

the Communist regime across the Taiwan Strait. Hence, Deng’s “one country, two systems” formulation never gained much traction in Taiwan.

At the height of the Cold War, Taiwan received major U.S. development assistance. As a result, the island experienced an “economic miracle.” Politically, however, Chiang K’ai-shek continued to rule Taiwan with an iron fist, permitting no opposition to the political monopoly enjoyed by the GMD. After Chiang’s death in 1975, Taiwan slowly began transitioning to democracy. In 1988, **Lee Teng-hui** became the first native-born Taiwanese president. This proved to be an important turning point in Taiwan’s politics, for almost as soon as Lee assumed the presidency, he began to reveal a strong attachment to the cause of Taiwanese independence.

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As popular support for independence rose in the 1990s, Beijing reacted strongly with increasing threats of reprisal. Tensions almost boiled over in 2000, when the Democratic Progressive Party candidate, **Chen Shui-bian**, was elected president. Pledging to revise Taiwan’s constitution to change the island’s name to the Republic of Taiwan, Chen repeatedly antagonized Beijing and irritated Washington.

The return to power of the GMD in 2008, under reconciliation-minded **Ma Ying-jeou**, led to a marked improvement in cross-strait relations. By the spring of 2009, relations were more relaxed than at any time since the early 1990s. More than 3,000 mainland Chinese visitors were now arriving in Taiwan each day—a 10-fold increase over the previous year. And Beijing approved Taiwan’s application for official observer status in the World Health Assembly.

Although China has for now substituted the carrot of **soft power** for the stick of military threat, the ultimate goal of reunification remains Beijing’s clear priority. Though we cannot predict whether peace or war will ultimately prevail in the Taiwan Strait, one thing does seem clear: The state of play in cross-strait relations will be strongly affected by long-term evolutionary forces at work within China itself. ■

## Names to Know

**Chen Shui-bian** (b. 1951): A vocal supporter of Taiwan independence and the president of the Republic of China from 2000 to 2008. His Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) ended a half-century of GMD rule in Taiwan, but his provocative proindependence rhetoric angered Beijing and irritated Washington. Chen and his wife were convicted of bribery and embezzlement in 2009 and sentenced to life in prison.

**Lee Teng-hui** (b. 1923): The first popularly elected president of the Republic of China. A native Taiwanese, Lee served as president from 1988 to 2000, presiding over Taiwan's democratic reforms and advocating Taiwan independence. Lee split from the GMD after the 2000 presidential election.

**Ma Ying-jeou** (b. 1950): This Harvard-trained lawyer and former GMD mayor of Taipei was elected president of the Republic of China in 2008. Ma is opposed to both Taiwan independence and reunification with China and has forged closer economic ties with China.

## Important Terms

**“one country, two systems”**: The slogan coined by Deng Xiaoping in the early 1980s, promising substantial autonomy for Taiwan and Hong Kong after reunification with China.

**soft power**: International influence gained through exemplary behavior, cooperativity, and moral suasion.

## Suggested Reading

Ash, Ferdinand, Hook, and Porter, *Hong Kong in Transition*.

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Deng, *China’s Struggle for Status*.

Hughes, *Chinese Nationalism in the Global Era*.

Kynge, *China Shakes the World*.

Romberg, *Rein in at the Brink of the Precipice*.

Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*.

Taylor, *The Generalissimo*.

### Questions to Consider

1. Why has the modern history of Taiwan and Hong Kong evoked such strong nationalist emotions in China?
2. Why have the people of Taiwan consistently rejected the “one country, two systems” formula, while Hong Kong has embraced it?

# China in the New Millennium, 2000–2008

## Lecture 45

[By 2005] a typical middle-class family consisted of an employed couple with one school-aged child and no pets. With an annual income of around \$7,500 a year, the family lived in a small, privately owned five-room apartment with two mobile telephones, a large-screen color TV (with cable service), and a personal computer connected to the Internet.

Zhu Rongji's reforms created a new economic boom, but they also created new problems. Zhu's most enduring legacy was the breaking of the "iron rice bowl." By 2002, for 125 million workers in state-owned enterprises, there would be no more guaranteed lifetime jobs, wages, or welfare benefits.

Some outside observers predicted that the sudden surge of industrial unemployment would trigger a major political crisis, as angry workers rose up to protest their sudden impoverishment. But the anticipated explosion never materialized. The primary reason was a gradual but substantial rise in nonstate employment. Between 2002 and 2005, increasing numbers of laid-off workers were absorbed into China's rapidly-growing private sector, particularly construction jobs and export manufacturing. By 2005, the private sector employed more than 100 million workers, accounting for almost two-thirds of China's total industrial output. As the private sector flourished, the unemployment bubble gradually subsided, and China's GDP growth rate correspondingly accelerated, surpassing 12 percent by mid-decade. Foreign direct investment also surged, with joint ventures now pumping tens of billions of dollars annually into the Chinese economy. As foreign dollars flowed in, Chinese exports flowed out. By 2005, China's total foreign trade volume approached \$1 trillion annually.

But under the surface of China's remarkable urban economic miracle lay a more troubling phenomenon: a rapidly growing income gap. The upswing in urban incomes was far outstripping the meager growth in rural incomes. As a result, by 2006 China's Gini coefficient reached its highest level ever, approaching .48. Emblematic of the rising Chinese

income gap was the vast army of rural migrant workers—members of the so-called **floating population**—who lived and worked on the fringes of urban society.

Compounding the problem of a steadily rising rural-urban income gap was the phenomenon of widespread official corruption. According to estimates, illegal graft, corruption, bribery, and kickbacks eat up as much as 3 percent of China’s GDP—well over \$100 billion—per year. The widespread existence of corruption has helped stymie repeated efforts by central government leaders to increase the transparency and accountability of local government.

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**In an effort to become more market friendly, the party abandoned its long-standing ideological hostility toward capitalists.**

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From the moment of its birth in 1921, the Chinese Communist Party identified itself with the laboring masses—the workers and peasants. But since Deng’s Southern Tour of 1992, the economic reality in China has been that workers and peasants have been eclipsed by a new class of entrepreneurs and merchants. To legitimize the contributions of these high-flying new economic elites, and to ensure their cooperation with the regime, Jiang Zemin offered them privileged membership in the CCP’s ruling coalition. Under the theory that the party should represent the “advanced classes” and the “advanced forces of production,” some 5 million Chinese entrepreneurs and businessmen were recruited into the party in the first six years of the new millennium. And in an effort to become more market friendly, the party abandoned its long-standing ideological hostility toward capitalists. The result was a marriage of mutual convenience between traditional Communist political power and newborn entrepreneurial wealth. But doubts remained whether a rigid, one-party political system could effectively deal with the mounting strains and stresses of a modernizing, pluralistic society. ■

## The Astonishing Growth of Shenzhen

Once a sleepy fishing village on the border with Hong Kong, Shenzhen for the past 20 years has been the fastest growing city in the world. With average annual economic growth of more than 25 percent, Shenzhen is packed to the rafters with 12 million people, almost 60 percent of whom lack valid urban household registration.

Because of its close proximity to Hong Kong and its status as one of four original Special Economic Zones, Shenzhen has long enjoyed preferential foreign investment status and tax benefits. It ranks first among Chinese cities in foreign direct investment and third (after Shanghai and Beijing) in the number of high-rise buildings and star-rated hotels. It also has the world's fourth busiest container port.

Among the impressive by-products of Shenzhen's rapid economic growth are a large, well-educated middle class; a wide array of nongovernmental organizations; a vigorous mass media; and a relatively efficient and responsive municipal government. Not surprisingly, there is also a Dickensian underside to Shenzhen's rising prosperity. Many of the city's millions of migrant workers are young women with no marketable skills, some of whom wind up scammed into prostitution or kidnapped by human traffickers. For those migrants fortunate enough to find regular factory or construction work, their wages barely exceed the rent they pay for their dingy, crowded dormitory rooms.



## Important Terms

**floating population:** Up to 150 million poor farmers who have migrated to Chinese cities since the 1980s. They are generally treated as second-class citizens.

**Singapore model:** The Chinese goal of emulating Singapore by creating an affluent, orderly, law-abiding authoritarian society with few democratic checks and balances.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Deng, *China's Struggle for Status*.

Fallows, *Postcards from Tomorrow Square*.

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China*.

Gifford, *China Road*.

Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen*.

Kynge, *China Shakes the World*.

McGregor, *One Billion Customers*.

Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*.

Pei, *China's Trapped Transition*.

Tsai, *Capitalism without Democracy*.

Yang, *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How have rising economic inequality and local government corruption affected social stability since the 1990s?
2. Is the CCP's quest for neo-Confucian harmony and consensus, a la Singapore, likely to provide a viable substitute for pluralistic political contention in China? Why or why not?

# China's Information Revolution

## Lecture 46

**Although blogging is a relatively recent phenomenon, there are upwards of 20 million active bloggers in China (up from only 2 million as recently as 2005). On average, four new blogs are posted in China every second.**

The Communist Party's traditional insistence on controlling the spread of news and information in China is increasingly being challenged by the **information revolution**. The broad array of new technologies of information dissemination is making censorship and content control difficult. Three key developments help to explain this changing situation: first is the steady growth of personal freedom; second is the commercialization of the mass media; and third is the spread of new electronic media of communications, including mobile phones and the Internet.

This is not to suggest that the CCP has given up on its goal of shaping and controlling the information available to ordinary Chinese—and in particular, information pertaining to politically sensitive issues. On the contrary, as the task of controlling the media has become more challenging in recent years, China's media minders have sought to sharpen their tools of censorship, surveillance, and supervision.

Probably the greatest advances in the free flow of information in recent years have come not from traditional media but from Internet chatrooms, weblogs, and text messaging. Because these new electronic media have proved especially difficult to police, the authorities in charge of electronic media surveillance have tried to foster a climate that maximizes self-censorship and deterrence. Under the watchful eye of the State Council's Information Office, tens of thousands of Internet police have been recruited and trained since 2000. Collectively known as "Big Mama," these cybercops have shut down more than 100,000 unlicensed Internet cafes since 2002. On college campuses, thousands of student monitors have been hired to scrutinize postings in chatrooms and on electronic bulletin boards and blogsites and to report offenders to local Internet police. To remind netizens not to stray from approved content, the ubiquitous cartoon cybercop icons **Jingjing**

and Chacha regularly pop up on Chinese computer screens, along with a reminder to avoid “unhealthy” content.

Notwithstanding the wide array of weapons available to the Chinese government in its efforts to control the impact of the information revolution, there are reasons for long-term optimism. First, consumers in the reform era have become more sophisticated, more demanding, and more media savvy. Second, the media themselves have become more diverse, lively, and commercially oriented than ever before. Third, there is a growing trend toward professionalization in the print and broadcast media. Journalistic standards are rising, and many editors and reporters are no longer content to serve as mouthpieces of the party. Investigative journalists and their editors are increasingly playing **edge-ball**, pushing the limits of government censorship. Fourth, given the staggering volume of electronic messages, total content control of the new electronic media has become impractical, if not impossible. The fabled **great firewall of China** has numerous vulnerabilities, and many Chinese netizens have become quite adept at exploiting them. Taken together, these various factors make it unlikely that Chinese authorities will succeed in halting either the relentless, market-driven expansion of the information cascade or the envelope-pushing bravado of journalists—professional and amateur alike. ■



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**The explosion of Internet and cell phone use in China has made censorship increasingly difficult.**

### China's Information Revolution

|                     | 1992    | 2008        |
|---------------------|---------|-------------|
| Cell phone accounts | 200,000 | 590,000,000 |
| E-mail accounts     | 18,000  | 315,000,000 |

## Important Terms

**edge-ball:** Tactic used by investigative reporters to test governmental limits on free journalistic inquiry.

**great firewall of China:** The system of governmental regulations, automated Web filters, and human surveillance designed to censor unwanted Internet content.

**information revolution:** The rapid spread of new electronic means of communication since the 1980s, marked by the proliferation of cell phones and Internet use.

**Jingjing and Chacha:** Pop-up cartoon police icons that appear on Chinese websites to remind Internet users to avoid controversial sites and subjects.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Fallows, *Postcards from Tomorrow Square*.

Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*.

Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*.

Peerenboom, *China's Long March to the Rule of Law*.

Pei, *China's Trapped Transition*.

Shirk, *China*.

Yang, *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan*.

## Questions to Consider

1. How has the information revolution affected the Chinese government's ability to monitor and control the flow and content of electronic information?
2. In what ways can the growth of civil society in China help strengthen environmental protection and the quest for expanded civil and political rights?

# “One World, One Dream”—The 2008 Olympics

## Lecture 47

**While the Olympics had been widely expected to help open China up, they served instead to close down China even more tightly.**

Of all the visible symbols of China’s rise to global prominence, perhaps the most compelling was the opening ceremony of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. For the PRC, the Beijing Olympics functioned as a globally televised coming out party. According to The Nielson Company, the 2008 Summer Olympics had the largest global TV audience in history, with some 4.7 billion people tuning in—approximately 70 percent of the world’s population.

Though some had hoped that China’s hosting the Olympics would bring about greater openness, as had happened in South Korea in 1988, the Chinese government’s overriding concern with maintaining social order and political stability led rather to a visible tightening of state censorship, surveillance, and repression. Scores of social and environmental activists were arrested in the run-up to the games.

It was not only activists who were mistreated during this period: Between 2002 and 2008, as many as 1.4 million residents of central Beijing were subjected to mandatory relocation to make room for new Olympic venues, transportation facilities, high-rise office and apartment complexes,

### Whole Lotta Culture Shock

During the closing ceremony, Chinese President Hu Jintao was caught by TV cameras in a candid moment of intense culture shock. On stage in the Bird’s Nest, British rock guitarist Jimmy Page and pop singer Leona Lewis were belting out a sanitized version of Led Zeppelin’s raunchy 1969 hit single “Whole Lotta Love.” Up in his VIP box, Hu Jintao, with a pained look on his face, visibly bit his lip and grimaced. His expression spoke volumes about the ongoing “clash of civilizations.”

and beautification projects. According to various sources, a substantial minority of these dislocated residents were never given the upgraded housing or financial compensation that had been promised them. Hundreds (perhaps thousands) of petitioners who protested their forced eviction and underfunded relocation were placed in detention in **black jails** across Beijing.

Shortly after Beijing was awarded the games, international criticism began. A focus on China's economic and military assistance to Myanmar and Sudan

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gave critics added momentum in 2007–2008. Director Steven Spielberg canceled his agreement to serve as an artistic consultant to the Beijing Olympics on the grounds that the situation in Darfur made it impossible to conduct “business as usual.”

**The spirit of the games was overwhelmingly festive and exuberant: It was China's moment in the sun.**

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But none of this detracted notably from the breathtaking success of China's national coming out party. TV viewers around the world were blown away by the spectacularly colorful, brilliantly choreographed display of human artistry and ingenuity that marked the opening ceremony. Beijing looked exquisite dressed up in its gleaming new Olympic finery. While attendance at many individual events was surprisingly sparse, the spirit of the games was overwhelmingly festive and exuberant: It was China's moment in the sun. ■

### Important Terms

**black jails:** Informal detention centers set up in Beijing in 2007–2008 to hold unruly petitioners demanding fair compensation for pre-Olympic eviction.

**“genocide Olympics”:** A term coined by activists seeking the boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics because of China's support for brutal regimes in Myanmar and Sudan.

## Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Fallows, *Postcards from Tomorrow Square*.

French, *Tibet, Tibet*.

## Questions to Consider

1. In what respects did the 2008 Beijing Olympics serve as a showcase for both the best and worst aspects of China's rise to global prominence?
2. What, if anything, do the Beijing Olympics tell us about Chinese attitudes toward foreigners and national minorities?

# **China's Rise—The Sleeping Giant Stirs**

## **Lecture 48**

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**Napoleon's sleeping giant is stirring: It is awake, it is restless, and it is wary. It should be handled with care.**

In 2009, the People's Republic of China celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its birth. There was indeed much to celebrate—including China's rise from endemic poverty and the ravages of revolution and war to become the world's third-largest economy. Over the past 30 years, a process of international accommodation and adjustment has been evident as well. Among other significant changes, China has abandoned its revolutionary Maoist ideology, accepted the principles of free-market economics, joined the World Trade Organization, and engaged with its neighbors in a series of constructive multilateral agreements.

On the other hand, there are some worrisome aspects to Beijing's international behavior—aspects that seem to contradict its leaders' oft-repeated claim of a "peaceful rise." With a defense budget that has been increasing at double-digit rates for almost two decades, Beijing's ultimate military intentions remain opaque and unclear. Other sources of concern include a periodically surging tide of virulent Chinese cybernationalism, principally aimed at Japan and the United States; a growing Chinese appetite for natural resources and raw materials; a chronically undervalued Chinese *yuan*; and Beijing's willingness to ignore egregious human rights violations in pursuit of diplomatic and commercial partnerships with such "pariah" regimes as Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Sudan.

These concerns should not be discounted. They are significant. Yet they do not add up to an inevitable adversarial relationship between China and the West, as some have argued. Throughout history, whenever a dynamic, rising power has sought a larger niche in a world dominated by a solitary

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**As China continues its rise, it will undoubtedly be drawn to probe the limits of American regional and global dominance.**

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superpower, a certain amount of friction has been inevitable. Such friction may be manifested in various ways—including competition for resources, suspicion of the other's military intentions, passage of protective tariffs, and a general tendency to view the other as a threat to one's own peace and security. Such friction is not illusory, but it need not be unduly alarming. For the true art of positive diplomacy lies not in denying or suppressing divergent national interests, expectations, and priorities, but rather in learning to live with them—seeking common ground where possible, agreeing to disagree where not possible, and contesting where necessary.

Although China's behavior in world politics over the past quarter century has been more cooperative than conflictual, it would be a mistake to expect a globally engaged China to take a back seat indefinitely to unilateral American power. As China continues its rise, it will undoubtedly be drawn to probe the limits of American regional and global dominance and to spread its wings as an autonomous actor in world politics. As much as Americans may resist the idea of sharing the global stage with an energetic, self-confident Chinese peer competitor, such an accommodation will have to be made. In this respect it is the United States, rather than China, that faces the more daunting challenge—the challenge of gracefully adjusting to the eventual, inevitable diminution of its own unipolar global dominance.

Social scientists have discovered that when authoritarian societies reach an income threshold of between \$6,000–\$8,000 per capita, there is a relatively high probability that they will introduce—and sustain—democratic political reforms. Taiwan reached the \$6,000 threshold in the late

### Quick Facts on China and the United States

- China's economy is the third largest in the world, after the United States and European Union.
- China's economy is expected to surpass that of the United States before 2025.
- China's military is predicted to gain tactical superiority over that of the United States in the Western Pacific by 2015–2020.

1980s, while South Korea attained it in the early 1990s. Since then, both countries have successfully transitioned from oppressive dictatorships to pluralistic democracies. Assuming that China emerges intact from the prolonged global recession that began in 2008, it can be expected to reach the \$6,000 per capita income threshold sometime within the next decade. Barring an unforeseen catastrophe, and given China's continued global engagement and adherence to market-friendly economic policies, it would not be unreasonable to expect to see a more politically open and pluralistic China emerge by around the year 2020. One cause for optimism is rising domestic pressure for greater social and political openness. A more open and pluralistic China is more likely to be a **responsible stakeholder** in the global community. ■

### Important Term

**responsible stakeholder:** Term coined in 2005 by Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick to describe the United States' preferred role for China in world affairs.

### Suggested Reading

Baum, *China Watcher*.

Kynge, *China Shakes the World*.

Shirk, *China*.

Suettinger, *Beyond Tiananmen*.

### Questions to Consider

1. To what extent has China become a responsible stakeholder in international affairs?
2. Is China's growing need for natural resources and raw materials likely to lead to increased competition (and rivalry) with the West?

# Timeline

## B.C.E.

- c. 600.....Earliest hydraulic irrigation in China.
- 551.....Confucius is born.
- c. 500.....Iron plow appears in China.
- 300.....First Chinese dictionary.
- 221.....China unified under Emperor Qin Shihuang Di.
- 220.....Construction begins on Great Wall.
- c. 190.....Silk Road links China and Near East.

## C.E.

- c. 50.....Buddhism introduced from Central Asia.
- c. 605.....First imperial civil service examinations.
- 609.....Grand Canal completed.
- c. 635.....First Christian missionaries arrive from Persia.
- 650.....Earliest record of Islam's arrival in China.
- c. 850.....First reference to gunpowder in China.
- 1265.....Mongol leader Kublai Khan invades Sichuan.
- 1271.....Voyages of Marco Polo.
- 1279.....Mongols conquer China.
- 1368.....Ming dynasty founded.
- 1405–1433.....Maritime expeditions of Zheng He.
- 1516.....First Portuguese contact with Macau.
- 1582.....Jesuits begin missionary work in China.
- c. 1620.....Portuguese traders bring opium to China.
- 1644.....Manchus overthrow Ming dynasty.
- 1721.....Emperor Kangxi bans Christian teaching.
- 1793.....Lord Macartney's trade mission arrives in Beijing.
- 1796–1799.....White Lotus Rebellion.

- 1800–1820.....Opium becomes leading Chinese import commodity.
- 1839.....Commissioner Lin Zexu seizes British opium.
- 1839–1842.....First Opium War.
- 1842–1843.....Unequal treaties forced upon China.
- 1850–1864.....Taiping Rebellion.
- 1853–1868.....Nian Rebellion.
- 1856–1860.....Second Opium War.
- 1860.....Franco-British armies sack the Summer Palace; Treaty of Beijing further erodes Chinese sovereignty.
- 1862–1875.....Self-Strengthening movement.
- c. 1875–1885.....Dowager Empress Cixi blocks reforms.
- 1894.....Sun Yat-sen forms Revive China Society.
- 1898.....Guangxu launches Hundred Days of Reform.
- 1899–1900.....Boxer Rebellion.
- 1906–1911.....Sun Yat-sen launches uprisings against Manchus.
- October 1911.....Local mutiny triggers collapse of Manchu dynasty.
- 1912.....Sun Yat-sen inaugurated president of Provisional Republic of China and reorganizes Guomindang (GMD).
- 1912–1913.....Sun Yat-sen forced into exile, succeeded by Yuan Shikai.
- 1915.....Japan issues 21 Demands.
- 1916–1926.....China enters warlord era.
- November 1917.....Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.
- 1918–1919.....First Marxist study groups in China.
- 1919.....May 4<sup>th</sup> movement; birth of modern Chinese nationalism.
- 1921.....Chinese Communist Party (CCP) founded.
- 1923–1927.....First CCP-GMD united front.
- 1925.....Sun Yat-sen dies; Chiang K'ai-shek rises to power.

- July 1926 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek launches Northern Expedition.
- April 1927 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek attacks Chinese Communist Party; surviving Communists flee, form Red Army.
- 1927 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek establishes Nationalist government in Nanjing.
- 1928–1934 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek attacks Chinese Communist Party base area; Mao Zedong introduces “people’s war.”
- September 1931 ..... Japan occupies Manchuria.
- October 1934 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek forces Red Army out of South China.
- 1934–1935 ..... Chinese Communist Party embarks on Long March, relocates in Yan'an.
- December 1936 ..... Zhang Xueliang kidnaps Chiang K'ai-shek.
- Winter 1937 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek forms second united front with Chinese Communist Party.
- July 1937 ..... Japan invades, occupies North and East China.
- December 1937 ..... Nanjing Massacre.
- 1938 ..... Guomindang government retreats to Chongqing; Burma Road provides overland supply route for Guomindang.
- 1941–1942 ..... Flying Tigers supply Chiang’s army by air.
- December 1941 ..... Japan attacks Pearl Harbor.
- 1942–1945 ..... U.S. naval power turns tide of war in Pacific.
- 1944 ..... U.S. Dixie Mission establishes liaison with Mao in Yan'an.
- August 1945 ..... Japan surrenders.
- December 1945 ..... President Harry S. Truman sends General George C. Marshall to China.
- 1946 ..... Mao Zedong and Chiang K'ai-shek talk peace, prepare for war.
- 1946–1947 ..... Civil war breaks out in Manchuria.
- 1948–1949 ..... Communists go on offensive, rout Chiang K'ai-shek’s forces.

- October 1949 ..... Mao Zedong announces birth of People's Republic of China (PRC).
- December 1949 ..... Chiang K'ai-shek retreats to Taiwan.
- February 1950 ..... Mao Zedong signs treaty of friendship and alliance with Joseph Stalin.
- 1950–1952 ..... Land reform conducted in rural China.
- 1950–1953 ..... Korean War brings China and U.S. into military conflict.
- 1951–1952 ..... Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and Three Anti campaigns launched.
- March 1953 ..... Joseph Stalin dies; Nikita Khrushchev eventually succeeds him.
- July 1953 ..... Cease-fire in Korea.
- 1953–1957 ..... PRC launches 5-year economic plan with Soviet advice and money.
- 1956 ..... China completes economic transition to socialism; Nikita Khrushchev denounces Joseph Stalin; popular unrest erupts in Hungary and Poland.
- 1956–1957 ..... Mao Zedong introduces Hundred Flowers campaign.
- May 1957 ..... Stung by criticism, Mao Zedong halts Hundred Flowers campaign, punishes intellectuals.
- Spring 1958 ..... Great Leap Forward begins.
- August 1959 ..... Mao Zedong lashes out at critics of the Great Leap Forward.
- 1959–1961 ..... Three Hard Years bring widespread famine.
- 1959–1962 ..... Mao Zedong denounces Soviet "revisionism."
- 1961–1962 ..... Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping reverse Mao Zedong's radical policies.
- September 1962 ..... Mao Zedong launches Socialist Education movement.
- 1964–1965 ..... Lin Biao initiates Mao Study in People's Liberation Army and schools.

- November 1965 ..... Leftists criticize revisionist literary works.
- August 1966 ..... Mao Zedong unleashes Red Guards.
- September 1966–1967 ..... Cultural Revolution spawns political violence.
- Spring 1967 ..... Liu Shaoqi denounced as “China’s Khrushchev.”
- August 1968 ..... Soviet troops invade Czechoslovakia.
- March 1969 ..... Fighting erupts on Sino-Soviet border.
- Summer 1969 ..... USSR threatens attack on Chinese nuclear facilities.
- 1969–1970 ..... Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong begin to consider U.S.-China détente.
- April 1971 ..... Zhou Enlai invites U.S. ping-pong team to Beijing.
- July 1971 ..... Henry Kissinger makes secret trip to Beijing.
- September 1971 ..... Lin Biao dies in suspicious plane crash.
- February 1972 ..... Richard Nixon flies to China, signs Shanghai communiqué.
- 1973–1976 ..... Succession struggle heats up as Mao Zedong’s health fades.
- August 1974 ..... Richard Nixon resigns in wake of Watergate scandal.
- April 1975 ..... Chiang K’ai-shek dies, is succeeded by Chiang Ching-kuo.
- January 1976 ..... Zhou Enlai dies, is succeeded by Hua Guofeng.
- April 1976 ..... Deng Xiaoping purged for inciting “counterrevolutionary incident.”
- September 1976 ..... Mao Zedong dies after naming Hua Guofeng his successor.
- October 1976 ..... Mao Zedong’s widow, Jiang Qing, and three associates arrested for treason.
- July 1977–  
November 1978 ..... Deng Xiaoping mounts political comeback.
- November 1978 ..... Deng Xiaoping supports free speech at Democracy Wall.

- December 1978 ..... Deng Xiaoping becomes “paramount leader,” launches economic reforms; Deng and Jimmy Carter agree to normalize U.S.-PRC relations.
- January 1979 ..... Deng Xiaoping tours United States.
- February 1979 ..... Deng Xiaoping launches punitive counterattack against Vietnam.
- Winter 1979 ..... Democracy Wall closed; leading activists arrested.
- April 1979 ..... U.S. Congress passes Taiwan Relations Act.
- Spring 1980 ..... Chinese government authorizes decollectivization of agriculture.
- 1980 ..... Four Special Economic Zones are created along China’s southeast coast.
- August 1980 ..... Deng Xiaoping proposes major political reforms.
- November 1980 ..... Gang of Four tried for murder, treason.
- December 1980 ..... Stung by popular unrest, Deng Xiaoping shelves political reform.
- 1982 ..... Rural people’s communes abolished.
- Fall 1983 ..... Hard-liners launch campaign to stamp out spiritual pollution.
- 1984–1985 ..... Sweeping urban economic reforms introduced by Zhao Ziyang.
- November–
- December 1986 ..... Student demonstrations support democracy.
- January 1987 ..... Hard-liners oust liberal Party chief Hu Yaobang.
- October 1987 ..... Zhao Ziyang proposes political reforms.
- 1987–1988 ..... Rampant inflation and corruption undermine popular support for reforms.
- April 15, 1989 ..... Death of Hu Yaobang triggers student demonstrations.
- April 26, 1989 ..... Deng Xiaoping labels student movement “unpatriotic.”
- May 1–15, 1989 ..... Student demonstrations grow larger; hunger strike begins.

- May 19–20, 1989 ..... Martial law imposed in Beijing; citizens block army convoys.
- June 3–4, 1989 ..... Deng Xiaoping orders People's Liberation Army to clear Tiananmen Square; hundreds killed.
- June 14, 1989 ..... Zhao Ziyang purged for “splitting party,” replaced by Jiang Zemin.
- August–December 1989 ... Communist regimes collapse in Eastern and Central Europe.
- 1990–1991..... Conservatives attack Deng Xiaoping's reforms as “capitalistic.”
- 1991..... First McDonald's restaurant opens in Beijing.
- December 1991 ..... Soviet Union disintegrates; Boris Yeltsin replaces Mikhail Gorbachev.
- January 1992 ..... Deng Xiaoping undertakes Southern Tour to bolster support for reforms.
- 1993..... Zhu Rongji named economic czar, applies brakes to overheated economy.
- 1994–1998..... Banking and tax reforms launched; state enterprises restructured.
- August 1995–
- March 1996 ..... China conducts missile tests in Taiwan Strait.
- March 1996 ..... Lee Teng-hui becomes Taiwan's first elected president.
- February 1997 ..... Deng Xiaoping dies.
- July 1, 1997 ..... Britain returns Hong Kong to China.
- April 1999 ..... About 10,000 Falun Gong supporters “illegally” demonstrate in Beijing.
- May 1999 ..... U.S. accidentally bombs Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.
- 2000..... China introduces first Internet restrictions.
- February 2000 ..... Jiang Zemin calls for admitting capitalists into Chinese Communist Party.
- March 2000 ..... Chen Shui-bian elected president of Taiwan.
- Summer 2000 ..... George W. Bush's presidential campaign labels China as “strategic competitor.”

- April 2001 ..... U.S. spy plane forced down in China.
- July 2001 ..... Beijing awarded 2008 Summer Olympics.
- September 2001 ..... China enters World Trade Organization.
- November 2002 ..... Hu Jintao succeeds Jiang Zemin as Chinese Communist Party general secretary.
- Winter 2003 ..... SARS epidemic breaks out in China.
- August 2003 ..... Six-party talks begin on North Korean denuclearization.
- June 2004 ..... Scientists warn of major HIV/AIDS epidemic in China.
- April 2005 ..... Guomindang leader Lien Chan visits Beijing.
- October 2005 ..... First Chinese astronauts orbit Earth.
- January 2006 ..... Chinese agricultural tax abolished.
- 2006 ..... Private autos exceed 30 million in China; China overtakes U.S. in carbon dioxide emissions.
- 2007 ..... China surpasses Japan to become world's third-largest economy; annual U.S. trade deficit with China exceeds \$250 billion.
- December 2007 ..... Internet users top 200 million in China.
- March 2008 ..... Ma Ying-jeou elected president of Taiwan; violent protest breaks out in Tibet and is suppressed by People's Liberation Army.
- May 2008 ..... Massive earthquake strikes Sichuan, killing 90,000.
- July–September 2008 ..... Tainted milk sickens 50,000 children; scandal is covered up.
- August 2008 ..... Beijing hosts Summer Olympics.
- November 2008 ..... China announces \$586 million stimulus package.
- December 2008 ..... First direct flights from Taiwan to China.
- July 2009 ..... Ethnic violence erupts in Xinjiang: 187 killed, 2,000 arrested.
- August 2009 ..... China surpasses U.S. as largest producer of household garbage.

# Glossary

**antagonistic contradictions:** Maoist reference to fundamental threats to state security posed by class enemies. Such contradictions are to be resolved through criticism and struggle. *See also contradictions among the people.*

**Anti-Rightist Rectification movement** (June 1957–1958): The struggle against “bourgeois intellectuals” and wayward CCP members following the termination of the Hundred Flowers campaign.

**Autumn Harvest Uprisings** (1927–1928): A series of ill-fated, armed insurrections carried out by the CCP in a desperate attempt to avoid annihilation by Chiang K’ai-shek’s Nationalist army.

**Awaken China Society:** *See Xingzhong Hui.*

**backyard blast furnaces** (1958–1959): Indigenous kilns used in rural areas to smelt crude steel during the Great Leap Forward. Most of the steel was unusable.

**Battle of Huai Hai** (November 1948–January 1949): The turning point in the CCP-GMD civil war. PLA troops surrounded 500,000 GMD soldiers, decimating them in three stages.

**Beida:** Nickname for Peking University, a contraction of *Beijing Daxue*.

**Belgrade embassy bombing** (May 1999): The accidental destruction of the PRC embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, by a U.S. stealth bomber. The United States claimed that outdated maps caused an error in targeting.

**big-character posters:** *See dazibao.*

**black cats, white cats:** Deng Xiaoping’s 1962 thesis arguing that economic productivity is more important than political ideology. Taking exception, Mao Zedong purged Deng in the Cultural Revolution.

**black jails:** Informal detention centers set up in Beijing in 2007–2008 to hold unruly petitioners demanding fair compensation for pre-Olympic eviction.

**bourgeois liberalization:** A leftist epithet used to denounce the liberal reforms of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang in 1980s.

**bourgeois powerholders:** Those CCP officials accused by Maoists of undermining socialism and promoting capitalism in the mid-1960s. *See also capitalist road.*

**Boxer Protocol** (1901): The treaty that ended the Boxer Rebellion; it exacted large financial indemnities from the Manchus as punishment for their complicity in Boxer attacks on foreigners.

**Boxer Rebellion** (1899–1900): Insurrection by secret society of “harmonious fists” aimed at killing all foreigners and punishing the Manchus for China’s weakness.

**Brezhnev Doctrine:** The Soviet doctrine of “limited sovereignty” promulgated after the 1968 Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.

**Burma Road** (1938–1941): Overland supply route linking Rangoon with Kunming, enabling food and war matériel to reach embattled GMD forces in Chongqing.

**capitalist road:** Mao Zedong’s mid-1960s allegation that many of his comrades were ignoring class struggle and following a “revisionist” path, leading to a restoration of capitalism in China. *See also bourgeois powerholders.*

**CCP:** Chinese Communist Party.

**Central Committee:** The executive committee of the National Party Congress. It meets annually to debate and enact major policy decisions.

**China Alliance Society:** *See Zhongguo Tongmeng Hui.*

**“China’s Khrushchev”:** Maoist epithet for Liu Shaoqi, around 1967–1968.

**“Chinese learning as the foundation, Western learning for practical use”** (*zhongxue weiti, yangxue weiyong*): The slogan of the Self-Strengthening movement. **civil society**: Nongovernmental associations and interest groups formed by concerned citizens to promote various societal causes.

**collective farms** (1955–1957): The highest stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by the abolition of private ownership and the large-scale pooling of land and labor among 100–200 families.

**Communist International (Comintern)**: Organization founded by Vladimir Lenin in 1919 to promote revolutionary movements in colonial and semicolonial countries.

**Confucianism**: Classical Chinese philosophical doctrine holding that society is best regulated via internalized moral precepts of virtue and benevolence, rather than compulsion.

**contradictions among the people**: Maoist reference to the existence of nonantagonistic conflicts of interest among various different social classes and strata. Such contradictions are to be resolved through “patient education and persuasion,” rather than coercion. *See also antagonistic contradictions.*

**cooperative farms** (1953–1954): The intermediate stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by the introduction of work points and year-round sharing of land and tools by 20–30 households.

**dazibao (big-character posters)**: Large hand-written posters, often anonymous, espousing political principles or accusing others of wrongdoing. Widely used in the Hundred Flowers movement and later during the Cultural Revolution and Democracy Wall period.

**Democracy Wall** (a.k.a. **Xidan Wall**): The Beijing city wall west of Tiananmen Square that became a haven for free speech in the fall and winter

of 1978–1979, as wall posters publicized various political ideas and personal grievances. It was closed by authorities in 1979.

**Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)**: The proindependence Taiwan party that was legalized in 1987. Led by Chen Shui-bian, the DPP won presidential elections in 2000 and 2004.

**dictatorship of the proletariat**: The Soviet form of government introduced by Vladimir Lenin, which involved Communist Party dictatorship over all class enemies. *See also people's democratic dictatorship*.

**Dixie Mission** (1944): Wartime delegation of U.S. diplomats and military officers sent to Yan'an to liaise with CCP leaders.

**East wind prevails over West wind**: Coded Maoist thesis of 1958, claiming that the socialist camp had overtaken the imperialist camp in strategic military power.

**edge-ball**: Tactic used by investigative reporters to test governmental limits on free journalistic inquiry.

**EP-3 incident** (April 2001): A U.S. spy plane collided in midair with a Chinese fighter jet, forcing the U.S. plane to land in South China. The incident sparked anti-American protests in China.

**floating population**: Up to 150 million poor farmers who have migrated to Chinese cities since the 1980s. They are generally treated as second-class citizens.

**Flying Tigers** (1941–1943): Volunteer U.S. fighter pilots under Claire Chennault who assisted the GMD anti-Japan war effort.

**Forbidden City**: The imperial palace in Beijing, built early in the Qing dynasty.

**Four Cleanups movement**: *See Socialist Education movement*.

**Four Modernizations:** Slogan first coined by Zhou Enlai, and later revived by Hua Guofeng, calling for the rapid modernization of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense.

**four olds:** The Red Guards were mobilized in 1966 to destroy “old habits, old ideology, old customs, and old culture.”

**free-rider problem:** Classic dilemma posed when all members of a large group share equally in the benefits of membership without adequate monitoring of individual contributions.

**Gang of Four:** Radical clique led by Mao Zedong’s wife, Jiang Qing, responsible for launching violent factional struggles during the Cultural Revolution. They were tried and convicted in 1980.

**Gate of Heavenly Peace:** The literal translation of *Tiananmen*, the southern entrance to Beijing’s Forbidden City.

**Gemingdang (Revolution Party):** Organized by Sun Yat-sen while in exile in 1914, this party aimed at overthrowing the regime of Yuan Shikai.

**“genocide Olympics”:** A term coined by activists seeking the boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics because of China’s support for brutal regimes in Myanmar and Sudan.

**getihu (individual households):** The first private entrepreneurs permitted to engage in small-scale commerce in post-Mao China.

**Gini coefficient:** An index of the degree of inequality in income distribution. A coefficient of less than .30 indicates relatively modest inequality; greater than .45 indicates a high level of inequality.

**granny police:** Urban neighborhood watchdog groups, generally staffed by elderly women.

**great firewall of China:** The system of governmental regulations, automated Web filters, and human surveillance designed to censor unwanted Internet content.

**Great Leap Forward** (1958–1962): Mao Zedong’s ill-fated attempt to reach Communism ahead of the USSR by relying on subjective factors—mass ideological mobilization, selfless devotion to labor, and “red” leadership. This movement resulted in great famine and 30 million deaths.

**Green Gang:** Criminal Shanghai underground society recruited to assist Chiang K’ai-shek govern Shanghai from 1927 to 1937.

**guanxi:** The Chinese cultural tradition characterized by reciprocal ties of mutual obligation and responsibility.

**Guomindang (GMD; Nationalist Party):** The republican political organization formed by Sun Yat-sen and Song Jiaoren in 1912, after the Xinhai Revolution. The GMD was forced to move to Taiwan in 1949.

**Hai Rui Dismissed from Office:** An allegorical 1961 opera by Wu Han likening the purge of Peng Dehuai to the Ming dynasty emperor’s dismissal of a loyal minister, Hai Rui.

**high-level equilibrium trap:** Hypothesis holding that China’s dramatic early successes in wet rice cultivation precluded later innovations in farming techniques.

**Hong Kong Basic Law:** The 1990 miniconstitution guaranteeing substantial local autonomy, political freedom, and institutional continuity for Hong Kong after the 1997 handover to China.

**hongyan bing (“red-eye disease”):** The envy displayed by low-paid white collar workers in the state sector toward self-employed private entrepreneurs in 1980s.

**household responsibility system:** The system of contracting farmland to individual families for cultivation that was introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978–1979.

**hukou system:** The system of household registration adopted in the early 1950s to prevent peasants from leaving rural areas. It has been modified since the 1980s to permit urban labor migration.

**Hundred Days of Reform (1898):** Abortive effort by Emperor Guangxu to reform the Manchu dynasty from within. Spearheaded by Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, the reforms were blocked by Dowager Empress Cixi.

**Hundred Flowers campaign (1956–1957):** Mao Zedong's invitation to Chinese intellectuals to freely air grievances. When complaints turned to attacks on the CCP, Mao launched the Anti-Rightist Rectification movement.

**information revolution:** The rapid spread of new electronic means of communication since the 1980s, marked by the proliferation of cell phones and Internet use.

**iron rice bowl:** The policy of providing lifetime employment and welfare benefits to Chinese state employees. This policy was gradually restricted in the 1980s and eliminated in the 1990s.

**Jiangxi (Kiangsi) Soviet Republic (1930–1934):** The Red Army regional base in South China led by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De.

**Jinggangshan:** The Red Army's mountainous revolutionary base along the Hunan-Jiangxi border, from 1927 to 1928.

**Jingjing and Chacha:** Pop-up cartoon police icons that appear on Chinese websites to remind Internet users to avoid controversial sites and subjects.

**Joint Declaration on Hong Kong:** The 1984 agreement signed by Britain and China promising that Hong Kong could retain its economic, administrative, and legal institutions for 50 years after reunification with China.

**Keynesian stimulus:** An economic policy geared to combat recession by pumping money into the economy via low interest rates, government jobs, and infrastructure investment.

**Khmer Rouge**: The radical Cambodian Communist movement that seized power in 1975 and then imposed a reign of terror, killing upward of 1 million people.

**land reform**: The Maoist policy of confiscating the land of wealthy landowners and distributing it to poor peasants. The policy was first introduced in Jiangxi Soviet in 1930–1934 and extended nationwide in 1950–1952.

**laobaixing**: Ordinary Chinese people (literally, “old hundred names”).

**Legalism**: A classical Chinese philosophical doctrine that stresses the vital importance of laws, regulations, and punishments in regulating human society.

**Lin Biao affair** (September 1971): An aborted coup attempt allegedly masterminded by Lin Biao, which ended with Lin and his wife dying in a plane crash in Mongolia.

**Little Red Book** (a.k.a. *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*): A collection of Maoist sayings and writings that was distributed widely to soldiers and students in 1964 and 1965.

**Lushan Plenum** (July–August 1959): The party conference at which Mao Zedong angrily attacked critics of the Great Leap Forward and purged Peng Dehuai.

**Macartney Mission** (1793): The failed trade mission sent by King George III of England to open normal trade relations with China.

**Malthusian crisis**: A hypothesis by Thomas Malthus that holds that increases in human reproduction eventually outstrip increases in economic productivity, leading to rising human immiseration.

**Manchu dynasty** (a.k.a. **Qing dynasty**; 1644–1911): The last imperial dynasty, imposed by conquest from Manchuria.

**Manchukuo** (1931–1945): The puppet Japanese regime in Manchuria that was nominally headed by China’s “last emperor,” Puyi.

**Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams:** Led by the PLA, these disciplinary teams entered schools and factories throughout China in August 1968 to suppress factional violence and punish recalcitrant Red Guards and rebels.

**Marco Polo Bridge incident** (July 1937): Gunfire erupted between Japanese and GMD soldiers at this bridge west of Beijing, providing a pretext for the Japanese invasion.

**Marshall Mission** (December 1945–January 1947): After Japan’s defeat, Truman sent General George C. Marshall to Chongqing in a futile attempt to convince the CCP and GMD to form a coalition government.

**May 4<sup>th</sup> movement** (1919): Angry Chinese students and workers protested against the terms of the Versailles Treaty, marking the birth of modern Chinese nationalism.

**middle characters:** Literary reference in the early 1960s to ordinary people who are neither heroes nor villains; tacitly antithetical to socialist realism.

**Middle Kingdom:** This literal translation of “Zhongguo” (China) refers to the traditional Chinese belief in a Sinocentric universe.

**migrant workers:** *See floating population.*

**modern revisionism:** The Maoist charge that Nikita Khrushchev and his successors abandoned revolutionary Leninism in favor of peaceful coexistence and restoring capitalism in the USSR.

**most-favored nation:** A principle written into mid-19<sup>th</sup> century unequal treaties granting signatory foreign powers all rights and concessions granted to others in China.

**mutual aid** (1952–1953): The first stage of agricultural collectivization, marked by small-scale, seasonal sharing of tools, animals, and labor by six or eight neighboring families.

**Nanjing decade** (1927–1937): A shorthand term for the decade of GMD rule under Chiang K'ai-shek prior to the Japanese invasion.

**Nanjing Massacre** (a.k.a. **Rape of Nanjing**; December 1937): The invading Japanese army launched a brutal campaign of terrorism against civilians in which more than 100,000 people were murdered and thousands of women were raped and sexually mutilated.

**National Party Congress**: The highest policy-making body of the CCP, its functions are mainly ceremonial. It meets every four years to elect the Party Central Committee and Politburo.

**National People's Congress (NPC)**: China's highest law-making body. Indirectly elected and led by the Communist Party, it lacks independent legislative power.

**New Culture movement** (1920s): An offshoot of the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement that witnessed the emergence of a Chinese literary renaissance.

**Nian Rebellion** (1853–1868): A massive peasant rebellion triggered by the extensive collapse of imperial flood-control works and subsequent famine in the Yellow River region.

**Northern Expedition** (1926–1927): Chiang K'ai-shek's successful military campaign, launched in cooperation with the CCP, to defeat the warlords and establish a unified government.

**one-China principle**: China's insistence that Taiwan is an integral part of China and can never be separated from it.

**“one country, two systems”**: The slogan coined by Deng Xiaoping in the early 1980s, promising substantial autonomy for Taiwan and Hong Kong after reunification with China.

**“one divides into two”**: The radical Maoist thesis that all antagonistic contradictions are zero-sum struggles, resulting in victory by one side or the other. *See also “two combine into one.”*

**open cities**: Fourteen Chinese cities that in 1984 were granted discretionary authority to make trade and investment decisions without central authorization.

**Open Door policy** (1898): The policy initiated by President William McKinley that was designed to morally restrain foreign powers from dominating China and to maintain equal access among foreign countries.

**Opium Wars**: Wars launched by European powers in 1839 and 1856 to punish the Manchu government for restricting foreign commercial access to China.

**parliamentary road to socialism**: Nikita Khrushchev’s thesis that socialism could be achieved without violent revolution in the age of nuclear weapons. Mao Zedong rejected this thesis as “revisionist.”

**peaceful evolution**: China’s fear that Western countries will undermine Communism by introducing bourgeois culture, values, and institutions.

**people’s democratic dictatorship**: The Maoist form of government involving multiclass dictatorship over class enemies. *See also dictatorship of the proletariat.*

**people’s war**: The Maoist doctrine of guerrilla warfare, which emphasizes tactical mobility, flexibility, and the benevolent treatment of the peasant population. *See also three-eight work style.*

**Petitioners’ movement**: The protest movement organized by Fu Yuehua in the winter of 1979 to give voice to victims of Cultural Revolution persecution.

**ping-pong diplomacy** (April 1971): Term used for the U.S. table-tennis team's visit to Beijing at Zhou Enlai's invitation, which inaugurated the Sino-American détente.

**PLA**: People's Liberation Army, the army of the People's Republic of China.

**poisonous weeds**: Mao Zedong's 1957 characterization of art and literature that served to undermined socialism, CCP leadership, or Marxism-Leninism.

**Politburo**: The small executive body elected by the Party Congress that is the CCP's center of power. It meets frequently and exercises responsibility for party policies when the Central Committee is not in session.

**PRC**: People's Republic of China.

**Qing dynasty** (1644–1911): *See Manchu dynasty.*

**Qingming Incident**: *See Tiananmen Incident.*

**Rape of Nanjing**: *See Nanjing Massacre.*

**Red Guards** (a.k.a. *hongweibing*): High school and college students mobilized by Maoists in 1966 to launch attacks on "bourgeois powerholders."

**Republic of China (ROC)**: The government founded by Sun Yat-sen in 1912 and transformed by Chiang K'ai-shek after 1927. The ROC was exiled to Taiwan in 1949.

**Republican Revolution**: *See Xinhai Revolution.*

**responsible stakeholder**: Term coined in 2005 by Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick to describe the United States' preferred role for China in world affairs.

**revolutionary rebels:** Nonstudent activists in the Cultural Revolution, including workers and peasants.

**rural people's communes:** First introduced in 1958, these communes encompassed as many as 10,000 families, all of whom shared equally in communal income and contributed voluntary labor to backyard steelmaking and other nonagricultural tasks.

**Rustication movement:** *See “up to the mountains, down to the villages.”*

***sanmin zhuyi:*** *See Three People’s Principles.*

**SARS epidemic:** The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome that hit China in the winter of 2003, killing hundreds and causing brief panic.

**scar literature:** *See wounded literature.*

**“seek truth from facts”:** The slogan used by Deng Xiaoping to attack Hua Guofeng’s slavish devotion to the words of Mao Zedong.

**Self-Strengthening movement (a.k.a. Tongzhi Restoration; 1862–1875):** A reform movement initiated by Manchu Prince Gong, designed to defend China against foreigners by studying the secrets of Western military success.

**Shanghai communique** (February 1972): The document signed by Richard Nixon and Zhou Enlai establishing the one-China policy as the basis for normalizing U.S.-China ties.

**Silk Road:** The network of ancient trade routes linking western China to the Near and Middle East.

**Singapore model:** The Chinese goal of emulating Singapore by creating an affluent, orderly, law-abiding authoritarian society with few democratic checks and balances.

**Socialist Education movement** (a.k.a. **Four Cleanups movement**; 1962–1965): Mao Zedong’s attempt to launch a mass campaign to inoculate peasants, workers, and cadres against class enemies seeking a “capitalist restoration.”

**socialist realism:** The Stalinist notion, endorsed by Mao Zedong, that art and literature should glorify the working classes and expose the evil machinations of class enemies.

**soft power:** International influence gained through exemplary behavior, cooperativity, and moral suasion.

**Son of Heaven (*tianzi*):** The Chinese emperor’s official title, implying an inclusive Sinocentric world order.

**Southern Tour (*nanxun*):** Deng Xiaoping’s emergency five-city tour of prosperous coastal zones in January 1992, undertaken to rekindle support for his economic reforms and open policy.

**Special Economic Zones:** Four coastal ports in Southeast China—Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Xiamen, and Zhanjiang—became experimental export-processing zones in 1980 as part of Deng Xiaoping’s “open policy.”

**spiritual pollution:** In the early 1980s, CCP conservatives used this term to criticize Western cultural influences as decadent, immoral, and materialistic.

**state-owned enterprises (SOEs):** The backbone of China’s socialist industrial economy. Under Zhu Rongji, SOEs were consolidated and converted to shareholding enterprises.

**Taiping Heavenly Kingdom** (1853–1864): A rebel state encompassing several provinces and tens of millions of uprooted peasants, with its capital in Nanjing. Founded by Christian zealot Hong Xiuquan.

**Taiwan Relations Act** (April 1979): The U.S. congressional act clarifying the nature of continuing U.S. economic, cultural, and military ties with Taiwan.

**10,000-yuan households:** The first group of affluent Chinese entrepreneurs to accumulate substantial private wealth in the 1980s.

**Tet Offensive** (February 1968): Ho Chi Minh's massive, unexpected offensive against South Vietnamese cities. Opposed by China as "premature," the offensive achieved a moral victory, demonstrating U.S. military vulnerability.

**Third Plenum** (December 1978): This historic Central Committee meeting is celebrated as the birthplace of Chinese "reform and opening up" under Deng Xiaoping.

**Three Anti and Five Anti campaigns** (1950–1953): Mass campaigns aimed at combating corruption, waste, tax evasion, bribery, and theft of state secrets, *inter alia*.

**three-eight work style:** The Maoist code of ethical conduct for Red Army soldiers and CCP cadres, first introduced in the 1930s. *See also people's war.*

**Three-Family Village:** A collective writing group in the early 1960s that published veiled satirical commentaries poking fun at Mao Zedong's personal foibles.

**three hard years** (1959–1961): The period of maximum rural hunger and starvation during the Great Leap Forward.

**three links:** In 2008–2009, direct shipping, postal, and communications links were established for the first time between China and Taiwan.

**Three People's Principles** (*sanmin zhuyi*): Sun Yat-sen's political platform, which calls for democracy, national independence, and people's livelihood.

**Tiananmen Incident** (a.k.a. **Qingming Incident**; April 1976): Funeral wreaths placed in Tiananmen Square in memory of Zhou Enlai were quietly removed, setting off angry demonstrations the next day. Jiang Qing blamed Deng Xiaoping for the disturbance.

**Treaty of Beijing** (1860): The treaty signed after Franco-British forces destroyed the Summer Palace in Beijing.

**Treaty of Nanking** (1842): The first of several unequal 19<sup>th</sup>-century treaties granting concessions to foreign powers.

**tributary trade system**: The traditional hierarchical system of Chinese external relations wherein foreign kings provided periodic gifts in exchange for benevolent Chinese treatment.

**21 Demands** (1915): The Japanese attempt to close the “open door” by demanding exclusive industrial and commercial rights in China.

“two combine into one”: The philosophical premise promoted by liberal intellectuals in the early 1960s, holding that antagonistic contradictions could be peacefully reconciled. *See also “one divides into two.”*

**unequal treaties**: Treaties imposed on the Manchu dynasty after the Opium Wars that granted major concessions to foreign powers.

**united front**: A Comintern tactic, later adopted by Mao Zedong, encouraging former enemies to unite against common foes. The first GMD-CCP united front (1923–1927) opposed warlords; the second united front (1937–1945) opposed Japan.

**up to the mountains, down to the villages** (*shangshan, xiāxiāng*): The Maoist rustication movement of late 1968 that urged urban youths to resettle in the countryside to learn humility and discipline from peasants.

**U.S.-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty**: Signed in 1954, this treaty bound the United States to defend Taiwan. It was cancelled by the United States in 1979.

**Velvet Revolution** (1989–1991): The sudden, peaceful collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, culminating in the disintegration of the USSR.

**warlord era** (1916–1926): The period after the death of Yuan Shikai during which regional militarists ruled independent provincial kingdoms. Warlord armies were defeated by Chiang K'ai-shek's Northern Expedition of 1926–1927.

**Whampoa Academy**: The military academy founded in Canton by Sun Yat-sen in 1924 to train the Revolutionary Army.

**whatever faction**: The sobriquet given to Hua Guofeng's supporters in 1977, referring to their habit of blindly upholding whatever Mao Zedong said or did.

**White Lotus Rebellion** (1796–1799): A peasant rebellion against excessive imperial grain taxes in Central China.

**“With you in charge, I’m at ease” (*Ni banshi, wo fangxin*)**: Mao Zedong’s April 1976 bequest to Hua Guofeng, anointing Hua as the his successor.

**“women with bound feet”**: Classical Maoist reference to conservative cadres who are afraid to boldly innovate.

**work teams**: The traditional CCP method of solving social and organizational problems by sending teams of party and government workers to basic-level units to investigate local conditions. Criticized by Mao Zedong in 1966 for “suppressing the masses.”

**wounded literature** (a.k.a. **scar literature**): Essays and novels published in the early 1980s depicting the suffering endured by the Chinese people during the Cultural Revolution.

**Xi'an Incident** (December 1936): GMD General Zhang Xueliang kidnapped Chiang K'ai-shek and held him hostage to end GMD-CCP hostilities and create an anti-Japan united front.

**Xidan Wall**: *See Democracy Wall.*

**Xingzhong Hui (Awaken China Society):** Organized by Sun Yat-sen in 1894, this society aimed at radical, Western-style reform of the Manchu dynasty.

**Xinhai Revolution:** On October 10, 1911, revolutionary agents in Wuhan's imperial garrison mutinied, triggering the collapse of the Manchu dynasty.

**Yalta Conference** (February 1945): The wartime meeting of Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill, and Franklin D. Roosevelt that paved the way for the Soviet war declaration against Japan and postwar partition of Korea.

**Yan'an Forum** (1942): A lecture series by Mao Zedong that stressed the class content of art and literature, followed by the rectification of “incorrect ideas” within the CCP.

**Yan'an spirit:** Reference to the high morals, devotion to duty, and unity of leadership demonstrated by the CCP during the anti-Japanese War, 1937–1945.

**Yinhe:** A Chinese cargo ship suspected of carrying chemical weapons to the Middle East in 1993. The ship was searched at the behest of the U.S. CIA, but no weapons were found.

**Yuanmingyuan:** The Manchu Summer Palace in Beijing, which was destroyed by the British and the French in 1860.

**Zhongguo Tongmeng Hui (China Alliance Society):** Sun Yat-sen's renamed revolutionary movement, formed in 1904.

**Zhongnanhai:** The Beijing residential compound for top-level party and government leaders. Mao Zedong met Richard Nixon there in 1972.

## Biographical Notes

**Bo Yibo** (1908–2007): One of eight original CCP “immortals.” A top economic planner, Bo was among the first to concede the tragic death toll of the Great Leap Forward. He was imprisoned and beaten repeatedly by Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution.

**Brzezinski, Zbigniew** (b. 1928): President Jimmy Carter’s national security advisor, Brzezinski championed the normalization of relations with China as a counterweight to rising Soviet expansionism.

**Chen Duxiu** (1879–1942): A leading intellectual in the May 4<sup>th</sup> era, Chen launched the influential *New Youth* magazine and cofounded the CCP (with Li Dazhao). Chen was expelled from the CCP in 1929 as a “Trotskyite.”

**Chen Gongbo** (1892–1946): A founding member of the CCP, Chen quit the party in 1922 and joined the Guomindang. After the Japanese invasion, Chen collaborated with Japan. At war’s end, he was tried as a traitor and executed by firing squad.

**Chen Shui-bian** (b. 1951): A vocal supporter of Taiwan independence and the president of the Republic of China from 2000 to 2008. His Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) ended a half-century of GMD rule in Taiwan, but his provocative proindependence rhetoric angered Beijing and irritated Washington. Chen and his wife were convicted of bribery and embezzlement in 2009 and sentenced to life in prison.

**Chen Yun** (1905–1995): A veteran party leader and top economic planner who in 1978 led the campaign to reinstate Deng Xiaoping. The two later split when the more conservative Chen rejected Deng’s “capitalist” methods.

**Chennault, Claire** (1893–1958): A U.S. Air Force officer who formed a squadron of volunteer American fighter pilots known as the Flying Tigers in Chongqing during World War II.

**Chiang Ching-kuo** (1910–1988): The son of Chiang K'ai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo became president of the Republic of China upon his father's death in 1975. He is best known for ending the civil war with the People's Republic of China and introducing democratic reforms in Taiwan in 1987.

**Chiang K'ai-shek** (1887–1975): The leader of the GMD after Sun Yat-sen's death, Chiang led the Northern Expedition to end warlordism. An ardent anti-Communist, Chiang sought to destroy the CCP at all costs—even while tolerating early Japanese encroachments. After World War II, Chiang suffered a humiliating defeat by Mao Zedong's PLA; Chiang fled to Taiwan in December 1949.

**Cixi** (1835–1908): This archconservative dowager empress dominated Manchu court politics in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Operating behind the scenes, she effectively manipulated youthful emperors and undermined all efforts at reform.

**Deng Liqun** (b. 1915): A leading CCP propagandist and hard-line opponent of liberal reform. Deng led the 1983 campaign to combat “spiritual pollution” and in 1991 spearheaded the drive to roll back Deng Xiaoping’s “capitalistic” economic reforms.

**Deng Xiaoping** (1904–1997): A veteran CCP leader and economic pragmatist, Deng introduced sweeping market reforms after Mao Zedong's death. Twice purged as a “revisionist,” Deng supplanted Hua Guofeng as China's top leader in December 1978. Best known for his 1962 slogan: “It doesn't matter if the cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice.”

**Elliot, George** (1784–1863): Admiral who commanded the British naval force in Canton in 1839–1840. Seeking retribution for Lin Zexu's seizure of British opium, Elliot engaged his warships in a show of military force, precipitating the First Opium War.

**Fang Lizhi** (b. 1936): Former Professor of Astrophysics and vice president of China's University of Science and Technology. Fang's liberal political ideas inspired prodemocracy student demonstrations in 1986 and 1989. Expelled from the CCP in 1987, Fang sought asylum in the U.S. embassy in Beijing in June 1989.

**Fu Yuehua** (b. c. 1947): An unemployed female factory worker who organized the January 1979 Petitioners' movement among victims of leftist persecution in the Cultural Revolution. Fu was arrested and sentenced to three years in jail.

**George III** (1738–1820): The king of England who sent a high-level trade mission, led by Lord George Macartney, to the court of Emperor Qianlong in 1793.

**Gong, Prince** (1833–1898): The principal patron of the Self-Strengthening movement of the 1860s, Gong promoted educational reforms and foreign military technology, thereby running afoul of Cixi.

**Guangxu** (1871–1908): Influenced by liberal intellectuals Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, this youthful Manchu emperor introduced 40 major domestic reforms in 1898. He was deposed and imprisoned by Cixi following the Hundred Days of Reform.

**Hong Xiuquan** (1814–1864): The charismatic founder and delusional leader of the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864). Hong believed himself to be the brother of Jesus Christ and ruled the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom until his death in 1864.

**Hu Jintao** (b. 1942): A former party secretary in Tibet and Gansu Province, Hu has been the CCP general secretary since 2002. A colorless technocrat with a low-key leadership style, Hu is politically moderate and is a vocal supporter of the goal of a “harmonious society.”

**Hu Shih** (1891–1962): An American-educated philosopher, Hu was a leading figure in China's literary renaissance during and after the May 4<sup>th</sup> era.

**Hu Yaobang** (1915–1989): A second-generation party leader and pre-Cultural Revolution head of the CCP Youth League. A liberal who actively supported Deng Xiaoping's reforms, Hu was tabbed to succeed Hua Guofeng as party chief in 1982. Hu was later forced out by hard-liners in 1987, and his sudden death in April 1989 triggered the Tiananmen student protests.

**Hua Guofeng** (1921–2008): An unheralded party secretary from Hunan, Hua rose to become the dark horse successor to both Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong in 1976. He was eased out of power by Deng Xiaoping in 1978.

**Hurley, Patrick** (1883–1963): As President Franklin D. Roosevelt's personal representative in Chongqing from 1944 to 1945, Ambassador Hurley replaced the ascerbic General Joseph Stilwell.

**Jiang Qing** (1914–1991): Mao Zedong's fourth wife and a former movie actress, Jiang met and married Mao in Yan'an in 1938. She became China's culture czar during the Cultural Revolution, instigating Red Guards to attack "powerholders." She was convicted of murder and treason in 1980 and hanged herself in her prison cell in 1991.

**Jiang Zemin** (b. 1926): This former Shanghai party secretary was brought to Beijing in May 1989 to replace the discredited Zhao Ziyang as CCP general secretary. Jiang is best known for his 2001 "theory of the three represents," which encouraged Chinese capitalists to join the CCP. He retired in 2003.

**Kang Sheng** (1898–1975): The sinister head of Mao Zedong's internal security and intelligence apparatus, Kang gained influence by compiling confidential dossiers on thousands of party officials from the 1930s to the 1970s.

**Kang Youwei** (1858–1927): Kang was the leading liberal reformer in the last decades of the Qing dynasty. He persuaded Emperor Guangxu in 1898 to introduce major innovations in education, civil service exams, medical training, and foreign affairs.

**Khrushchev, Nikita** (1894–1971): The Soviet party leader after Joseph Stalin, Khrushchev drew Mao Zedong's ire as a "revisionist" for criticizing Stalin's personality cult and reversing Vladimir Lenin's theory of inevitable war with imperialism.

**Kissinger, Henry** (b. 1923): The national security advisor and later secretary of state under Richard Nixon, Kissinger initiated the U.S.-China rapprochement when he secretly flew to Beijing in July 1971 to meet with Zhou Enlai.

**Lee Teng-hui** (b. 1923): The first popularly elected president of the Republic of China. A native Taiwanese, Lee served as president from 1988 to 2000, presiding over Taiwan's democratic reforms and advocating Taiwan independence. Lee split from the GMD after the 2000 presidential election.

**Lei Feng** (1940–1962): This martyred PLA conscript typified Maoist virtues of self-sacrifice and “serving the people.” When Lei’s diary was published posthumously in 1962, he became a national hero.

**Li Dazhao** (1889–1927): Head librarian at Peking University, he was a cofounder of the CCP and an early mentor to Mao Zedong. When Chiang K’ai-shek turned against the CCP in 1927, Li was executed.

**Li Hongzhang** (1823–1901): Li fought alongside Zeng Guofan to suppress the Taiping Rebellion. During the Self-Strengthening movement, Li established China’s first modern arsenals, copying Western designs.

**Li Peng** (b. 1928): A hydraulic engineer by training, Li was the Chinese premier from 1987 to 1998. A hard-liner, he criticized Zhao Ziyang’s “wavering” attitude toward the 1989 student protests and urged a military crackdown on the demonstrators.

**Liang Qichao** (1873–1929): This student of Kang Youwei worked with Kang to enact the reforms of 1898. Both men fled to Japan in 1898 after Cixi suppressed the reforms and imprisoned Emperor Guangxu.

**Lin Biao** (1907–1971): A senior PLA general and longtime confidant of Mao Zedong, Lin became defense minister after Peng Dehuai’s purge in 1959. Lin died in a plane crash in 1971 following an alleged attempt to assassinate Mao.

**Lin Zexu** (1785–1850): The imperial commissioner appointed by the Manchu emperor in 1838. Lin sought to suppress the British opium trade in Canton (Guangzhou). His efforts triggered the First Opium War in 1839.

**Liu Shaoqi** (1898–1969): A CCP organizational specialist and one of Mao Zedong’s top lieutenants, Liu became Mao’s heir apparent in the mid-1950s. Teaming with Deng Xiaoping to dismantle Mao’s Great Leap Forward in 1958–1962, Liu was later accused of “taking the capitalist road.” He was purged by Mao in 1966 and died in captivity in 1969.

**Lo Ruiqing** (1906–1978): As the PLA chief of staff, Lo criticized Mao Zedong’s personality cult. During the Cultural Revolution, Lo was dismissed for calling the national fetish of reciting Mao’s quotations “a needless exercise.”

**Lu Ping** (b. 1927): As the president of Peking University, Lu was severely attacked by Red Guards in 1966 for “stifling the mass movement” at the outset of the Cultural Revolution.

**Ma Ying-jeou** (b. 1950): This Harvard-trained lawyer and former GMD mayor of Taipei was elected president of the Republic of China in 2008. Ma is opposed to both Taiwan independence and reunification with China and has forged closer economic ties with China.

**MacArthur, Douglas** (1880–1964): General MacArthur was the commander of UN forces in Korea from 1950 to 1951. Insisting on “total victory,” he ran afoul of President Harry S. Truman, who fired him for insubordination in April 1951.

**Macartney, George** (1737–1806): The emissary who led the failed British trade delegation from King George III to the court of Qianlong in 1793. Lord Macartney offended the emperor by refusing to perform the traditional kowtow.

**Mao Zedong** (1893–1976): Political theorist, military strategist, and chairman of the CCP Central Committee from 1935 until his death, Mao adapted Vladimir Lenin’s theory of proletarian revolution to the needs of China’s rural society. He defeated Chiang K’ai-shek in China’s civil war and led the People’s Republic of China for 40 years. His radical policies in the 1950s and 1960s caused enormous suffering, leading to major reforms in the 1980s.

**Marshall, George C.** (1880–1959): Sent to China by President Harry S. Truman in December 1945, General Marshall tried without success to forge a coalition government between the CCP and the GMD.

**Nie Yuanzi** (b. 1921): A female philosophy instructor, Nie put up a wall poster at Peking University in May 1966, challenging the university's ban on wall posters and mass meetings. Mao Zedong endorsed her poster, praising her as a “true revolutionary.”

**Peng Dehuai** (1898–1974): An outspoken PLA general and China’s defense minister, Peng was purged by Mao Zedong in 1959 for criticizing the Great Leap Forward.

**Peng Zhen** (1902–1997): A veteran CCP revolutionary and mayor of Beijing. Peng was purged by Mao Zedong in 1966 for protecting Wu Han against leftist criticism. He was rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978.

**Puyi** (1906–1967): China’s “last emperor.” As a toddler, he was placed on the Manchu throne as a figurehead by Cixi in 1908. Puyi was later installed by Japan as the puppet ruler of Manchukuo.

**Qianlong** (1711–1799): The fifth emperor of the Manchu (Qing) dynasty. He contemptuously rejected Lord Macartney’s 1793 request for normal trade relations, citing China’s “celestial supremacy.”

**Qin Shihuang Di** (c. 259–210 B.C.E.): The first unifier of the Chinese empire. Known for his cruelty, he burned Confucian books and buried Confucian scholars alive. Mao Zedong once boasted that when it comes to cruelty, “we surpass Qin Shihuang 100 times.”

**Qishan** (1790–1854): The Manchu imperial envoy known as the “manager of barbarians.” His diplomatic efforts to limit British military forays in 1840–1841 failed, and he suffered permanent exile.

**Qiying** (1787–1858): Qiying replaced Qishan as the chief Chinese “barbarian handler” in 1841. He employed dilatory tactics to slow British encroachments. Failing to deter Britain, he was recalled in disgrace.

**Song Jiaoren** (1882–1913): An expert on parliamentary government, Song was the first prime minister of the Republic of China. A year after he orchestrated the GMD’s first electoral campaign in 1912, he was assassinated on Yuan Shikai’s orders.

**Soong Ching-ling** (1893–1981): The American-educated second wife of Sun Yat-sen. She was the daughter of Sun’s key financial backer, Charlie Soong, and the sister of Soong Mei-ling (Madame Chiang K’ai-shek).

**Soong Mei-ling** (1897–2003): The younger sister of Soong Ching-ling, and wife of Chiang K’ai-shek. Educated in the United States, she acted as a go-between in the early 1940s, rallying the support of the American people for China’s struggle against Japan.

**Stilwell, Joseph W.** (1883–1946): A much-decorated war hero, General “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell was sent by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to Chongqing in 1942 to train Chiang K’ai-shek’s army. Increasingly critical of Chiang’s ineffective performance, Stilwell was recalled in 1944.

**Sun Yat-sen** (1866–1925): A medical doctor trained in Hawaii and Hong Kong, Sun led efforts to overthrow the Manchu dynasty. When the dynasty collapsed in 1911, Sun founded China’s first modern political party, the Guomindang, and became the first president of the Republic of China. He is revered as the father of modern China.

**Tian Jiyun** (b. 1929): A liberal reformer who was vice-premier under Zhao Ziyang in the 1980s. Tian gained notoriety in 1992 for his satirical critique of China’s conservative hard-liners. Calling for creation of a “special zone” for opponents of reform, Tian promised them rigid state planning, rationing, long food lines, and no foreign travel.

**Wang Dan** (b. 1969): A leader of the Tiananmen student protest movement of 1989. Wang was arrested shortly after June 4 and served four years in prison before being granted compassionate release. He later earned a Ph.D. in History from Harvard University.

**Wang Dongxing** (b. 1916): Mao Zedong's principal bodyguard during the Cultural Revolution, Wang was subsequently put in charge of the Central Committee's archives. After Mao's death, he blew the whistle on Jiang Qing for attempting to usurp power.

**Wang Guangmei** (1921–2006): The glamorous wife of Liu Shaoqi, Wang was envied and resented by Jiang Qing. In 1967, Wang was tricked into leaving her Zhongnanhai sanctuary and was captured by Red Guards, who publicly humiliated her.

**Wang Hongwen** (1935–1992): A Shanghai factory security officer and revolutionary rebel, Wang rose during the Cultural Revolution to become vice chairman of the CCP Central Committee at age 35. He was arrested in 1976 as a member of the Gang of Four.

**Wang Jingwei** (1883–1944): He was initially a leader of the left wing of the GMD, but Wang's disdain for Chiang K'ai-shek led him to collaborate with the invading Japanese in 1937. Wang died in disgrace in Japan at the end of World War II.

**Wang Ming** (1904–1974): Mao Zedong's pro-Stalinist rival in the early 1930s. His policies were discredited by Mao at the start of 1934's Long March. After three decades in the USSR, Wang was publicly lauded in 1968 by the Soviets, who heralded him as the "true" leader of the CCP.

**Wang Zhen** (1908–1993): This foul-mouthed, hard-line PLA general was a stern critic of the student demonstrations in 1989. He was known as "Big Cannon" Wang.

**Ward, Frederick Townsend** (1831–1862): An American soldier of fortune hired to recruit and train foreign mercenaries to help suppress the Taiping Rebellion. Ward was fatally wounded at the battle of Cixi in 1862.

**Wei Jingsheng** (b. 1950): An electrician by training, Wei became active in the Democracy Wall movement of 1978, authoring a series of controversial wall posters, including a critique of Deng Xiaoping's "dictatorial tendencies." Wei was imprisoned in 1979.

**Wen Jiabao** (b. 1942): China's premier since 2003. His warm personality complements Hu Jintao's more detached style. Mentored by Zhu Rongji, Wen has a populist approach and preference for welfare economics over unrestrained capitalism that have endeared him to ordinary Chinese.

**Wu Han** (1909–1969): A playwright, historian, and deputy mayor of Beijing. His writing group published essays critical of Mao Zedong in 1961–1962. His 1961 opera *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* was an allegorical criticism of Mao's 1959 purge of Peng Dehuai.

**Wu Shuqing** (b. 1932): A conservative who was appointed president of Peking University after the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown. Wu opposed renewed economic reforms he claimed would promote inflation, inequality, and unemployment.

**Wu'er Kaixi** (b. 1968): A college student of Uyghur ethnicity who gained prominence in the 1989 Tiananmen protests as a leader of the student hunger strike. Wu'er enraged Chinese premier Li Peng by rebuking him on national television.

**Yang Kaihui** (1901–1930): Mao Zedong's second wife and the daughter of Mao's favorite teacher. Yang joined the CCP in 1921. In 1930, she was captured, tortured, and executed by the GMD.

**Yao Wenyuan** (1931–2005): A member of the Gang of Four. Yao's November 1965 article attacking the Beijing Opera *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

**Yongle** (1360–1424): The third emperor of the Ming dynasty (r. 1402–1424). He commissioned seven major oceanic expeditions, led by the great Chinese navigator Zheng He. With Yongle's death in 1424, maritime exploration ceased for 400 years.

**Yuan Shikai** (1859–1916): The last commander of the Manchu imperial army. Yuan transferred his loyalty to Sun Yat-sen after the revolution of 1911, only to seize power from Sun a few months later. Yuan died after an unsuccessful attempt to restore the dynastic system.

**Zeng Guofan** (1811–1872): The commander of the imperial Hunan army that defeated the Taiping Rebellion. Zeng later became a leading figure in the Self-Strengthening movement.

**Zhang Chunqiao** (1917–2005): The party secretary of Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution, and member of the Gang of Four. Under Jiang Qing's patronage, Zhang became the leading figure in the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group. He was imprisoned in 1976.

**Zhang Tiesheng** (b. 1951): In 1973, this aspiring college entrant from Liaoning Province turned in a blank entrance exam, claiming his proletarian birthright entitled him to a college education. He was lionized by radical leftists but imprisoned after Mao Zedong's death.

**Zhang Xueliang** (1901–2001): Son of the assassinated Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, Zhang Xueliang was known as the Young Marshal. He led a mutiny against Chiang K'ai-shek in December 1936 (the Xi'an Incident), demanding a GMD-CCP united front to resist Japan.

**Zhang Zuolin** (1875–1928): This Manchu warlord ruled Manchuria from 1916 to 1928, when he was assassinated by a Japanese army officer. His son, Zhang Xueliang, famously kidnapped Chiang K'ai-shek in 1936.

**Zhao Ziyang** (1919–2005): The Chinese premier and general secretary of the CCP in the 1980s. He helped to design and implement Deng Xiaoping's market reforms. Zhao's prostudent sympathies during the 1989 Tiananmen protests angered Deng, resulting in Zhao's ouster and house arrest.

**Zheng He** (c. 1371–1433): A Hui Muslim and imperial eunuch, Zheng launched seven oceanic expeditions between 1405 and 1433. His fleet of 200 six-masted ships reached ports in Southeast Asia, India, Ceylon, the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and the Horn of Africa.

**Zhou Enlai** (1898–1976): The first premier and foreign minister of the People's Republic of China, Zhou was China's foremost diplomat. Ever loyal to Mao Zedong, he was the chairman's right-hand man and chief troubleshooter. Before succumbing to cancer, he paved the way for the Sino-U.S. détente.

**Zhu De** (1886–1976): Cofounder of the Chinese Red Army, Zhu helped turn the PLA into a well-disciplined guerrilla force. After 1949, he became the PLA's commander in chief and the CCP's vice chairman.

**Zhu Rongji** (b. 1928): As China's economic czar in the early 1990s, Zhu inherited a series of economic crises, including an excessive money supply, rising inflation, and chaotic financial markets. After achieving a successful soft landing, he was named premier in 1998. The unsung hero of China's economic miracle, Zhu restructured China's tax, banking, and state enterprise systems and steered China into the WTO.

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