Twentieth Century Chinese History

“From Mao, to Deng, to Jiang” (and now Hu)
Critical to understand China’s Geography:

China covers an area of about 9,572,900 sq km (3,696,100 sq miles), making it the third-largest country in the world. . . .

. . . but 90% of population lives on 1/6th of the area (rest is too mountains or a desert)

It is the most populous country in the world . . .
Here’s a little overview:

• Revolution (1911) and the Qing fall and a “republic” is formed by the Nationalists
• Nasty civil war in which Mao makes friends with the *peasants*.
• Briefly the Communists and Nationalists cooperate to fight the Japanese in WWII
• China become Communist (1949)

• Mao is in charge for a very long time – at first he thinks the Soviets are way cool and someone to follow (as the first commies)
• Sino-Soviet split. Then China becomes very Maoy and they go through two bizarre events the GLF(1958-1961) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)
Shang, Zhou, Qin, Han
Sui, Tang, Song

Yuan, Ming, Qing, Republic
Mao and Deng
SO part ONE: Decline of the Manchu

At the end of the 19th century, the Manchu (Qing) dynasty was decaying due to rebellion, evasion of taxes, a disastrous flood of the Yellow River, unfair and unequal treaties, and defeat by the Japanese in 1895. The dynasty was further weakened by imperialism (spheres of influence).
Formation of the Nationalists

Sun’s Three Principles of the People: San Min Zhu Yi

- Nationalism: get rid of Qing & Western powers
- Democracy: people are sovereign (want a parliamentary gov’t)
- Socialism (people’s livelihood): care for society –very vague/no land reform component

Note the slide’s not red!

1894: Sun Yat Sen formed the Kuomintang (KWOH MIN TANG) or Nationalist's People's party (or GMD)
The end of the Qing Dynasty and the establishment of a Republic

Yuan Shi Kai becomes President & is BAD – corruption, disbands parliament, starts wearing emperor-like robes!!

A poster that commemorates the permanent President of the Republic of China Yuan Shikai and the provisional President of the Republic Sun Yat-sen. "Chinese Republic forever" is a unconventional English translation of "Long Live the Republic of China.".
Warlord Period (1916-1927)

- Still technically a republic, but the warlords in charge of various provinces are strong.
- Not lots of fighting among them, but power is VERY decentralized & warlords amass armies/weapons for protection.
- Warlord over Beijing province is “leader” of China …and enters WWI on side of Allies in 1917.
- …leading to the May 4th movement protests, boycotts, strikes after the Treaty of Versailles gave the Japanese territory in China.
China entered WWI side of the Allies in 1917, on condition that all “German spheres of influence” be returned to China.

Japan also entered the war as an Allied power and annexed German spheres of influence.

At the Paris Peace conference, China demanded that all imperialist privileges be abolished.

The Allies ignored China. This led to the outbreak of the May 4th movement in China.

On May 4th, 1919 Beijing's students protested against the Versailles Peace Conference's decision to transfer former German concessions in China to Japan.

After more than a month the government gave way and refused to sign the peace treaty with Germany.
The nationalists have a hard time ruling and Chiang Kai Shek assumes control

- Sun Yat Sen dies in 1925--Chiang Kai Shek takes over Nationalists; he led the Republic of China from 1928 to 1975.

- Meanwhile, Japanese influence grows with new territory gained from WWI (21 Demands)
Nationalists under Chiang

Whereas Sun Yatsen wanted democracy, Chiang does not— he wanted a strong efficient gov't, but not democratic.

He reinterprets 3 principles as…

Nationalism: solidarity, loyalty, harmony (all very Confucian!)
Democracy: can’t do immediately, so must establish temporary martial law (that never actually ends, until 1975 in Taiwan)
People’s Livelihood: allow small scale capitalist enterprise

Nationalists ignore peasant discontent
throw out Western model AND the Marxist elements
fighting against growing Japanese encroachment

Chiang even forms a secret police to enforce his rule (“Blue Shirts”)
Founding of the Chinese Communist Party

- Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established by Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao in June 1921.
The Making of the PRC . . . Mao Zedong

Mao soon becomes the most important member . . .

And he develops:

Marxist

Leninist

Maoist thought
The most important thing to remember about Maoist thought

He has to adapt Marxism-Leninism to China's situation: underdeveloped, largely peasant and under siege ... a SINIFICATION of Marxism-Leninism occurs.

SO MAO IS PEASANTS. . .

And a belief in the power of the masses

Believes in permanent revolution (not just a historical progression like Marx) because society is rampant with contradictions & this will limit corruption/abuse of power
At first the Communists join with the GMD (because Comitern tells them to) and then they go to war with each other.

1927 Chiang Kai Shek kills many communists in a bloody execution--almost eliminates CCP.
The communists escape on a long march and a civil war begins b/w Communists and Nationalists

1934: "Long March" over 18 mountain ranges and 24 rivers go 6000 miles one year—10% survive
A Communist cadre leader addressing survivors of the Long March
Japanese Invasion – start of WW2

1937, Japan invades Nanjing (the Nationalists capital) – total warfare – “Rape of Nanjing” (destroy factories, kill civilians)

Over 200,000 murdered in 3 months
A sort of alliance forms to fight the Japanese invasion and creation of the state of Manchukuo: Puyi crowned as emperor in 1932.

Chiang and Mao met during the peace negotiation held from Aug 28, 1945 thru Oct 11, 1945 in the wartime capital of Chongqing, China to toast to the Chinese victory over Japan, but their shaky alliance was short-lived.

Japanese invasion and creation of the state of Manchukuo: Puyi crowned as emperor in 1932.
WWII’s over and the Civil War resumes

Soldiers of the victorious People's Liberation Army entered Beijing in June 1949.

Mao Proclaims the Establishment of the People’s Republic of China
Nationalists retreat to Taiwan; Mao wins mainland

The nationalists retreated in 1949

And both sides claim to rule China

Black dotted lines are political boundaries drawn by the ROC. The formal names of these political entities are in black text. Red solid lines are political boundaries drawn by the PRC. The formal names of these political entities are in red text. White areas represent the territories claimed by the ROC but not the PRC.
Made in China:

Not Yet Made in China:

Peace
In The
Taiwan Strait
Mao’s China

First. . . The Soviet Model: "lean to one side" 1949-1957

A meeting between Stalin and Mao Zedong after the CCP's 1949 victory over the KMT in the Chinese Civil War.
Lean to One Side: Industrialization and Land Reform

Emphasis on Industrialization, Collectivization and of course, 5 year plans

Encouraged peasants to “speak bitterness” against landowners in order to rout out bad/good landowners

Land Reform: redistribution!
Lean to One Side: Efforts to combat illiteracy

Fairly successful
Lean to One Side The Korean War

("Produce more! Contribute more!"),. This "Patriotic Pledge" starts with the call to "resist America and support Korea".
The New Marriage Law that was promulgated on 1 May 1950 gave women legal equality with men.

Lean to One Side “Women hold up Half the Sky”
But then . . . The Sino-Soviet split

"All people of the world unite, to overthrow American imperialism, to overthrow Soviet revisionism, to overthrow the reactionaries of all nations!" (text in italic corresponds to blackened characters)
Maoist Era 1958-1976 . . No more leaning

Two notable events: GLF and Cultural Revolution

And do we see a cult of personality thing going on?????
Mao orders a return to the countryside and the creation of small rural factories in a push to drive through industrialization more quickly. Between 1958-61, rural communes were encouraged to produce industrial products like steel and iron to the neglect of agricultural production. The result was widespread famine, with per capita grain consumption falling by 22% and millions of deaths.
China joins the Nuclear Club: 1964

The first Chinese atomic test (right), codenamed "596," took place at the Lop Nor Testing Ground on October 16, 1964. Mao Zedong HAD declared that nuclear weapons, and by extension the United States, were a "paper tiger," but that did not prevent him from pushing the Chinese nuclear program.
1966: Cultural Revolution:

1966-1976 Mao’s “revolution” which would purge the elder leaders and put in a younger generation whose zeal would not let the country self-destruct, as Mao felt had happened in the USSR which was taking the “revisionist road to capitalist restoration.” It leads to wide scale disruption of industry and agriculture as Mao orders a purge of right-wing elements in the Party. Many managers and intellectuals sent to the countryside for re-education. Open conflict within the party is only resolved after Mao’s death when the "gang of four" are deposed.

“Hold high the great red banner of Mao Zedong thought to wage the Great Proletarian Revolution to the end. Revolution is no crime. To rebel is justified. Ca 1966
In its first **stage**, 20 million or so high school and college students (the Red Guards) respond to Mao’s pronouncement that “it is right to rebel!” by going on a mass rampage destroying countless priceless historical artifacts and harassing, torturing and killing many 100s of people labeled “class enemies” and “capitalist roaders.” They particularly target intellectuals, officials and their families. Once the alleged “capitalist roaders” were removed from power, Mao and his radical allies introduced a range of policies aimed at making China a more purely socialist society. Thus art literature and drama were purged of all revisionist workers and strictly limited to depicting revolutionary themes. When schools reopened, procedures favoring applicants with worker or peasant backgrounds replaced grades or exams as the principle basis for university entrance.

Chinese poster saying: "Smash the old world / Establish a new world." Classical example of the Red art from the early Cultural Revolution. A worker (or possibly Red Guard) crushes the crucifix, Buddha and classical Chinese texts with his hammer; 1967
The **next phase** was a period of military domination when Mao decided to use the PLA to stop the Red Guard violence. The young rebels were sent to live and labor in the countryside where they were supposed to be reeducated by the peasants.

“Educated Youth must go to the countryside and learn from the poor and lower middle peasants”
The last phase followed an unsuccessful coup and it involved intense conflict between factions who wanted to keep the nation emphasizing the class struggle and permanent revolution (Gang of 4) and a more moderate faction who wanted to shift to economic modernization. (factions typical in communist history)

We must certainly wage the great struggle of criticizing and exposing the gang of 4 to the end. 1977
Ending: Mao died in 1976, the Gang of Four were arrested (after a succession crisis) and the CR was over.

Mao's body lies in state after his death on September 9, 1976.
China’s Revolutionary *Process*

- 1949 marked the end of the *political* revolution
- The *economic* revolution continued through the 1950s with the Great Leap Forward (which failed)
- Then, the *cultural* revolution to reform the people themselves (get rid of the ‘four olds’) and reflect the new socialist person

*So…how successful was the Chinese Revolutionary process? In what areas?? why??*
President Nixon meets with China's Communist Party Leader, Mao Tse-Tung, 02/29/1972
Economic Reform in China

Deng changes communism by “restructuring” the Chinese economy

“Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”

"to get rich is glorious"

“Black Cat, White Cat, it doesn’t matter as long as the cat catches mice”
Architect: Deng Xiaoping
Time: early 1980’s
Process of restructuring two fold

One: Decentralize the economy by

(A) Shifting authority for decision making from central bureaucrats to individual families (starting with the “household responsibility system), factory managers, local governments

(B) recognizing diverse forms of property rights

March 2004, NPC changed constitution so that it says “Citizen’s lawful private property is inviolable” and that the state will “protect private property and give compensation when it is confiscated” (do you get how un Marxist this is?????)

(C) Most prices set by supply and demand, not administrative decree

Note that this is limited Privatization: diminish (NOT eliminate) state owned factories
TWO: Open China to the outside world by . . .

(A) Increasing trade with a focus on “export lead” growth

(B) encouraging foreign investment
RESULTS

Consumer product growth

GDP grows

China joins the WTO

Foreigners invest more

US trade imbalance
More RESULTS

Rich/poor gap grows

Environmental Degredation

Rural/urban gap grows
Maybe perestroika but not glasnost
Lu Xiaobo, center, and Hu Yingying, right, undergraduates at Shanghai Normal University, monitor university Internet forums for signs of dissent. MAY 9, 2006 NYT

There are contested elections now at the village level

But there are also still restrictions on forming your own party, free access to the internet, forming a large spiritual group etc.

Reintroduction of “Public Shaming” Suspected prostitutes and a few men accused of being pimps were paraded through the streets of Shenzhen two weeks ago as part of a crackdown. Dec 13, 2006
Deng dies in 1997, but policies continued under Jiang Zemin and now Hu (who?)

A man walks past busts of former leaders Deng Xiaoping, left, and Mao Zedong, center, and current president and Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin.

nb: figures before 1978 less reliable
SOURCE: World Bank, Riskin, “China’s Political Economy”
Macao: Administered by Portugal until 1999, it was the oldest European colony in China, dating back to the 16th century (ah yes, the Iberian Century). The administrative power over Macau was transferred to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1999, and it is now one of two special administrative regions of the PRC, together with Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was a Crown colony of the United Kingdom from 1842 (hmmm what happened then?) until the transfer of sovereignty to the People's Republic of China in 1997. It operates under China's “one country-two systems” policy.
Overpoulation problems and the one child policy—adopted in 1979 (note that the birth rate was dropping already)—ahem—industrialization will do that