History 11B: History of China, 1000-2000

Terms and Names 3/4

The War of Resistance

First United Front, 1923-1927
Northern Expedition, 1926-1928
Nanjing Decade, 1927-1937
Long March, October 1934 - October 1935
Second United Front, 1937-1945
War of Resistance against Japan, 1937-1945
WWII in Europe, 1938-1945; U.S. involvement in WWII, 1941-1945

Guomindang 國民黨 (Nationalist Party): founded in 1912; led by Sun Yatsen and then later by Chiang Kai-shek.

Chinese Communist Party 共產黨 (CCP): founded in the French Concessions area in Shanghai in 1921; encouraged to work within the Guomindang party structure during the years of the First United Front; after the purge of the leftists in 1927, the party switches to a rural approach to revolution; CCP decimated in Shanghai by 1931; undertakes in the Long March from 1934-1935, which becomes a formative experience for the Party leadership; enters the Second United Front with the GMD to fight the War against Japan; emerges victorious from the Civil War in 1949.

Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蒋介石) (1887-1975): Military and political leader of the Guomindang following the death of Sun Yatsen; joined the Tongmenghui as a student in Japan prior to the 1911 Revolution; studies military training in the Soviet Union in 1923; later named leader of the Whampoa academy; launches the Northern Expedition to rid China of warlord control in 1926; by 1928 sets up a new political regime with its capital in Nanjing; following defeat in the civil war with the CCP in 1949, retreats (with his army) to Taiwan; remains leader of the Guomindang on Taiwan until his death in 1975.

Mao Zedong 毛泽東 (1893-1976): son of a rich peasant from Hunan; became an early member of the CCP under the influence of Li Daozhao; worked at the Library at Peking University; after 1927, he advocated a peasant line of revolution; rose to leadership in the party in the 1930s during the formative experience of the Long March; established the People’s Republic of China in 1949; the supreme political leader in China until his death in 1976.

Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (1898-1976): Important figure in the CCP; begins his political and military training at the Whampoa Academy; works in the propaganda department of the Guomindang during the years of the First United Front; heads up CCP in intelligence work in Shanghai from 1927-1931; joins the Jiangxi Soviet movement in the 1930s; becomes one of the most respected leaders of the CCP.

Chongqing 重慶: a city on the Yangzi River in Sichuan Province; serves as the wartime capital for the Nationalist government from 1937-1945; government bureaus, schools, businesses, etc. are relocated en masse to Chongqing after the Japanese invasion in 1937.

Yan’an 延安: communist base area in Shaanxi Province; the survivors of the Long March make this their headquarters; they set up schools and army training facilities here; the Eighth Route Army (baiyuan 八路軍), one of the two regiments of the Red Army, operates out of Yan’an. (The other Red Army Regiment is known as the New Fourth Army (xin sijun 新四軍), which is active in the Jiangxi/Yangzi River delta region.)
Manchurian (Mukden) Incident (九一八事件): Japanese forces blow up a section of railway line near the city of Mukden (Shenyang) in Manchuria on September 18, 1931; fighting breaks out between Chinese and Japanese troops after this; Japan uses this as a pretext to take over full military control of Manchuria.

Manchukuo 滿州國 (literally, “Land of the Manchus”: the puppet government set up by the Japanese in Manchuria in 1932; the deposed last emperor of the Qing, Aisin Gioro Henry Puyi 溥儀 (1906-1967) (who had been on the throne from age two to five between 1908-1911) is made the figurehead ruler of Manchukuo; this puppet government remains in place until the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1945.

Zhang Xueliang 張學良 (1901-2001): son of northern warlord Zhang Zuolin; inherits his father’s forces in Manchuria after the death of the elder Zhang by assassination in 1928; because the Japanese army in Manchuria was responsible for the assassination, Zhang Xueliang increasingly advocates for CCP-GMD cooperation in the fight against Japan; forces this by having Chiang captured in the Xi’an Incident in 1936.

Xi’an Incident 西安事變: In December 1936 Chiang Kai-shek is kidnapped by warlord and chief ally Zhang Xueliang and forced into cooperating with the CCP in a Second United Front to fight against Japan.

Marco Polo Bridge Incident: Japanese forces take the Marco Polo Bridge in the outskirts of Beijing on July 7, 1937; this incident is considered the formal start of the (2nd) Sino-Japanese War.

Rape of Nanjing: Japanese forces take the city of Nanjing on December 12, 1937; the rape, kill, burn, and pillage for seven weeks; estimated that 200,000 civilians were slaughtered; this is still a touchstone of controversy between China and Japan; right-wing politicians in Japan have tried to downplay the extent of the violence (some even denying that the atrocities ever happened); concerned Chinese citizens, Chinese governments, and overseas Chinese have argued that Japan has never adequately acknowledged its guilt in the war nor paid reparations for its actions.

Soong Meiling 宋美齡 (1897-2003): also known as Madam Chiang Kai-shek; American-educated and Christian-identified wife of Chiang Kai-shek; played an important role in securing U.S. support for China during the WWII; her older sister, Song Qingling 宋慶齡 (1893-1981), becomes the wife of Sun Yatsen; her brother, T.V. Soong 宋子文 (1894-1971) was an important industrialist and financial backer of the GMD government.

Joseph Stillwell: U.S. Army general in charge of U.S. forces in the China-Burma-India theater; liaison to Chiang Kai-shek during WWII; grows very critical of Chiang’s tactics in the war; later replaced by Albert Wedemeyer.