

China: A Framework for Understanding

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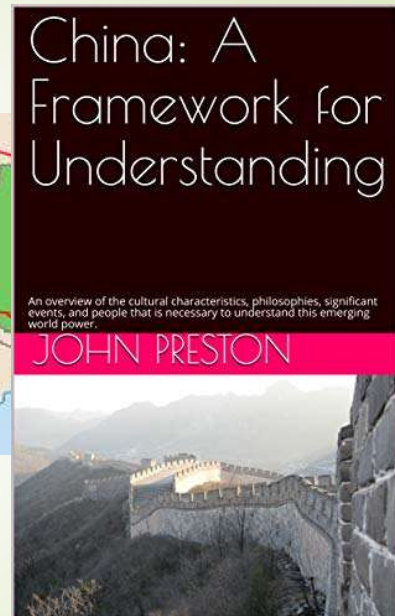


A few years ago, in my last year at the university, I developed a technology course designed to fulfil our new requirement in global awareness. Creating that course made it clear to me that there was a large gap in my education when it came to the far east. I decided that when I retired, I would begin by learning more about China. My goal was to identify a few of the most outstanding elements of Chinese history and culture that make it a unique country. I knew that the best way for me to understand something was to do the research and then organize my thoughts on a subject well enough to write about it.

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Where to Start?

- ▶ Peking Man: 300,000 years ago
- ▶ Geography: 3.7 million square miles
- ▶ Geographic features, language, philosophy, people, events
- ▶ Framework for Understanding



I soon realized that this was a vast undertaking. It was like drinking from a firehose. For example, how do you pick a few people if the *first person to live in this area was born 300,000 years ago?

*If I chose to travel there and explore the country and toured 10,000 square miles a day each day for a year, I wouldn't see all of it. I chose to focus on China's past because I had access to many books and articles that have been written about China that are available in electronic form in English.

*I chose to identify five items in five categories: Geographic features, language, philosophy, people, and events. I've described them and provided links to my sources in a book;

**China: A Framework for Understanding*. If you explore the same sources, you might come up with a different list, but I think you will find these to be fascinating. From this book, I've chosen a few of the most significant to share with you today. We will have time at the end of this presentation for questions and discussion. Please note the slide number so we can return to the relevant part.

Yellow River

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- ▶ Loess: Soft and easily eroded
- ▶ Muddy: 2 lb/ft³ (30x Mississippi)
- ▶ Floods, No port city
- ▶ Central government needed for flood control
- ▶ Chiang Kai-shek breaks dikes to slow Japanese advance in 1938
- ▶ Hundreds of thousands of peasants die of starvation



Let's begin with the Yellow river.

*Soil in the north is compacted dust, called **loess**, blown in from the Gobi desert to the north.

*Easily eroded by rainfall. The Yellow river has thirty times as much suspended mud as the Mississippi

*During periods of low flow, the mud deposits on the river bottom raising the surface in the next rainy season above the walls of the dikes. Frequent floods change the course of the river and where it enters the sea by hundreds of miles and buries nearby cities. As a result, it has no long-established port city near its mouth which limited China's relations with its overseas neighbors.

*Building and maintaining dikes and levees required strong, centralized government

*During WWII, Chiang Kai-shek breached the dikes to slow the advance of the Japanese invaders

*The flooding of cropland caused the starvation of hundreds of thousands of Chinese peasants in the North which damaged his relationship with them.

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Written Language:

- Symbolic
- Middle Kingdom
- An educated person knows 8,000 characters; 2,000 needed to read a newspaper
- One written language used since about 1,000 BCE



The Chinese language is very different from ours and has an interesting effect on their culture.

*Chinese characters represent entire words rather than a phonetic representation of a spoken language. We use similar symbols to represent concepts or sentences. *, *

*For example, these two characters are the name of China. They represent the words/ideas

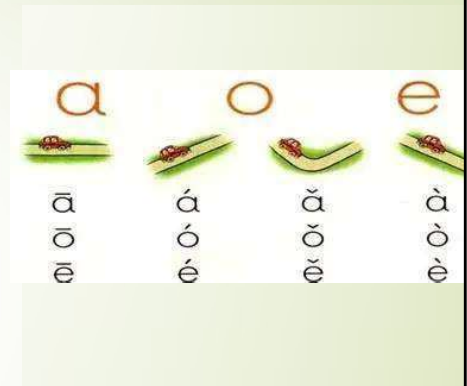
Middle Kingdom

*Just as there are thousands of words in a dictionary, there are thousands of Chinese characters. Knowledge of at least 2000 characters is required to read a newspaper. Because the Japanese incorporate Chinese characters in their language, Japanese children are required to memorize 2000 Chinese characters.

*This method of writing has been in use in China for thousands of years and many of the old characters are still recognizable by modern Chinese.

Spoken Language

- Many dialects
- **Mandarin:** spoken language of the Han, 92% of Chinese
- Fifty-six ethnic minorities, <2%
- 1950s, Communists standardized on Mandarin and simplified the characters
- Tonal languages



*Because the written language is not phonetic, it contains no clues about how to pronounce the words/concepts they represent. Consequently, there are dozens of spoken dialects, many of which are unintelligible to each other. *The largest ethnic group, the Han, comprise about 92% of the population and they speak Mandarin. *The other 8% of the population is divided among fifty-six ethnic groups the largest of which has less than 2% of the population but even 1% of 1.4 billion people is still 14 million.

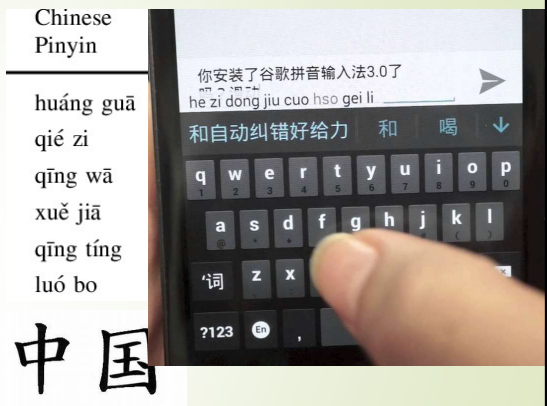
*In the 1950s, the communist government chose mandarin as the official language of China and simplified the characters. Most Chinese who speak a different dialect, also speak mandarin as a second language. Some of the minorities like those in Hong Kong and Taiwan kept the old characters making it difficult for Han Chinese to read their written publications.

*All the Chinese dialects rely on tone to give meaning. Mandarin uses four different tones. Other dialects have more. For example, Cantonese, that is spoken in Hong Kong, has nine.

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Using Phones and Computers

- ➔ **Pinyin:** phonetic spelling in Mandarin using Romanized letters
- ➔ China in Mandarin
- ➔ **Zhong Gou** in Pinyin
- ➔ Ch sound; Q, Qin pronounced Chin



*To adapt Mandarin to modern computers and cell phones, a system called *pinyin* is used. The Chinese word, as spoken in mandarin, is represented phonetically using romanized (English) letters.

*For example, the name of China, as spoken in Mandarin is: *

*This is written in pinyin as Zhong gou. One would begin by typing Zh on the keyboard and the computer or phone would display several characters from which to choose. The list would become better as you typed more letters.

*Some sounds in Mandarin don't match Romanized letters well. For example, the letter Q is often used to represent the ch sound.

Lucky and Unlucky Numbers

- Spoken number resembles a spoken word
- 8 sounds like “make a fortune”
- Olympics date and starting time; 2008, August 8, 8:08:08 pm
- 4 sounds like “death”



*When spoken, some numbers sound like other words and this gives them special meaning.

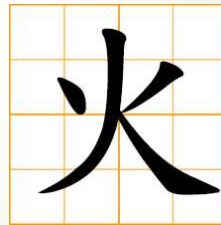
*For example, saying the number 8 sounds like the phrase for "make a fortune" and the number 8 is considered very lucky.

*For example, when the 2008 Olympics were held in China they began on August (8th month) 8, at eight minutes and eight seconds after 8pm.

*Similarly, saying the number 4 sounds like the word for death and it is a very unlucky number. A tall building in Hong Kong might not have a floor with 4 in it or 13 to accommodate western superstition.

No Alphabetical Order

- Number of strokes
- Stroke order
- Beijing Olympics opening ceremony order of countries



Order	Country
1	Greece 
2	Turkey 
3	Malta 
4	Madagascar 
5	Malaysia 
6	Ecuador 
7	Eritrea 
8	Jamaica 

Chinese characters do not have an alphabetical order.

*When a sequential arrangement is needed, they might count the number of strokes it takes to draw the character and *when those are the same, consider the sequence of the strokes.

*For example, the order of countries that appear in the parade at the Olympics begins with Greece and ends with the host country and the others are in alphabetical order. In China, the order is determined by the stroke count and stroke order of their names in Chinese, which is why the next country in the parade was Turkey whose name has the fewest strokes and lowest stroke numbers.

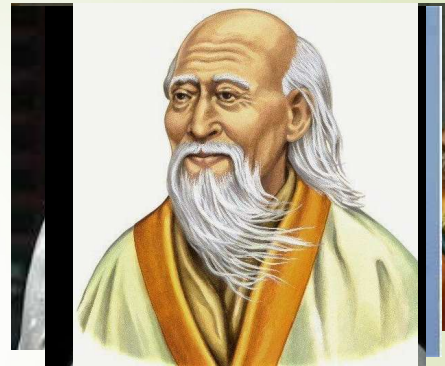
Great Thinkers

Greece 450-350 BCE

- Socrates
- Plato
- Aristotle

China 500-450 BCE

- Laozi
- Confucius
- Sun Tzu



China had a golden age of philosophers, about fifty years before ancient Greece.

*Three of the great philosophers of ancient Greece lived between 450 and 350 BCE. They were *Socrates, *Plato, and *Aristotle

*Just prior to that, three of China's most famous philosophers lived from 500-450 BCE. They were *Laozi (Lazy), *Confucius, and *Sun Tzu

Laozi, 550 BCE

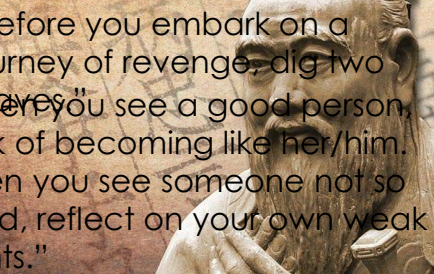
- Founder of Daoism (Taoism)
- Harmony with “the way of integrity”
- Inspiration for “The Force”



*Laozi is the founder of Daoism (Taoism) and he taught people to be in *harmony with the "the way of integrity" or more often just "the way"
*The movie "Star Wars" modeled its religious order on Daoism substituting "the force" for "the way"

Confucius, 500 BCE

- Analects (conversations)
- Moral behavior
- Submission to authority
- The Silver Rule



"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."
"Wherever you see a good person, think of becoming like her/him. When you see someone not so good, reflect on your own weak points."

"It is rare for a man whose character is such that he is good as a son...to have the inclination to transgress against his superiors."

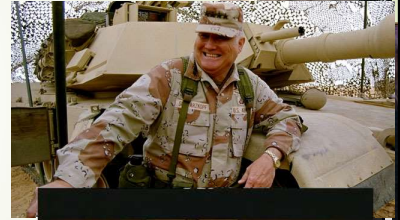
Do not impose on others that which you yourself do not desire

*Confucius used conversations to teach which are called **analects**.

*He taught about *moral behavior, *submission to just authority, and *what westerners call *the silver rule". Notice the emphasis is on not taking unwanted action.

Sun-tzu

- Sun-tzu, (shun tzu) military strategist; ~450 BCE
- Author of *The Art of War*
 - Translated into French in 1772 Napoleon
 - Mao – Japanese and Nationalists
 - Giap – Defeated the French and Americans in Vietnam
 - Castro – Cuban revolution
 - Translated into English in 1910
 - Schwarzkopf – Gulf War



*Sun-tzu made my list because his influence has affected history up to modern times.

*He literally "wrote the book" on how to win wars.

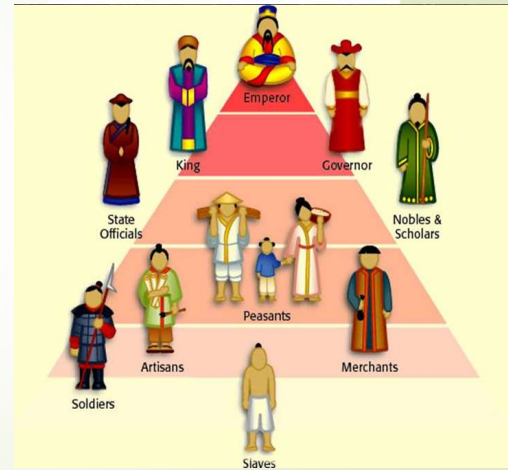
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Middle Kingdom

- Mandate of Heaven
- History of previous ruler is negative
- Civil service examination on Confucian philosophy; 700 years to 1905 CE
- Merchants and military – low class

中国



The social hierarchy was different in China. *In western culture, the king ruled by divine right which didn't depend on his moral behavior. In China, the emperor was awarded the Mandate of Heaven which he could lose if his rule was corrupt. The moral fitness of the rulers was judged on Confucian principles.

*We often say the winner writes the history and inflates his own achievements. In China, the new ruler describes the failures of the preceding dynasty to explain why they lost the mandate of heaven.

*Civil service was the highest calling for non-royalty. The best and brightest students were chosen as civil servants based on tests of their knowledge of Confucius. This practice was followed for 700 years.

*Merchants and soldiers were lower class than farm workers, just above slaves.

Ying Zheng—China's Alexander the Great



Alexander, 326 BCE

- King of Macedonia at 20
- Conquered 2 million square miles by age of 30

*In the West, we know about Alexander the Great who became king in Greece at the age of 20. *He conquered about 2 million square miles territory including parts of India and most of Egypt.

Ying Zheng—Unified China 221 BCE

- King of Qin (chin) at 13
- Unified China by 38 (221BC)
 - 890,000 sq. mi.
 - China from Qin
- Enforced Legalism, burned books and killed Confucian scholars
- Integrated first Great Wall
- 20 sq. mi. burial compound
- 6,000 terracotta soldiers



*The Chinese had a similar boy-wonder about a hundred years later named Ying Zheng, who became king of a small area named Qin (chin) when he was 13. *By the time he was 38, *he had conquered almost a million square miles of territory. *He was the man from Chin so his country became known to outsiders as China.

*He rejected Confucian teaching and advocated a harsh legalistic rule. He wanted history to begin with his rule, so he burned history books and killed scholars.

*He connected shorter segments of defensive walls to create the Great Wall.

*His burial compound covers 20 sq. miles with a large earthen pyramid. Documents from that era say that the central room is decorated with gems in its ceiling to simulate stars with lakes and streams of mercury. His tomb remains intact and unexplored except for probes that confirmed high levels of mercury within.

*Near the tomb, an army of terracotta soldiers was unearthed that might have been intended to accompany him in the afterlife.

Mongol Empire: Kublai Khan, 1271

- Mongols invade
- Adopted Chinese customs
- Claimed the Mandate of Heaven
- Founded the Yuan dynasty in China
- Marco Polo



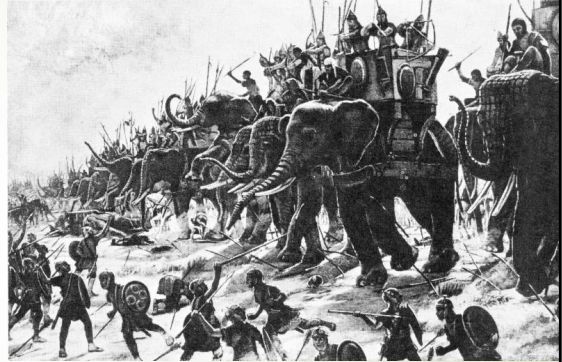
The next 1400 years of Chinese history are records of the rise and fall of different ruling families or dynasties during which time the Mongols from the north continued raiding the border and growing stronger.

*The Mongols succeeded in penetrating the Great Wall and conquering China as well as lands as far west as central Europe. *Kublai was Khan of the Mongols. He adopted Chinese culture, *claimed to have the mandate of heaven (because he won) and *declared his own dynasty (Yuan).

*He was emperor when Marco Polo visited from Venice.

Mongol Invasion of Japan and Vietnam

- Invasion of Japan; Typhoons
 - 1274: 900 ships, 40,000 men, 200 ships, 13,000 men lost
 - 1279: 4,400 ships, 200,000 men; 4,000 ships, 100,000 men lost
 - Kamikaze (divine wind)
- Invaded and failed to take Vietnam; 1257, 1273, and 1287
- Lost the Mandate of Heaven
- Han Chinese expel Mongols, 1367; Ming Dynasty



*Chinese dynasties had been inwardly focused on their own politics for hundreds of years but the Mongols wanted to continue expanding. Their next objective was Japan.

*In 1274, Kublia had the Koreans build a fleet of 900 ships in which he loaded 40,000 men to test the strength of the Japanese. He was almost successful but retreated after heavy losses.

*In 1279, he tried again with a much larger fleet and army. The Japanese prayed for divine intervention which came in the form of a typhoon that sank the invasion fleet and saved Japan. They called it the **Kamakaze** or **divine wind**.

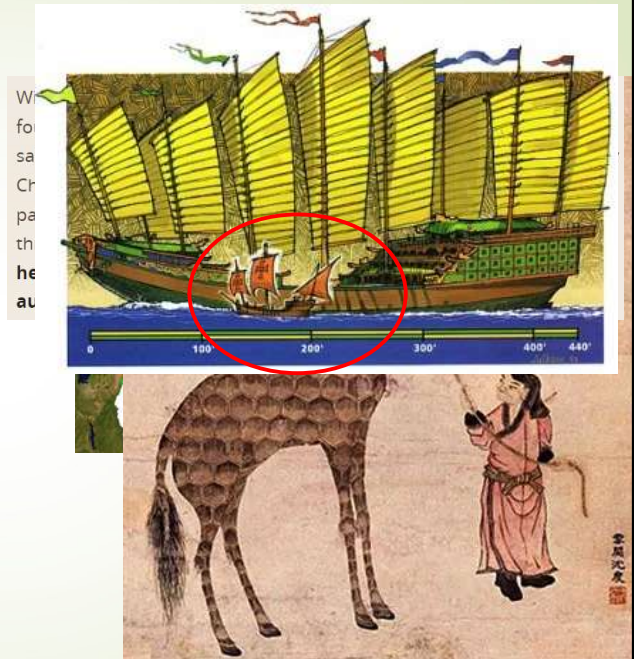
*Kublia had attempted to conquer Vietnam while invading southern china in 1257, and then he tried again in 1273, and 1287. The tactics that worked with horses on open plains were not useful against elephants in jungles.

*These losses, along with droughts and crop failures indicated that he had lost the mandate of heaven and embolden the Han Chinese to revolt and *restore rule by the Han in 1367 with the Ming dynasty.

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Voyages of Zheng He

- ▶ Throne usurped by Zhu Di, 1402
- ▶ Zheng He: Admiral, Muslim, Eunuch
- ▶ Seven Voyages; 1405-1433
 - ▶ 317 ships, 28,000 crew
 - ▶ Giraffe, envoys from 30 countries back to China
 - ▶ Expensive fleet disbanded. China turns inward.
 - ▶ Papal bulls (1453, 1492)



*The third emperor in the new Ming dynasty was a boy who was deposed by a powerful uncle, Zhu Di. The boy escaped. To prove to the world that Zhu was the legitimate ruler (and to look for his nephew) Lhu decided to build a great fleet of huge ships that would tour the known world to demonstrate the superiority of Chinese culture and exact tribute.

*He put his loyal servant, Zheng He in charge who *made seven voyages.

*The fleet had 317 ships, *many of which were far larger than any European ships such as Columbus' ship.

*This was not a voyage of discovery or to make territorial claims. It brought back curiosities like a giraffe but did not bring in enough tribute to pay for itself. The Chinese learned that the rest of the known world did not have anything it needed or wanted.

*When Zhu Di died, his fleet was broken up. When the European explorers arrived twenty years later, they did not encounter a massive Chinese fleet.

*The Europeans also had a completely different view of exploration. Decrees by the Pope in 1453 and 1492 had granted European Christians ownership of any lands they found that were not already held by Christians.

Manchu Rule: Qing Dynasty 1644-1912

- ▶ Warring faction invited Manchus south of the Great Wall for support
- ▶ Manchus take over: Qing
- ▶ Mandatory hair style
- ▶ Limit Han migration to Taiwan
- ▶ Allow Han migration after Japanese landing in indigenous areas



*The Ming family ruled until 1644 when they found themselves in trouble with another Chinese family. They invited the Manchus (from Manchuria to the north) to come to their aid and let them through the Great Wall.

*The Manchus seized the opportunity and took over, founding the Qing dynasty.

*The Manchus required all men to copy the Manchu style and shave their foreheads and braid their hair in a pigtail. The penalty for noncompliance was death.

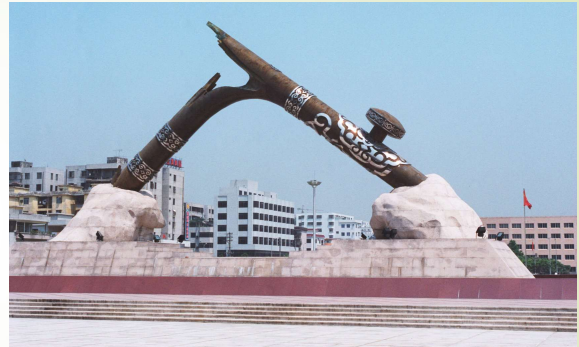
*Some Han wanted to migrate to Taiwan, displacing the aboriginal non-Chinese people, but the Qing government discouraged it initially.

*Japan adopted the European view of terra nullus (no one of importance lives there) toward the aboriginal lands in Taiwan and sent troops and settlers to colonize there. The Qing government objected and had to pay Japan to leave. Afterwards, they opened Taiwan to immigration of about 2 million Han Chinese.

Century of Humiliation: First Opium War

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- ▶ British trade for silk, tea, opium
- ▶ Letter to Queen Victoria
- ▶ Chinese “tea party”, 1839
 - ▶ Arrested 1,700 dealers
 - ▶ Destroyed 70,000 opium pipes and 2.6 million lbs. of opium
- ▶ First opium war; 1839-42
 - ▶ Paid \$21 million (\$800 million)
 - ▶ Ceded Hong Kong
 - ▶ Opened four more ports
 - ▶ British exempt from local laws



The period from 1839 to 1949 is known in China as the **Century of Humiliation**. The Qing dynasty rulers were outsiders from Manchuria and they had to deal with rebellious Han Chinese. Western countries and Japan took advantage of this weakness to exploit the Chinese.

*The British found a big market for Chinese tea and silk at home, but the Chinese had no interest in British goods and insisted on being paid in silver. To balance this trade deficit, the British East India Company began smuggling opium into China from India in an attempt to create as many opium addicts as possible and pay for the tea and silk. Opium imports in 1838 were 40,000 chests @ 140 lb = 5,600,000 lbs. per year.

*Chinese officials pleaded with Queen Victoria to stop this illegal practice in an official letter. There was no reply.

*Americans know about the Boston Tea Party in 1773 where locals dumped 432 chests of tea into the harbor to protest British taxes. In 1839, the Chinese government had a much bigger "tea party" when they *arrested 1,700 dealers and destroyed 70,000 opium pipes and 2.6 million pounds of opium.

*Instead of apologizing for their illegal acts and the suffering caused by widespread addiction, the British responded militarily, defeating the Qing army and capturing the capital at Nanking. *They forced the Chinese to agree to *pay \$21 million for the war (\$800 million in today's money), *cede control of Hong Kong, *open more port cities for trade, and *exempt British citizens from Chinese law—a humiliating concessions at the point of a

gun. Significantly, the Chinese did not legalize importation of opium.

Taiping Rebellion: 1850-1864

- Hong Xiuquan
- Jesus' younger brother
- Early communists: Acts: 44-45
- Female equality
- 30 million followers
- Defeated Qing army, captured Nanking
- Qing prevailed: 20 million deaths, equal to WWI
- Cheap labor and the diaspora



*The Qing government restricted travel by foreigners, including Christian missionaries. The missionaries translated the bible into Chinese and smuggled copies into China. A man named Hong Xiuquan read these texts and became convinced that he was *Jesus' younger brother, sent by God to expel the Manchus and establish God's kingdom on earth.

*He taught that his followers should share their property equally and live in communes as described in Acts: 44-45 where the *sexes were equal but lived separately, even married couples. *His movement was wildly popular. There were about 30 million followers that occupied central China along the Yangtze river.

*It took the Qing government fourteen years to defeat him and about 20 million died. It is the bloodiest civil war in history and matched the death toll of WWI. His movement was called Taiping which means *Heavenly Peace*.

*The rebellion and general unrest resulted in great poverty. *Many Chinese men sought work overseas, such as building the western portion of the transcontinental railroad in the US. *Many Chinese immigrated to other countries where there are now more than 40 million of them.

Second Opium War and Boxer Rebellion: 1856-1899

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- ▶ Second Opium War: 1856-1860
- ▶ Looting of the Summer Palace, Lord Elgin 1860
 - ▶ Stolen art not returned
 - ▶ Looty
- ▶ Unequal Treaties; legalize opium
- ▶ Japan takes Korea and Taiwan: 1895
- ▶ Boxer Rebellion (Righteous and Harmonious Fists) 1899



*The British continued to import enormous amounts of opium to China where it became the company's most profitable product, but it was still illegal. The British took offense when a cargo ship flying a British flag was seized and declared war. The French and Americans joined the British. They defeated the Qing army and captured the capital. Some British captives were tortured and killed.

*The British commander, Lord Elgin, decided to destroy the emperor's summer palace to avenge the killings and punish the royal family personally. *The summer Palace consisted of over 900 buildings on 180 acres, and it was full of art and historical artifacts.

*The art was considered a prize of war and removed to Europe. Unlike art stolen by the Nazis, Chinese art was not returned and still remains in possession of European aristocrats and museums. *Lord Elgin even sent a Pekinese dog name "Looty" to Queen Victoria to celebrate the event.

*The Qing rulers were forced to legalize opium and grant British, French, American, and Russian companies freedom to travel and trade.

*In 1895, Japan chose to take advantage of China's weakness and took control of Korea and Taiwan. This marked a major shift of power in the far east

*Frustrated with the Qing government, a group named The Brotherhood of Righteous and Harmonious Fists advocated martial arts and began attacking foreigners, including missionaries. The British, who were not familiar with martial arts like Kung Foo, called them Boxers and sent in troops to protect its citizens. The Qing government looked weak and

ineffective.

WWI and the Treaty of Versailles: 1911-1921

- ▶ Japan declares war on Germany and assumes Germany's claims in China
- ▶ Qing dynasty fails 1912: Nationalists form a coalition
- ▶ China provides laborers
 - ▶ 37,000 to France
 - ▶ 94,500 to UK
 - ▶ 2,000 died
- ▶ Treaty of Versailles, 1919
 - ▶ Gave Germany's claim to Chinese territory to Japan
 - ▶ Formation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921



- *When war broke out in Europe, Japan took the opportunity to declare war on Germany and claim its zone of influence in China. This was the last straw for the Qing dynasty.
- *The Qing rule of China ends after almost 300 years and is replaced by a coalition group called the Nationalists.
- *Japan did not allow China to join the allies as an equal partner in WWI. Instead, China provided laborers. *They sent 37,000 to France where they dug trenches and buried bodies near the front lines. *Another 94,500 came to England to work in dangerous munitions factories. *2000 Chinese workers died in Europe in WWI. There is a graveyard near the Somme honoring their contribution.
- *The Chinese Nationalists had high hopes for the Treaty of Versailles and for President Wilson who promised there would be no "back room" deals. *However, there was a secret deal involving the British, French, and Japanese that gave Germany's territorial claims in the far East to Japan.
- *The nationalists were embarrassed by the treaty and many young idealists lost faith in the West. Two years later, the Chinese Communist Party was founded.

WWII; 1932-1945

- Weak government: Nationalists vs. Communists vs. Japanese
- Japanese colonize Taiwan; 207,000 Taiwanese in the Japanese army
- 1932, Japanese take Manchuria
- 1937, Japan invades, rape of Nanking including Taiwanese troops
- 1941, US cuts off Japan's oil supply, Japan attacks U.S.
- 1945, U.S. atomic bombing ends WWII
- 500,000 Japanese troops in China surrender
- Soviets seize North Korea, U.S. occupies S. Korea



*The new government was still weak and divided between the Nationalists and the Communists, but they had to work together to fight the Japanese.

*After WWI, Japan administered Taiwan as a colony. They improved the roads, railroads and infrastructure and made life better than it had been under Qing rule. Many Taiwanese saw themselves as members of the Japanese empire and when war came, >200,000 of them were taken into the Japanese army.

*in 1932, Japan seized Manchuria and then in 1937 invaded central China.

*They captured the capital of Nanjing and massacred the civilian population in what was called the Rape of Nanking.

*The US tried to restrain Japan's war on China economically. Japan got 80% of its oil from the US. When the US cut off its supply of oil to Japan, Japan responded by attacking the US at Pearl Harbor.

*The US ended the war with two nuclear bombs. *The emperor ordered his troops to surrender, including *500,000 of them still in China.

*The Soviets took the opportunity to seize the Northern part of Korea while the US held the south.

Mao Zedong, Chairman 1934-1976

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- ▶ Allied with Nationalists against Japanese
- ▶ Won civil war with Nationalists
 - ▶ Long March 1934-35, 370 days, 5600 miles
 - ▶ Adapted communism to peasants
 - ▶ Nationalists retreat to Taiwan, declare martial law
- ▶ 1949, End to the Century of Humiliation



*Mao Zedong and his fellow communists initially allied themselves with the Nationalists against the Japanese invaders and then *won a civil war with the Nationalists for control. *At one point in the civil war, the communist forces were surrounded in the south and about to be defeated but they evaded the Nationalists by heading to the mountains and walking 5,600 miles North which took a year. Recall that the leader of the Nationalists, Chiang Kai Shek, had sacrificed the lives of hundreds of thousands of peasants in the North by flooding their farms to slow the Japanese. *Mao became the leader of the Communists during the Long March. He recognized that the ideas of communism as developed by Karl Marx were intended for factory workers, not peasants. Mao revised the communist ideology to be more appealing to peasants and emphasized communal living, shared property, and equality of the sexes. *His strengthened army defeated the Nationalists who retreated to Taiwan where Chiang Kai-shek declared martial law and ruled Taiwan in exile. *In 1949, Mao declared that the Century of Humiliation was over.

Mao Zedong, Chairman 1934-1976

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- Korean War 1950-53
 - Soviet backed Koreans attack
 - MacArthur lands at Inchon
 - Mao warns against approaching China border
 - 700,000 Chinese attack
 - Nuclear weapons, Taiwanese
- Great Leap Forward, 1958-62
- Nuclear weapons 1964
- Cultural Revolution 1966-76



*In 1950, Soviet backed Koreans invaded the south in an effort to unify the country under communist rule. *They drove the American forces all the way south to Pusan.

*Douglas MacArthur, leader of American forces, landed at Inchon, cutting off the communist supply lines and then drove them back toward the Yalu River which is the border with China.

*Mao warned the US against approaching his country's border, but MacArthur ignored him.

*Mao secretly moved 700,000 troops to the border at night without showing themselves to US aerial reconnaissance and caught the US by surprise when they attacked.

*MacArthur planned to counterattack by using 20-30 nuclear bombs and by bringing the Nationalists back from Taiwan. President Truman relieved MacArthur of duty and the country is divided into North and South.

*Mao sought to enact the concepts of communism by creating collective farms where everyone shared equally and by increasing industrial production. This was called the **Great Leap Forward**.

*He also recognized that his country needed its own nuclear weapons to defend itself from the US and the Soviets. China exploded its first fission bomb in 1964 and its first hydrogen bomb in 1967.

*Mao's reforms caused economic problems and he was losing control. He regained control by blaming the old thinking and that the youth of the country should take over in what was called the **Cultural Revolution**. *Mao died in 1976 and his body is on display in Beijing.

Deng Xiaoping, Chairman 1978-1989

- ▀ Socialism with Chinese Characteristics
- ▀ Relationship with US
- ▀ Market economy
- ▀ Asked for Japan's help
- ▀ Shut down communist expansionism
- ▀ Reduced military by half
- ▀ One child policy
- ▀ Raised 250 million Chinese out of poverty in 7 years
- ▀ Tiananmen Square, 1989



I chose Deng Xiaoping as one of my picks for most influential people in Chinese history. He isn't as well known as Mao, but he had a major impact.

*Deng continued Mao's work on redefining communism and socialism to fit Chinese culture. He called it **socialism with Chinese characteristics**

*Deng traveled to the US to improve relations and worked toward *creating a market economy.

*He was the first ruler of China to visit Japan. At the time, Japan's best steel mill produced more steel than all of China. Deng got their help in modernizing China's industry.

*Under Mao, the communists sought to overthrow neighboring governments, but Deng discouraged this to improve relations.

*He assessed that the Soviets were bogged down in Afghanistan and the Americans were not a threat, so he cut military spending in half and put the officers to work managing factories.

*When gains in food production were not keeping up with population increase, he agreed to the one-child policy. *In the next 7 years, he raised 250 million Chinese out of poverty.

*He recognized that China was weak and needed to keep a low international profile.

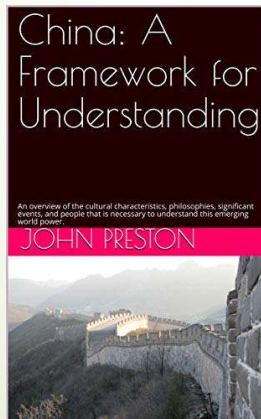
*He feared that the instability of the Soviet Union would spread to China. He felt that communism was the only political system that would work in China. He chose to end the protests in Tiananmen Square with force.

	News	Framework
28	One-Belt-One-Road	Middle Kingdom, Voyages of Zheng He
	Anti-corruption campaign	Mandate of Heaven
	Korean nuclear program	Korean War
	Air pollution	Great Leap Forward
	U.S. spy plane (2001)	Century of Humiliation, Korea
	South China Sea island building	Century of Humiliation, Zheng He
	Opioid imports from China	Opium wars
	Copyright infringement	Stolen Art, Taiping, Communism
	Persecution of Christians	Taiping, Cultural Revolution

I find that knowing something of China's history, gives me better perspective in understanding current events.

China: A Framework for Understanding

John Preston



Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance. Study the past if you would define the future.
Confucius 551-479 BCE

If you would like to read more on this topic or look at the sources I found, you may obtain a copy of my book from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Now, I'm happy to entertain questions or hear your insights.

References

- ▶ Oracle bone script: [Link](#)
- ▶ Opium wars: [Link](#)
- ▶ Chinese art heist: [Link](#)
- ▶ Chinese graves from WWI: [Link](#)