**Course:** China’s Revolutions: 1912-1976  
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*During the following weeks you will encounter several terms, acronyms, place names and personal names, some of which may be unfamiliar to you. Below are some of those, which hopefully will help you as we discuss China’s Revolutions.*

**Terms**

**CCP** – Chinese Communist Party, founded in 1921  
**Nationalist Party** – First revolutionary Party in China led by Sun Yatsen, and later by Chiang Kaishek  
**United Front** – CCP and Nationalists twice join forces to fight their common enemies. 1st against Chinese warlords, 2nd time against Japanese  
**Comintern** – International Communist Organization led by Soviet Union to help direct worldwide revolution  
**Soviet** – Government system set up in CCP controlled areas  
**Central Committee** – Elected central leadership group of CCP  
**Politburo** – Smaller, most powerful group of leaders within Central Committee  
**Class Struggle** – Core Marxist position that revolution exists between ruling and working/peasant classes, with one class fighting to overthrow the other  
**Red Army** – Communist Army established by Mao Zedong and Zhu De  
**Encirclement Campaigns** – Nationalist’s five consecutive attacks on Communist forces to wipe out the Red Army in early to mid-1930s  
**Yan’an** – CCP and Red Army base from 1936 – 1947  
**8th Route Army and New 4th Army** – Red Army disbanded in 1937 and reformed into these two armies. Joins with Nationalists to form United Front to fight the Japanese
Rectification Campaign – 1942 Political movement in Yan’an to purify the Party and root out spies

PLA – CCP’s “People’s Liberation Army,” created after end of WWII to fight against Nationalists for control of China. Maintains designation through today

Liberation – Term used to declare victory at founding of People’s Republic of China in 1949

Land Reform/Eat Bitterness Campaign – Land distribution to peasants taken from landlords, coupled with mass rallies to criticize and punish the landlords just after Liberation

100 Flowers Campaign – Call in 1956 from Mao Zedong to the Chinese intellectuals to criticize, thus improve, the Communist Party

Anti-Rightist Movement – After unexpected harsh criticism of Party, in 1957 Mao initiates movement to root out those “rightists” who oppose the Communist Party. Many go to prison, some to countryside to work as peasants. Some executed

Great Leap Forward – Movement to quicken modernization of China through heightened industrialization and conversion of agricultural production to commune system

Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution – Also called Cultural Revolution. Ten years of revolutionary fervor and chaos inside China; 1966-1976

Chinese Leaders

Sun Yatsen – Founder of Nationalist Party and 1912 Revolution against Qing Dynasty and Chinese warlords


Zhou Enlai – Early member of Chinese Communist Politburo, Military Leader and eventual Premier of People’s Republic of China

Soong Qingling (spelled Song in China) – wife of Sun Yatsen and supporter of Chinese Communist revolution; beloved matron of the People’s Republic of China

Zhu De - Early leader of Red Army with Mao, lifelong military leader, equal in eyes of many in status with Mao until early days after liberation. Not criticized during Cultural Revolution
Peng Dehuai – Early Red Army general, leader of Chinese forces in Korean War, opposed Mao’s economic policies in 1950s, arrested and criticized during Cultural Revolution

Liu Xiaoqi – Early member of Chinese Communist Politiburo, leader of Communist underground, President of People’s Republic of China until imprisoned and died during Cultural Revolution

Chiang Kaishek – Supporter of Sun Yatsen, leader of Nationalist Party and Army following Sun’s death; defeated in Civil War with Communists and fled to Taiwan

Western Supporters and Participants in the Chinese Revolution

Edgar Snow – American journalist originally from Missouri, one of first foreign writers to visit Red Army and interview Mao. Wrote “Red Star Over China.” Red baited during McCarthy period. Immigrated to Switzerland.

George Hatem (Ma Haide) – Originally from North Carolina, American doctor who joined with Red Army at end of Long March. First foreigner to join CCP. Traveled with Red Army through the Revolution. Stayed in China all his life as Public Health physician specializing in STD and leprosy eradication.

Norman Bethune – Canadian doctor who set up one of first front-line surgical units with Republican army during Spanish Civil War, then went to join Chinese Red Army to replicate this during anti-Japanese war. Died of sepsis following hurried surgery at front. Iconic figure in revolutionary China.

Agnes Smedley – Originally from Montana, American labor advocate, writer and Communist political organizer. Worked with Soong Qingling in Shanghai to support Red Army. Visited Yan’an in late 1930s and wrote biography of Zhu De. Wrote autobiography, Daughter of the Earth.

Anna Louise Strong – Originally from Nebraska, American labor advocate, writer and Communist. Lived in Soviet Union, then settled in China. Interviewed Mao for what became his often quoted, “United States is a Paper Tiger” article.

David and Isabel Crook - British communist and his Canadian wife from missionary family who joined with Red Army in late 1940s. Stayed in China, working at Beijing Foreign Languages Institute. Both imprisoned during Cultural Revolution for “ultra-leftist” activities.

Syd Engst and Joan Hinton – American couple who joined with Red Army in late 1940s, he as dairy farmer from New York and she as former physicist with Manhattan project. They worked the rest of their lives to improve animal husbandry in the Chinese countryside.
Israel Epstein – Polish/British/American journalist who wrote extensively on Chinese Communist advances. Worked after Communist victory with Soong Qingling as editor of “China Reconstructs” magazine. Imprisoned during Cultural Revolution for “ultra-leftist” activities.


Recommended Additional Resources

Otto Braun, *A Comintern Agent in China, 1932-1939 (Memoir by Otto Braun)*

Jung Chang, *Big Sister, Little Sister, Red Sister: Three Women at the Heart of Twentieth-Century China (biography of the Soong sisters)*

David Crook, *Autobiography of David Crook (davidcrook.net)*


Mao Tse-Tung (Mao Zedong), *Talks At The Yenan Forum on Art and Literature* ([https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_08.htm](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_08.htm))

Edgar A. Porter, *The People’s Doctor: George Hatem and China’s Revolution*

*Foreign Teachers in China, Old Problems for a New Generation*


Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*

Jonathan Spence, *To Change China, Western Advisors in China*

Jonathan Spence, *Mao Zedong, A Life*

Tracy B. Strong & Helene Keyssar, *Right in Her Soul, The Life of Anna Louise Strong*

Agnes Smedley, *The Great Road; The Life and Times of Chu Teh (Zhu De)*

Theodore H. White, *Thunder Out of China*