

### Overview – The Founding of the People's Republic of China

Learners need to have a basic understanding of the following concepts: bourgeoisie, capitalism, class struggle, communism, democracy, dictatorship, feudalism, nationalism, private v state enterprise, proletariat, socialism, totalitarianism.

Learners also need to understand that there are different interpretations of key historical events by historians.

The topic broadly deals with the period 1937–1956.

#### Teacher support

Teacher Support is a secure online resource bank and community forum for Cambridge teachers. Go to <http://teachers.cie.org.uk> for access to specimen and past question papers, mark schemes and a resource list. We also offer online and face-to-face training; details of forthcoming training opportunities are posted online.

An editable version of this course outline is available on Teacher Support. Go to <http://teachers.cie.org.uk>. The course outline is in Word doc format and will open in most word processors in most operating systems. If your word processor or operating system cannot open it, you can download Open Office for free at [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)

#### Resources

The up-to-date resource list for this syllabus can be found at [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)

Hinton, W. *Fanshen* Vintage Books (1968) ASIN: B0012VPVLY

Hsü, I. *The Rise of Modern China* Oxford University Press, USA (2000) ISBN: 9780195125047

Lynch, M. *The People's Republic of China Since 1949* Hodder Education (2008) ISBN: 9780340929278

Marx, K and Engels, F *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Melby, J.F. *The Mandate of Heaven: Record of a Civil War; China 1945–1949* University of Toronto Press (1968) ISBN: 9780802015204

Snow, E. *Red Star over China* Grove Press / Atlantic Monthly Press (1994) ISBN: 9780802150936

Spence, J. *Mao* Phoenix (2000) ISBN: 9780753810712

Spence, J. *The Search for Modern China* W. W. Norton & Co, UK (1991) ISBN: 9780393307801

Stewart, G. *China 1900–1976* Heinemann (2006) ISBN: 9780435327699

Wu, H. *Bitter Winds* John Wiley & Sons ISBN: 9780471114253

## Course outline – The Founding of the People’s Republic of China

The *italicised/shaded* sections are outside the syllabus period and are not compulsory. However, some knowledge of the key issues in earlier and later periods will help ensure a deeper understanding about what happened during the period of 1937–1956.

Time	Topic	Key issues	Knowledge and understanding	Learning resources
1839–1842	<i>First Opium War</i>	<p><i>The factors which led to the First Opium War</i></p> <p><i>China’s unwillingness to trade with the West</i></p> <p><i>Western powers desire for access to China</i></p>	<p><i>The pre–1839 Canton System involving a triangular trading relationship between Britain, the East India Company and China. The Treaty of Nanjing (1842) ceded Hong Kong to China. Five Treaty Ports, including Shanghai, were opened to foreigners.</i></p>	<p>Spence, J. <i>The Search for Modern China</i></p> <p>Hsü, I. <i>The Rise of Modern China</i></p>
1856–1860	<i>Second Opium War</i>	<p><i>The changing relationship of China to Western powers after the Second Opium War</i></p>	<p><i>Burning of the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) by French and British troops.</i></p> <p><i>The opening of ten more Treaty Ports to foreigners. Missionaries allowed to work in China.</i></p> <p><i>Britain, France and Russia were given land concessions and favourable trading status.</i></p> <p><i>Maritime Customs Service run by foreigners. Foreigners allowed to travel in China.</i></p>	

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1860–1864	Taiping Rebellion	The possible connections between the Taiping Rebellion and the eventual collapse of the Qing Dynasty and rise of the CCP	<p>Qing Dynasty seriously threatened by rebel forces. Foreign troops help to suppress the Taiping Rebellion.</p> <p>Taiping ideology (union of civil and military administration, private property abolished, foot-binding and slavery abolished, improved rights for women, opium banned, money held in common...).</p>	
1861–1875	Self-Strengthening Movement	<p>The change in the Chinese attitude to 'Western Studies' after 1860</p> <p>The Self-Strengtheners reform of Chinese institutions and their building of Chinese technological expertise</p>	<p>Self-strengthening Movement amongst reformers in the Chinese court.</p> <p>Jiangnan Arsenal and Fuzhou Shipyard set up.</p> <p>The first steamships built in China.</p> <p>'Modern' schools set up in Beijing and Shanghai; 'Western Studies' (mainly science and technology) began to be studied and textbooks translated.</p> <p>Students sent to USA. Missions sent to France, Germany and Britain to investigate Western technology.</p>	
1894–1895	Sino-Japanese War	The humiliation of the defeat by Japan	<p>Chinese Navy defeated by Japanese.</p> <p>Many Chinese students sent to Japan to study after 1895. Increased emphasis on the study of foreign technologies and ideas. Textbooks translated from Japanese.</p>	
1898–1905	<p>Hundred Days' Reform</p> <p>Late Qing reforms</p>	The late Qing reforms of the education system	<p>Reforms of examination system.</p> <p>Banning of opium and foot binding.</p>	

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1900	Boxer Rebellion	<i>The Boxer Rebellion as the first anti-foreign 'nationalist' uprising in China</i>	<i>Anti-foreign uprising, tacitly supported by the Qing court. Foreign troops brought in suppress rebellion.</i>	
1911–1912	Xinhai Revolution	<i>The fall of the Qing dynasty and attempts to found a modern state</i>	<i>Qing Dynasty overthrown. Last Emperor Pu Yi abdicated. Republic of China proclaimed.</i>	
1916–1927	Warlord period	<i>The military weakness of the Nationalist government and the rise of the CCP</i>	<i>Weak central government; rival warlords ruled various provinces.</i>	
1919	May Fourth Movement	<i>The influence of the May Fourth Movement on literature</i>	<i>Treaty of Versailles gave former German possessions in China to Japan. Students protested about the Treaty.</i>  <i>A flowering of new types of literature critical of traditional Chinese society and search for new directions in Chinese politics.</i>	
1921–1923	Founding of CCP  Soviet influence	<i>The influence of the ideas of the May Fourth Movement on Mao Zedong and his colleagues in the CCP</i>  <i>The experiments in the Jiangxi Soviet and their influence on later developments in CCP ideology</i>	<i>CCP founded 1921 in Shanghai. The stated aims of the Communist Party.</i>  <i>The rise of the Leninist model of the 'vanguard' party.</i>  <i>1922–1923 First Soviet advisers come to China.</i>  <i>1927 Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan. Jiangxi Soviet area founded.</i>	Marx, K and Engels, F. <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> (1848)
1923–1927  1925	First United Front	<i>The cooperation between the Guomindang (GMD) and CCP despite their ideological differences</i>	<i>CCP and GMD work together under Sun Yat-sen.</i>  <i>Death of Sun Yat-sen. Chiang Kai-shek became the leader of the GMD.</i>	

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1924–1927	Northern Expedition	Chiang Kai-shek's attack on the CCP in 1927	The Northern Expedition defeated the warlords.  (1927) Communists massacred by GMD forces.	
1931	Manchuria invaded by Japan	The factors leading to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria  The reluctance of the GMD to repel their attack	Japanese invaded Manchuria, set up Manchukuo as a puppet state with Pu Yi as Emperor.	
1934–1935	Long March	The effect of the Long March on the reputation of the CCP  Mao's prestige as CCP leader related to the experience of the Long March  The Soviet influence on the CCP after the Long March	Mao became undisputed leader of CCP after the Zunyi Conference (1935).  CCP march from Jiangsu to Yan'an in NW China.	
1936	Xi'an Incident	The reluctance of Chiang Kai-shek to engage the Japanese forces directly before 1937	Chiang Kai-shek captured by the Young Marshal, a Manchurian warlord. Chiang was forced to agree to a Second GMD / CCP United Front to resist Japan.	
1936–1949	Second United Front against Japan	The importance and nature of the Second United Front  The hopes which the CCP and GMD each had of this temporary alliance	Understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extent to which CCP was able to consolidate as a result of the United Front</li> <li>• mutual suspicion of GMD and CCP</li> <li>• extent to which the Second United Front did actually involve a ceasefire between GMD and CCP</li> </ul>	

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1935–1947	Yan'an Period	<p>The role the Yan'an period played in the development of the CCP</p> <p>The institutional structures and ideas which came out of this period</p> <p>The effect of Mao's ideas on the role of culture on the arts in post-1949 China</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maoism: Mao's sinification of Marxism</li> <li>• growth of CCP doctrines: party control based on indoctrination, the Mass Line, class struggle</li> <li>• Yan'an Rectification Movement and thought reform movement; establishing Party discipline (1942–1944)</li> <li>• Mao's lectures on literature and art in 1942</li> </ul>	Snow, E. <i>Red Star over China</i>
1943	Mass Line	The nature of 'democratic centralism' and its importance for the development of the CCP	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• concept of democratic centralism</li> <li>• balance between consultation of the masses and mass participation versus necessity for central control and leadership</li> <li>• concept of enemies of the people / purges</li> </ul>	
1937–1945	Sino-Japanese War	<p>The main motives of the Japanese in attacking China</p> <p>How the war with Japan generated a feeling of national identity and purpose in China</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japanese aggression; the Nanjing Massacre</li> <li>• Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist response, relations with the USA</li> <li>• role of the Communist base in Yan'an</li> <li>• relations with the USSR</li> <li>• assessment of the role of the USA and its contribution to the outcome of the conflict</li> <li>• role of guerrilla warfare</li> </ul>	

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1945–1949	Civil War	<p>The inability of the CCP and GMD to settle their differences after the defeat of Japan</p> <p>The Nationalists' initial triumph and their later overthrow</p> <p>The reasons for the ultimate Communist victory</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>origins of the Civil War</li> <li>main campaigns, battles and events</li> <li>key turning points in the war</li> <li>reasons for ultimate Communist victory (military, political, economic, popular support, international intervention, leadership)</li> </ul>	<p>Melby, J.F. <i>The Mandate of Heaven: Record of a Civil War; China 1945–1949</i></p> <p>A diary of the war written from an American perspective.</p>
	Sino-Soviet relations	<p>How national rivalries between the USSR and China eclipsed ideological similarities between the two Communist parties</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mutual suspicion of Mao and Stalin</li> <li>territorial rivalries in certain areas such as Xinjiang</li> <li>solidarity as Communist powers</li> <li>fear of US imperialism</li> </ul>	
	Nationalists	<p>The relative strengths of the Nationalists and the Communists at the outset of the Civil War</p> <p>The success of the tactics of the Fifth Encirclement Campaign of 1934–1935</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengths and weaknesses of the Nationalist government during World War II</li> <li>role and influence of Chiang Kai-shek</li> <li>Chongqing government and its policies</li> <li>Second United Front against Japan</li> <li>Encirclement Campaigns against the Communists</li> </ul>	

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	The structure and control of the PRC	<p>The imposition of Party authority</p> <p>The relationship between the Party, the administration and the military</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• administrative structure</li> <li>• imposition of military control in Tibet, Xinjiang and Guangdong</li> <li>• registration (danwei, hukou, dang'an)</li> <li>• political control and party structure, including thought reform (see also mass campaigns below)</li> <li>• Mao's relationship with the Party and the administrative bureaucracy</li> <li>• role of Mao</li> </ul>	
1950–1953	Korean War	<p>China's involvement in the Korean War</p> <p>The effect of the Korean war on the development of the new Chinese state</p> <p>The cost to China of its involvement in the war</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what exactly happened – Stalin's role, Mao's reaction, China's contribution to the war</li> <li>• how the new government used the Korean war to its advantage to accelerate process of building new China</li> <li>• why the Korean war was a success for the new government (international respect, patriotism, military confidence)</li> <li>• harmful results of the war</li> </ul>	<p>Lynch, M. <i>The People's Republic of China 1949–76</i></p> <p>Stewart, G. <i>China 1900–1976</i></p> <p>Spence, J. <i>Mao</i></p>



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	Land Reform	<p>The extent to which land reform policies were successful</p> <p>The effect of land reform on the lives of the people involved</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transition from feudalism to socialism</li> <li>• early land reform: liquidating the landlords</li> <li>• spread of land reform</li> <li>• collectivisation of agriculture: the causes of collectivisation, its effects on peasants, Chinese society, the CCP</li> <li>• process of collectivising agriculture and the changing pace of reform: mutual-aid teams, Agricultural Producers Cooperatives, full collectivisation</li> <li>• twelve-year Agricultural Programme</li> <li>• CCP attitudes to the countryside</li> <li>• effects of central planning</li> <li>• changes in the CCP approach towards land reform</li> <li>• importance of agriculture in Chinese economy and the tensions between peasant aspirations and long-term Communist aims</li> </ul>	<p>Hinton, W. <i>Fanshen</i> A detailed account of land reform in one Chinese village.</p>
1953–1957	First Five-Year Plan	<p>The reasons for the Five-Year Plans</p> <p>The success or otherwise of the first Five-Year Plan</p> <p>The extent to which economic planning achieved rapid economic growth</p> <p>The lessons that could be drawn from the first Five-Year Plan</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• industry and the first Five-Year Plan</li> <li>• Mao's economic aims for China</li> <li>• social reforms and ideology</li> <li>• role of and relationship with Soviet Union</li> <li>• political control of CCP and transition to People's Republic of China</li> <li>• plans for the second Five-Year Plan</li> </ul>	

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1949–1956	Education	The extent to which the CCP was successful in revolutionising education in the period 1949–1956	Understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reshaping traditional attitudes: Transition from revolutionary war to government and the need to control thoughts and behaviour of Chinese people</li> <li>expansion of primary education</li> <li>public health campaigns</li> </ul>	
	Politics in command – mass campaigns in the fifties	The purpose and key features of the mass campaigns  The methods that made them possible  Their successes and failures	Understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>context in which the CCP established its rule over China and Mao’s role within the system of government</li> <li>land reform / collectivisation</li> <li>resist America – aid Korea</li> <li>patriotic health campaign</li> <li>suppression of counter-revolutionaries campaign</li> <li>combat illiteracy campaign</li> <li>Three Antis Campaign</li> <li>Five Antis Campaign</li> </ul>	
1957	<i>Hundred Flowers Campaign</i>  <i>Anti-Rightist Campaign</i>	<i>The extent to which the Hundred Flowers Campaign represented a turning point in the history of the PRC</i>	<i>Hundred Flowers Campaign (1957): Mao’s motives in launching it; analysis of effects; changing attitudes of Communist leadership to intellectuals.</i>  <i>Anti-Rightist Campaign (Summer 1957).</i>	Wu, H. <i>Bitter Winds</i> A personal account of his experiences during the Hundred Flowers Campaign.
	<i>Great Leap Forward</i>	<i>The purpose and meaning of the Great Leap Forward</i>  <i>Mao’s motives in starting this mass mobilisation campaign</i>	Understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>causes, events and effects of the Great Leap Forward and the backyard furnaces</i></li> </ul>	