

THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

1912 to 1949

Xavier Paulès

Translated by Lindsay Lightfoot

中國通史
民國卷

polity

Contents

<i>Illustrations</i>	page xii
<i>Maps</i>	xiv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvi
Introduction	I
1 The 1911 Revolution	10
The flashpoint in Wuhan	11
The last dynasty's unorthodox downfall	15
1912, the year of many possibilities	20
The years under Yuan Shikai (1913–1916)	23
The international context and the influence of the war in Europe	28
The fall of Yuan Shikai	29
2 Cliques and Warlords (1916–1928)	32
The rivalry amongst North China's major cliques for control of the government	33
Who were the warlords?	40
<i>The implausible identikit portrait</i>	41
<i>The driving forces behind junfa power</i>	43
<i>Conflicts, alliances and viscosity</i>	45
<i>Was national unity in jeopardy?</i>	47
The diplomatic context, the May Fourth Movement (1919) and the rise of nationalism	48
<i>Two decades of spectacular diplomatic recovery for China</i> (1906–1926)	49
<i>Disappointed expectations following the Versailles negotiations</i>	50
<i>A movement without precedent</i>	51

The rise of the Guomindang (1917–1926) and the Guangzhou decade	53
1925: the death of Sun Yat-sen and its aftermath, the May Thirtieth Movement	58
The Northern Expedition	61
<i>Phase 1: the defeat of Wu Peifu and Sun Chuanfang</i>	61
<i>Phase 2: the time of divisions</i>	64
<i>Phase 3: Zhang Zuolin's defeat</i>	67
3 The Nanjing Decade (1928–1937)	72
1928–1932: troublesome former allies	73
The period of stabilization: 1932–1935	77
The Guomindang's achievements	81
The looming Japanese threat	84
Warlords on the wane	88
The successful marginalization of the Chinese Communist Party	92
The run-up to the Sino-Japanese War: 1935–1937	97
4 The War against Japan (1937–1945)	100
The war of movement: 1937–1939	100
<i>Why did Chiang Kai-shek choose confrontation?</i>	101
<i>Japan's first victories</i>	102
<i>The second United Front and Soviet aid</i>	103
<i>1938, the difficult conquest of the Middle Yangtze River basin</i>	105
<i>1939, settling in for a long war</i>	106
The war of position (1940–1944)	108
<i>Stabilization of the front</i>	108
<i>Population movements</i>	110
<i>China and the Allies</i>	111
<i>1940: the beginning of the Guomindang state's disintegration</i>	113
<i>The CCP, a new force</i>	114
<i>Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek, the crossed paths of destiny</i>	117
<i>Occupied China and the collaborating governments</i>	120
1944–1945: return to the war of movement	123
<i>From the Ichigō offensive to the surrender</i>	123
<i>The war's outcome</i>	125

5 Civil War (1945–1949)	129
A very favourable situation for the Guomindang	129
<i>The political and symbolic dividends of victory</i>	129
<i>The economic rebound in the immediate post-war period</i>	130
Immediately post-war: 1945–1946	133
<i>The role of the USSR and the USA</i>	133
<i>Locking of horns for the first time</i>	134
<i>The Guomindang's post-war failure</i>	135
The military era: 1946–1949	136
Sclerosis of the Guomindang	140
<i>The issue of corruption</i>	140
<i>Lack of renewal within the Guomindang</i>	141
<i>The impossible democratic transformation</i>	143
The CCP's policy	145
A third force gone missing	147
The withdrawal to Taiwan, a victory for the Guomindang?	147
 6 Overview of the Chinese Economy	 152
China in an international context	154
The financial and monetary system	157
<i>The shortcomings of the financial system</i>	157
<i>Progress and crisis in the monetary system</i>	159
The primary sector	160
<i>The very slow evolution of the agricultural sector</i>	160
<i>Mining: the triumph of coal and emergence of oil</i>	163
The secondary sector	165
<i>Industry and the rise of Chinese capitalism</i>	165
<i>Maintaining cottage industries</i>	170
The service sectors	173
<i>Transport</i>	174
<i>Traditional services</i>	175
The effects of the 1937–1945 war and the civil war	179
<i>Relocation and state control of the economy</i>	179
<i>The origins of communist China's planned economy?</i>	180

7 Building the State	181
Political culture	182
<i>Inventing a political culture</i>	182
<i>Continuities with the New Policies period</i>	186
<i>Continuity with an older political order</i>	189
The Guomindang and the party-state model post-1928	191
<i>Sun Yat-sen, a guiding light</i>	191
<i>Institutional structure</i>	194
<i>Cliques and clique struggles</i>	198
<i>The endless return of revolution</i>	200
<i>The question of fascism</i>	201
The extension of the state's scope, a fundamental trend	203
The question of the relationship between the state and local elites	208
A plurality of state-building trajectories	211
 8 Changes in Society	 215
The population	216
<i>Demographic data</i>	216
<i>Migrations</i>	218
Social groups	220
<i>The proletariat</i>	221
<i>The urban middle classes</i>	222
<i>The recomposition of elites</i>	223
<i>Highly resilient intermediary bodies</i>	226
Living standards and lifestyles	229
<i>The issue of the impoverishment of Chinese peasants</i>	229
<i>Did the Guomindang lose interest in the countryside?</i>	232
<i>Endemic insecurity in the countryside</i>	233
<i>'Problems' in Chinese society</i>	235
<i>New leisure activities</i>	236
<i>Can we call it Westernization?</i>	237
<i>Women</i>	241

9 Cultural Renewal	246
The dissemination of ideas	247
<i>The development of primary and secondary education</i>	247
<i>Higher education</i>	249
<i>The media</i>	251
<i>Passing influences</i>	253
<i>New interest in the non-Western world</i>	256
The May Fourth Movement 1919 and that of the new culture	
(xin wenhua yundong 新文化運動)	258
<i>Chinese culture's Western crisis</i>	258
<i>A reinvented language</i>	260
<i>The wenti</i>	262
<i>The competition of 'isms'</i>	263
Religious revivals	265
China's cultural influence	267
<i>The undiminished prestige of classical culture</i>	268
<i>China as a conduit for knowledge from the West</i>	268
<i>Transmission of popular culture</i>	270
Conclusion and Epitaph	273
<i>Timeline</i>	280
<i>Appendixes</i>	284
1 <i>Sun Yat-sen's Last Will (yizhu 遺囑)</i>	284
2 <i>Comparison of China's population with that of other major countries</i>	285
3 <i>Comparison of the length of China's rail network with that of other countries</i>	286
4 <i>The Song family simplified family tree</i>	287
<i>Maps</i>	289
<i>Notes</i>	300
<i>Bibliography</i>	314
<i>Index</i>	332

Illustrations

Title-page calligraphy by Toshiko Yasumoto-Martin.

1	Li Yuanhong in 1911. Image courtesy of Joanna Dunn, Phillipa Lamb and Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol (www.hpcbristol.net).	14
2	Yuan Shikai in 1912. Image courtesy of Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol (www.hpcbristol.net).	26
3	Wu Peifu in the mid-1920s. Wikimedia Commons.	38
4	Arrest of Beijing University students (June 1919). Duke University Library – Photographer Sydney D. Gamble.	52
5	16 June 1924, inauguration ceremony of the Huangpu Academy. Wikimedia Commons.	57
6	Zhang Zuolin circa 1924. Wikimedia Commons.	69
7	Chiang Kai-shek, Feng Yuxiang and Yan Xishan. UtCon Collection / Alamy Images.	71
8	Hu Hanmin in Paris on 27 April 1928. Albert Kahn Museum.	74
9	Sun Ke (Sun Yat-sen's son) and his wife in Paris on 27 April 1928. Albert Kahn Museum.	80
10	The great warlord Chen Jitang, overlord of Guangzhou between 1931 and 1936. Historic Collection / Alamy Images.	89
11	Mao Zedong and Zhang Guotao, spring 1938. Everett Collection Inc. / Alamy Stock Photo.	96
12	Japanese infantry in combat in the suburbs of Shanghai, 30 October 1937. Wikimedia Commons.	101
13	Wang Jingwei in 1925. Photograph by Fu Bingchang. Image courtesy of C. H. Foo, Y. W. Foo and Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol (www.hpcbristol.net).	122
14	Chiang Kai-shek a few days after the Japanese surrender.	131
15	January 1949, communist troops and their propaganda organization march in Beijing. Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo.	138

16	Execution of communists by the Guomindang, circa 1948. Pictures from History / Bridgeman Images.	140
17	Coal transport in Shanghai circa 1930. Virtual Shanghai.	164
18	The success of traditional crafts – a pottery workshop near Suzhou in 1932. Courtesy of the Pontifical Mission Societies Lyon.	172
19	A tinker offering his services on the street, north China, circa 1918. CreativCommons – Photographer Sidney D. Gamble.	173
20	Freight transport by river in the Lower Yangtze valley in 1932. Courtesy of the Pontifical Mission Societies Lyon.	176
21	A fortune teller in Hangzhou in 1919. CreativCommons – Photographer Sidney D. Gamble.	178
22	The cutting of queues (1912). Private collection / Bridgeman Images.	183
23	A new pedagogy in the service of the nation. Author's photograph.	185
24	Young children working in a Shanghai spinning mill, 1920. Virtual Shanghai.	222
25	The Shanghai Bund in 1932. Courtesy of the Pontifical Mission Societies Lyon.	238
26	Street library adjacent to a small restaurant, 1941. Courtesy of the Pontifical Mission Societies Lyon.	241
27	Feminization and modernization of the restaurant sector as seen in a Cantonese comic strip from 1934. <i>Yuehuabao</i> 越華報, 16 December 1934.	244
28	A public writer on a street in Chengdu (Sichuan), 1941.	248

Maps

All the maps were created by Noël Meunier.

- 1 Province borders in 1912. *Source*: John Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. XII: *Republican China 1912–1949*, part I, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 30. 290
- 2 Open ports, leased territories and European colonies in 1926. *Source*: Robert Bickers, *Britain in China*, Manchester University Press, 1999, p. 11. 291
- 3 The revolution. *Source*: Li Xin 李新 (ed.), *Zhonghua minguo shi* 中華民國史, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011, vol. II, p. 765. 292
- 4 Principal warlords' zones in 1922. *Source*: Marie-Claire Bergère, Lucien Bianco and Jürgen Dormes, *La Chine au xxe siècle, d'une révolution l'autre*, vol. I, Paris: Fayard, 1989, p. 129. 293
- 5 The Northern Expedition. *Source*: Marie-Claire Bergère, Lucien Bianco and Jürgen Dormes, *La Chine au xxe siècle, d'une révolution l'autre*, vol. I, Paris: Fayard, 1989, p. 154. 294
- 6 The railways. *Source*: Elisabeth Köll, *Railroads and the Transformation of China*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019, p. 22. 295
- 7 Zone occupied by Japan between 1938 and 1944. *Source*: Diana Lary, *The Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937–1945*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 79. 296
- 8 Zone occupied by Japan and communist bases between 1944 and 1945. *Source*: Diana Lary, *The Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937–1945*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 149. 297

- 9 The Ichigō offensive. *Source*: Edward Drea, Mark Peattie and Hans van de Ven, *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945*, Stanford University Press, 2011, p. 25. 298
- 10 Migrations during the Republic. *Source*: Xavier Paulès. 299