



28 October 2024



A CHINESE WAY OF WAR AND PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY TODAY

OPENING REMARKS:

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MODERATOR:

DR. MAHIR J. IBRAHIMOV (DR. I.)-

Director, Cultural and Area Studies Office,
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College

DATE:

Mon, 28 Oct, 2024

TIME:

1300 - 1500 (CST)

LOCATION:

Arnold Conf. Room,
Lewis and Clark Center,
Fort Leavenworth, KS

All welcome for the audience.

For outstations, the event will be available live on

CGSC's Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/USACCGSC>



<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/static/maps/CH-map.jpg>. Accessed on 23 October 2024



A Chinese Way of War and People's Liberation Army Today



Dr. Geoff Babb

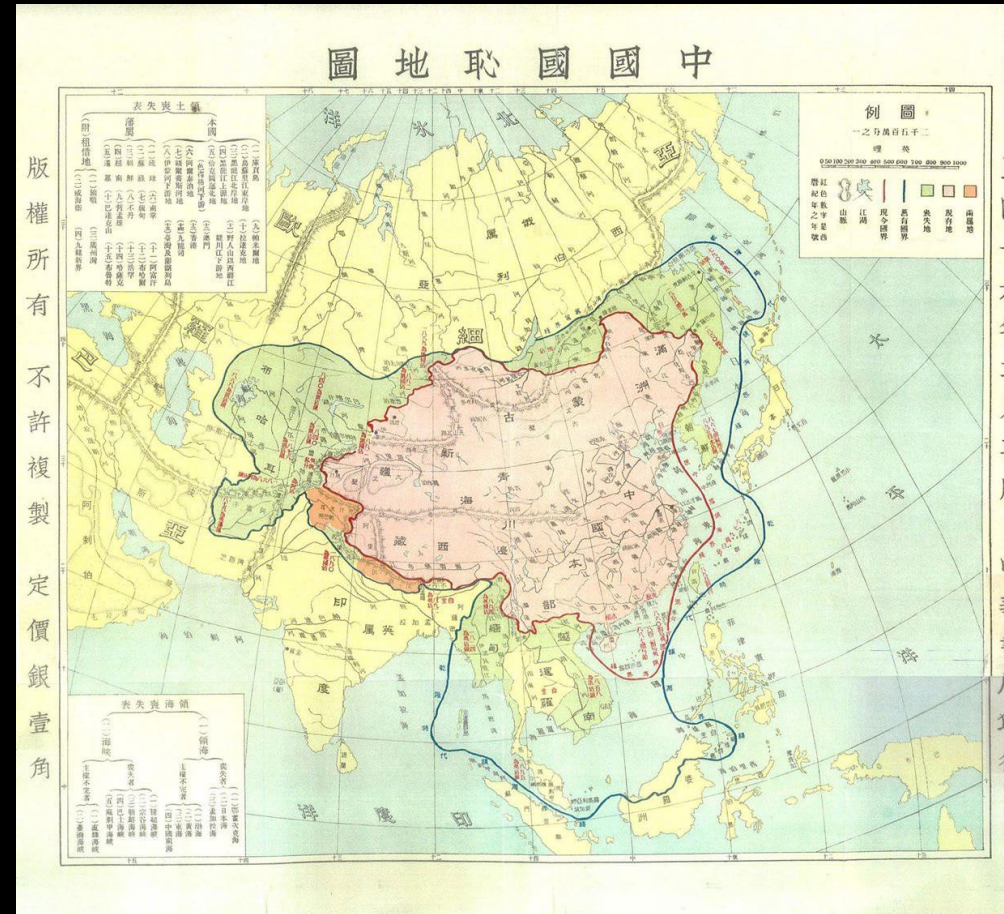
**Department of Military History
US Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.**

**Presentation for the
Cultural and Area Studies Office
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College**

China's Modern Military History: The Past is Prologue For the PLA Today



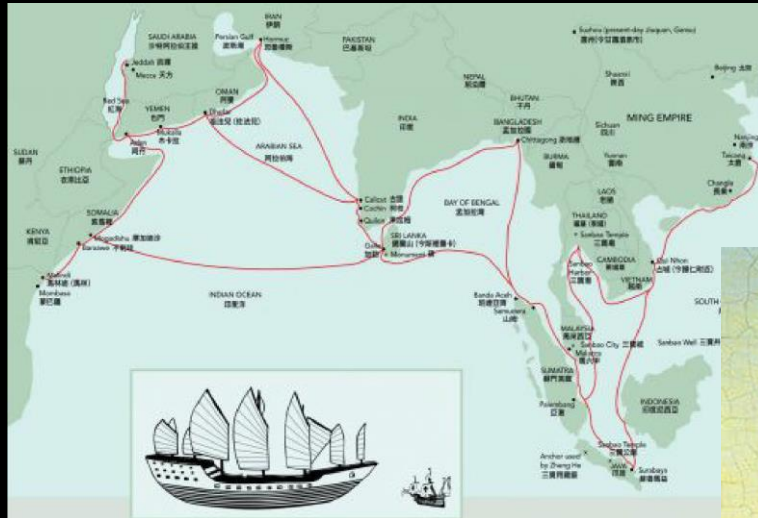
Dr. Geoff Babb, Department of Military History
US Army Command and General Staff College



China Map of National Humiliation (1938)

https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/4iw3ae/chinese_map_of_national_shame_1938_454_x_643/

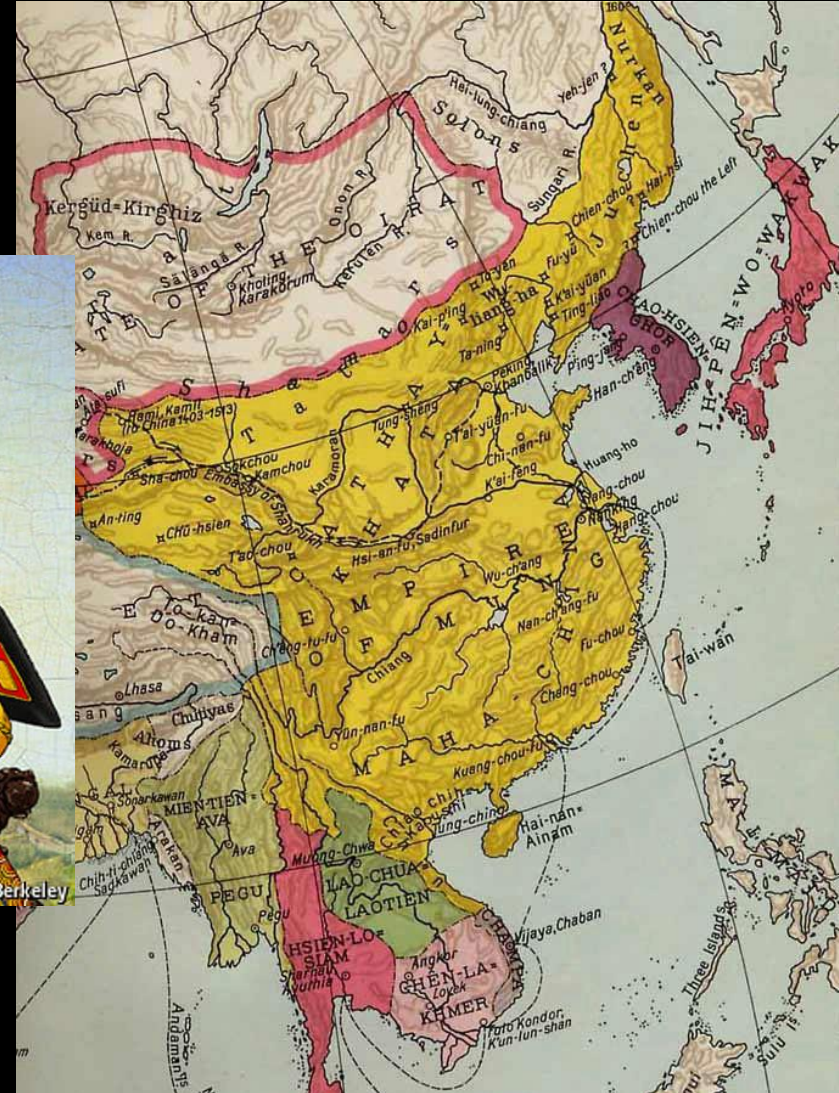
Emperor Xi of the Mao Dynasty (2013-2028?) Emulating the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)



Reconstructions of the ships of Zheng He and Christopher Columbus



Jon Berkeley



A New Golden Age (BRI), a Treasure Fleet (Merchant & Military), and a Restored Wall (A2AD)

Xi Jinping: The Party Centenary Speech 1 July 2021



The country endured intense humiliation, the people were subjected to great pain, and the Chinese civilization was plunged into darkness. Since that time, national rejuvenation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation.



The Goals of National Rejuvenation and the Century of Humiliation

The Hundred Years of Humiliation: A Key Driver of PLA Modernization



1st Opium War (1839-1842)

Taiping Rebellion (1854-1865)

2nd Opium War (1854-1860)

Sino-French War (1884-1885)

1st Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)

The Boxer Rebellion (1900-1901)

**Revolution, Warlords, & Civil War
(1911-1945)**

2nd Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

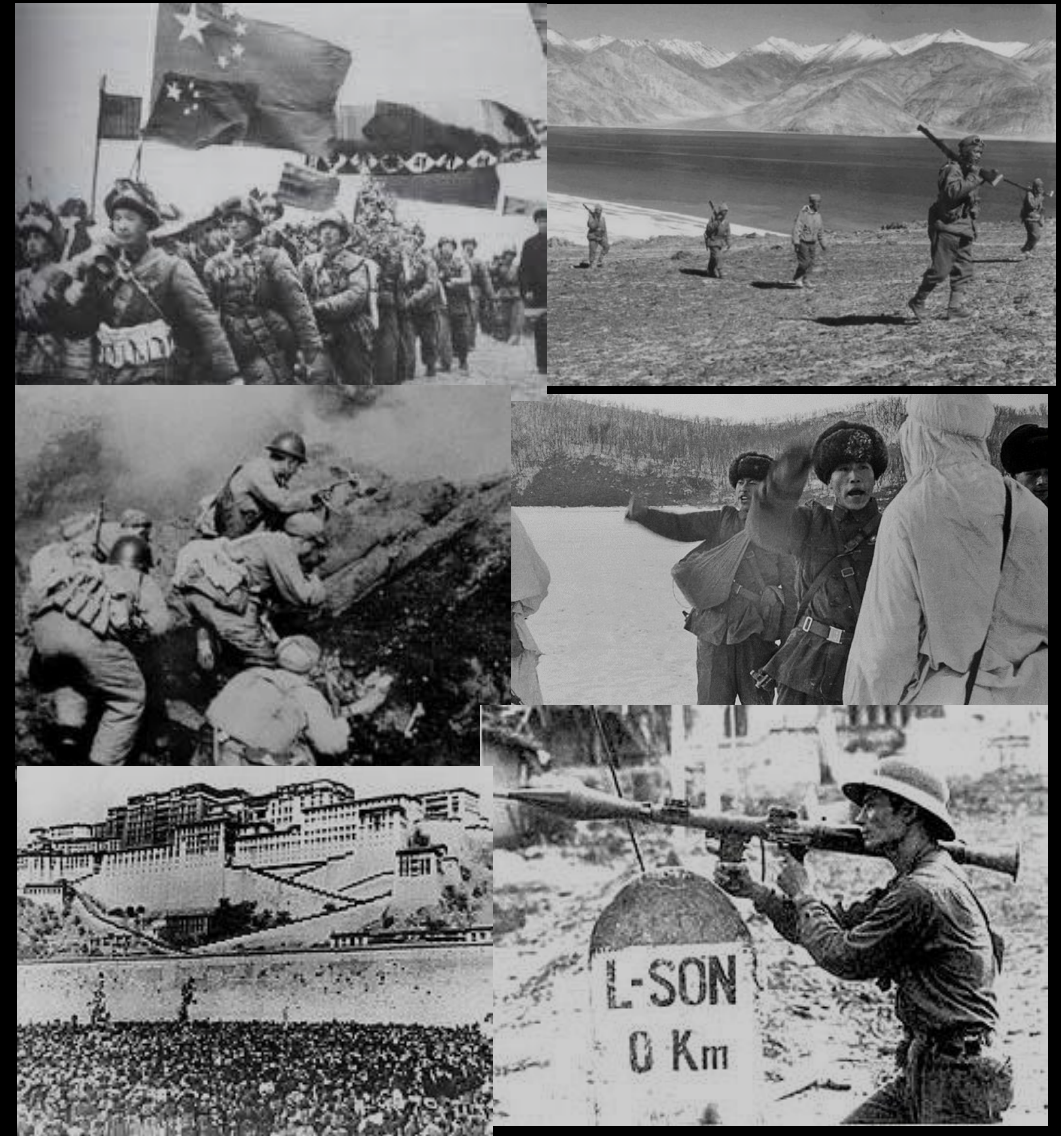
Civil War Part 2 (1945-1949)

Establishment of the PRC (1949)



Protecting the Borders & Consolidating Gains: The Conflicts of the PRC, 1950-1989

- The Korean War (1950-1953)**
- 1st & 2nd Taiwan Straits Crises (1954 & 1958)**
- Tibet Crisis (1959)**
- Sino-Indian Border Conflict (1962)**
- Sino-Soviet Border Clash (1969)**
- Seizure of the Paracels (1974)**
- Sino-Vietnam War (1979)**



Taiwan Unification: A Key Driver of PLA Operations Today



White Paper: The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era

August 2024



- I. Taiwan Is Part of China - This Is an Indisputable Fact
- II. Resolute Efforts of the CPC to Realize China's Complete Reunification
- III. China's Complete Reunification Is a Process That Cannot Be Halted
- IV. National Reunification in the New Era
- V. Bright Prospects for Peaceful Reunification



People's Liberation Army Ground Force



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**The People's Liberation
Army – Army (PLA-A)
Modernization Efforts
&
A Chinese Way of War**

Proximity to Politics



Mao Zedong & Zhu De



Deng Xiaoping



Xi Jinping





Professionalization



GTA 20-10-002

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY *Theater Commands (TC)*

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is a historically army-centric organization, and for years bureaucratic intransigence limited their ability to transform into a modern joint force.

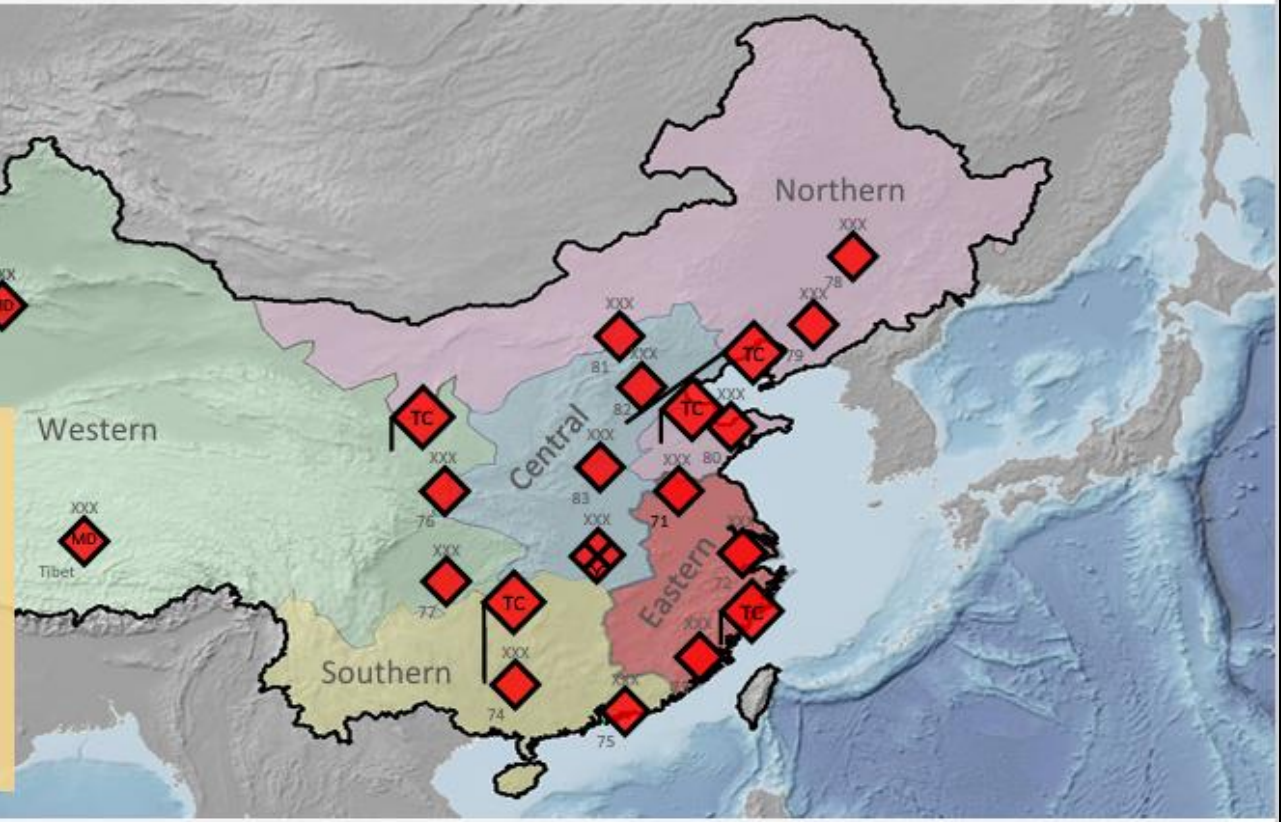
In 2016, China enacted major reforms to organization and operations that included the most comprehensive restructuring of forces in its history. The purpose of these reforms is to create a more mobile, modular, lethal ground force capable of being the core of joint operations and able to "fight and win wars."

People's Liberation Army Army (PLAA)

Theater Command (TC) Group Armies



In line with China's national reforms, the PLA restructured to strengthen administrative control and establish a joint command system capable of routinely organizing and directing operations consisting almost entirely of brigades.



Flattening the corps-level command structure with TC reforms, anticipates faster communications both horizontally among joint force elements and vertically up the command chain. TC branches report to two entities-their TC and HQ. For example, the Western TC Army reports to the TC and PLAA HQ.



Operational Principles



Making Sense of a Chinese Way of War



China's Air and Space Force



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The People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and Its Space Efforts

... are rapidly closing the capabilities gap

with the United States





X-37B

NASA'S **SECRET** SPACE PLANE





Recent developments ...



- Developing **cutting-edge technologies**—including stealth fighters, new aircraft, and airborne warning and control systems
- Working on a **6th generation fighter**; prototype expected by maybe 2028, design by late 2030s
- **Y-20 airlifter** ... note the routine similarities in Chinese design with its earlier American design (**they steal everything that isn't locked down**)
- **Electro-magnetic catapult** for use on 3rd aircraft carrier and beyond (mirrors Ford Class innovation)
- **Digital transformation**; modernizing its IT systems to transform PLA organizations, processes, and cultures
- **Covert recruitment of Western air combat trainers** (underscores a lack of confidence in own trainers), i.e. the “*grey beard strategy*.”
- The US is beginning to drop the word “*near*” as in “*near peer threat*” or “*pacing threat*”

Other developments ...



- Number of Chinese surveillance satellites has **tripled since 2018** to 359; since 2015, **550% satellite increase** (848 vs. 129)
- **Perspective:** US has a total of 6,975 operational satellites today (**8x as many as China**) — and since 2015, total US satellites have increased by over **2100%**
- **So why are military leaders so concerned?** Lines are blurred between Chinese military, civil, and commercial; same not true for US where vast majority (94%) are commercial.
- The US just has 300 military and intelligence satellites in operation—roughly a third of China’s total space assets.
- US not fully leveraging innovation in its own commercial sector; Commercial Augmentation Space Reserve (**CASR**) is a step in the right direction; parallels Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) concept used only three times since created about 75 years ago.
- In 2023, the US commercial sector—the envy of the world—launched (not including government missions) **3X as many satellites** as the rest of the world combined, and US effective launch capability for **4X the rest of the world** combined.



Recommendations ...



- Beijing has been strategically leveraging its **massive regional missile capabilities** to potentially **neutralize major US air bases and ports** in the region; our current strategy's **reliance on a select few bases and ports** strikes this onlooker as **a dubious gamble**.
- China has long had a problem **producing quality engines** for its fighter aircraft. It appears they are energetically **solving that deficit**. Given current production numbers, China could **soon have the world's largest Air Force** to compliment its already having **the largest Navy** (in numbers, not displacement)
- China is **not ahead of the US in space**. But the military and intelligence communities are falling behind the commercial space sector and losing ground to China.
- We need to do a better job **unleashing the potential of the Space Force**. The best way to do that is to **capitalize on what's already working**.
- While we have a sizeable lead in space, China is galloping ahead **copying our technology and countering our innate advantages**.



China's Maritime forces, PLA Navy, Coast Guard, and the Militia



Dr. John T. Kuehn

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Chinese Way of War? Maritime



- **Maritime Forces**
 - **Navy (PLAN)**
 - **Coast Guard approx**
 - **Militias**

“The First law of war is to preserve yourself and destroy your enemy.”

Mao Zedong



Historical Context



- Mostly River Wars
- Sino-Japanese War
- Paracels and Spratly's
- Neo-Jeune Ecole

Chinese Way of War? Maritime



- **Maritime Forces**

- **Navy (PLAN) 370 (221 US)**
- **Coast Guard approx. 50 “blue water” OOA**
- **Militias hundreds?/purpose built**

Don't forget

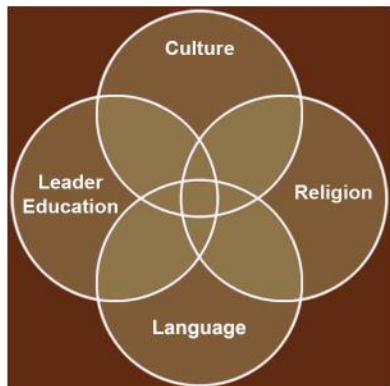
- **PLAAF/shorebased missile batteries**



Questions / Answers / Comments



Organization and Capabilities



Source documents provide guidance for training in three broad areas.

- 1. Core Cultural Competencies:** Core cultural competencies include areas such as understanding culture, applying organizational awareness, cultural perspective taking, and cultural adaptability
- 2. Regional/Technical Competencies:** Regional/technical competencies deal with applying regional information and operating in a regional environment.
- 3. Leader/Influence Functions:** Leader/influence functions include strategic (cultural) agility, (cultural) systems thinking, cross-cultural influences, organizational cultural competence, and utilizing interpreters/advisors.

CJCSI 1800.01D (Officer PME Policy) and CJCSI 1805.01A (Enlisted PME Policy)



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