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978-0-521-68190-2 - The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture

Edited by Kam Louie

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The Cambridge Companion to
Modern Chinese Culture

At the start of the twenty-first century, China is poised to become a major global power. Understanding its culture is more important than ever before for Western audiences, but for many, China remains a mysterious and exotic country. This *Companion* explains key aspects of modern Chinese culture without assuming prior knowledge of China or the Chinese language. The volume acknowledges the interconnected nature of the different cultural forms, from 'high culture' such as literature, religion and philosophy to more popular issues such as sport, cinema, performance and the Internet. Each chapter is written by a world expert in the field. Invaluable for students of Chinese studies, this book includes a list of key terms, a chronology and a guide to further reading. For the interested reader or traveller, it reveals a dynamic, diverse and fascinating culture, many aspects of which are now elucidated in English for the first time.

KAM LOUIE is Dean of the Arts Faculty at the University of Hong Kong. He has taught at universities including Auckland, Nanjing, Queensland and Australian National University. He has published more than ten books on modern Chinese culture.

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- 1895 China defeated in the Sino-Japanese War. Taiwan ceded to Japan, Japanese presence grows in Korea and Manchuria. Calls for more thorough reforms among Chinese elites.
- 1898 ‘100 days reform’ led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao failed. Yan Fu’s translation of T. H. Huxley’s *Evolution and Ethics* published. He follows this with translations of J. S. Mill, Herbert Spencer, Adam Smith, and other Western writers.
- 1899 Liang Qichao advocates ‘revolution in literature’.
- 1900 Anti-foreign Boxer Uprising swiftly put down. Beijing plundered by Allied troops.
- 1901 Boxer Protocol signed, imposing harsh conditions.
- 1902 Liang Qichao starts journal *New Fiction*, and advocates link between literature and politics.
- 1905 Traditional civil service examinations abolished. *Dingjun Mountain*, the first film to be produced in China, completed.
- 1907 Sun Yat-sen leads unsuccessful uprisings to overthrow Qing government in south China.
- 1908 Guangxu Emperor and Empress Dowager die. Pu Yi, still a child, becomes the ‘last emperor of China’.
- 1910 Jiang Kanghu establishes the Chinese Socialist Party.
- 1911 October 10 uprising in Wuchang leads to general revolution in central and southern China, and to the end of Manchu rule.

- 1912 Republic of China (ROC) proclaimed; the Qing throne abdicates on February 12; Sun Yat-sen becomes provisional president in Nanjing, but relinquishes presidency to Yuan Shikai in Beijing. The Guomindang (GMD, Chinese Nationalist Party) is established by Song Jiaoren.
- 1913 Song Jiaoren is assassinated by Yuan's lackeys and the GMD banned; Sun Yat-sen returns to exile.
- 1915 'New Culture' movement begins. Chen Duxiu establishes the journal *New Youth* and promotes Western values in the names of 'Mr Democracy' and 'Mr Science'.
- 1916 Opposition forces Yuan Shikai to abandon plans for monarchy; Yuan dies and is succeeded as president by Li Yuanhong, while central rule weakens.
- 1917 Sun Yat-sen establishes a military government in Guangzhou. Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi proclaim a 'literary revolution'.
- 1918 Ibsen's *A Doll's House* performed in Beijing. Lu Xun's 'Diary of a Madman' appears in *New Youth*. First scheme of phonetic writing announced by Ministry of Education.
- 1919 Student protests against decisions of the Versailles Peace Conference that handed German concessions in Shandong over to Japan. This turns into the May Fourth Movement, which supported New Culture's attacks on Confucianism and other traditional 'evils', as well as attacking imperialism and warlordism.
- 1920 Socialist and anarchist groups formed in several major cities.
- 1921 First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).
- 1922 Liang Shuming's *Eastern and Western Philosophies and Their Cultures* published. Debates about merits of Chinese culture compared to other cultures continue.
- 1924 The first national congress of the GMD pledges to cooperate with the CCP and seek aid and advice from the Soviet Union on the reunification of China.
- 1925 Sun Yat-sen dies.

- 1926 Chiang Kai-shek takes over the GMD and launches the Northern Expedition against various warlords in order to unify China.
- 1927 The revolutionary camp splits: Chiang Kai-shek crushes the CCP in Shanghai and other areas under his control. The Communists are driven into the countryside.
- 1928 Completion of the Northern Expedition and founding of the Nationalist government in Nanjing.
- 1929 National Art Exhibition held in Shanghai.
- 1930 Communist forces seize but then lose Changsha, capital of Hunan; Nationalist armies begin 'Extermination Campaigns' against the Communists. League of Leftwing Writers formed in Shanghai.
- 1931 Mao Zedong establishes the Jiangxi Soviet in the remote hill country of central China. Japan seizes Manchuria following the 'Mukden (Shenyang) Incident'.
- 1932 Japan creates Manchukuo with Pu Yi as head of the puppet state. China sends its first team to the Los Angeles Olympics.
- 1933 Communist Party's Central Committee moves from Shanghai to Ruijin, Jiangxi.
- 1934 The GMD's Fifth Extermination Campaign against the Jiangxi Soviet forces the Communists on the retreat that is later called the Long March; Chiang Kai-shek launches 'New Life Movement'.
- 1935 Mao Zedong gains control of the CCP at the Zunyi Conference in Guizhou; Communist forces arrive in Yan'an to end the Long March. Students in Beijing and elsewhere protest against government inaction in the face of Japanese aggression.
- 1936 Chiang Kai-shek is kidnapped in the Xi'an Incident, which ends government military campaigns against Communists and leads to a United Front between the GMD and the CCP against Japan.
- 1937 Sino-Japanese War begins; government loses control of Yangtze Delta; Rape of Nanjing; Communist forces reorganized under government control.

- 1942 Ding Ling publishes ‘Thoughts on March 8’ criticizing CCP’s failure to liberate women. Mao Zedong’s ‘Talks in Yan’an’. These ‘Talks’ become CCP policy on cultural matters for the next few decades. ‘Rectification campaign’ against some intellectuals launched.
- 1945 Japan surrenders; end of Second World War. China recovers Taiwan. The opera *The White-Haired Girl* premieres.
- 1946 American mediation attempts fail to prevent full-scale civil war between CCP and GMD forces.
- 1947 Early Nationalist victories in the civil war melt away as Communists go on the offensive; soaring inflation and GMD corruption feed urban protest; government suspends constitutional freedoms.
- 1948 Communist military victories in northeast, north and central China pave the way for Nationalist collapse. First colour film, the opera *Remorse at Death*, starring Mei Lanfang, produced.
- 1949 People’s Republic of China (PRC) founded in Beijing. Nationalist government flees to Taiwan.
- 1950 Korean War; United States Seventh Fleet in Taiwan Straits; China enters war. China signs Treaty of Friendship with Soviet Union. Marriage and agrarian laws passed. The Three Selfs Movement requires Chinese Christians to cut ties with foreigners.
- 1951 Campaign against ‘Counter-revolutionaries’.
- 1952 ‘Three Antis Movement’ (against corruption, waste and bureaucracy) ends; ‘Five Antis Movement’ (against bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, shoddy work and theft of economic information) begins.
- 1953 Korean War ends. First Five-Year Plan begins.
- 1954 Purge of regional party leaders Gao Gang and Rao Shushi. Chinese Script Reform Commission established.
- 1955 Agricultural cooperatives set up. Campaign to criticize Hu Feng, writer who questioned CCP control over culture.
- 1956 Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom Movement encourages intellectuals to speak their minds. The Chinese National

- 1957 Symphony Orchestra formed in Beijing. First scheme of simplified Chinese characters promulgated. Feng Youlan proposes 'abstract inheritance' method in January for salvaging aspects of traditional philosophy. Controversies immediately follow. 'Anti-Rightist campaign' in which opposition voices suppressed.
- 1958 Second Five-Year Plan. Great Leap Forward. Beijing Television starts first television programmes in China. 'Manifesto for a Reappraisal of Sinology and Reconstruction of Chinese Culture' by New Confucianists published in Taipei.
- 1959 Peng Dehuai attacked for his outspoken criticism of Great Leap Forward policies and dismissed; rise of Lin Biao. Soviet experts begin to withdraw.
- 1960 Famine and millions of deaths caused by Great Leap Forward. Sino-Soviet split becomes public.
- 1961 Sino-Soviet polemics intensify. Wu Han's play *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*, which indirectly criticizes Mao's handling of Peng Dehuai, staged.
- 1962 Border war with India. Mainland refugees pour into Hong Kong; ethnic minorities flee northwestern areas for the Soviet Union. Socialist Education Movement launched to emphasize class struggle in cultural matters.
- 1963 Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, criticizes cultural establishment. Calls for ban on traditional drama. The first of the 'revolutionary operas', *The Red Lantern*, staged.
- 1964 PRC explodes atomic device. *The East is Red*, an extravagant operatic celebration of CCP history and Mao's role in it, is staged. Two more revolutionary operas *Shajiabang* and *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* performed.
- 1965 Battle lines drawn in struggle between 'revisionist' and 'proletarian' culture. Mao goes to Shanghai and encourages Yao Wenyuan to attack Wu Han's play as 'anti-Party poisonous weed'.
- 1966 Lin Biao enlists Jiang Qing to develop cultural policies for the military. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution officially begins; Red Guard rallies; Liu

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Chronology of major events

- Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and many cultural leaders purged; riot in Macau. Universities and schools close.
- 1967 Revolutionary 'seizures of power'; armed clashes in many parts of the country; Shanghai's People's Commune established; burning of Britain's mission in Beijing; riots in Hong Kong.
- 1968 Armed clashes between factions continue. Urban 'educated youth' sent to countryside to learn from the peasants.
- 1969 Mao calls an end to the Cultural Revolution (though he later speaks of it as continuing). Some universities reopen.
- 1971 PRC replaces the ROC as China's representative in the United Nations. In April, US table tennis team is invited to China ('ping-pong diplomacy'). Henry Kissinger visits China secretly. Lin Biao dies in a plane crash. Screenings of model revolutionary dramas *The Red Lantern* and *The Red Detachment of Women*.
- 1972 President Nixon of the United States visits Beijing; Japan recognizes PRC, severs ties with Taiwan.
- 1973 Deng Xiaoping reappears in public. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra visit China.
- 1974 Attempts to attack Deng in the thinly veiled 'Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius' campaign.
- 1975 Chiang Kai-shek dies; his son Chiang Ching-kuo succeeds him as chairman of the GMD and ruler of Taiwan.
- 1976 Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De die; Hua Guofeng succeeds Mao. Deng Xiaoping purged again. Arrest of 'Gang of Four', one of whom was Jiang Qing, who played key role in cultural matters in the Cultural Revolution.
- 1977 Denunciation of the 'Gang of Four'; Deng Xiaoping returns to power.
- 1978 Deng Xiaoping launches economic reforms and open door policy. 'Democracy Wall' activities begin. CCP issues 'Document 19', stating policy of protecting and respecting religious freedom, and also guaranteeing freedom not to believe.

- 1979 The US gives PRC diplomatic recognition; US Congress passes the Taiwan Relations Act governing unofficial ties with Taipei. Students and scholars begin to travel abroad. Communes disbanded.
- 1980 Hu Yaobang appointed general secretary of the CCP; Zhao Ziyang appointed premier. Trial of ‘Gang of Four’. Special Economic Zones launched.
- 1981 CCP formally denounces Cultural Revolution and reappraises Mao Zedong.
- 1982 UK and China agree to open talks on future of Hong Kong.
- 1983 Antispiritual pollution campaign to resist the effects of Western influence. Sino-British talks begin on the future of Hong Kong. China launches its first telecommunications satellite.
- 1984 Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*, directed by the playwright, opens in Beijing. Margaret Thatcher and Zhao Ziyang sign Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong.
- 1985 The Bolshoi Ballet performs in Beijing. CCP orders modernization in education. *Yellow Earth* screened in Hong Kong International Film Festival.
- 1986 Students protest against corruption and for democracy. Shanghai Stock Market reopens after nearly forty years.
- 1987 Martial law lifted in Taiwan; Taiwanese allowed to visit relatives on Mainland. Communist party says China in ‘initial stage’ of socialism and calls for faster reforms.
- 1988 Hainan Island designated a province and Special Economic Zone. Chiang Ching-kuo dies; Lee Teng-hui, a native of Taiwan, succeeds him as president and chairman of the GMD.
- 1989 Exhibition of avant-garde work at the China Art Gallery in Beijing. Tiananmen Democracy movement; Gorbachev visits China; Zhao Ziyang replaced as leader of the CCP by Jiang Zemin. Tiananmen Incident when military evicts demonstrators, killing many. Mass protests in Hong Kong and Taiwan against military suppression in Beijing.
- 1990 Basic law, Hong Kong’s post-1997 Constitution, promulgated.

1991	Collapse of Soviet Union alarms China's Communist leaders. First McDonald's Restaurant opens in Beijing.
1992	Deng Xiaoping calls for faster economic growth; CCP champions the 'socialist market economy'. Major Yangtze River and border cities open to foreign investment.
1994	Direct elections in Taiwan for the mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung.
1995	Legislative elections in Hong Kong. Beijing hosts United Nations Women's Conference.
1996	Lee Teng-hui wins Taiwan's first presidential election. Tung Chee-hwa selected first chief executive of Hong Kong.
1997	Deng Xiaoping dies. Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control, becomes a Special Administrative Region.
1998	Asian financial crisis slows growth on Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan. China wins world respect for economic role in Asian crisis. Bill Clinton visits China.
1999	China recovers sovereignty over Macau. Falungong, a religious sect, outlawed.
2000	Chen Shui-bian, leader of the Democratic Progressive Party, elected president of Taiwan.
2001	China admitted to the World Trade Organization.
2002	Hu Jintao replaces Jiang Zemin as head of CCP and president.
2003	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak. Half a million demonstrators march in Hong Kong against the anti-subversion Article 23.
2005	Chartered aircraft makes first direct flight between China and Taiwan since 1949. Tung Chee-hwa resigns, succeeded by Donald Tsang.
2006	African heads of state gather for China–African summit in Beijing, promising closer ties between the two regions.
2007	US worry over balance of trade deficits with China intensifies. Head of food and drug agency executed after scandals about safety of Chinese exports.
2008	Beijing Olympics.

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BBS	<i>Luntan</i> , bulletin board service
BFA	Beijing Film Academy
BOCOG	Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games
CANet	China Academic Network
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	China Central Television
CPA	Catholic Patriotic Association
CR	Cultural Revolution
DTV	digital television
GANFO	Games of the New Emerging Forces
GLF	Great Leap Forward
GMD	Guomindang, the Chinese Nationalist Party
IHEP	Institute of High Energy Physics
IMAR	Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IPTV	Internet television
ITTF	International Table Tennis Federation
MRFT	Ministry of Radio, Film and Television
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SARFT	State Administration of Radio, Film and Television
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SMG	Shanghai Media Group, Shanghai Television
TAR	Tibetan Autonomous Region