China-Burma-India
The forgotten front of World War 2
Introduction

- CBI had two separate but related wars:
  - The Second Sino-Japanese War (1937 – 1945)
  - The War for Burma (1942 – 1945)

- However, to fully understand the impact on the post-war world we also have to look at the Chinese Civil War (1927-1937 & 1945-1950)

- Main Combatants and their objectives
  - Japan - Complete control of China as a colony; Resources and isolation of China (Burma)
  - China - Self-preservation (KMT & CCP to take control of China)
  - US – Protect China, keep her in the war, and tie up Japan there as much as possible
  - Britain – Protect India and recover Burma (preserve the empire).
  - Thailand – Support Japan (Asia for Asians).
What we’re going to do

• The emergence of modern Japan up to 1933
• The emergence of modern China up to 1937
• The runup to and Phase one of the Second Sino-Japanese War
• The Japanese strategic shift to South-East Asia and the conquest of Burma
• Japanese invasion of India
• Phase Two of the Sino-Japanese War (Operation Ichi-Go)
• The Allied re-conquest of Burma
• The end of World War Two in the CBI
• The Chinese Civil War (1945-1949)
• The impact of CBI on WW2 & the post-war world
Opening Comments

• Strategic level emphasis
• Facts vs. Opinions
• Questions
• Why was it the “forgotten front”? 
• Why am I interested in CBI?

C. W. Riffer
3d Pursuit Squadron
Flying Tigers
January 1942
Chinese/English

• Wade-Giles vs. Pinyin Chinese (Peking vs. Beijing) (北京市)
• Names go with when they lived. Therefore,
  • Chiang Kai-shek
  • Mao Tse-tung (but often the Pinyin Mao Zedong)
• Places are updated which is a problem for us:
  Beijing vs. Peking
  Guangzhou vs. Canton
  Nanjing vs. Nanking
  Xian vs. Sian
  Tianjin vs. Tientsin
  Shanghai vs. Shanghai
  Chongqing vs. Chungking
  Kunming vs. Kunming

• Pinyin pronunciation:
  q - ch (qurch = church)
  x - sh (xi = she)
The Emergence of Modern Japan

- Commodore Matthew Perry “opens” Japan in 1854
- Boshin War (1868-1869) & the Meiji Restoration
  - Sonnō jōi (Revere the Emperor; Expel the barbarians) is replaced by
    - Fukoku kyōhei (Enrich the state; Strengthen the military)
- Widespread westernization combined with very little democracy
- Satsuma Rebellion (1877) moves Japan towards increased militarization
- Three wars make Japan a “Great Power” on the world stage
  - First Sino-Japanese War (1894)
  - Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)
  - World War One (1914-1918)
SHŌWA JAPAN

• Emperor Hirohito ascends the Chrysanthemum throne in 1926
• Period of democratization ends with move towards extreme nationalism.
• 1931-1932
  • Kwantung Army & the Mukden incident (1931)
  • Creation of Manchukuo (1932); Lytton Report (1932); Japan leaves the League of Nations (1933)
  • Japan becomes a fascist military dictatorship.
• Japanese strategic planning
  • Hokushin-ron (counter-clockwise northern strategy preferred by the Army)
  • Nanshin-ron (clockwise southern strategy preferred by the Navy)
Eastwards movement to occupy Northern Sakhalin, the Maritime Province and adjacent areas
Westwards movement to occupy Outer Mongolia and the Baikal area up to the Yablonovy Mountain Range
and
Advance to Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk and Central Siberia

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

MAP OF MANCHUKUO

MAP OF UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

IMAGE OF A MAN

IMAGE OF A GROUP OF MEN ON A TRAIN TRACK
The Emergence of China

• The Qing Dynasty (1611-1911)
• China’s Century of Humiliation
  • Opium Wars (1839-1842) and (1856-1860)
    • Treaty of Nanjing (“The Unequal Treaties”)
  • Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864)
    • Hong Xiuquan
    • Warlords
  • 1st Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)
  • Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) By the end of the 19th century most Chinese feel the Qing Dynasty has lost the “Mandate of Heaven”
The Republic of China

- Sun Yat-sen, the Xin Hai Revolution, Wang Jingwei and the Kuomintang (KMT) (1911)
- The Beiyang government (1912-1928) (Yuan Shikai)
- China becomes divided between warlords, the Beiyang government and the KMT.
- World War One, the 21 demands, and Soviet support.
- 1925: Sun Yat-sen dies and the KMT splits into a left wing under Wang (in Wuhan) and a right wing under Chiang (in Nanjing)
- The Northern Expedition (1926-1928; with a pause in 1927)
- April, 1927: Chiang initiates the Shanghai Massacre in which he expels the CCP from the KMT and executes ≈ 300 CCP leaders. He will kill another 10,000 over the next month.
The Republic of China (2)

• 1928: Chiang defeats the Beiyang government and establishes nominal control of all of China except for a few areas controlled by the warlords.
  • Wang flees to Europe
• This initiates the Nanking Decade
  • The 10 Year Civil War (1927-1937)
  • The five encirclement campaigns (1927-1934)
  • Chiang leads a modernization effort with some success.
The Nanjing Decade (1927-1937)

- Real progress in the economy, legal system, banking, transportation, industrial & agricultural production.

- Significant support from the Soviet Union. (Chiang is anti-Japanese)

- The rise of the “China Lobby” in the United States

- Chiang has now identified three enemies: Warlords, the CCP, & Japan
  - Establishes national priorities, “First internal pacification; then external resistance.”
  - In English this means first defeat the Communists, then the Japanese.
  - This will never actually change although Chiang will prove to be a realist.

- 1931 – Manchukuo established.

- A series of “Incidents” now takes place with Japan from 1932 until 1937, BUT Chiang IS FOCUSED ON THE CCP!
Run up to War

- January 28 battle (Shanghai incident)
  - Shanghai Ceasefire Agreement – May 5, 1932
- Great Wall attacks (1933 - 1934)
- The CCP’s “Long March” (1934-1935)
  - Response to the last encirclement campaign.
  - Actually a series of marches over 5460 miles and 370 days to escape the KMT
  - 10% of the initial marchers survived (~8000)
  - Mao became the unquestioned leader of the CCP
- He-Umezu & Chin-Doihara Agreements (1935)
  - Chiang essentially cedes Northern China to Japan
  - This is consistent with his priorities
- The Xi’an Incident (1936) – Resulted in the formation of the “United Front”
  - Puts the Civil War on hold.
Zhang & Yang kidnap Chiang
Xi’an - 1936
Phase One of the Sino-Japanese War

- Lugou (Marco Polo) Bridge Incident (July 7, 1937)
  - Kwantung Army engineers a war without authorization
  - General fighting flairs up
  - Japanese capture Beijing and Tianjin (July – August)
- Japanese government orders a stop (no control over the Army)
Battle of Shanghai

- August – November 1937
- Chiang decides to fight (Declares a “War of Resistance”)
  - Largest and bloodiest battle of the war (>1M men involved in the fighting)(7:3)
- China shoots down 85 Japanese planes while losing 90 (1/2 of it’s Air Force)
- China loses ≈250,000 men, Japan loses ≈100,000
- The ferocity of Chinese resistance catches Japan by surprise BUT the Chinese lose many of their best troops (esp. officers – 70%) in this battle.
- Japan reorganizes in China
  - Creates the Central China Area Army
  - The Army & Government now agree to finish off the Chinese
• Every 20th century war has an iconic picture
• Battle of Shanghai
The Burma Road

• As a result of the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, Britain decides to build a road in the colony of Burma to provide a lifeline to China.
• Built by 200,000 Burmese & Chinese laborers and completed in 1938.
• 717 miles of the toughest country imaginable
The Battle of Taiyuan

• Knowing the Chinese were seriously stretched in Shanghai, Japan decided on a second simultaneous assault on Shanxi from Chahar in the north-west.

• Battle lasted for September until November.

• A clear Japanese victory giving them access to the coal fields at Datong.

• This ended Chinese resistance in the north.
Nanjing

“Nanjing is the capital of China and the capture thereof is an international affair; therefore, careful study should be made so as to exhibit the honor and glory of Japan and augment the trust of the Chinese people,..... therefore protect and patronize Chinese officials and people, as afar as possible.”
Nanjing (2)

- Japan’s goal; take Nanjing and thereby win the war.
- Chiang decides to save the best part of his army at the expense of losing Nanjing.
- Therefore he ordered a retreat. This left Nanking in the hands of 100,000 untrained and poorly equipped soldiers.
- Surrender deadline of December 10.
- Chinese evacuate on December 12 (which becomes a rout)
- The PANAY incident & the Allison incident
- Japanese enter Nanjing on December 13.
The Nanjing Massacre (Dec – Jan 1938)

• What caused the Japanese Army to conduct this massacre?
  • Prince Asaka?
  • Failure of the Chinese to surrender “as promised”?
  • Armed citizens?
  • Hirohito’s August 1937 proposition on Chinese prisoners.

• Results: up to 300,000 (?) civilian deaths, at least 20,000 rapes.

• This horrific war crime has been a source of friction between the two countries ever since.
How not to end the war?

• With the capture of Nanjing, the war should be over. However, Prime Minister Konoe overrode the army (!) and decided to pursue the war to a final conclusion.

• Konoe delivers a set of “non-negotiable” war aims (January 1938)
  • As expected, Chiang rejects these out of hand.
  • Konoe then announces “Total Victory” as the only acceptable outcome.

• In May 1938, Konoe issues the National Mobilization Law which put Japan into a wartime economic state

• Result: A war which Japan expected to win in six months will now rumble on for eight years.
Taierzhuang (Mar – Apr 1938)

- Japanese drive on Xuzhou in northeastern China. (Rail & Grand Canal junction)
- Japan brought 40-70,000 troops; major error. China had between 100-400,000.
- Again, stiff resistance surprised the Japanese and they were finally forced to retreat.
- Japan lost 11,000; China 20,000.
- But, a clear Chinese tactical victory.
- This was a major Chinese moral booster but it did not stop the overall southern push of the Japanese army.
Yellow River Flood (June 1938)

• Chiang has retreated to Wuhan.
• Japan decides to capture Wuhan and win the war (again).
• To stop them, Chiang decided to destroy the Yellow River dikes in front of them.

• Result:
  • ≈500,000 dead Chinese civilians, another 3M lose their homes
  • Japanese lose 8000 men and simply go around the flooded area.
  • “..largest act of environmental warfare in history.”
• This decision will prove to be a tremendous recruiting tool for the CCP later in the war.
Yellow River Flooding and the Battle of Wuhan
Battle of Wuhan (June – Oct 1938)

• Japanese objective: To force Chiang to negotiate (surrender).
  • Wuhan had become the de facto capital of the ROC
  • Japan throws everything it has into this battle.
  • Emperor highly involved, demands immediate total victory.

• Battle results in a major Japanese tactical victory but Chiang escapes to Chongqing and refuses to talk.
  • 1M Chinese fighting 350,000 Japanese
  • Japanese had their usual advantage in artillery, armor, and aircraft (2.5::1)
  • Losses: China – 400,000, Japan – 140,000

• But another Chinese strategic victory. (Washington?)
1939 – Slugging it out

• Battle of Suixian-Zaoyang (April – May 1939)
  • Japan attempts to expand control westwards from Wuhan
  • 113,000 vs. 220,000 Chinese (losses: 21K vs. 28K)
  • In spite of the use of poison gas, Japan is completely unsuccessful

• 1st Battle of Changsha (Sept – Oct 1939)
  • Japan decides to attack from further south to isolate Chongqing from the sea
  • 100K vs. 240K Chinese (losses: 40,000 each!!!)
  • The assault was a complete Japanese failure.
1939 – Slugging it out (2)

• Battle of South Guangxi (Nov 1939)
  • Japanese amphibious landing on the south coast of China successfully isolates Chongqing from the sea.
  • 100K vs. 150K (losses: 8K vs. 23K)

• Chongqing can now be supplied only by the Indochinese railroad, the Burma Road, and the “Hump”.

• However, China’s successes in 1939 cause the US and Britain to start seriously looking for ways to help them.
The 1939-1940 Winter Offensive

- Japanese strength was dispersed as a result of the 1937-1939 battles
- Chiang’s objective was to use his manpower advantage to attack “everywhere” to prevent any future Japanese gathering in force for future offensives.
- A total of 10 offensives involving 550,000 troops initiated in Dec – Jan. Offensive severely hampered by poor training and logistics.
- Japan caught completely by surprise but quickly responded by bringing in 850,000 troops from elsewhere to respond to each offensive.
- Chinese losses were ≈70,000, Japanese just over 20,000. By April Japan had recovered all lost ground. A clear Japanese victory.
- HOWEVER, the huge number of troops Japan brought in to deal with the offensives stayed in China for the rest of the war, a clear Allied strategic victory.
Kunlunguan Pass
Guangxi
Dec ‘39

Kulan Pass
Guangxi
Dec ‘39

Kulan Pass
Jan ‘40

Kulan Pass
Jan ‘40
By the End of 1940 (Summary)

- With the agreement of Vichy France, Japan has invaded Tonkin in Indochina and cut the Kunming-Hai-Phong rail line. (Burma Road and the “Hump” are now the only way to get stuff to Chiang.)
- Japan occupies much of northern & costal China but is struggling to administer it
  - Adopts a “Points & Lines” policy and turns much routine administration over to the newly named collaborate “Government of National Salvation” (Wang)
- Chiang has retreated to Chongqing (his new capitol) and has retained much of his army (he has successfully traded space for time)
  - Chiang has 3 million troops, Japan has 1 million in China (≈ ½ their total army)
- The CCP is becoming more active in the north thereby becoming a source of much frustration for the Japanese. Between June ‘39 & May ‘40, the CCP attacked Japanese forces at least 7000 times inflicting 64,000 casualties.
Questions or Comments?
China-Burma-India
The forgotten front of World War 2

US

Great Britain

India

Japan

Rep. of China

Burma
Japan’s conquest of China by 1940

Japan is feeling completely frustrated in it’s efforts to bring this war to a final victory.

Japan will now completely shift strategic emphasis leading over the next year directly to Pearl Harbor (and to the Burma War).
Chinese Governments

• By March 1940, China had three separate Chinese governments:
  • Areas controlled by the communists were governed by the CCP under Mao Zedong
  • Areas controlled by ROC were governed by the KMT under Chiang Kai-shek
  • Areas controlled by the Japanese Army were nominally governed by the National Government of China under Wang Jingwei
    • March 1940, Wang signed the “Sino-Japanese Treaty”
    • Three Principles: Pan-Asianism, anti-communism, & opposition to Chiang Kai-shek
    • Died in Tokyo in Nov 44.
    • Today he is viewed as a Benedict Arnold or Quisling in both China and Taiwan.
Chinese Finances

• By the end of 1939, Chiang had run out of money. Was saved by loans from:
  - Britain - $10M ($172M in today’s money)
  - Soviet Union - $250M ($4.3B “
  - United States - $245M ($4.2B ”

• Inflation would be a major problem for the ROC throughout the war.
  - Caused by Chiang running the presses to pay for the war (60 – 80%)
  - Starting at the war’s beginning in 1937 (value = 1.00)
    - 1600% by 1941
    - 17,708,800% by 1945
    - Albeit with significant variations throughout the country.

• The Soong Family
  - Charlie
  - T.V., T.L., & T.A.
  - Ai-ling, Ching-ling, & May-ling
  - “Chiang’s single greatest asset.”

• Lend Lease to China
  - $31.4B – Britain
  - $11.3B – USSR
  - $3.2B – France
  - $1.6B - China

T. V. Soong
Minister of Finance & Foreign Affairs and Lend Lease Coordinator

Soong Sisters
Japan’s Strategic Problems

• Failure to conquer China – Too big, too many people, and fights too hard.
• Its actions in China are bringing ever increasing criticism from the United States.
  • Repeated efforts to negotiate an agreement failed
• The Soviet Union is becoming more and more aggressive in halting Japan’s movement towards the Northwest.
Japan Shifts Strategy

• In the summer of 1939, Japan, pursuing its strategy of *Hokushin-ron*, is severely defeated in a major battle with the Russians along the Khalkhin Gol river.
  • Battle of Nomonhan (May – Sept 1939) Involved over 100,000 men, over 600 tanks, and over 1300 aircraft.
  • As a result, Japan tripled tank production, sent generals to Germany to study tank tactics, and commenced peace talks with the Soviet Union.
  • Stalin cuts off aid to Chiang to show good faith.

• In April 1941, they signed the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact.

• Russia: Now safe to focus on the west.

• Japan: No choice but to shift strategy to *Nanshin-ron* (the Navy’s preferred strategy anyway.)
  • Would have to push to East Indies and SW Asia for resources
  • Would have to take Philippines to exploit these resources which leads to Pearl Harbor.
  • Once oil was cut off, it took the Japanese three weeks to finalize plans for *Nanshin-ron*
AVG (The Flying Tigers)

- The brainchild of Clair Chennault. T.V. Soong provided the financing and inter-governmental coordination.
- Summer of 1941, 300 workers of the Central Aircraft Manf. Co. boarded ships for Rangoon, Burma. All had just recently been in the U.S. military.
- 100 P-40 Tomahawks (British model) also made the trip.
- First saw combat over Kunming 10 days after Pearl Harbor.
- They were used to defend Rangoon, Chinese & AVG airfields, attack Japanese airfields, support Chinese ground forces, and defend various Chinese cities.
- Kill ratio: an amazing 296 to 14. 19 of the 100 pilots became aces.
  - Early warning system
  - Hit & Run
  - NO DOGFIGHTS!!

- Disbanded to become part of the 14th Air force in July 1942.
- Evaluation: A major moral boost for two countries in serious need of a moral boost.
The Flying Tigers
Nanshin-Ron’s effect on China

• The 2d Battle of Changsha (Dec 1941 – Jan 1942)
  • The capture of Hong Kong was assigned to Japanese Army and Naval forces in China
  • Original plan was to capture Changsha which would cut off Chinese support to the British forces in Hong Kong
  • One day into the attack, Hong Kong fell. Japanese decided to continue the attack.
  • After much fierce fighting in the city, the Japanese decided to retreat and did so right into a well-laid trap
  • Loses: China-30,000; Japan- 56,000
  • This battle was seen as a major victory for the Allies at a time when victories were few. Chiang gained much prestige and Xue Yue was declared “Patton of Asia”
The Burma Campaign

• Four phases
  1. Japanese Conquest (1942)
  2. Allied operations in Burma (1942-1943)
  4. Allies reconquer Burma (1944 – 1945)
The Preliminary (Thailand)

• Japan invades on 8 December ‘41.
• Thailand surrenders in 5 hours and signs a military cooperation treaty.
• Thailand then declares war on Britain and the US
• Actively supports Japan until 1944.
Burma as a Battlefield

- North/South
- No roads
- Shwebo
- Mountains
- Jungles
- Rivers
- Monsoons
- Animals
- Insects
- Diseases
Monsoons

“There are the first huge drops, growing heavier and heavier, and then God opens the sluices and the jets of a million high-pressure hoses are being directed straight down, and the deluge comes with a great roar....after that the earth is under a skin of water which looks as though it’s being churned up by buckshot.”

George MacDonald Fraser
Japanese Conquest of Burma

- Burma became a target as soon as the Japanese shifted to Nanshin-ron
- In late 1940 Aung San and the “Thirty Comrades” are enlisted by the Japanese
- The Burma Independence Army (BIA) is officially founded in Bangkok
- In late December the Japanese crossed through Thailand and invaded southern Burma with Rangoon and then the Burma Road as the primary objectives.
- Rangoon falls by March 7 and the Burma Army just escapes capture.
  - Slim named to command of the XV Corps
  - Flying Tigers defend Rangoon, then escape to China.
  - Colonel Sakuma’s tactical error.
  - 100,000 tons of equipment and supplies captured.
- On 21 March, the Thai army invaded Burma further north capturing the eastern salient (Shan) and its capital of Kengtung. It would rule this area until 1944.
- The Japanese then began a rapid movement up the Irrawaddy, Sittang, & Salween River valleys. Repeated efforts by the newly constituted Burma Corps and three Chinese armies failed to slow the offensive.
Japanese 15th Army on the morning of the initial assault

General Iida Shojiro

General Archibald Wavell

Jungle
Japanese Conquest of Burma

(2)

- The Allies retreated to upper Burma to make a stand.
- The British lost the Battle of Yenangyaung (April 1942)
- The allied positions collapsed with the Chinese defeat in the Battle of Yunnan-Burma Road & on April 25, Gen. Alexander ordered a complete withdrawal from Burma.
- The retreat turned into a disaster.
  - 47,000 Burma Army troops
  - 95,000 Chinese troops (23,000 go west)
  - 500,000 refugees (∼50,000 died on the trail)
  - Gen. Stilwell & 140 people walk out
  - The BIA caused major disruptions in the retreat
- When the retreat was over, Allied losses were 70,000, Japanese losses were 4500.
General Joseph Stilwell

- West Point – 1904
- DSM for service in WW1
- Considered the best tactical flag officer in the US Army
- Had an amazing facility for languages; after three tours in China between the wars he spoke and wrote fluent mandarin.
- Selected to lead the invasion of North Africa.
- In February 1942, was named Chiang’s Deputy and C-in-C of US Forces in CBI. ★★★★★
  - Also placed in charge of distribution of Lend-Lease for China.
- Arrived in Burma just in time to get driven out.
- "I claim we got a hell of a beating. We got run out of Burma and it is humiliating as hell. I think we ought to find out what caused it, go back and retake it."
Japanese conquest of Burma (3)

- The Chinese continued to fight the Battle of Yunnan-Burma Road until completely defeated in May.
- Japanese stopped their advance in May as the monsoon season started.
- Burma was now Japanese and the Burma Road was closed.
Japan Stops in May 1942

- What had they achieved?
  - 32 Million square miles of area
  - 70% of the world’s tin & all it’s natural rubber
  - 7.9M tons of oil per year (more than California & Iran combined)
  - 1.4M tons of coal per year
  - 1.1M ounces of gold per year
  - 500M tons of iron, manganese & chromium per year
- The labor to exploit all of this and:
- Japanese moral and confidence was sky high.
Burma: 1942-1943

• May through November was quiet due to the monsoon season.
• The Japanese could use the Chindwin River as far north as Kalewa and the British could use rail as far east as Dimapur. However, the area between the two was essentially impassable except for a single rough road between Dimapur & Imphal.
• By December it was clear that CBI was the lowest allied priority.
  • Germany First
  • African Campaign
  • Solomon Campaign
• In 1943, the Allies would try three assaults: complete failures and one of mixed reviews.
India (1942-1943)

- The Quit India Movement
  - Launched by Mahatma Gandhi in August 1942
  - Called for an “Orderly British Withdrawal” from India
  - The British deployed 57 battalions to put down the movement and arrest the leaders all of whom spent the rest of the war in jail.
  - This negated any effort in 1942 to attack the Japanese.

- Subhas Chandra Bose and the INA
  - Militant anti-British Indian nationalist
  - Was a major supporter of Japanese imperialism and of Hitler
  - Created the INA using 40,000 Indian troops from Singapore and augmented it with Indian nationals from other Japanese conquests
  - The INA peaked at 45,000 men and fought in five major battles in 1944-1945 in Burma (but not very effectively).
  - Most were killed or captured in combat and the rest surrendered with the Japanese at Singapore in August 1945
  - Bose was killed trying to fly to meet with Russian troops in northern China.
Greater East Asia Conference - 1943

Ba Maw
Burma

Zhang Jinghui
Manchukuo

Wang Jingwei
China

Tojo
Japan

Wan
Waithayakon
Siam

Jose P. Laurel
Philippines

Chandra Bose
India
India (1942-1943)(2)

• Bengal Famine of 1943
  • Numerous causes including
    • ≈ 500,000 Indian refugees swarmed into Bengal to escape the Japanese
    • Several terrible rice harvests compounded by Brown Spot disease
    • Strong cyclone leading to massive storm surge & flooding
    • Government prioritized food and medicine to the military
    • A scorched earth policy in anticipation of a Japanese invasion (10’ tall syndrome)
  • Net result was ≈3 million deaths
  • Intensified Indian independence movement
CBI Command Structure (1942-1943)

• China
  • Chiang Kai-shek was Supreme Allied Commander of all Chinese troops in CBI
  • Gen. Stilwell was his deputy but also Commander of all US Forces in CBI

• Burma
  • It was agreed from the start that Burma would be under British command
    • General Wavell was Commander-in-Chief, India which was the operational command for all forces in both India and Burma
    • The Eastern Army, India was under the new command of General Noel Irwin.
    • The actual Burma Commander was General Alexander, but the fighting unit would become the Burma Corps (later the Burma Army, later the 14th army) under Gen. William Slim.

• So, technically US forces in China worked for Chiang through Sitwell while those in India & Burma worked for Alexander (but also for Stilwell as overall US commander (???) It will get worse)

• And technically Chinese forces in India & Burma worked for Alexander, but also for Stilwell but also (and actually) for Chiang.
CBI Command Structure (1943-1944)

• In October 1943 CBI is reorganized to try and limit the rampant disfunction
  • Admiral Lord Mountbatten is designated Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command (SEAC). Stilwell is designated Deputy Supreme Commander, SEAC.
  • Stilwell is also designated Commander of the Northern Combat Area Command (NCAC) (all Chinese & US forces in Burma), and also retains his position as Chiang’s deputy in China (and Lend-Lease coordinator for China)
  • British General Giffard becomes commander of the 11th Army Group (all land forces in the SE Asia Theater, the key unit being Gen. Slim’s 14 Army). **THEREFORE:**
    • Stilwell reported to Giffard as NCAC but Giffard reported to Stilwell as he was Deputy SEAC.
    • To help this work even worse, Giffard & Stilwell hated each other.
    • Finally, Stilwell proposed to answer to Slim while his NCAC troops were in upper Burma but to only answer to Mountbatten directly once south of Kachin. As Giffard wanted no part of Stilwell, this was accepted and worked reasonably well (or at least better).
Lord Louis Mountbatten

• Successful and highly decorated naval officer. (Action in WW1 and early WW2)
• Appointed SAC SEAC in August 1943.
• Allowed Slim to operate pretty much independently in Burma after the 1st Arakan assault.
• Remarkably was able to get along reasonably well with Stilwell.
• Murdered by the IRA in August 1979.
Allied efforts in 1943

- The Japanese showed little inclination to fight in either China or Burma after their conquest of Burma in 1942.

- By December 1942, the British outnumbered the Japanese 450,000 to 300,000.

- The Allies decide that following the monsoon, that they should start pushing the Japanese out of Burma.

- This led to three operations:
  - The First Arakan campaign (December 1942- May 1943)
    - Irwin takes personal control of XV Corps from Slim
    - A complete disaster. The outnumbered Japanese out-thought and out-fought the British forces inflicting a major defeat on them. (Casualties 5000 vs. 1700 for the Japanese)
    - Irwin relieved and Slim put in charge of the XV Corps
  - Operation Longcloth (The First Chindit Operation- Feb ‘43)
  - Chinese offensive into northern Burma (October ‘43)
Orde Wingate & the Chindits

- General Wingate came up with the idea of long range penetration groups in 1940.
  - Gideon force in North Africa

- First Chindit unit (77th Indian Infantry Brigade) was made up of 3000 British, Indian, and Burmese troops.

- Operation Longcloth started in February 1943.
  - The three month mission ended in April. The Chindits had:
    - Marched between 750 and 1000 miles through the jungle
    - Lost 818 men plus 600 more who returned useless for further active service
    - Cut Japanese railway lines in 70 places
    - Practical success was limited (each affected railway was repaired in about a week)

- A major moral booster for the British empire however and destroyed the myth that Allied soldiers could not fight in the jungle with the Japanese.
Chinese Offensive (1943)

• Chiang became desperate to open the Burma Road & launched an assault into Northern Burma in October 1943.
• This would develop into the Battle of Northern Burma & Western Yunnan
  • Would run off & on until March 1945. (9 separate battles over that time)
  • The first four battles from October 1943 until March 1944 were Chinese defeats.
CBI Air Operations

• For two years the British flew all missions in Burma as the 10th Air Force with the exception of a few months when the Flying Tigers helped defend Rangoon.

• When the AVG was disbanded in July 1942, the 14th Air Force was founded in China and was responsible for all China area aerial missions. (US & Chinese)

• The “HUMP”
  • The Air Transport Command (ATC) was given the mission of flying supplies to China over “The Hump”. After several name changes the actual mission was flown by the ATC India-China Wing (Dec ‘43 – June ’44) and then the ATC India-China Division (July ‘44 – November ‘45)
  • Initially was 27 aircraft (C-47’s) and 1100 men, it grew to 640 aircraft (mostly C-46’s and 34,000 men.
  • Over it’s lifetime the mission lost 594 aircraft and 1659 men, “the aluminum trail”
During its life, the “Hump” mission:
- Hauled 685,000 tons of supplies to China (including 392,000 gal. of fuel)
- Logged in 1.5 million hours
CBI Air Operations (3)

• In November 1943, the Air Command South-East Asia (SEAAC) was formed under British command

• Burma operations were then made the purview of the Eastern Air Command under SEAAC
  • 1st Air Commando Group
  • 3d Tactical Air Force (British)
  • 10th Air Force (US)
  • Starting with 55 total squadrons, by May ‘44 this came to 92 squadrons (28 US)

• Unlike the land forces arrangement, this air arrangement worked very well.

Between November 1943 and August 1944 SEAAC destroyed the Japanese Air Force in Burma (700-800 aircraft). It also hauled 70,000 tons of combat support supplies and 93,000 men including 25,000 casualties.

There is general consensus that allied air supremacy was the key element in the eventual reconquest of Burma.
Air Operations in China

Chennault vs. Stilwell

- The two fundamentally disagreed about the use of air power.
- The Wilke letter (Nov ‘42) (105/42)
- Stilwell’s concerns and the effect of the Doolittle raid.
  - 250,000 Chinese civilian casualties
  - Operation Ichi Go (spring to fall ’44) would painfully prove Stilwell correct.
- In early spring 1944, the 20th Bomber Command arrived in India (B-29’s under direct JCS control)
- The capture of the Marianas (July 1944) put an end to this mission before it even started.
We Salute the
CHINESE REPUBLIC
On her Birthday OCTOBER 10TH

China - the First of our Allies to fight Japan,
China - in spite of war, struggling victoriously
 toward Democracy as we did 150 years ago.

HELP HER TO FIGHT BRAVELY ON!

UNITED CHINA RELIEF
Member Agency of the National War Fund
China-Burma-India
The forgotten front of World War 2
The Ledo Road (Stilwell Road)

- Started as an American project in December ‘42.
  - 65,000 tons per month estimate
- Connected to the Burma Road in December ‘44.
- Ledo Road moved a total of 147,000 tons of supplies at a much lower rate than passed over the Hump.
- 50,000 workers (15,000 Americans)
  - 1100 US deaths
- Never lived up to expectations (1/10th) and probably was not worth this incredible effort to build it.
  - Stilwell Road (peak) – 6000 tons/month
  - Hump (peak) – 71,000 tons/month
The Burma Railway (Death Railway)

• Built by the Japanese using slave labor to connect Bangkok with Rangoon.
• The project took from June ‘42 until Dec ‘43 and ran for 258 miles.
• Over 200,000 SE Asian civilians and 60,000 allied POWs build the railway. Over 90,000 civilians and 12,000 POWs died in the effort.
The Reconquest of Burma
General William Slim

• A much decorated and experienced (wounded three times in WW1) officer of the Indian Army.
• Following the British disaster in the first Anakin Campaign, he was made commander of the 14th Army.
• Made major improvements in the army’s training, logistics, and moral.
• He had great respect for the Japanese and worked hard to develop an army that could and would be able to deal with them.

• OPINION: My vote for the best general of WW2

Field Marshal William Joseph Slim, 1st Viscount Slim, KG, GCB, GCMG, GCVO, GBE, DSO, MC, KStJ

There is only one principle of war and that's this. Hit the other fellow, as quickly as you can, as hard as you can, where it hurts him most, when he ain't lookin'.
Southern Burma (Early 1944)

• In January, the British began a drive on the Arakan area (the 2d Arakan Offensive).
• The Japanese who were planning an offensive into Assam (NE India) saw an opportunity to pull British troops south to Arakan.
• On 7 February the Japanese launched Operation Ha-Go at the HQ of the 7th division. This triggered the Battle Ngakyedauk Pass. ("The Admin Box")
  • Although surrounded, the Slim had figured out and taught his army how to deal with this.
  • Allied air flew 714 sorties keeping the British supplied. The Japanese plan called for living on captured supplies which did not happen.
  • By 22 February, the Japanese were out of food and were forced to retreat with heavy losses.
  • Casualties: British – 3500, Japanese – 5200 BUT this was the first time British forces had defeated a Japanese assault. They now knew how to do it.
The Battle of the Admin Box
Merrill’s Marauders (Unit Galahad)

• Directly inspired by Wingate’s Chindits. Stood up in Sept. 1943.
• All were volunteers and all were either jungle warfare trained or experienced.
• They were initially trained by Wingate but were assigned to NCAC at Stilwell’s demand.
• Their assignment was to support Stilwell’s drive on Myitkyina.
  • The unit was disbanded in August 1944 after 5 months of combat, five major battles, and 32 other engagements.
  • The unit had 130 combat effective men left and 41 mules (out of the original 700)
  • Of the original 3000 men, 2 had not been hospitalized for one reason or the other.
  • Bronze Star or higher for every member.
Northern Burma (1944)

- Stilwell’s Chinese forces (X Force) launched a drive south into Kachin in Oct ‘43. The goal was to capture Myitkyina and its critical airfield. This was supported by Merrill’s Marauders.
  - Would allow running the Ledo Road to the Irrawaddy.
- Also In October ‘43, the Chinese launched what would become the Battle of Northern Burma and Western Yunnan. Y Force crossed the Salween with 175,000 troops forcing the Japanese to now fight on two fronts.
- In February ‘44, the second Chindit Operation was launched to support Stilwell's drive (Operation Thursday). Included the 1st Air Commando
  - 18,000 men w/ 155 aircraft & 255 gliders.
  - Missions: support Stilwell and support Chinese Yunnan offensive.
  - In March, Wingate was killed in a B-25 crash.
Northern Burma (1944)
Northern Burma (1944)

- Japanese created the Burma Area Army and placed the key tactical unit (15th army) under General Mutaguchi. He in turn had been heavily influenced by Chandra Bose.

- Mutaguchi convinced Tojo that an invasion of India would be successful. So, despite opposition from every level between the two, Operation U-Go was approved.
**Operation U-GO**

**Imphal and Kohima**

The Plan (using 4 Japanese and 2 INA divisions) (83,000 men)

1. Attack and destroy the 17th India Division at Tiddim, then attack Imphal from the south. (1 Japanese & 1 INA)
2. Attack and destroy the 20th India Division at Tamu, then attack Imphal from the east. (1 Japanese & 1 INA)
3. Directly attack Imphal from the north (1 Japanese)
4. Isolate Imphal by capturing Kohima, then move NW to capture the supply base at Dimapur. (1 Japanese)
Imphal & Kohima

• 6 March, the Japanese struck. Slim was slow to pull his forces back and the 17th was trapped at Imphal. However, the division held up against repeated attacks throughout March and April in exceptionally heavy fighting. On 3 April, the Japanese attacked Kohima and cut the Dimapur Imphal Road.

• By 16 April, Kohima was relieved and the British started counter attacking the Japanese positions and drove them from these by May.

• On June 22, the Imphal – Kohima Road was reopened ending the siege of Imphal.

• Mutaguchi continued to order attacks throughout May and June but it became clear they were in no shape to continue. The operation was cancelled on 3 July.

• This was the biggest defeat in Japanese history. They suffered 63,000 casualties out of 80,000 troops committed. (vs. 12,600 British)

• From this point on, Japan would be on the defensive in Burma.
“……probably one of the greatest battles in history…in effect the Battle of Burma… [It was] the British-Indian Thermopylae.” Lord Mountbatten
The rest of 1944 in Burma

- By May, Stilwell’s troops (X force) had captured Myitkyma airfield and laid siege to the town.
- Also by May, the Chinese (Y force) were stopped by a combination of Japanese reinforcements and the monsoon.
- In June, the Chindits were completely wasted and were withdrawn.
- The monsoon season now halted campaigning until December’44.
- Also, Thailand started actively working against Japan (while pretending to collaborate).
Operation Ichi-Go

• By early 1944, the Japanese had become tired of the 14th Air Force and the threat of the 20th Bomber Command.

• Just as Stilwell had predicted, they decided to put an end to this problem. This gave birth to Operation Ichi-Go which was launched in April.

• 500,000 Japanese troops together with 15,000 vehicles, 6000 artillery pieces, and 8000 tanks were committed.

• The goal was to drive south west capturing Hunan, Henan, and Guangxi provinces to
  • Link up with units in Indo-China
  • Destroy the US air bases in SE China
  • Prevent strategic bombing of the Japanese homeland.
  • AND possibly win the war.

• The campaign was largely successful in terms of land and casualties. China lost 700,000 men (from which Chiang would never recover). Japanese lost ≈100,000 men.

• Captured provinces were still “points & lines”. There was great civilian dislocation which the Communist successfully exploited.

• However the goal of protecting the homeland from strategic bombing was not met.
  • The B-29s simply moved to the Marianas (thereby further marginalizing China).
Ichi-Go, Before and After
Stilwell Says Goodbye

• In one of the first engagements of Ichi-Go, the Japanese assaulted the town of Guilin in Guangxi province. Chiang decided to defend Guilin to the last man which Stilwell saw as a waste of good men. Then Stilwell demanded Y force be returned.

• Stilwell saw an opportunity but over played his hand. He demanded that Roosevelt force Chiang to turn over control of all Chinese forces to him. Roosevelt wrote the ultimatum but Chiang correctly saw it as a bluff and formally demanded Stilwell’s recall

• In October ‘44 Stilwell was recalled and his duties split among three people:
  • General Wedemeyer - Chiang’s Chief of Staff
  • General Wheeler – Mountbatten’s Deputy at (SACSEA)
  • General Sultan – Commander, US Forces India-Burma Theater

• Stilwell’s legacy and the effect on the future of China
  • The two completely different views of the Sino-Japanese War
“The decision to relieve General Stilwell represents the political triumph of a moribund, anti-democratic regime that is more concerned with maintaining its political supremacy than in driving the Japanese out of China…… No diplomatic genius could have overcome the Generalissimo's basic unwillingness to risk his armies in battle with the Japanese.”

New York Times
Burma – 1945 (Planning)

- During the monsoon season, the allies settled on three simultaneous plans:
  - Plan X – The drive by Force X from Myitkyma south to Lashio and a link up with Force Y. Would open the route for the Ledo Road.
  - Plan Y - A drive by the 14th Army west into central Burma, capturing Mandalay and eventually link up with Force X & Force Y at Maymyo (east of Mandalay). This would clear the Japanese from central Burma and open the road south to Rangoon.
  - Plan Z – Airborne & amphibious assault on Rangoon. With Rangoon captured the Japanese would have lost their line of communications and be forced to evacuate Burma to the east.

- X&Y were initiated as soon as the monsoon season ended. However Z had to be deferred because of a lack of resources which would not be available until the war in Europe was over.

- It was replaced by a third attack on Arakan to allow the construction of air bases on two off-shore islands that could then support the assault on Rangoon.

- A complicating factor for the Japanese was a decidedly negative shift in the attitude of the Burmese people, the BNA, and the INA against the Japanese.
Helpful Irregulars

• Although by 1945 the Chindits & Merrill’s Marauders had been disbanded, Burma was awash in Allied irregular forces.
  • V Force: British army force first envisioned as a “buffer area” irregular unit between India and Burma preparing for the Japanese invasion. Did poorly during Ha-Go but provided useful assistance during the subsequent operations. As a result, Z Force was set up to directly assist the 14th Army.
  • OSS Detachment 101: Set up in Burma in April 1942 and operated as a guerilla organization until July 1945. For the loss of 22 Americans it was credited with killing 5500 Japanese and rescuing 574 allied personnel. Total strength was 3000 men. (One of Donovan’s most successful efforts)
  • Force 136: British SOE unit that worked towards developing Burmese opposition and resistance movements. Highly successful in initiating anti-Japanese sentiment by 1945. Also conducted intelligence gathering and hit & run raids. Also successful in Thailand.
  • MARS Task Force: US long-range penetration force along the lines of the Chindits. Was very successful in supporting X Force operations in 1945.

• All these units were heavily dependent on locals for their success.
  • Particularly the Karin, the Kachin, Chin, & the Rohingya
Burma 1945
Allied Attacks
Southern Burma -1945

• XV Corps attacked Akyab Island in early December (for the third time in 2 years) and complete the capture on 2 January ‘45.

• On 3 January, units moved ashore at Anakan and became involved in very heavy fighting finally forcing the Japanese into a disorganized retreat by 29 January.

• They then landed on Ramree Island which initiated a major six week battle before the Japanese evacuated suffering heavy casualties.

• This then ended the southern campaign as XV Corps air support was stripped away to support the central Burma campaign.
Northern Burma - 1945

- Fighting was relatively easy as the Japanese had withdrawn most of their forces to the central front.
- By 21 January all original objectives were in hand.
- The first trucks moved up the Stilwell Road to Kunming on 4 February.
- Lashio fell on 7 March but then progress stopped as Chiang ordered a halt to X Force. However, Northern Burma was now solidly in Allied hands.
Central Burma - 1945

- Japanese assigned 4 divisions under General Katamura to defend central Burma. He recognized the advantageous nature of the Shwebo Plain to British armor and secretly retreated east across the Irrawaddy before Slim attacked in early January.

- This forced Slim to change plans. He quickly shifted south forcing the Irrawaddy at Pakokku cutting the Japanese lines to their main base at Meiktila.

- He then brought the entire XXXIII corps across the river and drove SE, capturing Meiktila on 4 March in a rapid *blitzkrieg* style assault.

- Meanwhile, the 19th Indian Division drove straight through to Mandalay capturing it on 20 March.

- Now comes the race to Rangoon.
The Race to Rangoon

• Why a race? (planes and rains)

• IV Corps was assigned to make the main drive down the Sittang River valley. The assault started on 6 April.

• Concerned that the Japanese would defend Rangoon to the last man during the monsoon season (a disaster for the British) Slim decided to “backdoor” Rangoon with a parachute & amphibious assault (Operation Dracula).

• On 1 May an Indian parachute battalion dropped on the Japanese coastal defense area, cleared it and the next day the 26th Indian Division landed just as the monsoons started. The Japanese had evacuated the city on 22 April.
Pegu Breakout

• From Rangoon, the Japanese had retreated to Tenasserim where they were trapped, starving and worthless as a fighting force.

• However, some 20,000 Japanese troops escaped to the Pegu Yomas hills between the Irrawaddy and the Sittang.

• An attempted breakout on 17th of July was a disaster as the British had captured the Japanese plans.

• The war in Burma is now completely over except for......
One Final CBI Drama

- In November ‘44, Command of Allied Land Forces, SE Asia (ALFSEA) was taken over by General Leese who had been quite successful in North Africa and Italy.

- In June’45, Leese decided to relieve Slim of the 14th Army and replace him with the commander of the Indian XV Corps. Slim would take over the new 12th Army for “mop up” operations in Burma. Slim immediately resigned.

- The 14th Army essentially mutinied and General Brooke was outraged.

- Leese was sent home and Slim promoted to ALFSEA. Everybody was now happy except Leese.
Ending the war in China

• In April ‘45, The Japanese attacked Hunan in an attempt to seize Chinese airfields and railways in the province. The Chinese were ready and stopped the assault with relative ease. Counter-attacks then inflicted serious losses on the Japanese forces.

• Also in April, the Chinese launched a major offensive against the Japanese in Guangxi province which was very successful. By the end of July, Guangxi was in Chinese hands and the Chinese were preparing to attack and capture Shanghai when the war ended.
  • At one minute past midnight, 9 August the Soviet Union sent 1.5M men swarming into Inner Mongolia, Manchukuo, and Northern Korea.
    • According to Russian historians, this act caused the Japanese surrender on 15 August.

Arms for Mao
The Chinese Civil War

• As we discussed in week one, the war had been going on from 1927 until 1937 when it was put on hold due to the Sino-Japanese War.
  • Almost all non-communist historians agree that if not for this break, Chiang and the KMT would have wiped out the CCP.

• About 95% of Chinese military losses in WW2 fell on the KMT led forces

• Politically, Chiang received the blame for all the bad things that happened in China during WW2.
  • He was especially castigated for the Yellow River flood decision.
  • His highly repressive regime was very unpopular.
  • The CCP could promise land, peace, and an end to repression (true or not). Chiang had demonstratively not been able to produce any of these.

• All of this served to give the CCP a major recruiting advantage in the civil war.
The Chinese Civil War (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nationalists</th>
<th>Communists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>4,300,000</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3,650,000</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,490,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Losses for the Civil War:
Nationalists – 1.5 M,
Communists – 250,000
Civilians – 4.25 M
Result

• Mao declares the creation of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.
• Thought: One can only imagine the result if Chiang had won the civil war.
  • A gigantic humongous (1.4B) version of today’s Taiwan??
Some final local politics

- In March ‘45, the BIA revolted against the puppet government, removed Baw Ma from Burmese leadership and replaced him with its commander, Aung San.
  - Burma would get it’s independence from Britain in 1947.
- India (and Pakistan) would also achieve independence in 1947.
  - Displaced 15M people and killed > 1M.
- Thailand “undeclared” war, restored civilian government (1946) and returned all conquered territories as the price for joining the UN.
Loses

• US
  • 3600 military casualties

• Britain
  • 86,000 military casualties (mostly Indian)
  • > 3 Million civilian casualties (Indian)

• Japan
  • 4 Million military casualties (2M dead) (200,000 in Burma, the rest in China)
  • 1 Million NRA Chinese fighting on the Japanese side

• China
  • ≈ 10 Million military casualties (500,000 CCP) (4M dead)
  • ≈ 20 Million civilian deaths
  • ≈ 80 Million refugees

• No one will ever know how many Burmese died during the conquest, occupation, and reconquest.

Japanese POW death statistics:
  British – 6.2%
  Dutch – 23%
  Americans – 41%
  Forced native laborers – 77%
  Chinese ≈ 99.9% (56 survived of 1M POWs)
CBI Impact on WW2

• Very little
• There was no chance Japan could conquer either China or India.
• China did tie up over 1M Japanese troops but it’s not clear where else they could have been used.
• Burma tied up another 300,000 with the same question mark.
• The Allies used < 10% of their resources in the CBI.

• Opinion: If the Japanese had stopped in Indo-China and not proceeded west and had conducted no further offensive actions in China after Pearl Harbor, it would have had no impact on the outcome of the war.
Impact of the CBI on the Post WW2 World

• DRAMATIC!!!
  • It ended colonialism in SE Asia
  • It allowed the Chinese Civil War to reignite and arguably made sure the Communists would win it.
    • This in turn triggered the “Who lost China?” debate and
    • Gave serious impetus to Joseph McCarthy and the “Unamerican Activities movement”
I learned much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, but most from my students.

The Talmud

(Thank you for your attention, your good questions, and your participation!)
Questions & Comments