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Rana Mitter's new book, "Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937 -- 1945" helped fill many gaps in my understanding of both WW II and its aftermath. The book offers an acessible and balanced account of China's WW II, centering on the Japanese invasion. Mitter is professor of modern Chinese history at the University of Oxford.

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[Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937-1945 by Rana Mitter](#)

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Buy Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937-1945 Library ed. by Mitter, University Lecturer in History and Politics of Modern China Rana, Vance, Simon (ISBN: 9781482924770) from Amazon's Book Store. Everyday low prices and free delivery on eligible orders.

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May 8 will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of World War Two in Europe. While the stories of D-Day and Dunkirk are well versed, China's resistance against Japan is one of the great untold stories of the Second World War and one that contributed heavily to the Allies victory.

[The Forgotten Ally: China's Unsung Role in World War II](#)

Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937-1945. Rana Mitter. The epic, untold story of China's devastating eight-year war of resistance against Japan. For decades, a major piece of World War II history has gone virtually unwritten. The war began in China, two years before Hitler invaded Poland, and China eventually became the fourth great ally, partner to the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain.

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Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937-1945: Mitter ...

On that basis alone, Oxford University historian Rana Mitter is justified in titling his revisionist history of China in World War II *Forgotten Ally*. But, as he explains at length, recognition of China's contribution to the war effort is overdue on a far broader basis than that. Dueling myths and torrents of propaganda

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For most Europeans, World War II began with Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939. Many Asians, however, date the war from May 1937, when Japanese forces in China created an "incident"...

BOOK REVIEW: 'Forgotten Ally' - Washington Times

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Made possible through access to newly unsealed Chinese archives, tells the untold story of China's devastating eight-year war of resistance against Japan in World War II, rewriting the larger history of the war in the process.

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A history of the Chinese experience in WWII, named a Book of the Year by both the Economist and the Financial Times: "Superb" (The New York Times Book Review). In 1937, two years before Hitler invaded Poland, Chinese troops clashed with Japanese occupiers in the first battle of World War II. Joining with the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain, China became the fourth great ally in a devastating struggle for its very survival. In this book, prize-winning historian Rana Mitter unfurls China's drama of invasion, resistance, slaughter, and political intrigue as never before. Based on groundbreaking research, this gripping narrative focuses on a handful of unforgettable characters, including Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong, and Chiang's American chief of staff, "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell—and also recounts the sacrifice and resilience of everyday Chinese people through the horrors of bombings, famines, and the infamous Rape of Nanking. More than any other twentieth-century event, World War II was crucial in shaping China's worldview, making *Forgotten Ally* both a definitive work of history and an indispensable guide to today's China and its relationship with the West.

Made possible through access to newly unsealed Chinese archives, this riveting book tells the untold story of China's devastating eight-year-war of resistance against Japan in World War II, rewriting the larger history of the war in the process. 30,000 first printing.

China is now poised to take a key role on the world stage, but in the early twentieth century the situation could not have been more different. Rana Mitter goes back to this pivotal moment in Chinese history to uncover the origins of the painful transition from a premodern past into a modern world. By the 1920s the seemingly civilized world shaped over the last two thousand years by the legacy of the great philosopher Confucius was falling apart in the face of western imperialism and internal warfare. Chinese cities still bore the imprints of its ancient past with narrow lanes and temples to long-worshipped gods, but these were starting to change with the influx of foreign traders, teachers, and missionaries, all eager to shape China's ancient past into a modern present. Mitter takes us through the resulting social turmoil and political promise, the devastating war against Japan in the 1940s, Communism and the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, and the new era of hope in the 1980s ended by the Tian'anmen uprising. He reveals the impetus behind the dramatic changes in Chinese culture and politics as being China's "New Culture" - a strain of thought which celebrated youth, individualism, and the heady mixture of strange and seductive new cultures from places as far apart as America, India, and Japan.

Different countries give different opening dates for the period of the Second World War, but perhaps the most compelling is 1937, when the 'Marco Polo Bridge Incident' plunged China and Japan into a conflict of extraordinary duration and ferocity - a war which would result in many millions of deaths and completely reshape East Asia in ways which we continue to confront today. With great vividness and narrative drive Rana Mitter's book draws on a huge range of new sources to recreate this terrible conflict. He writes both about the major leaders (Chiang Kaishek, Mao Zedong and Wang Jingwei) and about the ordinary people swept up by terrible times. Mitter puts at the heart of our understanding of the Second World War that it was Japan's failure to defeat China which was the key dynamic for what happened in Asia.

China's mid-twentieth-century wars pose extraordinary interpretive challenges. The issue is not just that the Chinese fought for such a long time—from the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 1937 until the close of the Korean War in 1953—across such vast territory. As Hans van de Ven explains, the greatest puzzles lie in understanding China's simultaneous external and internal wars. Much is at stake, politically, in how this story is told. Today in its official history and public commemorations, the People's Republic asserts Chinese unity against Japan during World War II. But this overwrites the era's stark divisions between Communists and Nationalists, increasingly erasing the civil war from memory. Van de Ven argues that the war with Japan, the civil war, and its aftermath were in fact of a piece—a singular process of conflict and political change. Reintegrating the Communist uprising with the Sino-Japanese War, he shows how the Communists took advantage of wartime to increase their appeal, how fissures between the Nationalists and Communists affected anti-Japanese resistance, and how the fractious coalition fostered conditions for revolution. In the process, the Chinese invented an influential paradigm of war, wherein the Clausewitzian model of total war between well-defined interstate enemies gave way to murky campaigns of national liberation involving diverse domestic and outside belligerents. This history disappears when the realities of China's mid-century conflicts are stripped from public view. *China at War* recovers them.

In the early stages of the Second World War, the vast crescent of British-ruled territories stretching from India to Singapore appeared as a massive Allied asset. It provided scores of soldiers and great quantities of raw materials and helped present a seemingly impregnable global defense against the Axis. Yet, within a few weeks in 1941-42, a Japanese invasion had destroyed all this, sweeping suddenly and decisively through south and southeast Asia to the Indian frontier, and provoking the extraordinary revolutionary struggles which would mark the beginning of the end of British dominion in the East and the rise of today's Asian world. More than a military history, this gripping account of groundbreaking battles and guerrilla campaigns creates a panoramic view of British Asia as it was ravaged by warfare, nationalist insurgency, disease, and famine. It breathes life into the armies of soldiers, civilians, laborers, businessmen, comfort women, doctors, and nurses who confronted the daily brutalities of a combat zone which extended from metropolitan cities to remote jungles, from tropical plantations to the Himalayas. Drawing upon a vast range of Indian, Burmese, Chinese, and Malay as well as British, American, and Japanese voices, the authors make vivid one of the central dramas of the twentieth century: the birth of modern south and southeast Asia and the death of British rule.

Once sidelined from public memory, World War II is now a historical touchstone in China. Rana Mitter links reassessment of the war to China's rising nationalism. At home, Chinese use the war to shape conflicted identities; abroad the war with Japan is now treated as a Chinese victory, a founding myth for a people destined to shape the global order.

The New York Times bestseller that inspired the documentary *Shanghai 1937: Where World War II Began* on Public Television. At its height, the Battle of Shanghai involved nearly a million Chinese and Japanese soldiers while sucking in three million civilians as unwilling spectators—and often victims. It turned what had been a Japanese imperialist adventure in

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China into a general war between the two oldest and proudest civilizations of the Far East. Ultimately, it led to Pearl Harbor and to seven decades of tumultuous history in Asia. The Battle of Shanghai was a pivotal event that helped define and shape the modern world. In its sheer scale, the struggle for China's largest city was a sinister forewarning of what was in store only a few years later in theaters around the world. It demonstrated how technology had given rise to new forms of warfare and had made old forms even more lethal. Amphibious landings, tank assaults, aerial dogfights, and—most important—urban combat all happened in Shanghai in 1937. It was a dress rehearsal for World War II—or, perhaps more correctly, it was the inaugural act in the war, the first major battle in the global conflict. Actors from a variety of nations were present in Shanghai during the three fateful autumn months when the battle raged. The rich cast included China's ascetic Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his Japanese adversary, General Matsui Iwane, who wanted Asia to rise from disunity, but ultimately pushed the continent toward its deadliest conflict ever. Claire Chennault, later of "Flying Tiger" fame, was among the figures emerging in the course of the campaign, as was First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In an ironic twist, Alexander von Falkenhausen, a stern German veteran of the Great War, abandoned his role as a mere advisor to the Chinese army and led it into battle against the Japanese invaders. Shanghai 1937 fills a gaping chasm in our understanding of the War of Resistance and the Second World War.

Providing historical insights essential to the understanding of contemporary China, this text presents a nation's story of trauma and growth during the early twentieth century. It explains how China's defeat by Japan in 1895 prompted an explosion of radical reform proposals and the beginning of elite Chinese disillusionment with the Qing government. The book explores how this event also prompted five decades of efforts to strengthen the state and the nation, democratize the political system, and build a fairer and more unified society. Peter Zarrow weaves narrative together with thematic chapters that pause to address in-depth themes central to China's transformation. While the book proceeds chronologically, the chapters in each part examine particular aspects of these decades in a more focused way, borrowing from methodologies of the social sciences, cultural studies, and empirical historicism. Essential reading for both students and instructors alike, it draws a picture of the personalities, ideas and processes by which a modern state was created out of the violence and trauma of these decades.

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