The History and Political Economy of the Peoples’ Republic of China (1949-2012)

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Lecture #2 The Enigma of Maoist Leadership & Thinking

• 1. Mao Zedong, A brief biography
• 2. Mao’s many manifestations
• 3. Mao’s Vision and Thinking
• 4. Mao’s Social & Political Thought
• 6. Mao’s Swan Song: The Cultural Revolution
• 7. Mao’s leadership & Legacy
The Iconic Chairman Mao

Chairman Mao Zedong

Official 1960–1966 portrait of Mao
Young Mao Zedong in 1919
Mao the Military Leader

Mao Tse-tung as a young revolutionary.
Mao, The New Leader of China 1949

Mao Zedong declaring the founding of the People's Republic of China, Peking, October 1, 1949
The Iconic Mao, China’s Paramount Leader
Lecture 2: The Enigma of Maoist Leadership & Thinking

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1. Mao Zedong, A brief biography
1893-1976

• 1. Personal life
• 2. Character-Personality
• 3. Contradiction of Mao’s character
• 4. A born leader and Revolutionary
• 5. Early years 1919-1949 (A Leader in the Making)
• 6. Middle Years 1950-1965 (Leadership Tested)
• 7. Later Years 1966-1976 (The Leader’s Swan Song)
• 8. Mao’s legacy and place in History
Mao, as an ordinary human being
2. Mao’s many manifestations

• 1. Mao: The Dreamer and Rebel
• 2. **Mao: An Intellectual Genius, A Man of Vision**
• 3. Mao: The Teacher, The Intellectual
• 4. **Mao: The Charismatic Leader**
• 5. Mao: The Master Politician
• 6. **Mao: The Mad Genius of Evil**
• 7. Mao: An Ordinary Man, in Extraordinary Times
Mao, A Dreamer of Traditional Cultural Heroes and the Never Ending Battle With Evil
3. Mao’s Vision and Thinking

- 1. Influence of Chinese History & Culture
- 2. Influence of Classical Marxism-Leninism
- 3. Mao’s Originality & Creativity in developing Chinese Communism
- 4. Mao’s major works: Theoretical Constructs
- 5. Mao on Nature of Revolution
- 6. Daring to Dare, armed struggle a constant
- 7. Mao’s Vision, always a work in progress
Chairman Mao’s Intellectual Mentors

Karl Marx       Vladimir Lenin
German          Russian Revolutionary Leader
Economist       Founder of the Soviet Union

Following the success of the October Revolution in the Russian Empire, in which Marxists took power, Mao came under the theoretical influence of Karl Marx (left) and Vladimir Lenin (right).
4a. Mao’s Social and Political Thought

- Classical Marxism-Leninism as starting point
  - 1. Hegalian Dialectics – New theory about change
  - 2. Dialectical Materialism (change in natural world)
  - 3. History of man, as history of class warfare
  - 4. Imperialism last stage of capitalism
  - 5. Post capitalist age, withering away of state
    - Classless society, utopian socialist world
  - 6. Lenin’s Communist party as vanguard of revolution
  - 7. Lenin’s Unitary Party-state system
  - 8. World wide communist revolutions usher in new era of global unity, peace, & prosperity
4b. Mao’s Social and Political Thought

1. Power grows out of the barrel of a gun
2. If the party are the fish, the people are the sea
3. The role of contradictions in socio-political struggle
4. China requires its own unique brand of communism
5. Two stages of revolution needed in China
   - Anti-Feudal, Anti-Imperialism (work w/bourgeoisie)
   - Anti-Capitalism, (destroy the bourgeoisie)
6. Socialist Transformation, via fundamental political, economic, and cultural change
7. Recapturing the Chinese Millstone of greatness
Mao, The Maverick Original Thinker

Mao in 1938, writing *On Protracted War.*
A Lifetime of Engaging Others, Where the Winner Takes All!

Mao and Khrushchev at the Kremlin in November 1957. Mao saw himself as the leader of the socialist camp and believed that the Great Leap Forward would allow China to forge ahead and make the transition from socialism to communism, leaving the Soviet Union far behind.

General George Marshall and Mao Zedong in Yan'an

Mao greets United States President Richard Nixon during his visit to China in 1972.
4c. Mao’s Major works and Their key Ideas

1. **Analysis of the classes in Chinese Society** (1926)
   Peasantry as pivotal class in Chinese society
2. **Report on an investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan** (1927)
   Peasants as vanguard of revolution
3. **On Guerrilla Warfare** (1937)
   Its nature, value and relevance for China
4. **On Practice** (1937)
   Distinguishing dogma & practice, avoiding extremes, best to lean towards practice/experience over dogma
5. **On Contradiction** (1937)
   The law of contradiction, is the law of opposites, which is the basis of dialectical materialism, where development occurs internally with contradictions
4d. Mao’s Major works and Their key Ideas

6. On Protracted War (1938)
   argues against simple view of either Chinese defeat or victory in war w/ Japan is easy or simple, struggle is ongoing

7. On New Democracy (1940) (1949-1953)
   Beyond political, economic change CCP stands for cultural change, socialist transformation, new socio-cultural change
   "Democratic Dictatorship"  CCP leads w/4 classes,
   "Democratic Centralism" elected bodies of reps, approval & responsible to higher authority

8. On the Correct Handling of the contradictions among the people (1957)
   Two types of contradictions exist, 1) Antagonistic contradictions between the people and the (external) enemy, 2) Non-antagonistic contradictions among the people themselves. Former no compromise, but latter capable of compromise for resolution
4e. Chinese Communist Views of Ideology

- **Theory** is pure ideology, unalterable truths. **Thought** is practical ideology, which is flexible, adaptable, The two mirror changing relationship with each other over time.

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<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Pure ideology</th>
<th>Practical ideology</th>
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<td>7th party cong.</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism</td>
<td>Mao’s Thought</td>
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<td>(1945)</td>
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<td>(1956)</td>
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<td>Great Leap Forward</td>
<td>Marxism-Leninism</td>
<td>Mao’s Thought</td>
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<td>(1960)</td>
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1. 1919-1920 A Wonderful Time, A Wonderful Place
2. 1921-1927 A small crumb from the Chinese banquet Table
3. 1927-1935 Mao’s Way, From failure to Success
4. 1935-1936 Master of the Red House, on a precipice
5. 1936-1945 An Inconvenient Delay, via a Convenient Alliance, The 2nd United Front in WWII
6. 1945-1949 Mission Accomplished!
7. 1949-1953 Impatiently Bidding One’s Time
8. 1957-1959 Absolute Master of China, Only to Fall into the Abyss
6. Mao’s Swan Song: The Cultural Revolution

1. Opposition within the CCP (by the Moderates)
2. Failures of the Great Leap Forward 1958-1959
3. 1960-1964 Moderates Take Over leadership of CCP & PRC, Mao “kicked upstairs” into retirement-politically neutralized
4. 1960-1965 Mao plans his comeback & revenge
5. 1965-1976 The Cultural Revolution, The Mother of all Mass Mobilization Campaigns, attack, destroy enemies within CCP and prepare Chinese People for a future without Mao
7a. Mao: His leadership & Legacy

1. Mao’s Leadership
   1. Charismatic, but erratic and enigmatic
   2. 1919-1935 idealistic dreamer, rebel
   3. 1935-1945 Brilliant, leader with incisive mind, intuitively and rationally at the top of his game
   4. 1945-1955 The Leader, as a Team Player
   5. 1957-1959 A Master Chief Who burns the meal!
   6. 1965-1976 Return of the Master Chief, burns the meal and the whole house down!
2. Mao’s Legacy

1. The official line (1978-2014)
   A Great leader who did a lot of good things, but also a human being who made many mistakes, must learn from both his good & bad

2. A Brilliant mind, who took on a tremendous task

3. His success is that he did break the mold of Tradition, and created a new mold, Mao will always be numbered among the top 3 Chinese in all of Chinese History

4. His failure is that he was ruthless like the first Emperor of China, where the end justifies the means

5. Will Mao be a “Washington” or a “Lenin” relative to how the present (2018) and future will represent or repudiate his vision of China