ChinaX Course Notes

I transmit, I do not innovate.¹

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These are the class notes of Dave Pomerantz, a student in the HarvardX/EdX MOOC course entitled ChinaX. My ChinaX id is simply DavePomerantz.

First, a very big thank you to Professors Peter Bol and Bill Kirby and Mark Elliot and Roderick MacFarquhar, to the visiting lecturers who appear in the videos and to the ChinaX staff for assembling such a marvelous course.

The notes may contain copyrighted material from the ChinaX course. Any inaccuracies in here are purely my own. Where material from Wikipedia is copied directly into this document, a link is provided. See here.

¹ The Analects 7.1. See page 36.
### Part 8: Creating Modern China – The Birth of a Nation

#### Part 8 Introduction

**Historical Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 1911</strong></td>
<td>In Wuchang, Hubei, anti-Manchu revolutionaries toppled the provincial government, the first of many such actions throughout the provinces which established the Republic of China. Sun Yat-sen was provisional president, followed by Yuan Shikai, the turncoat Qing commander.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>February 12, 1912</strong></td>
<td>The Qing emperor abdicated, ending 268 years of Qing rule and 2000 years of dynastic reign.</td>
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<td><strong>December 1912 through January 1913</strong></td>
<td>The Republic held elections for the National Assembly, the first election in Chinese history. It was an electoral vote marred by bribery.</td>
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<td>1913</td>
<td>President Yuan Shikai appointed himself military dictator, limiting the powers of the Assembly.</td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>President Yuan Shikai proclaimed himself emperor of a constitutional monarchy. His death in 1916 threw China into chaos, leading regional commanders to take local control.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>May 4, 1919</strong></td>
<td>The May 4th Movement, aka the New Culture Movement, led by university students, protested the Treaty of Versailles’ transfer of Shandong from Germany to Japan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>The Chinese Communist Party was created with the aid of the Soviet Union.</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>Chiang Kai-shek, Sun Yat-sen’s successor to the leadership of the Kuomintang or Nationalist party (Guomindang in Pinyin), routed the regional warlords in his Northern Expedition, creating a new national government in Nanjing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Chiang Kai-shek forced the CCP out of southern China to Yan’an in northern China.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Japan created a puppet regime, Manchukuo, in NE China.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937-1945</td>
<td>Aided by the United States, China under the Nationalists outlasted Japan in the Second Sino-Japanese War, preserving China as a unified state.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940’s</td>
<td>Mao Zedong gained recognition for the participation of the CCP in the war.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>August 1945</strong></td>
<td>Chiang Kai-shek declared victory over the Japanese. On the brink of recognition as a great Asian power, China disintegrated into civil war.</td>
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35: Foreign Models for a Chinese Republic

The End of the Empire

Until recently, the period of 1911-1949, the history of the Republic of China, was written as a mere interregnum between the Qing and the ultimate Communist triumph. But did this period present a viable alternative to Communist rule before it was shunted off to Taiwan?

Begin with the ending of exams

We watched as the Qing came apart in the face of neiluan waihuan, internal rebellion and foreign invasion, falling in 1911 to the anti-Manchu revolutionaries, but perhaps falling before that, in 1905, when the exam system ended, taking with it the social support for dynastic reign that civil promotion through exams had provided from the Song to the Qing.

The exams were dismissed because its teachings were deemed irrelevant to the central issues of the 20th century. Yet nothing replaced this powerful systems for channeling bright young Chinese into civil service. When, in 1911, Puyi abdicated, both the bureaucracy of the exams and the emperor himself were gone, allowing Confucianism and its moral and political philosophies to come under attack as the cause of China’s backwardness, the anchor that stilled its progress.

A philosophical void

Without the Confucian anchor that for millennia had held China together between dynastic transitions, people drifted freely in the modern currents of ideology. In the past, the gentry was able to reintegrate itself around a new political regime while retaining a familiar outline. But this time, in the 20th century, China fell apart politically and socially.

A new middle class

A bourgeoisie arose to run light industry and commercial ventures, with or without foreign partners. Under these entrepreneurs a new urban industrial working class, a proletariat, arose in big cities like Shanghai.

A new political scholar

Meanwhile a class of scholars separate from the civil bureaucracy came from the former gentry. These intelligentsia had Western PhDs in specialized fields rather than the omnicompetence of the old Confucian scholars. This group began to experiment with new social ideas.

Urban vs. rural

In addition to the elite scholars, by 1915 there are four million students of all kinds, some of them women, all of them urban, challenging China with a dichotomy between the urban and rural worlds.

All of these changes would make it far more difficult for political transition than the comparatively simple process of establishing a new dynasty.

Short Discussion

The question:

As we have seen, Chinese society had transformed into several independent classes from both urban and rural areas in the 20th century. What could unite these different classes into a whole? When you look at the world today, what are the major forces that unite people together within a nation?

My thoughts:

In general, people are unified by common problems they must solve and common traits they share. The problems can be external invasion, natural forces (storms, draughts), protection from fire and crime, economic dislocation, social issues (needs for education or family structure). The common traits include geography, language, religion, genealogy, ethnicity.

Confucianism and the exams were a major unifying force for millennia. Clearly, communism became a new force. Simple nationalism doesn’t define the precise political force. I would have thought that a political force that arose out of Confucianism would have been the strongest component of any new moral and political foundation.

Later, the Soviets would sniff the scent of an orthodox Communist revolution in this new proletariat, but Mao would prove that the basis for a revolution was not with the urban working class, the nature of which dominated Russia, but with the peasantry that was the bulk of China.
Republicanism

China’s transition was unprecedented, lacking the elements of the ancien régime:\(^3\):

- Bureaucracy
- Emperor
- Confucianism

Still, it had models to draw from in other nations and it chose to draw from the most modern of institutions: the republic. And it has largely been a republic since.

The word *republic* comes from the Latin term *res publica*.\(^4\) All of these are republics, yet all differ significantly:

- The Republic of France
- The United States of America
- The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- The People’s Republic of China

The one common element is that none of these is a monarchy.\(^5\) Since 1911, China has engaged in a series of experimentations, all of which originated from some Western model.

- 1912-1915: Constitutional republic
- 1915-1916: Constitutional monarchy
- 1916-1924: Parliamentary republic
- 1916-1928: Different attempts at military unification through a military republic
- 1927-present: Leninist one-party republic under Kuomintang and the CCP
- 1930’s: Fascism
- 1949-present: Various forms of socialism including Maoism

**How these models came about in China**

They came to life through the interpretations of individual Chinese leaders and to them through foreign advisers.

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\(^3\) *ancien régime*: a political or social system that has been displaced, typically by one more modern.

\(^4\) From Wikipedia: *Res publica* is a Latin phrase, loosely meaning ‘public affair’. It is the root of the word ‘republic’, and the word ‘commonwealth’ has traditionally been used as a synonym for it; however translations vary widely according to the context. ‘Res’ is a nominative singular Latin noun for a substantive or concrete thing – as opposed to ‘spes’, which means something unreal or ethereal – and ‘publica’ is an attributive adjective meaning ‘of and/or pertaining to the state or the public’. Hence a literal translation is, ‘the public thing/affair’.

\(^5\) From Wikipedia with my emphasis: A republic is a form of government in which power resides in the people, and the government is ruled by elected leaders run according to law (from Latin: res publica), rather than inherited or appointed (such as through inheritance or divine mandate). In modern times the definition of a republic is also commonly limited to a government which excludes a monarch. Currently, 135 of the world's 206 sovereign states use the word "republic" as part of their official names.
Communism

Anti-Western

By the end of WW I, the Chinese were looking for an alternative to the kinds of Western democracies that had led Europe into a devastatingly brutal war. Those models of governance had not covered themselves with glory.

So the Chinese looked to communism, still a Western model, but not as thoroughly Western as the constitutional monarchies and elective democracies of Western Europe and the United States.

Comintern

The Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921 on a tourist boat on South Lake in Jiaxing, as a member of the Communist International, the Comintern, an organization that was itself founded in 1919 in Moscow by Lenin. Indeed, the intellectuals who founded the CCP found kindred spirits in the ideologues of Russian revolution who were anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist.

Soviet communism claimed science as its ally, that it could predict the evolution of societies, and that the other Western models of governance were a thin layer above the greed of capitalism that led inevitably to the kind of imperialism that had humiliated China in the 19th century.

Communism offered China a role in the struggle against imperialism. Perhaps most important, communism legitimized a small ruling committee from which a band of strong-willed Chinese intellectuals could demand total obedience from their followers.

Lastly, communism offered rapid development, bypassing the capitalist phase and taking China directly to modern socialism.

Chen Duxiu and Li Da Zhao, the co-founders of the CCP, embraced the promise of communism, spending their first two years organizing the urban proletariat to seize power.

The Comintern, however, reserved the right to make policy for all its members, demanding the same obedience of Chen and Li that they demanded of their followers. The Comintern insisted that China first become capitalist before becoming socialist. But the idea of wading through a bourgeois democratic phase alienated the young idealists of the CCP, who wanted revolution now.

The First United Front

In 1924, the CCP reluctantly acceded to the Comintern’s demands that they join Sun Yat-sen’s Kuomintang to form the First United Front, an alliance between the nationalists and the communists.

The Comintern sent many young Soviets to help the cause, arming and training 150,000 Chinese troops by 1926, the only Chinese army with an ideology. They marched from their base in Guangzhou to conquer most of the south, then marched north to unify China under a new government.

Despite their military success, the leaders of the CCP were dismayed. Stalin declared Sun Yat-sen and his protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, to be the embodiment of the Chinese bourgeoisie, destined to complete the bourgeois revolution that would necessarily precede socialism. It was a fine theory, but they neglected to tell Sun Yat-sen, or perhaps the diktat was lost in translation.

Oddly enough, since the Soviets didn’t speak Chinese and the Chinese didn’t speak Russian, all the meetings and the minutes of those minutes were in English. Further, the Kuomintang drew its support from the broad base of merchants, landholders and professionals who were captivated by Sun Yat-sen’s charisma. These were not, however, the capitalist bourgeoisie that the CCP would need to prop up as its enemy and even after Sun Yat-sen’s death in 1925, the Kuomintang grew more powerful every day, overshadowing the CCP.

Chiang Kai-shek seemed to know of the Soviet plans to dump him. After consolidating his power at the Yangtze River, Chiang had the communists shot and the Russian advisers expelled, replacing them with advisers from Germany.

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I copied this phrase verbatim from the lecture notes, but it leaves me confused. Aren’t ‘merchants, landholders, and professionals’ the very soul of bourgeois capitalism?
Discussion

Based on the study of the evolution of Western societies, Marx assumed that societies would go through a capitalist phase before attaining socialism. Why is this assumption problematic when applied to 20th century China?

My response:

No settled form of governance since Imperialism

Having abandoned 2000 years of dynastic rule, China had no immediate replacement and was led more by a charismatic leader than by an established form of governance with the corresponding generation-spanning institutions. What capitalists there were had no chance to establish a base of power against which the communists could revolt.

Fascism

German Advisers

German political advisers to Chiang Kai-shek

Hans von Seeckt8 and Alexander von Falkenhausen

Italian Fascism and particularly German Fascism had a particular appeal for Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist party in the decade from 1928-1938, prompting Chiang to have closer relations with Germany than any other nation. Germans replaced Russians in advising the military and in personally advising Chiang on politics and economics. Chinese students educated in Germany returned to high levels in the Chinese bureaucracy.

Ideological Affinity and National Character

Chiang saw Germany as a model for China, since it had emerged industrially in the last third of the 19th century and had recovered rapidly from its defeat in WW I. He saw in Germany’s recovery that military and industrial development was the key to national strength without the prerequisite of a political revolution.

Rather than politics, Chiang envisioned China as emulating Germany’s model of a nation based on the particular character of its people: frugal, conservative, organized, and law-abiding. He sent two sons to study in Germany, telling one of them, Jiang Wei-kuo:

From Wikipedia: (I’m quoting from a rather poorly written section of Wikipedia, but it gives the gist of Falkenhausen’s role and the close relationship he had with Chiang Kai-shek.) In 1930, Falkenhausen retired from the service and went to China to serve as Chiang Kai-shek’s military advisor in 1934. In 1937 Nazi Germany officially allied themselves with the Empire of Japan, who by then had launched a war against the Republic of China during the Second Sino-Japanese War as part of the Sino-German cooperation to reform the Chinese Army. As a goodwill gesture to Japan, Germany recognized the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo and withdrew German support to China, including forcing Falkenhausen to resign his advisor post by threatening to have his family back in Germany punished for disloyalty. After a goodbye dinner party with Chiang Kai-shek's family, Falkenhausen promised he would never reveal any battle plans he had taught him to the Japanese.

8 From Wikipedia: (I’m quoting from a rather poorly written section of Wikipedia, but it gives the gist of Falkenhausen’s role and the close relationship he had with Chiang Kai-shek.) In 1930, Falkenhausen retired from the service and went to China to serve as Chiang Kai-shek's military advisor in 1934. In 1937 Nazi Germany officially allied themselves with the Empire of Japan, who by then had launched a war against the Republic of China during the Second Sino-Japanese War as part of the Sino-German cooperation to reform the Chinese Army. As a goodwill gesture to Japan, Germany recognized the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo and withdrew German support to China, including forcing Falkenhausen to resign his advisor post by threatening to have his family back in Germany punished for disloyalty. After a goodbye dinner party with Chiang Kai-shek's family, Falkenhausen promised he would never reveal any battle plans he had taught him to the Japanese.
China should learn from a country that is solid, not fancy. We can’t do things yet in the fancy way. We have nothing to learn from the Japanese. Their goods are too cheaply made. The Americans are too fancy, the British too slow, the French too vain. Germany is the country from which we can learn something. They can give us the base from which we can develop our own style, firm and solid.

Max Bauer, Chiang’s first military adviser, urged him to study what Mussolini had done to motivate the ‘degenerate’ Italians. *Mein Kampf* was translated into Chinese and sold on the streets while Chinese soldiers were outfitted with blue shirts to emulate the brown and black of the Nazis.

**Lost in Translation**

Yet there was little understanding in China of what fascism truly meant. Some thought it meant nationalism while others thought its focus was on planned economy. Still others picked up on the socialism of national socialism.

Tellingly, the word *fascism* was never translated to Chinese, only transliterated, while other political terms had specific Chinese definitions:

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>People’s rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialism</td>
<td>Social society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communism</td>
<td>Shared production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fascism</td>
<td>Whatever you want it to mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A Chinese Alternative**

*Only the practice of self-government prepared a country for self-government... We of the East ask only one thing of the West. It is this—that you of the West stay away from us and our problems: leave us to solve our own problems, to work out our own destinies, while you spend your time looking after yours. The greatest good you can do us, the lasting benefit you can confer on us, is to let us alone.*

*Sudhindra Bose*

China did not become constitutional in the 1910s or communist in the 20s or fascist in the 30s. At the American Political Association’s annual convention in 1915, Frank Goodnow asserted that the Chinese were unsuited for representative government. He was denounced by Charles Beard and then by Sudhindra Bose, as quoted above. Nevertheless, the two systems that remained from this period of political experimentation were the modern state with a modern military.

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9 For Bose’ quote, see An Early Tragedy of Comparative Constitutionalism: Frank Goodnow and the Chinese Republic, as published in the June 2012 issue of Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal, vol.21 no.3. The above quote is on page 588. If I have time someday, I’d like to read this paper.
Discussion

The period after the fall of the Qing, from around 1912 to the late 1930s, is sometimes seen as an interregnum or “waiting period” until the Communist Party of China finally rises to power. Yet the period of Nationalist rule from 1927 to 1937 has been called a “golden decade.” What might China look like today if Chiang Kai-shek had continued to rule the mainland after 1949?

My thoughts (Guangzhou fixed group):

I’m completely out of my depth in answering this question, so I’ll have to look at what other posters think, those who are far more knowledgeable of modern China.

I do think there is a concept of a national character that is a function of the shared traditions and education and cultural goals of the people, especially when the people is as homogeneous as China. I know many folks will argue that it’s not: that China includes Uigur’s and Manchus and Tibetans and Mongols, but it’s dominated by the Han Chinese and is less mixed than many European nations and far less mixed than the U.S. or England.

The culture dates back to Confucianism, to the elevation of the elderly and the educated, to service to the state. Though it reveres collectivism far less than Keightley would advocate, it has greater cultural focus on the relationship between family and state than most Western societies.

I believe Chiang Kai-shek would have found his national character and would have continued to build his authoritarian government with its centralized bureaucracy but I also believe he would not have survived the communications age (TV and radio and internet) without either revolution or evolution.

Chiang would either have changed or been overthrown. It’s impossible to predict what would have taken his place.
Assumptions Regarding the Military in Chinese History

Imperial China assumed success followed alongside the civilian bureaucracy, not the military ranks, and that culture would triumph over arms.

“You don’t use good iron for nails and you don’t use good men for soldiers.”

In other words, save the best men for government. Sunzi argued that the aim of war is to subdue your opponent, ideally without fighting.

But having lost the Opium Wars and experiencing total humiliation against the Japanese and in the Boxer Rebellion, there’s an assumption that the Chinese were a passive, non-militaristic people who seduced opponents with their culture. The truth is that though their weapons were no match for those of the newly industrialized nations, their history was filled with some of the most violent episodes in all of humanity.10

The biggest Western export to China before 1950 was arms and ammunition. Since the 1910s, China has had, on a continuing basis, the largest number of men under arms as any nation.

Regional Militarization

In the middle of the 19th century, the Taiping Revolution caused so much destruction that in some districts, two-thirds of the population was dead or missing. Social services decayed, floods destroyed farmland, epidemics broke out. As one example, Guangde county went from a population of 300,000 to 6,000.

To combat the rebellion, militias formed at the provincial and regional levels. After the rebellion, unrest continued, requiring a semi-permanent militia. Yet there was no strong national commitment to a standing army.

Militarization of the State in Republican China

Creating a National Army

The national army began under the Qing by Yin Chang, a Manchu officer who was sent to Germany for training. Yin created a military code separate from civil law, which meant that soldiers were outside civilian jurisdiction, which remains the case today.

Until that point, militias fell under the control of the bureaucracy; the heads of the largest forces were provincial scholar-officials. The New Army introduced the concept of military professionals, who saluted instead of bowing, who wore uniforms instead of gowns, and who cut their Manchu queues to fit them in their helmets.

Yuan Shikai, the leader of the New Army, would ultimately take down the Qing dynasty to become the first president of the Chinese republic.

The Presidency of Yuan Shikai, 1913-1916

Taking their cue from the French and American revolutions, the Chinese turned to the republican form of government. A republic seemed to naturally integrate local and national interests. Yuan Shikai was more interested, however, in a strong national government. When members of parliament used their influence to secure local favors, Yuan did everything to suppress them, from bribery to murder, along the way crushing the young democracy and turning the Chinese state into a military dictatorship.

His critics would say that Yuan Shikai lived by the simple rule that people feared weapons and loved gold. Still, he gave lip service to legitimation by performing rites at the Temple of Heaven on Confucius’ birthday and in 1915 he sought to have himself declared emperor. Further, he asked Harvard University to send him a constitutional adviser. Frank Goodnow, the recommended adviser, an expert in comparative politics, felt China was not ready for a parliamentary republic and should make Yuan either president for life, or emperor.

Warlordism

Warlords were local military leaders who commanded their own personal army, participated in shifting alliances, and acted independently of any national authority. The warlords were constantly in conflict, leading to seven heads of state and a brief imperial restoration, from 1916 to 1928. The desire for national unity led to frequent attempts by individuals to conquer all the other warlords.

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10 Four of the ten worst human conflicts in history took place in China. See here.
The brutality and incompetence of the warlords, along with the spectacle of Chinese fighting Chinese with foreign arms and advisers, created a force for nationalism and a desire to expel the foreigners.

**Competing Models for the New Military**

The two Chinese governments that remain today, the Nationalist government of Taiwan and the CCP of mainland China, both had their origins as warlord armies, tied to a single powerful military leader. Both knew that military strength was the road to power but not the means of keeping it. Under both governments, however, true power lay with the chairman of the military commission.

Both governments geared Chinese industry toward the military. From the 1920s through the ‘70s and ‘80s, industrial and military growth ran together. Having learned from the disastrous warlord period, these governments linked the military to a broad role.

From 1927 to 1937, the National government focused on domestic enemies, the Communists, and anticipated enemies, the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek spent 50% of his budget on the military. With his German advisers, Chiang focused on:

1. Dominating regional warlords
2. Exterminating communists
3. Defending China from foreign forces

He kept his army separate from the people as a purely professional force. As Xunzi said, “The people are the water and the rulers the boat. The water can support the boat, but it can also sink it.” This separation was a mistake, as the Chinese society remained militarized and violent and ripe for military organization.

Mao Zedong opted to immerse his army among the people, saying, “the soldiers are the fish and the people the water.”

Chiang, however, was forced to create his professional army by Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931, followed by the massing of its troops on the Korean/Manchurian border.

Chiang had several quick successes against local militias and against the Chinese Communists, who he forced on the famous Long March. He used his army as the school of the people, holding them as an example of moral conduct and loyalty.

**New Life Movement**

In 1934, Chiang attempted to use the army to teach that the values of Confucianism were in line with the military values of the day and were the cause of the strength of Italy and Germany.

**The Military under the People’s Republic, 1949-**

**The militarization of the soul…**

The factors that militarized China included the eight-year war with Japan, the civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists, and then, under the rule of the CCP, Mao’s effort to spread the military ethic throughout Chinese life. Mao and Chiang both ruled as Chairman of the Military Commission.

Chiang wanted civilians to obey orders like soldiers and talked about the militarization of Chinese society.

Mao went further, embedding military concepts in every facet of life, in political terminology, in the roll call of the civilian ‘production brigades’ and the huge mess halls in which they ate.

The height of Mao’s militarization came during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, when Lin Biao, the leader of the People’s Liberation Army (see page Error! Bookmark not defined.) turned the PLA into a cult and created a cult hero out of Lei Feng, a soldier who died when a truck backed over him. Mao had taken Chiang’s promise of teaching China through its army and made it real.

**Tiananmen Massacre Not a Surprise.** By 1989 the cult of militarism had receded, which was why the massacre at Tiananmen Square came as such a shock. It shouldn’t have. The old men who set policy, like Deng Xiaoping, knew revolution. From the 1950s to the ’80s, it was true that the ingrained norms of military order controlled society.

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11 From [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org): The Long March began Mao Zedong's ascent to power, whose leadership during the retreat gained him the support of the members of the party. The bitter struggles of the Long March, which was completed by only about one-tenth of the force that left Jiangxi, would come to represent a significant episode in the history of the Communist Party of China, and would seal the personal prestige of Mao and his supporters as the new leaders of the party in the following decades. However the true role of Mao in the Long March remains disputed, with many claims that Mao's role was heavily exaggerated and certain events in the Long March entirely fabricated.
without the need for force. But in 1989, the military emerged to suppress the largest popular demonstrations in world history because those old leaders understood from the early days of conflict and revolution that control was won with blood.

**… and the absence of a civilian bureaucracy**

As late as 1989, Chinese governments from Yuan Shikai to Jiang Zemin had shown they could exert tight military control over a billion people, governing and industrializing with absolute authority. But they had not shown that they could stand among the people as a legitimate government without the threat of force.

**Discussion**

**On the secret police vs. the military**

We watched a short news video of Beijing during the Great Leap Forward. I’ve quoted a fascinating thread on the whether we were seeing the influence of the military or the hidden influence of the secret police. I corrected spelling and added my own emphasis in places, but otherwise copied these comments literally.

Dougma: I don't think the film supports a militarization thesis - there are no PLA on view. It was a tightly controlled society, but controlled by the secret police led by the Party, not by the military, though of course they needed to be kept on-side.

Leotra: To say that they were controlled by the secret police in that time is inaccurate, the method for control was like in the Qing’s street or family groups that were responsible for the whole collective, it is more efficient, no secret police would have been enough in that time and there was not an existing institution like that, historical facts, one thing is China and other Eastern Germany.

Dougma: I don't dispute that there were the social controls you outline, but there were also undoubtedly ununiformed public security officials. And who was telling the street groups what the policy was?

Pczhang: @Dougma: Chinese policy is always distributed through the various local Communist Party branches. In China there is this organization called "居民委員會" (Residents' Committee) in urban areas and "村民委員會" (Villagers' Committee) in rural areas that usually carry out the nitty gritty mundane work of policy at the local level. I don't believe in the history of the PRC there was ever a secret police to the proportions of that seen in East Germany or the Soviet Union, and certainly did not leave a mark on Chinese society as a whole.

During the Cultural Revolution, when Mao was arguably at the zenith of his personal power, he moved against his foes within the leadership by motivating the masses - not through assassination. Many of his political opponents were tortured, but mostly at the hands of zealous masses, not at the hands of a secret police service.

To conclude from this particular video clip that Chinese society at the time was controlled by "the secret police led by the Party" is quite unwarranted.

Dougma: @pczhang You misrepresent what I said. I did not conclude from the video clip that society was controlled by anyone. I think it is absurd to draw any broad conclusion from one clip taken by a foreigner with an agenda. Nevertheless I have no doubt that the Ministry of State Security officials, who are non-uniformed, are tasked to maintain internal security and have the power of arrest, were quite as powerful as the Stasi in East Germany were (though this is not a comparison I myself originally made). I am well aware of the role of the various committees you cite, which did inculcate conformity to prevailing policy, but to suggest this was not backed by a secret police presence is naive. The reason Chinese people were frightened to be seen speaking to foreigners had nothing to do with the committees. Even today who is it that monitors and arrests dissidents? Of course every country has internal security forces but I am surprised you seek to down-play their strength in China. That Mao was able to incite ordinary people to behave appallingly does not seem to me to disprove the existence of the secret police.

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No doubt the Ministry of State Security monitored the interactions between foreigners and ordinary Chinese citizens, but based on how few foreign travelers there were in China at that time, I seriously doubt that this could amount to evidence showing that the secret police "controlled" the entire Chinese society.

Communist China in its early years relied much more on effective propaganda to control Chinese society. Especially in the early years of the People's Republic, there was tremendous widespread popular support for Mao Zedong and the Communist Party, and people genuinely believed the ideology put forth by the Communist Party.

Dougma: I quite agree the MSS or secret police, however one wants to call them, never controlled China by themselves - they were directed and controlled by the Party. Perhaps my original brief comment was too elliptic. I was in fact arguing that those we saw in the film clip showed no particular sign of being militarized and I believe the authorities at that time were genuinely popular with most people. Your final paragraph is quite correct in my view. I still think that if the centre of Beijing looked empty that was because it was tightly controlled for security reasons by security personnel.

My own view is that part of the tragedy of Mao and the Party was that they had needed to develop powerfully centralised organs of control to win the civil war and though this is a good model for an army, it is too open to abuse for a political party and Mao abused his centralised power, including his control of the security organs, much as happened in the Soviet Union. I think Professor Kirby over-stressed the thesis of the militarisation of Chinese society, as it has always seemed to me that the army was fairly drawn from political conflict (and hence remained the object of popular admiration). Of course any army is inevitably the final guarantor of state stability, but it has always seemed to me that the Party has carefully guarded its political authority over the army.

Dougma: @ronaldyeo I think you risk getting the emphasis wrong. The fact that Deng had been a military commander, as inevitably had virtually all of the Party leadership as a result of the civil war, was not the source of his power, which came from the Party. For obvious reasons the loyalty of the PLA to Party policy has always been a high priority for the Party, but I don't think it was seriously in doubt in the early decades of communist rule. I think the uncertainty shown by elements of the military in the Tiananmen crisis has in fact made their role a little more problematic of late - it's harder to attract and motivate high calibre military personnel under current economic policies, but their role in a China becoming more assertive on the international stage is growing in importance.

Ronaldyeo: Hi Dougma I think you risk misinterpreting my thoughts. I did say "most people, during that era, showed genuine support.". Furthermore, I did not say it was doubt, I did stated that "The PLA had...
always been part of the Party" However, it was the PLA that kept the Red Guards in check just as the cultural revolution came to close.

However, their role has indeed more problematic of late; as evidenced by PLA troops building a road in disputed border territory right next to Indian troops while Xi Jinping is on one of the biggest diplomatic trips of his administration.

Dougma: You're right we got away from the exact specifics of the question, but it was comment on the thesis presented in this week's lectures. I think that philosophically what we see is a communist, not a military mode of organisation, and I don't think they are exactly the same.
37: Culture and Revolution

Introduction

The themes of post-imperial China discussed so far include the growth of militarism, the search for a political model, and the growth of state power at the expense of civil society. Among other things, these themes had in common the search for a means of securing China’s place in the world as a strong and independent nation. One other approach to solving this problem was the cultural revolution: to revolutionize a nation’s culture as the first step along the path of revolutionizing society.

How does culture shape a nation?

China and Culture (wenhua)

Mao Zedong: to reshape culture in order to reshape the people.

The central idea of previous generations of Chinese culture, in its role as an aid to maintaining an imperial empire, was to encourage people to behave properly according to the status and their role in society. My opinion: proper behavior by status and role is the core concept of Confucian thought. The exam system ingrained this concept with its concomitant submission to power.

In China it was always assumed that the cultures of the arts - literature, opera, poetry – affected the culture of society: behavior. Thus, studying the classics promoted cultural behavior.

With the end of the examination system in 1905, the most important source of shared culture evaporated.

Yuan Shikai tried and failed to replace the exams with ‘constitutional Confucianism.’ Some believed the reason for China’s backwardness was, in fact, the Confucian tradition, denigrated as the ‘old culture.’

In the early 20th century, Lu Xun and Hu Shi, promoted the New Culture Movement to oppose the ‘old culture.’ Chiang Kai-shek, in the 1930’s, created the militaristic New Life Movement, as a counterrevolution to the New Culture Movement.

Revolution of High Culture

May Fourth Movement

Among the elite, the May Fourth Movement brought new universities with the explicitly stated goal by Cai Yuanpei of Peking University, that there would be unfettered academic freedom.

Chen Duxiu and New Youth

In 1915, before he co-founded the CCP, Chen Duxiu wrote the Call to Youth, a famous call to cultural revolution.

Chinese compliment others by saying: ‘He acts like an old man although still young.’ Englishmen and Americans encourage each other by saying: ‘Keep young while growing old.’

He told the youth of China to embrace a new culture instead of following the lead of their ancestors.

1. Be independent, not servile.
2. Be progressive, not conservative.
3. Be aggressive, not retiring.
4. Be cosmopolitan, not isolationist.
5. Be utilitarian, not formalistic.
6. Be scientific, not imaginative.

Most of his admonishments directly contradict Confucian tradition.

For a translation of Chen Duxiu’s writings, see here.
Short response

Read the following excerpt from Chen Duxiu’s "Call to Youth," written in 1915. How does the author define freedom and slavery? Who is his intended audience? Does the call to "be independent, not servile!” provide a viable solution to the problems facing China in the 1910s and 20s?

Note that the reading is apparently the full text of the section on “Be independent, not servile.”

My thoughts:

He’s talking to all of China’s youth, but also to those in power, that they should break with Confucian tradition. He defines slavery as both a state of being (enslaved) and a state of mind (thinking like a slave). Freedom is both equality of treatment and independence of thought.

I don’t believe that completely discarding Confucian tradition was in the interests of the Chinese at the turn of the century. They needed industrialization and modern technology and a new form of government, not to mention a strong outward-facing military. By discarding all their traditions, they found themselves with a lot of guns turned upon themselves. Moderation and less of a puppy-dog entrenchment with the fascists would have eased the transition.

Bai Hua – Plain Speech

Although novelists had turned to the vernacular during the Late Ming13 most written text remained in classical Chinese (was this wen yan?). Lu Xun, a short story writer of the early 20th century, bai hua. It offers a more economical writing, as in vs. vernacular

One important result was to make writing more accessible to the masses. In particular, when a proclamation is read to an illiterate person, it doesn’t have to be translated to the language they speak, it’s already in that language. Nevertheless, since most Chinese were illiterate, for them the argument was moot and was engaged primarily by the elite.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

Cultural Reorientation

Under Mao, the cultural revolution would take Chinese culture away from both the West and from Chinese tradition, and toward the Soviets. And then away from the Soviets to find its own niche.

In the early years of the People's Republic, Western ideas and especially Western religions were suppressed. Western schools were closed and correspondence with foreigners was deemed criminal. Proletarian simplicity was advocated over Western fashion, music, and culture.

By the 1960s the cultural revolution had turned against Chinese tradition as well, taking language beyond bai hua to simplify written characters, which had the effect of making classic texts and literature indecipherable to those educated under the new regime.

Jiang Qing and Cultural Revolution

Art as a vehicle for the new way

From 1966 to ’76, Mao’s coterie took control over the cultural changes, tying them to his particular charisma. His contribution to the history of socialism was to turn it from one based on sharing the outputs of society to a spiritual sharing even before the economy was up to the task of socialism.

Though Mao himself read the classical literature, he didn’t want the classics as part of a scholarly curriculum, preferring to use literature to promote his ideas. Famously, he viewed literature “as the artistic crystallization of the political aspirations of the Communist party.”

Mao felt that literature should idealize the lives of peasants and soldiers, that “there is no such thing as art for art’s sake.”14

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13 See page 204 for a discussion of the use of vernacular in novels, instead of the traditional wen yan of classic literature.

14 See page 204 yet again. This time not for the vernacular, but how the classics were used for wen vi zai dao, as a vehicle for the way. Plus ça change.
My thoughts: I don’t see Mao’s views as all that different from the Imperial elite using the Confucian classics, through the exam system, to cement the rigid respect for status during the dynastic period. The difference was not in Mao’s advocacy of literature as a means of promoting ideology, but in his strict censorship of anything contrary to his ideology.

**Jiang Qing**

Also known as Blue Apple, Mao’s last wife became the leading proponent of cultural dictatorship, insisting that all we should ever celebrate in the arts is the labor of the peasants and the workers, and the guardianship provided by the PLA. She insisted upon this over the objections of Deng Xiaoping, who rather enjoyed ‘feudal art’ like Peking opera.

For the duration of Mao’s cultural revolution, every work of art that failed to conform was proscribed. Instead, Mao was enforced as the sole muse of the Chinese artist.

The Little Red Book was all students had to memorize, and if they did, they would engage in the living study of Mao Zedong thought. New forms of art sponsored by the state took the place of the pantheon of historic Chinese art, several millennia of creative works.

**Reading: The Red Lantern**

The Red Lantern, first produced in 1964, celebrates the resistance of revolutionary forces against the Japanese occupation during the Anti-Japanese War 抗日戰爭 (Kangri zhanzheng). The main characters, Li Yuhe, Diemei, and "Grandma," are not blood-related, but as a family they overcome difficulty and guard a red lantern, from which the play derives its name.

Li sneaks home with a secret code hidden in a canteen of porridge. The dialogue is treacly and without nuance, like a child’s fable. The red lantern, a family heirloom “lighted the way for us poor people, for workers.”

If drama is defined as the presentation and resolution of inner conflict, The Red Lantern offers no drama and certainly no subtlety. “We are one family even with the wall,” they solemnly intone.

Enemy agents surround the house and try repeatedly to get the secret code. Tieh-mei’s father must leave and face the danger outside. He drinks an overtly symbolic bowl of wine. Granny says “Don’t cry, Tieh-mei. Our family has this rule: when one of us leaves, nobody must cry.”

In the arts there is a line distinguishing drama and melodrama. To quote one website on writing: “The last thing an author wants is for his work to be labeled melodramatic—because it means his story has stepped over the bounds of realistic conflict and tension into the realm of the sensationalized and overwrought.” In The Red Lantern, the playwright high-stepped over the line.

From Wikipedia: Jiang Qing (Chiang Ching; March 19, 1914 – May 14, 1991) was the pseudonym used by the major Communist Party of China political figure who was Mao Zedong's last wife. In the West, Jiang was known as Madame Mao. She went by the stage name Làn Ping during her acting career, and was known by various other names during her life. She married Mao in Yan'an in November 1938 and served as Communist China's first first lady. Jiang Qing was best known for playing a major role in the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) and for forming the radical political alliance known as the "Gang of Four". She was named the "Great Flag-carrier of the Proletarian Culture"

Jiang Qing served as Mao's personal secretary in the 1940s and was head of the Film Section of the CPC Propaganda Department in the 1950s. In the early 1960s, she made a bid for power during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). In 1966 she was appointed deputy director of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and claimed real power over Chinese politics for the first time.

Before Mao's death, the Gang of Four maintained control of many of China's political institutions, including the media and propaganda. However, Jiang's political success was limited. When Mao died in 1976, she lost the support and justification for her political activities. She was arrested in October 1976 by Hua Guofeng and his allies, and was subsequently accused of being counter-revolutionary. Since then, Jiang Qing and Lin Biao have been branded by official historical documents in China as the "Lin Biao and Jiang Qing Counter-revolutionary Cliques", to which most of the blame for the damage and devastation caused by the Cultural Revolution was assigned. The assessments of western scholars have not been as uniformly critical. Though initially sentenced to execution, her sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 1983, and in May 1991 she was released for medical treatment. Before returning to prison, she committed suicide.

Not unlike the Soviet proscription of art and literature during the communist era. See here.

At one point, Granny tells the story of the CCP overcoming the warlords and then the Japanese. She doesn’t just tell it, she has to stand up to tell it. Tieh-mei doesn’t just listen, she announces that “Granny tells a stirring tale of the revolution.”

*The red lantern's light*
*Shines on my father fighting those wild beasts.*
*Generation shall fight on after generation,*
*Never leaving the field Until the victory is won.*
*(Granny and Tieh-mei hold high the red lantern, which throws a radiant light over the stage.)*

Just a tad overwrought.

We move on now, to Li as a hostage to the evil enemy who speaks in the language of capitalism, “beliefs can be bought or sold. The main thing is to make a profit.” Of course, Li laughs in their faces, “We Communists are tough. We look on death as nothing.”

Hatoyama, the enemy captain, is a believer in Buddhism. Li is not. So much for Buddhism under Mao. Hatoyama is about self-preservation, Buddhism, capitalism. Li is about the communal spirit, abstention, resistance. Thus does Mao’s culture follow Mao’s ideology in lockstep.

**The Red Detachment of Women**\(^{18}\)

Nixon saw this ballet in 1972 in Beijing. It’s marching music, rather pleasant. It’s a ballet that begins with a beautiful woman suspended from chains. An obviously evil man tears off her chains rudely so she can dance. Evil, obviously smirking men with armbands trot around bearing lanterns. Our heroine always wears an expression of deep suffering. The evil men are always grinning and smirking.

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\(^{18}\) From *Wikipedia*: Adapted from the earlier film of the same title under the personal direction of Zhou Enlai, which in turn adapted from the novel by Liang Xin, it depicts the liberation of a peasant girl in Hainan Island and her rise in the Chinese Communist Party. The novel was based on the true stories of the 100+ member strong all-female Special Company of the 2nd Independent Division of Chinese Red Army, first formed in May 1931. As the communist base in Hainan was destroyed by the nationalists, most of the members of the female detachment survived, partially because they were women and easier to hide among the local populace who were sympathetic to their cause.

…The ballet was later adapted to a Beijing opera in 1964…It is one of the so-called eight model plays, the only plays, ballets and operas permitted in China during the Cultural Revolution… and is now part of the permanent repertoire of the National Ballet of China.

Despite its political overtones and the historical background when it was created, it remains a favorite of music and ballet lovers nearly 30 years after the Cultural Revolution in China. Many numbers were based on the folk songs of Hainan Island, a place that, with its coconut trees rustling in tropical wind, evokes much romantic ethos. Though there are unmistakable elements of Chinese music, the music of this ballet was performed with basically a Western symphony orchestra.
Swallow and Dawn

This story embodies Mao’s Theory of Contradictions.¹⁹

When something goes wrong with [a construction] crane, it means there’s an internal contradiction. So check to find the principle aspect of that contradiction. If the crane is rocking, it means a bent shaft or a faulty wheel.

In other words, if something is wrong with the world, seek out the problem and fix it. Don’t persist in a static existence of slavery to capitalism and imperialism.

Discussion

After reading and watching and listening to various cultural outputs from the May 4th Movement to the Cultural Revolution, using evidence (giving specific examples) from these pieces, what role do you think culture played in society during this period? How does culture relate to revolution? You may choose to focus on a specific era or look at the whole period.

My response:

Art was written and performed exclusively in service to the CCP. The Red Lantern espoused the principle of communal thought, that the best families were created outside the lineage of father and mother, bound by common principles and especially by common enemies, a bond stronger than blood. The enemy were the Japanese, steeped in capitalism, in bacchanalian pursuits and selfish thoughts. Art was melodrama, never questioning its premises, starkly painting good and evil.

Swallow and Dawn reinforced the principles Mao wrote about in On Contradiction, which he adapted from Marx’ and Engels’ dialectical materialism. The principle, boiled down for the masses, is that capitalism and imperialism are old broken systems that enslave the proletariats and must be fixed through revolution. That people and systems evolve by identifying and fixing the contradictions (I think that’s what it means.)

Once again, I’m compelled to quote Dougma’s response as superior to mine²⁰:

The May 4th intellectuals seem basically to have been so contemptuous of what was happening to China that they wanted to jettison the whole pre-existing Chinese culture. Most of them took their initial cultural inputs from Japan, though Japan of course had imbibed much European culture and influence and this was refracted on to China. The work of the major writers tended to gravitate to the more easily translatable genres of essays and the novel, though there were playwrights and poets, all taking their models from Japan and Europe, but producing some fine work. Lu Xun and Lao She for example produced stories and novels

¹⁹ From Wikipedia: Along with On Practice, [On Contradiction] forms the philosophical underpinnings of the political ideology that would later become Maoism. It was written in August 1937, as an interpretation of the philosophy of dialectical materialism, while Mao was at his guerrilla base in Yenan. Mao suggests that all movement and life is a result of contradiction. Mao separates his paper into different sections: the two world outlooks, the universality of contradiction, the particularity of contradiction, the principal contradiction and principal aspect of contradiction, the identity and struggle of aspects of contradiction, the place of antagonism in contradiction, and finally the conclusion. Mao furthers the theme laid out in his essay On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People. Mao describes existence as being made up of constant transformation and contradiction. Nothing is constant as in metaphysics and can only exist based on opposing contradictions. He uses the concept of contradiction to explain different Chinese historical time periods and social events. Mao’s form of talking about contradiction creates a modified concept that brought forth the ideal of Chinese Marxism.

… Contradiction within an object fuels its development and evolution…

… With dialectical materialism we can look at the concrete differences between objects and further understand their growth…

Also from Wikipedia: Dialectical materialism (sometimes abbreviated diamat) is a philosophy of science and nature, based on the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels… The main idea of dialectical materialism lies in the concept of the evolution of the natural world and the emergence of new qualities of being at new stages of evolution. As Z. A. Jordan notes, “Engels made constant use of the metaphysical insight that the higher level of existence emerges from and has its roots in the lower; that the higher level constitutes a new order of being with its irreducible laws; and that this process of evolutionary advance is governed by laws of development which reflect basic properties of ‘matter in motion as a whole.’”

²⁰ There are so many articulate contributors who know so much more than me. I list Dougma and Pczhang and a few others because there’s only so much time to read responses. I try to take the time to read theirs.
of social criticism which can rank with what was produced in the countries they modeled themselves on. But did China want the literature of capitalist individualism?

The great counter-example was of course the Soviet Union and the home for the dissident intellectual that communism offered. Modernism in Europe was in itself perhaps a response to the perceived evils of industrial capitalism, but it was not a literature that offered the intellectual a powerful social role. Intellectuals like Chen Duxiu were perhaps attracted to communism because it was a modern western ideology that offered a plank for the individual. Even Lu Xun was sucked into its gravitational pull. On balance I fear the greatest result of the cultural upheaval of the early decades was to facilitate communism.

Mao seemed initially as if he might be prepared to countenance artistic creativity, but his increasing unwillingness to tolerate disagreement and his almost mechanistic belief in his ability as an engineer of human souls led to the disasters of the Cultural Revolution. Sometimes one can nostalgically smile at the sheer incongruity of these pastiche productions based on nineteenth century European art forms, and I confess I find the musical and narrative drive of the 'Red Detachment' can carry me along if I'm in mawkish mood, but then I get back to thinking about those writers and artists who met a violent end because they didn't fit the mould.

I find it hard to believe that culture played any serious role in China during the Cultural Revolution period. People conformed because they were scared but I suspect they privately felt derision for Jiang Ching all along. I think people always preferred the apolitical juggling troupes - not even Mao could claim all those plates stayed in the air because of dialectical materialism.

**Conclusion**

Some cultural works, like the Red Detachment of Women, despite being propaganda pieces were beautiful and entertaining. Many were not. But the censorship process was so cumbersome that few were approved during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution and the Chinese were forced to watch the same productions over and over.

Jiang Qing became one of the most hated people in China.

**Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art**

Mao's speech is translated into the public domain at [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org). The full text is [here](http://www.marxists.org). Following is my summary of Part II of his speech, which is a larger portion than the excerpt given to the class.

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“Should we devote ourselves to raising standards, or should we devote ourselves to popularization?”

The basis for literature and art starts with an understanding of what the masses can absorb, because you cannot raise the standards of the masses by starting at the level of the bourgeoisie. “you must raise a bucket from the ground.”

Nor do you raise the standards to the false heights of the bourgeoisie, you raise in the direction of cultural advance of the proletariat.

The life of the masses must be the source of all literature and art. Works of the past are not a source, they are part of a stream which “we must on no account reject.”

“Revolutionary literature and art should create a variety of characters out of real life and help the masses to propel history forward.”

“Popular works are simpler and plainer… Works of a higher quality, being more polished, are more difficult to produce and in general do not circulate so easily”

“For [the peasants fighting the revolution] the prime need is not ‘more flowers on the brocade’ but ‘fuel in snowy weather’… therefore, popularization is the more pressing task”

“Internationally, the good experience of foreign countries, and especially Soviet experience, can also serve to guide us. With us, therefore, the raising of standards is based on popularization, while popularization is guided by the raising of standards.”

“literature and art of a higher level are entirely necessary for [the more educated cadres]. To ignore this would be a mistake.”

“Whether more advanced or elementary, all our literature and art are for the masses.”

“We should esteem the [authors, playwrights, artists, and composers], for they are very valuable to our cause. But we should tell them that no revolutionary writer or artist can do any meaningful work unless he is closely linked with the masses, gives expression to their thoughts and feelings and serves them as a loyal spokesman. Only by speaking for the masses can he educate them and only by being their pupil can he be their teacher. If he regards
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himself as their master, as an aristocrat who lords it over the "lower orders", then, no matter how talented he may be, he will not be needed by the masses and his work will have no future.”

“Is this attitude of ours utilitarian?... We are proletarian revolutionary utilitarians and take as our point of departure the unity of the present and future interests of the broadest masses”

“It is wrong to depart from this policy and anything at variance with it must be duly corrected.”

My contribution to the discussion:

I read Part II of the full text of the speech on www.marxists.org, which is a slightly different translation, but should be the same content.

There is certainly a connection between the censorship of the 1960s and Mao’s speech in 1942, but there is also considerable departure. In 1942, he accepted the use of prior literature and art when he said that works of the past though not a source for new art, are part of a stream which “we must on no account reject.” If I understand correctly, during the cultural revolution, only newly approved material was presented and it seems the past was rejected.

Mao was saying that in general, new material was to be derived from the lives of the masses to fuel the revolution. Jiang appears to have followed that slavishly, only providing pure propaganda pieces, when Mao in 1942 also gave license for art drawn from the lives of the masses to provide inspiration, and not necessarily pure propaganda.

Mao closed with the statement that "It is wrong to depart from this policy and anything at variance with it must be duly corrected." Jiang took that part to heart.

38: Engineering a Modern China

Introduction

Two trends dominated the last century and shaped China’s development:

1. Transition from a culture of elite scholar officials educated in the arts, to one of engineers and technocrats.
2. A new focus on building modern infrastructure.

Some of the major changes taking place:

Transportation

Expressways growing from 2,000 km to 65,000 km in the last 20 years, with a 20% annual growth in major (trunk) highways, making it the second largest in the world.

Automobile production doubling to 32 million in in the next six years.

Rail expanded from 223 miles in 1900 to 57,000 miles, second only to Russia and the U.S., but carrying many more passengers and freight.

High speed rail, that is, rail supporting speeds over 125 mph, did not exist before 2006 and now exceeds 4,000 miles, the longest in the world. It will triple in the next three years.

Urban Migration and the Hukou System

Several hundred million Chinese have moved to the cities. This weakens the hukou system, the household registration system that kept the poor in their villages during the Maoist period.

From Wikipedia:

A hukou is a record in the system of household registration required by law in the People's Republic of China (mainland China). The system itself is more properly called "huji", and has origins in ancient China.

A household registration record officially identifies a person as a resident of an area and includes identifying information such as name, parents, spouse, and date of birth. A hukou can also refer to a family register in many contexts since the household registration record is issued per family, and usually includes the births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and moves, of all members in the family.

Because of its entrenchment of social strata, especially as between rural and urban residency status, the hukou system is often regarded as a caste system of China. The system descends in part from ancient Chinese systems of household registration, which also influenced neighbouring countries. In present times, a similar household registration system exists within the public administration structures of Japan (koseki), Vietnam (Hộ khẩu), and North Korea (Hoju). In South Korea, the Hoju system was abolished on 1 January 2008. While unrelated in origin, propiska in the Soviet Union had a similar purpose.
Booming Growth

The town of Kunshan has a per capita income among its legal residents of $51,000. It has an additional 1.2 million temporary residents who support the high-tech industries.

Short Response

We generally think of expansion of highways and railways as a good thing, and for good reasons. What do you think are some of the effects of China’s expanding highway and railway system?

Road and rail today has the effect of rivers and canals of ancient times. The fortunes of the towns and villages depend on the routes over land and water. I would expect the politics and corruption surrounding those routes to be intense.

Engineering

A shift in educational values

From the Song to 1905, the civil service exam, based on the study of liberal arts, defined the elite and established a common perspective among government officials. They memorized the classics and studied the enduring principles of human behavior.

After 1905, Chinese education tended toward math, science, and engineering. The May Fourth Movement initiated an attack on the Confucian foundation of Chinese culture. By 1949, when the mainland fell to the CCP, less than 10% of Chinese university graduates had liberal arts degrees.

Technocratic leadership

Two themes dominated 20th century Chinese education:

1. The belief that culture exists only to serve the state.
2. The belief that in the age of science, government could engineer the future.22

The second theme led to projects like the Three Gorges Dam, conceived by Sun Yat-sen in 1921 and finally built by Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

Nearly every member of the recent Standing Committees of the Politburo of the CCP, the seven to nine men who run China, have engineering training.

In 2011, 340,000 Chinese students were overseas, 200,000 in the U.S., more than half studying engineering, science, or management.

Engineering Culture

In 1926, Soviet engineer Peter Palchinsky wrote to the Soviet prime minister that the 20th century was more about technology than communism, that the international community needed a Tekhintern rather than a Komintern.

In contrast to other professions – law, medicine, religion, the arts – engineers obtained autonomy and a privileged status in modern China, first by the nationalists and then by the communists. The only other profession with similar status was the career military officer, with the obvious difference that engineers don’t threaten the state when they gain autonomy. The state and the engineer are mutually dependent.

The Legacy of Sun Yat-sen

China’s modern engineering state

In 1922, Sun Yat-sen published his industrial plan23, shiye jihua, six years before the Nationalists reached power. He envisioned a state with 100,000 miles of rail, a dam at the Three Gorges, and a car in every garage. What? No chickens?

His plan for a rail network emphasized politics over economics and became the model for the actual rail network. He is known as the guo fu, the father of modern China.

From an excerpt of the industrial plan...

• After WW I, what do we do with $120 million per day of war industry and capacity, now turned to peace?

22 But wasn’t that the belief in the age of the Sage Kings when Yu, faced with an horrific flood, channeled and drained rivers and dried out the land? That man conquers nature? See page 12.

• China will be a market for all the world’s surplus machinery to enable the industrial revolution, machinery for farms, mines, utilities, factories, and transit.
• China will take America’s place as the world’s young industrial nation.
• Three proposals:
  o An international bureau of standards for materials and machinery, to eliminate waste.
  o Get the Chinese people to sign onto a new industrialization plan
  o Sign a contract with a foreign company to assist in China’s development along the lines of Sun Yat-sen’s proposal

The new Nanjing
A year after the Nationalists reached power in 1927, they had an engineering plan for rebuilding Nanjing as the new capital. The plan included a government district situated west of the old Ming palace, a headquarters building for the Kuomintang, 12 new parks and tree-lined avenues. The city wall would be retained, with a ring road on top.

It was the first Chinese city that was planned in every detail.

In contrast, the CCP modernized Beijing in Soviet fashion. Five hundred years of historical architecture, except for the Forbidden City, were demolished or diminished.

International Science and Technology
The nationalists required that every university have a school of science, engineering, medicine or agriculture.

National Resources Commission. Technical students from these schools were recruited into this new ‘super bureaucracy’ that ran the SOEs in mining and defense and industry. Led by geologist, Weng Wenhao, the NRC was China’s largest employer, even before the war with Japan, and outlasted the Nationalists. By 1947, it employed more than a half million with 70% of China’s industrial capital at its disposal. Weng became premier of the Republic in 1948.

Engineering during the rise and fall of Mao
After the defeat of the Nationalists, the mainland engineers worked in cooperation with partners from the Eastern Bloc nations, which led to the creation of technical schools along Soviet models, such as Tsinghua University. Most degree programs were in industrial engineering.

Enrollment expanded in the 1950’s, but Mao’s disdain for scientific planning shut off those engineers from the government. Nevertheless, by 1979 the rank of engineer was restored to the bureaucracy, the universities began reopening and the percentage of engineering majors rose to the former levels of a third of all students, and to 90% of those studying abroad.

Engineering after Mao
Engineering grew in importance under Jiang Zemin, who counted 14 engineers among his 24 politburo (full and alternate) members. Jiang himself was an engineer.

[… the lecture follows with more recitation of statistics and backgrounds to further hammer the point of the domination of engineers in national politics …] 24

China may have moved toward a socialist economy, but the state remains committed to Sun Yat-sen’s ideals of commitment to infrastructure. China’s new construction of superhighways compares to Eisenhower’s interstate highway construction of the 1950’s. In only 15 years, Shanghai has been largely rebuilt, with 13 subway lines, four tunnels, three bridges, an elevated highway system, and two airports.

Is all this development to the good?

Chinese Infrastructure Today and in the Future
The U.S. highway and rail systems, which inspired the Chinese, now are aging and require heavy maintenance and are almost impossible to expand. 25

Infrastructure and national unity are intertwined. The railways from Sichuan to Lhasa will cost $10 billion. It’s a political project to link the PRC with a restive outlying region.

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24 Perhaps if the CCP is so concerned about restoring the rule of law to China, it should promote a few more jurists! The dominance of lawyers in U.S. politics is hardly a good thing. Some balance might be a good idea for both countries.

25 But this is because of the U.S. rule of law, which prohibits the taking of private property even through eminent domain. The Chinese experience might well be different.
Physical infrastructure is a mixed blessing. It opens China to international products and influence and it disrupts the environment. The Three Gorges Dam is a prime example of the latter.

If Taiwan is any guide, the lawyers will take more seats at the political table.

**Discussion on promotional videos of Nanjing, Shanghai, and Beijing**

I didn’t get all that much out of these videos.
Introduction

**Consequences of the War for the U.S.**

The US began a military buildup and an economic emergence that changed its place in the world and made it a permanent Pacific power. The US fought two more wars in Asia and still maintains troops in Korea.

**Consequences of the War for China**

China had been preparing for the war since 1931 when Japan seized the NE provinces and installed Puyi as the head of the puppet state of Manchuko.

In 1937, the National government had established a currency and a new central army and was the internationally recognized reigning authority. No one imagined then that they would fall to the communists shortly after the war.

**The War of 1937-1945**

**Economic and social consequences**

- 15 to 20 million Chinese died
- Destruction of industry, including mining
- Soviet theft of $2 billion of Chinese industrial equipment
- Rampant inflation of Chinese currency, from 4 yuan to the dollar in 1937, to 23 million yuan to the dollar in 1949

**Agricultural Consequences**

- 65% of China’s pre-war output
- Labor shortage caused by:
  - Deaths of millions of farmers
  - Forced conscription of millions of others.
- Conscription of tools, carts, and livestock for the war
- Famine in Henan Province in 1942 and ‘43

**Political Consequences**

The burdens, particularly of inflation, were borne mostly by those groups loyal to the Nationalist regime: the military, the bureaucracy, and the elite.

**Psychological Consequences**

Why would China engage in a three-year civil war after eight years of Japanese brutality? Why would they not join together to lick their wounds and rebuild?

Perhaps because the brutality of war inured them to violence. Japan was determined to break the will of the Chinese resistance.

Nanjing, destroyed in the Taiping rebellion, besieged in 1912, was once again subjected to horrific brutality under the Japanese in 1937. This was the infamous Rape of Nanking, witnessed by many foreign observers, that turned world opinion against Japan and remains a source of tension between China and Japan. More than any other event, the Rape of Nanking made Germany and Japan partners in their crimes against humanity.

From W.H. Auden’s poem, *Here War is Simple*.

*Here war is harmless like a monument:*
*A telephone is talking to a man;*
*Flags on a map declare that troops were sent;*
*A boy brings milk in bowls. There is a plan*

*For living men in terror of their lives,*
*Who thirst at nine who were to thirst at noon,*
*Who can be lost and are, who miss their wives*
*And, unlike an idea, can die too soon.*

*Yet ideas can be true, although men die:*
*For we have seen a myriad faces*
*Ecstatic from one lie,*
And maps can really point to places
Where life is evil now.
Nanking, Dachau.

The Chinese-American Alliance

Never before or since were China and the US as close as during WW II. Other nations have had a special relationship with China:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Date/Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>19th century mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1920s founding the CCP and KMT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1950s building Chinese industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The US-China alliance was formed during the war by a common enemy rather than born out of some long-standing relationship over mutual geographic, political or commercial interests. Indeed, the US did not come to China’s aid until it, too, had been attacked by Japan.

The Nationalist government had long term goals to create a single-party state, to restore China as a great military power, to gain control over the treaty ports and the role of foreigners.

The US wanted China to remain open to private investment.

After the war, these conflicting goals weakened an alliance that had been formed solely to defeat Japan.

Prior to the war, there were cultural exchanges: the YMCA and the founding of some universities. Most Chinese who went abroad to study, went to the US. But there was little interaction at the government level.

For those who believe that cultural exchange leads to governmental understanding, there’s little evidence from this period.

Some in the US hoped that China’s 400 million people would become a market for American goods. But through the 1920s and ‘30s, the US was 2nd or 3rd among trading partners.

FDR thought that post-war China would become a liberal government and a strong ally, even though there were no historical precedents to support this idea.

Generals Joseph Stillwell and Patrick Hurley

FDR sent Stillwell to China to command allied troops. Chiang Kai-shek refused to let this happen.

FDR sent Hurley to heal divisions between the Nationalists and the CCP. Hurley envisioned a two-party system, like the Republicans and Democrats, not seeing that neither side wanted a representative democracy. He made little effort to understand the Chinese, imposed his American perspectives, and spoke disparagingly of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong.

After the War

FDR ceded extraterritorial rights in his desire to treat China as a great power, but it was the way in which China sought that power that led to the greatest differences. China planned for a state-run socialist economy that funneled all foreign and domestic investment into the state, just as Sun Yat-sen had imagined. Chinese laws restricted the activities of Americans and still do.

Senator Wherry of Nebraska argued for a Marshall plan for China, to strengthen Chiang Kai-shek in the face of Mao’s CCP, and to rebuild China industrially. But such support was not universal, and the two nations grew distant.

Two New Chinas

Chiang Kai-shek may have lost more territory than any other leader in history, first to the Japanese, then to Mao, finally retreating to Taiwan.

The Communists are a Disease of the Heart

On the video China: The Roots of Madness

The video shows images of flying the Burma hump. I remember reading about this years ago when I studied the flights of American aircraft in WW II. My father flew as a gunner in the U.S. 8th Army Air Force (over Germany) and I was then an avid student of WW II.
Clearly from an American perspective, Theodore White relates Mao’s story of George Washington, diminishing Mao’s understanding of technology (that he didn’t know in what century electricity had been popularized), emphasizing American support for the Nationalists and the danger of the Communists. He recalls Chiang saying, “the Japanese are a disease of the skin, the Communists are a disease of the heart,” and reports this as a “prophetic vision of an apocalypse to come.” Of course, he’s writing in retrospective in the middle of both the cold war with Russia and the Vietnam war, when America sees itself in an ideological fight to the death with the Communists. To cement this difference, he says about Mao that, “his self-assuredness freezes to dogma…his truths become, for Communists, a holy script.”

He shows America as fighting side-by-side with the Chinese, but shows how the alliance was with the Nationalists, not the Communists and uses that to imply that the alliance necessarily dissolved when the Nationalists lost the civil war, when in fact the alliance dissolved more simply with the defeat of Japan.