

“Mao Zedong Thought” and the Cultural Revolution

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Abstract

This study examines “Mao Zedong Thought” in leading the Chinese Communist Party, China, and the Thought that led to the eruption of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 and its impacts. It is found that Mao Zedong Thought was mainly developed from Marxism-Leninism, his background and experience. The key elements of Mao Zedong Thought are Marxist revolution, the importance of the peasants, mass mobilization and voluntarism, continuous revolution, proletarian revolution, self-criticism, class struggle, and the primacy of Mao Zedong Thought. He was also interested in employing conflict theory to change culture and socio-political system of China. Campaigns launched under Maoist ideology had an important and serious impact on China and Chinese people. Reasons for the Cultural Revolution, erupted in 1966, are quite complex. For Mao, it is as an ideal of social transformation and his response to revisionism that threatened his thought of social equality and class struggle. Although purging the Party leaders, condemned as revisionists, was his personal reason, it was the Thought on continuous revolution and mobilizing the masses. The Cultural Revolution went beyond the stage of historical development and failed to lead effectively. It greatly impacted on various parts of China and changed the Chinese people’s world outlook and values.

Keywords: Mao Zedong Thought, China, Cultural Revolution, conflict theory, mass mobilization

Introduction

Since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) governed China in 1949, Chinese society has immensely changed. During the first decade of ruling, the CCP had been trying to ruthlessly eradicate traditional Chinese society such as prohibiting religious performs and banning outmoded and feudal customs and norms. Moreover, The CCP, led by Mao Zedong (1893 – 1976), organized political and social campaigns to build a socialist society. The Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Anti-Rightist Movement launched in 1957-1958 to suppress counterrevolutionaries. In 1958-1960, the Great Leap Forward was initiated as Mao's attempt to modernize and industrialize Chinese economy, and the people's commune was established to organize the peasants into completely socialist collectives. Rapid collectivization occurred to overthrow capitalism and build a socialist society was soon doomed to failure and caused the death by starvation of up to 30 million people which seriously impacted Mao's fame. The Cultural Revolution was thus initiated to restore his power and to continue his socialist ideologies.

This article explores thoughts of Mao Zedong and its impact to Chinese society, especially the huge impact of the Cultural Revolution. Examining the leader's thought helps to understand sources of his thought as well as causes and results of historical events.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine thoughts of Mao Zedong in leading the Chinese Communist Party and China.
2. To highlight "Mao Zedong thought" in launching the Cultural Revolution and its impact.

Data-Based and Concept Framework

This study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data, but more emphasis given on secondary data which are collected by previous researchers. The secondary data is various historical research and translated testimonies of people living during the Mao's era and were part of historical events such as Red Guard in the Cultural Revolution. One of the most significant work to understand the Cultural Revolution is *Mao's Last Revolution* by Roderick MacFaquhar and Michael Schoen-

hals (2008), an in-depth account of the turmoil. The authors examine why Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution, the roles of Mao and other senior officials and study the incidents happened in all regions during this time. *Life and Death in Shanghai* by Nien Cheng (1987) is an autobiography of Nien Cheng, a victim of the Cultural Revolution. Cheng, a well-educated woman, a daughter of landowner, and a senior manager of the British company in Shanghai, was attacked for being a “capitalist,” a friend of foreign countries, and a spy against China. She was imprisoned for six and a half year and her daughter was murdered by the Red Guards.

Jung Chang’s *Wild Swans* (1991) tells the story of the three generations: her grandmother as a warlord’s concubine, her parents’ experience as members of the Communist Party and their ordeal during the Cultural Revolution, and her life as a Red Guard, a peasant, a “barefoot doctor,” a steelworker, and an electrician. The book tells violence attacked her family and millions of people during this period. It reflects clearly feelings of Chang as a young and innocent student, her admiration to the cult of Mao, and her disappointment to Mao and the Revolution.

The latest interesting book is Frank Dikötter’s *The Cultural Revolution: A People’s History, 1962–1976* (2016). It examines hundreds of party documents, from secret police reports to versions of leadership speeches and the individual account. Dikötter works on full acknowledgement to memoirs and scholarly works. He analyzes the impact of communist rule, tension and violence, and the effects of almost seventy years of communism in China. The author argues that Maoism died out through widespread passive resistance; Mao’s collectivization was carefully considered by policy elites and later became decollectivization and the free market was introduced. Mao’s socialism was thus a failure.

Besides historical approach, this work applies the concept of social change as a framework of the study in order to examine Mao’s thought and its results in Chinese society. As V.K. Maheshwari (2016) states, when changes happen in the modes of living of people and social relation gets influenced, the *why* and *how* of social change must be explored to understand changes in a society.

Furthermore, “conflict theory” is used to understand Mao’s thought and the society in Mao’s era. Conflict theorists believe that conflicting groups struggle is essential to ensure progress and conflict is a necessary factor for change. Conflict is dealt with all types of social change in all society. The modern conflict theory is firstly and immensely influenced by Karl Marx’s idea which emphasized economic conflict. Marx viewed social change as a resolution of conflict over scant economic resources. Then, Max Weber’s argument based on conflict about power is applied in the study of social change. (Cohen, 1972)

Discussion Analysis

What is “Mao Zedong Thought”?

Mao Zedong, the Chinese statesman, Chairman of People’s Republic of China (1949-1959), and Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (1935-1976), played a dominant role in leading social, political and cultural changes in China. “Mao Zedong Thought” or Maoism, mainly applied from Marxism-Leninism, is a founding ideology that supports the People’s Republic of China. Mao Zedong Thought is based on the official writings of Mao Zedong and was formalized in 1945, as mentioned in the new party constitution drafting in this year. The draft states the significance of Mao Zedong Thought as the fundamental idea of the Party. Then, in the “Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party since the founding of the People’s Republic of China”, the Politburo Standing Committee concluded in 1981 that the essence of Mao Zedong Thought is the product of Marxism-Leninism and Chinese reality. This document establishes the historical status of Mao Zedong, and confirms the adherence to Mao Zedong Thought (Suettinger, 2017, p. 11).

The key elements of Mao Zedong Thought are Marxist revolution, class struggle, mass mobilization and voluntarism, continuous revolution, self-criticism, and a peasant and proletarian revolution in order to achieve wealth equality. These elements were applied from revolutionary theory of Vladimir Lenin and Karl Marx’s conflict theory. Marxism emphasizes on class and economic conflicts. The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is transformed into a proletarian revolution and the victory of the proletariat. Leninism is “Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular” (Stalin, 1954).

Mao Zedong Thought on practice and peasant revolution. A core idea of Mao Zedong Thought is “empiricism”. Mao Zedong firmly held to Marxist revolution and the theory of class conflict, but applied with his method of “seeking truth from facts”. (Richards & Saba, 1986) Marxism–Leninism was thus utilized into Chinese reality. Mao Zedong clearly knew that the poor peasantry and proletariat was important to the revolutionary movement. At the beginning of the CCP movement, workers were expected to be effective for the revolution, while peasants were thought that they were too backward to be mobilized for communism. Before 1927, the CCP mainly mobilized the working class in cities for their socialist movement. Most of them were suppressed.

However, in Mao's view China was an agricultural country. Besides Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought on revolution was organized from his experience. In his writing “On Practice,” written in 1937, Mao states as follow:

The only way to solve this problem completely is to redirect rational knowledge to social practice, apply theory to practice and see whether it can achieve the objectives one has in mind. Many theories are erroneous and it is through the test of practice that their errors are corrected. That is why practice is the criterion of truth and why ‘the standpoint of life, of practice, should be first and fundamental in the theory of knowledge.’ (Mao, 1968)

According to Mao, the farmer more numerous would be the main force pushing the revolutionary movement. He had formed a peasants' Red Army. In September 1927, Mao Zedong initiated his first peasant uprising in the city of Changsha, Hunan province. The mobilized masses was the peasant. Although the uprising failed, Mao Zedong acknowledged the power of the peasant for socialist revolution. (Spence, 2013, pp. 365, 368-369) As seen in *Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan*, written by Mao in 1927, he says that

In a very short time...several hundred million peasants will rise like a mighty storm, like a hurricane...They will sweep all the imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local tyrants and evil gentry into their graves...the popular slogan ‘all power to the peasant associations’ has become a reality...The powerful peasant movement will put to the test every revolutionary party and group...A rural revolution is a revolution by which the peasantry overthrows the power of the feudal landlord class. Without using the greatest force, the peasants cannot possibly overthrow the deep-rooted authority of the landlords which has lasted for thousands of years. (Mao, 1927)

During the 1920s until 1935, the CCP's Central Committee led by the “28 Bolsheviks”, the CCP leaders educated in Moscow, which was supported by the Communist International, or Comintern. The clique had close ties to the Comintern and the Soviet Union. They thus followed their ideology and tactics (Werner, 1979, p.

3), while Mao's way of revolution was strongly opposed. The CCP's Soviet-oriented Central Committee adhered to the proletariat revolution in the city, not by outmode and inactive peasant (Meisner, 1999, p. 31). Refusing the Central Committee's directives, Mao and his comrade, Zhu De, began to build their own peasant-based government, called Jiangxi Soviet in south-eastern China in 1931, blending Marxism with Chinese reality by forming farming collectives, building a bank and issuing its own currency, and using guerrilla warfare as the military tactics. He attached much weight to the peasant's force, rural-based revolution, and guerrilla warfare. In 1932, the population in the Jiangxi Soviet increased from 3 to 19 million and it became the most powerful communist base which had been attacked by Nationalist forces since 1930. In the CCP Conference at Zunyi in 1935 during the Long March (1934-1935), Mao completely attained power over the Party and his Thought, guerrilla strategy and peasant revolution, had then become main ideologies of the Party. Mao's success came from his adaptation of Marxist thoughts and his own experience. The peasants' Red Army had been the major forces of the CCP.

Mao Zedong Thought on mass mobilization. Mobilizing the masses is a main principle of communism. Mao Zedong's mobilizing masses had gradually occurred since his first uprising in 1927, the war against the nationalist government and imperialist Japanese invaders in 1930s-1940s, and the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960) until Mao's last revolution in 1966, the Cultural Revolution, the biggest mass mobilization. Mao's thought on mass mobilization can be seen in his writings. According to him, "The masses are the real heroes" (Mao, 1941, p. 12); "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history" (Mao, 1945, p. 257), and; "Production by the masses, the interests of the masses, the experiences and feelings of the masses—to these the leading cadres should pay constant attention" (Mao, 1943).

Mao Zedong Thought on conflict theory and class struggle. Mao Zedong Thought basing on conflict theory was applied in creating the absolute communist society which one of the According to Mao's idea in his essay "On Contradiction," social changes deals with the internal contradictions, such as, the contradiction classes, between the old and new, between the productive forces and the relations of production; the development of these contradictions pushes forward society. Contradiction between classes means conflict of interest and led to the class struggle; the class struggle is transformed into a peasant revolution. The peasant's triumph will establish the real socialist country with social equality (Mao, 1968, pp. 23-78). Thus, Mao consistently supported the class struggle and continuing revolution. Moreover, Mao's ideal society is decentralization and will not rule by corrupt vested interests. He thus had attempted to demolish capitalists in China to suppress the

corruption and classes (Sheng, 2006, p. 56). Mao launched many campaigns such as the “Three–Anti”: “anti-corruption, anti-waste, and anti-bureaucratism” in late 1951 and early 1952 and “the Five–Anti,” that is, bribery, theft of state property, tax evasion, cheating on government contracts and stealing state information. Mao’s idea of anti-corruption makes many people still miss him.

Mao Zedong Thought on a socialist economics. Mao Zedong adhered to principles of a socialist economics, that is, the absence of private property, the government’s control of all production and distribution of goods, and wealth equality. To him, to reach a true socialist society, wealth equality and people’s commune must be created. Private ownership should be eradicated; ownership of property must be distributed to every member. In 1950, the communist government performed the land reform to turn private ownership of land to small farmer. Then, the state organized collective farms in which peasants voluntarily pool their labor, land, and capital for purposes of production (Crook, 1973, pp. 45-50). In 1953, the model regulation of commune was found, called Sputnik Commune.

During the Great Leap Forward, planning to improve agricultural and industrial productivity and to turn from the light industry to heavy industry, the mobilized masses were the worker-peasant alliance. Communes were set up around the country. A commune or a collective unit was divided into production teams and production brigades. Commune had political, economic, and governmental functions. According to the commune’s regulation, “In changing over to the commune, the members of the cooperatives must turn over to the common ownership of the commune all privately own plots of farmland” (Selden, 2016, p. 243). Formal ownership and transfer rights to the land were firmly in the hand of the collective and the state.

Mao Zedong Thought, the Cultural Revolution and Its Impacts

Mao Zedong Thought and the cultural revolution. Mao Zedong attached great importance to change society through social revolution, class struggle, and empiricism. In 1966, the Cultural Revolution or its name in full is the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution was launched. The Revolution clearly reflects “Mao Zedong Thought,” that is, continuing revolution, class struggle, reaching socialist society, and mass mobilization. Mao Zedong maintained the class base for socialism even after the revolution, emphasizing on mass mobilization. He had paid attention to the relationship between the Party and the masses. The Party must lead, join, and encourage the masses and mobilize them for communism. In his essay “Mao Tse-

tung on Guerrilla Warfare,” Mao has expressed the relationship between the Party and the masses. He has compared guerrillas to fish, and the people to the water, “The guerrilla must move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea” (Mao, 2000). Also, in his essay on “Youth” in *Quotations from Mao Tse Tung* he has stated that the people is the powerful force of Chinese revolution; they are the workers and peasants (Mao, 1976). As already mentioned, Mao focused mainly on mass mobilizing and organizing “United Front” in the Chinese Revolution. The mass support was very important; the masses, according to Mao, meant all classes in the society, including the capitalists.

Several reasons of the Cultural Revolution have been explained. Firstly, Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution in response to new economic policies that threatened social equality. It was, said Mao, to oppose a new capitalist ruling class hidden behind the socialist banner. It was thus the anti-revolutionist struggle and the class struggle (Dikötter, 2016, p. 15; Gray, 2002, p. 325) In other words, it was Mao’s attempt to revive his authority over the Chinese government after the failure of the Great Leap Forward.

Result of the failed Great Leap Forward campaign not only caused the fall of Mao’s power and reputation, but it also increased the leading role of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping from their economic reforms. To restore his political base, in 1963 Mao Zedong thus initiated the Socialist Education Movement, also known as the Four Cleanups Movement, aiming to clean politics, organization, economy, and ideology. Richard Baum (1969) and Roderick MacFarquhar (2011) argues that the Movement would be Mao’s decision to prevent revisionism, to restore the revolutionary spirit among all classes from Party cadres to students, intellectuals, and peasants as well as to continue the collectivization. Liu and Deng were later labeled as revisionists “who are taking the capitalist road.” Mao Zedong also encouraged to take the class struggle into such matters as ideology, education, science, arts, and working (Dikötter, 2016, p. 30).

Secondly, it was to eliminate the *impure* elements of Chinese society, such as outdated beliefs and practices. The Four Cleanups Movement had been continued to be the attack on “Four Olds” elements within Chinese society: old ideas, old customs, old habits, and old culture during the Cultural Revolution (Spence. 2013: 545) Besides emphasizing on class struggle and China’s socialist revolution, this study proposes that Mao’s launching the Cultural Revolution might also originate from his experience during the New Cultural Movement in the 1910s. The Movement was to attack “the old” such as family and cultural values and the norms of traditional Confucian culture as well as to embrace “the new” such as individualism, individual

rights, nationalism, liberalism, women rights, and faith in “science” into Chinese society. Mao believed that China in 1960s was still under “Slavery Society” and “Feudal Society,” the elimination of *impure* elements promoted during the Cultural Revolution was to change totally Chinese society. He stated that the Cultural Revolution is the social process to proletarianize all classes. (Meisner, 1999: 314) Moreover, Mao’s Cultural Revolution may be inspired from Lenin’s idea of ‘cultural revolution’ (1923). For Lenin, “cultural revolution” was a concept of cultural development to transfer to a socialist society and as the development of socialism by stressing on transformation out of the backwardness an implementing such elements as literacy, hygiene, and law governing. It is a process of ideological transformation. (Fitzpatrick, 1974: 33)

Thirdly, it aimed to stimulate the revolutionary spirit among the nation’s youth (Meisner, 1999, pp. 295-296) The Cultural Revolution was said as the largest mass mobilization of China. (Dikötter, 2016: 1) Mao Zedong called for a massive youth mobilization and quickly became the center of a considerable personality cult. The young masses were formed in groups called the Red Guards and began to attack members of China’s elderly and intellectual population. (MacFarquhar & Schoenhals, 2008, p. 67) They also destroyed *impure* elements of the country, called “Four Olds.” The Left controlled power in many parts of the country and started implementing communism in education, production and culture. Mao Zedong’s writings were assigned to study such as *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*, a book of statements from Mao’s speeches and writings. Some topics in this book include classes and class struggle, socialism and communism, people’s war, the people’s army, the mass line, relation between the army and the people, revolutionary heroism, criticism and self-criticism, communists, and youth, for instance. Red Guards’ movements were thus claimed the true interpretation of Maoist thought (Fairbank, 1992, p. 392).

Impacts of the Cultural Revolution. Mao had aimed the Cultural Revolution would turn China into a top of communism. However, the movement seriously impacted Chinese society in all aspects. It caused disorder in the society and disruption of national and traditional heritage of China. Churches, shrines, and libraries were destroyed. It ruined the economy and millions of lives and brought China into 10 years of turmoil, bloodshed, and stagnation. Historians believe that around 500,000 and two million people lost their lives during this movement. (Fairbank, 1992, p. 387; Meisner, 1999, p. 354) This paper, however, has discussed the three main affects: (a) impact on Chinese people’s world outlook and values, (b) impact on education, and (c) impact on Chinese youth.

Impact on the Chinese people's world outlook and values. The greatest impact of the Cultural Revolution is a change in the Chinese people's world outlook and values. Violence extended by the young masses or Red guards. Their action during the Cultural Revolution impacted greatly their behavior and thought. They at that time believed their act were proper and right because of the support of the leaders. Most violence began and then gradually escalated to more violent act. They neglected value of human life and viewed violence and using force as normal and enjoyment (Dikötter, 2016, p. 63). Public prosecutions of party leaders, party members, professors, teaching staffs, and intellectuals affected many other social institutions. Accused people were condemned to the public. Some were publically humiliated and beaten, while other were tortured and murdered. Many people committed suicide. The overall number of victims is not known, but mass killings occurred nationwide. Moreover, the "Destroy the Four Olds" Campaign which targeted "old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits" led to the vast destruction of the legacy of China's traditional high culture, priceless artifacts, and historical records. The consequences of these traumas were heavy and caused the fall of traditional values, customs, as well as affected people's minds and behaviors. Later, in 1981 the Party assessed that the Cultural Revolution was negative throughout. Also, Chinese youth or Red guards who were discarded in rural villages felt a mixture of depression and rage. They felt disappointed to current political authorities (Plänkers, 2011, p. 233) Thus, it is understandable why the reform and opening up policy was welcomed in the later decade and why Deng Xiaoping's idea of "seek truth from fact" had been the key to restore Chinese society in 1980s.

Impact on education. In his campaign of the Socialist Education Movement, Mao Zedong had complained that education in schools and universities was ineffectual for supporting class struggle and was unproductive for the worker-peasant class. Schools and universities had been managed by the people who lacked of revolutionary sense as the intellectual and the bourgeoisie. Young people also disregarded class struggle and revolution. Stephen Castles and Wiebke Wustenberg (1979) has pointed out that education in China before the Cultural Revolution, has been recounted as "representing a 'bourgeois ethos'." Graham Milner (2009) also says, university education seemed to be dominated by students from non-proletarian or non-lower-peasant backgrounds, Mao thus suggested to change academic curriculums by focusing on his thought of empiricism and continuous revolution. The students were required to learn both theory and practice, participating in workshops or in fields and get hands-on experience workers and peasants. Academic curriculums, education, culture and production had been changed to support the revolution and communism. In one day, students learnt in class and practiced 'political study' such as reading articles in national newspaper, *Renmin Ribao* or *the Peo-*

ple Daily, and criticizing political figures. Students had also studied socialism and communism as well as memorized Mao’s thought. They owned “Little Red Book,” a collection of quotations from Mao that offered a design for Red Guard life.

“The cult of Mao” had been gradually established and emphasized throughout various media and activities. The propaganda stressed Mao’s importance as the great leader, the great strategist, the great teacher and the great military commander. In students’ view, Mao as a central figure, leading the masses like a demigod (Jung, 1991). Mao Zedong Thought and his guidance had been revered; students followed his words. When the Cultural Revolution reached its peak, schools and universities became a rally attended by gangs of students and Red Guards; students had been instructed to criticize their teachers, to remove all elements of “Slavery Society,” and to use force in attacking “capitalist roaders” (Jung, 1991). These cultivated aggressive behaviors among young people.

Universities were re-opened in 1970; academic courses had been adapted in accordance with the revolutionary way. It immensely affected academic progress and scholars’ working. The duration of university’s study was decreased. The study in sciences degree, for instance, was lessened from four to two years. Scientists and scholars were afraid to produce new academic research as they might be blamed as being experts or intellectuals (Meisner, 1999, p. 367). The studies of arts, humanities and social sciences that failed to respond to the idea of Revolution were terminated. Traditional literature and novels were banned and disappeared from libraries and book stores, while sciences and engineering books as well as books about Maoism and Communism were spread (Terrill, 1971). Thus, during the Cultural Revolution Chinese education regressed.

Impact on Chinese youth. Mao Zedong acknowledged the young power. For him, young people are the most active and vital force in society. In his state visit to the Soviet Union in 1957, Mao talked at a meeting with Chinese students and trainees in Moscow as follows:

The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigor and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you. The world belongs to you. China’s future belongs to you. (Mao, 1957)

Frank Dikötter (2016) says Mao aimed at the movement would turn him into “the man who leads planet Earth into communism” and make China at the apex of the socialist universe. Therefore, young people were forceful in the Cultural Revolution. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese youths were mobilized into action, building Red Guard groups in classrooms and campuses across the country. Mao Zedong established his personal cult. Students and Red Guards were taught to demand complete loyalty to the Chairman and Mao Zedong Thought. The youths were persuaded to believe that some Party leaders, officials, and the middle classes were revisionists, aiming to restore capitalism; they were needed to be removed. Gangs of students and Red Guards were the effective masses in running the Revolution, especially condemning and attacking suspected Rightists and “capitalist roaders.”

The young masses respected and believed Mao Zedong Thought. Many of them thus left schools and universities to fully attend the Revolution. Some mentioned that “learning and teacher wasted their time” (Dikötter, 2016, pp. 33-38). Moreover, young revolutionaries around 17 million people had been sent into the countryside during 1967-1976 and suggested to learn from the peasants (Meisner, 1999, p. 367). Many of them, however, never return home and school life. This young generation is referred to as the “lost generation” of China as they had never been trained properly; they only learnt violence, the use of force, and slander.

When young revolutionaries were sent into the countryside, telling to learn from the peasants. At first, the young people completely trusted and devoted to Mao Zedong Thought and revolutionary ideology. They were soon found that ‘learn from the peasants’ meant to isolate them from the revolutionary chaos. They were finally neglected and faced bad conditions. Their faith in revolutionary ideology and the cult of Mao had died; the lives of many young revolutionaries had also gone in the countryside.

Conclusion

It has already been mentioned that Mao Zedong hoped all classes would be a part of Chinese Revolution and aimed to cultivate revolutionary sense to young Chinese people. Mao Zedong Thought had influenced Chinese society and people in many ways. There is no doubt about his significance that shaped and formed China. He, however, is undoubtedly criticized as the number of lives and wishes were lost during his rule. Mao Zedong Thought on the continuing revolution and class struggle developed from Marxism–Leninism to make China an absolute socialist society caused chaos to China, especially the Cultural Revolution. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals write in their book, *Mao's Last Revolution*: “The Cultural Revolution was so great a disaster that it provoked an even more profound cultural revolution, precisely the one that Mao intended to forestall.” The Politburo Standing Committee in 1981 summed up the major historical events of the Party, especially the Cultural Revolution and analyzed the Party's guiding ideology. They concluded that the Cultural Revolution was totally wrong, but the Committee confirmed the great significance of Mao Zedong Thought as the guiding ideology of the Party and for building a socialist country and affirmed to hold Marxism-Leninism which is the root of Mao Zedong Thought. They evaluated the historical role of Mao Zedong as the great leader and teacher in the Chinese revolution. Moreover, the Party avoided discrediting Mao too much. A group, called ‘Gang of Four’, led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, had been announced publicly for their ambitious to take power and was behind the chaos during the Cultural Revolution (Dikötter, 2016, p. 319).

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