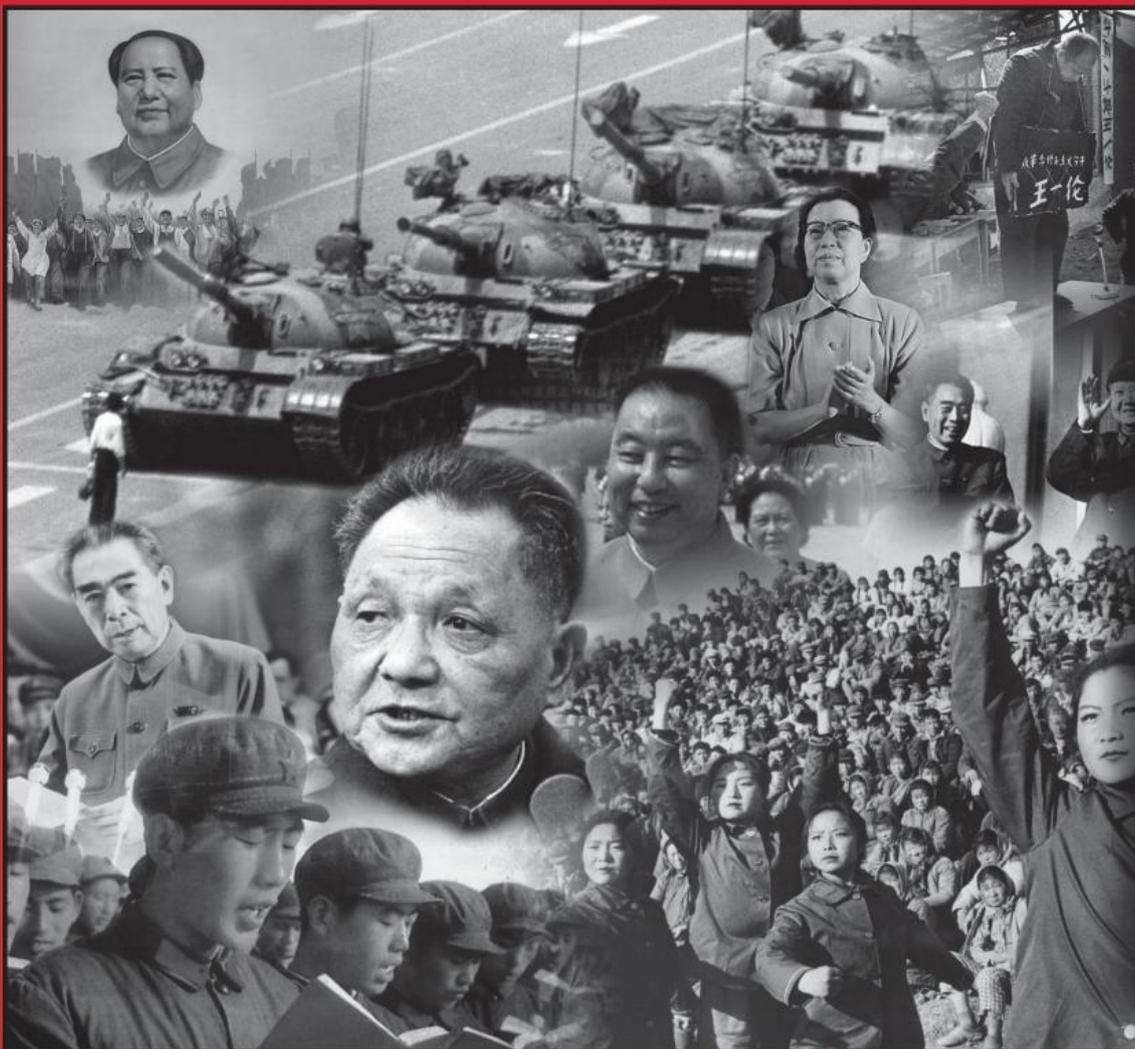


THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION TO TIANANMEN SQUARE 1966-1989

by Ken Webb

Here it is: the factual detail, the historiography, revision exercises and advice on how to write responses on The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989



eBook

“Everything you wanted to know about THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION TO TIANANMEN SQUARE 1966-1989, but were afraid to ask.”

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by Ken Webb M.A. (Oxon), C.Ed

“Everything you wanted to know about ‘The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989’, but were afraid to ask.”

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1st Edition

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Author's note

The purpose of this book – as with all titles in the “*Everything you wanted to know about... but were afraid to ask*” series – is to make life easy for students and teachers working their way through the ‘Change in the Modern World Topic’ topic: The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989. It is not intended to be the final word on The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989; nothing beats wide-reading and going back to the primary sources!

However, neither teachers nor students always have the time for such luxuries. Teachers have several other classes to worry about, not to mention a growing multitude of administrative and bureaucratic tasks to fulfill! Students have other subjects to study, and may also be burdened with a series of major works. Thus, “*Everything you want to know...*” steps in to make life easy.

The principal aims of this book are to:

- provide the essential factual detail needed to understand the topic;
- provide references to written and visual sources;
- provide an introduction to the essence of historiographical debate;
- provide ideas for approaching the types of questions that might appear when examined on The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989.

Rationale for the structure of this book

“*The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989*” is one of six topics in the ‘Change in the Modern World’ section of the Modern History syllabus.

The syllabus divides the topic as follows:

- Survey: Political and social conditions in China at the start of the period
- Focus of study:
 - The Cultural Revolution
 - Deng Xiaoping and the modernisation of China
 - The Tiananmen Square protests

These broad headings have been used to structure the book and have been broken down into chapters closely based on the layout of the syllabus to make the topic more accessible to students. The “legacy of the 1949 revolution and the Great Leap Forward” topic has been broken into two separate chapters. The “removal of Deng Xiaoping and the flight of Lin Biao” has been broken into two chapters. The “military and political response to the Tiananmen Square protest and the rise of Jiang Zemin” topic has been separated into two chapters. All other chapters match the bullet points as laid out in the syllabus. Additional sections have been included on approaching the types of questions that could be set on this topic in the HSC examination.

Think as historians

Key problems historians have in studying *The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989* – or indeed any major historical issue – are that we know what happened. Hindsight allows us to look back and isolate those developments which we can now see, from our current perspective, as the key issues. We can isolate the mistakes, criticise the leaders of the time and ask in incredulous tones:

- How on earth was the chaos and violence of the Cultural Revolution allowed to happen?
- How was China able to be transformed so dramatically?
- Why did the Chinese Communist Party deal with protest in such a violent manner?

However, when one is living in the middle of events there is no hindsight.

Section One ■ Survey:
Political and social conditions in China at the start of the period

Chapter One
The legacy of the 1949 revolution

Background to the 1949 revolution:

China had always referred to itself as ‘the middle kingdom’ and had developed a ‘consciousness of its own greatness’. Up to the 18th century, it was arguably one of the great world powers, dominating its region with neighbouring states forced to accept a vassal status. European contact had been limited and China sought to keep foreign ‘barbarians’ at bay.

- However, the economic revolution that was occurring in Europe in the late 18th and into the 19th century altered the world balance of power.
- More technologically advanced and militarily powerful European states ventured to the east in search of wealth, trade and empire.
- By the end of the 19th century, European (and Japanese) aggression had succeeded in reducing China to a shadow of its former self.

The Boxer Rebellion of 1900 had begun as a revolt against the ruling Qing dynasty. It was soon transformed into a violent anti-foreign crusade which the foreign powers brutally crushed in united action. China was forced to sign the 1901 Boxer Protocol, one of the last of a series of ‘unequal treaties’ that had been imposed on China by the west (and Japan).¹ China tried to introduce some modernisation but it was a case of too little, too late. By 1911, following a series of provincial revolts, the Qing dynasty collapsed. The last emperor, Pu Yi, abdicated in 1912.

Between 1912 and 1949, China experienced decades of internal conflict, foreign invasion and eventually civil war, which would culminate in the victory of Mao Zedong’s Communist Party in 1949.

- January 1912: Sun Yisian ² was appointed Provisional President of China. He quickly stepped down in favour of Yuan Shikai, who had army backing:
 - early optimism for change quickly evaporated as Yuan acted dictatorially and even attempted to make himself emperor;
 - in 1913, Song Jiaoren formed the Guomindang (GMD) or Nationalist Party in opposition to Yuan;
 - Song was assassinated in 1913 and the GMD was declared illegal;
 - Yuan died in 1916.
- From 1916 to 1928, the country then descended into the ‘warlord era’, as commanders of personal armies ruled or sought to rule different regions of China, and were able to act more or less independently of any central control.

¹ The first of the “unequal treaties” was The Treaty of Nanjing (Nanking) which concluded the First Opium War of 1839-1842. From this treaty, Britain gained the island of Hong Kong.

² Sun Yat-sen

- Sun Yixian attempted to set up a GMD government in Guangzhou in 1917 but it was weak and divided, and had to rely on local warlords for support:
 - from the early 1920s, the GMD began working with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP);
 - Sun died in 1925 and was succeeded by Wang Jingwei;
 - a power struggle ensued in the GMD which was won by Jiang Jieshi;³
 - by 1926 most of the south was under GMD control.
- In 1927-28, Jiang turned on his Communist allies in a bloody purge;
 - by 1928 thousands of CCP members had been killed by the GMD, and the CCP was forced underground;
- Following the 'Northern Expedition', Jiang was able to defeat most of the warlord armies and his forces were in Beijing by June 1928:
 - by 1931, the western powers recognised the GMD government of Jiang and all internal opposition had been crushed.

From 1927, Jiang's GMD government attempted to bring positive change to the country but its positivism and idealism had faded by 1937:

- trade and transport flourished, a uniform currency was introduced, education expanded and a new penal code appeared in 1933;
- diplomatic gains were made as the unequal treaties were brought to an end;
- though improvements did come about, rural areas were often left untouched and corruption was rife amongst businessmen, GMD figures and the military;
- Jiang's principal aims were to hold on to his dictatorial power and suppress the CCP, often at the expense of reform and confronting Japan.

After the purge of 1927-28, the Communists headed to Jiangxi province.

- Between 1930 and 1934, Jiang attempted several annihilation campaigns:
 - the fifth, (Oct 1934) almost destroyed the Communists' Jiangxi 'Soviet'.
- This forced the Communists to flee to distant Shaanxi, a trek known as 'The Long March' which took over a year:
 - by the end of the march, the CCP was very weak but it had survived;
 - Mao Zedong's leadership had been established;
 - Mao's ideas were gradually able to be implemented in the areas that the Communists were able to control.

In 1931, Japan attacked and took over the region of Manchuria, nominally part of China. Japan later took Jehol and bombed Shanghai. In 1937, Japan launched a full-scale war against China which lasted until 1945.

- At first GMD and CCP forces worked together against the Japanese;
 - Jiang moved further inland, hoping to trade space for time, and Japan became bogged down in a war of attrition.
- However, suspicions between the GMD and the CCP remained high, both realising that once Japan was defeated, their rivalry would be reignited.

³ Chiang Kai-shek

- The CCP came out of the war better than the GMD:
 - their united front calls improved their nationalist credentials;
 - their land reforms won over many peasants;
 - Communist guerrilla action behind enemy lines provided good experience for the clash with the GMD which was sure to come.

The Civil War 1946-1949

By August 1945, Japan had been defeated. Both the GMD and the CCP tried to grab what territory they could in the knowledge that their rivalry would certainly break out into open warfare.

By 1946, China was experiencing full scale civil war between the GMD and the CCP.

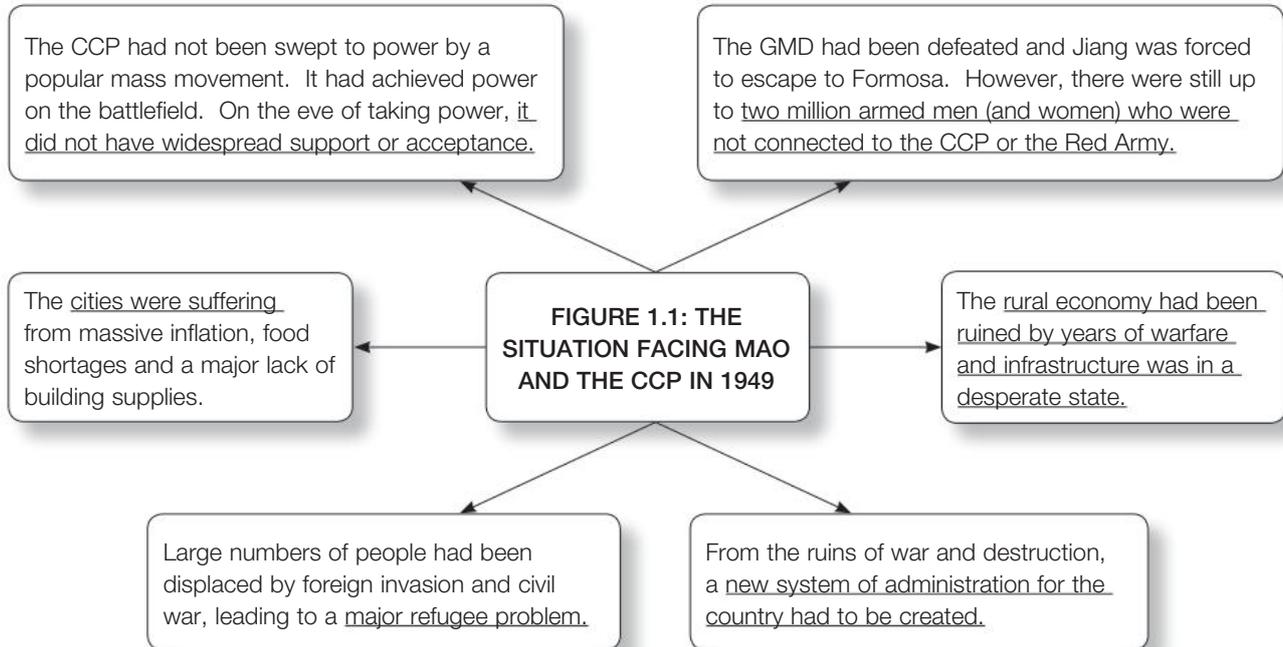
- Better-armed and supplied (and with US support), and with greater numbers, the war moved in favour of the GMD throughout 1946.
- However, by 1948, the war had gone in favour of the CCP, especially after the decisive Battle of Huahai in Central China.
- By 1949, Jiang's forces had been forced to retreat to the south:
 - October: Mao announced victory, and proclaimed the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing;
 - Jiang's remaining forces were forced to flee to the island of Formosa.

Exercise 1.1 Place the following events in the correct chronological order.

1st event		START OF SINO-JAPANESE WAR
2nd event		BATTLE OF HUAHAI
3rd event		ABDICATION OF PU YI
4th event		THE LONG MARCH
5th event		START OF THE CIVIL WAR'
6th event		THE WARLORD ERA
7th event		JIANG'S ANNIHILATION CAMPAIGNS
8th event		MAO PROCLAIMS THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
9th event		JAPANESE INVASION OF MANCHURIA
10th event		JIANG TURNS ON HIS COMMUNIST ALLIES

The situation facing the CCP in 1949

Winning the Civil War and taking power were one thing; consolidating that power and achieving the transition to Communism was quite something else. As Figure 1.1 shows, Mao and the CCP faced a myriad of problems in 1949.



As a result of all these problems, it meant that China's new rulers were not going to rush into an immediate socialist transformation. Instead the party which came to power in 1949 had to approach issues in a pragmatic manner. Soviet leader, Stalin, doubted the CCP's commitment to communism, describing it as 'nationalistic'.

The party's main early priority focussed on **the cities**:

- organs of GMD political power, eg police, the bureaucracy, had to be stripped of power and replaced by CCP-led organisations;
- the economy had to (temporarily) keep its existing form so that production could be restored;
- social order had to be re-established.

Dealing with the urban chaos meant not only repairing physical damage but also managing people's expectations for social justice. The people had readily heeded the party's call for *fanshen* – the call to revolt. This led to attacks on 'the wealthy' but as tensions mounted, the urban economies steadily worsened. Liu Shaoqi showed in Tianjin that the party had to work with former government officials and business people to ensure the provision of public services. This meant that social transformation had to be delayed as the party steered a pragmatic course.

This pragmatic approach saw the party deal with the cities' immediate problems:

- beggars were rounded up as part of the 'winter relief program', and placed in 'beggars' detention centres' and re-educated to see the value of 'labour';
- urban populations were urged to share the refugee burden, as refugees continued to pour into the cities;
- organisations that helped the people were allowed to continue functioning while superstitious sects and secret societies were immediately dissolved;
 - foreign organisations were forced to leave the country;
- publications formerly controlled by the GMD were closed down;
- trade unions were set up in factories taken over by the CCP authorities, and in June 1950, these and independent unions became part of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions;
 - for a while, the unions enjoyed great prestige as official representatives of the working class.;
- the party moved quickly to eliminate urban vices such as prostitution, opium smoking, gambling and speculation.

*"...These policies, all in all, were effective and successful. Order in most cities was restored quickly, and open resistance against the new regime was minimal..."*⁴

How to govern the new China was a fundamental issue facing the CCP. At first, the party followed Mao's ideas in his 1940 speech *The Politics and Culture of New Democracy*. The essence of this was that a system of New Democracy would operate that allowed a coalition of 'progressive forces' to rule under the leadership of the party. This was the *People's Democratic Dictatorship*.

- The *Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)* was called in September 1949 which established a common program and organic laws to provide a structure for the government:
 - article 7 emphasised the need to punish counterrevolutionaries;
 - Mao was named head of state;
 - Mao now dominated the party, army and government, and his prestige was further heightened by his personality cult that was developing.
 - By 1954, the party's hold on power was obviously secure. A **Constitution** was brought in by the People's Representative Congress which ensured that China would be a one-party state. It had many similarities to the Soviet constitution of 1936. On paper, the party was separated from the state.

This is shown in Figure 1.2.

4 Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 368

Figure 1.2 The “separation’ of party and state.

The party side	The government side
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The National Party Congress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ elected every four years □ chose the State Council ■ The Central Committee ■ The Politburo was the most important body ■ The head of the party was the Chairman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The National People’s Congress (NPC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ similar to a legislature ■ The State Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ headed by a premier □ performed like a cabinet ■ The head of state was the president whose role was largely ceremonial
<p>In practice, there was no difference between the party and the state. The leaders of the government simultaneously held posts in the party. By 1954, the CCP was the only legal party and so the ‘government’ merely carried out what the ‘party’ decided. There were elections but these were controlled by the party. Thus, there was a semblance of democracy at a local level but the whole constitutional set up was designed to maintain the power of the party elite.</p>	
<p>Throughout the 1950s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mao was both head of the Communist Party and the People’s Representative Congress (PRC) ■ Liu Shaoqi was chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress ■ Zhou Enlai was premier of the State Council 	
<p>Up until 1957, <u>Mao’s leadership</u> was unquestioned. His leadership in the struggle before gaining power in 1949, his ideological contributions which attracted much popular support, and the development of the personality cult around him guaranteed his extensive power and acceptance of his undisputed leadership. At this time, Mao was often referred to as “the great helmsman”.</p>	

Land Reform

One of the main reasons for popular support of the CCP in the years leading to 1949 was the promise of land reform. Land reform had several objectives:

- to create a more egalitarian society and end rural poverty;
- to ensure party control in the countryside;
- to increase tax revenues, as a step towards industrialisation.

From 1946, in areas controlled by the CCP, land owned by “evil gentry” and “tyrants” was confiscated and given to poor peasants and landless workers in the country. In June 1950, the party introduced the Land Reform Law. This took the early attempts at reform to a national level. Not only land, but also houses and farming equipment were ‘redistributed’. In the villages, peasants were encouraged to engage in “speak bitterness” denunciation campaigns against

landlords. Violence was common, and scores were often being settled with landlords. Up to a million landlords/ rich peasants were killed; millions were forced to undergo 'labour reform'.

In 1952, the process of collectivisation or cooperation in agriculture commenced. Mutual Aid Teams went into the countryside to organise the pooling of resources. Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives (APCs) appeared in 1955. Up to 30 or 40 peasant families would combine 'voluntarily' though land was still considered privately owned. By March 1955, 14% of rural households were in APCs.

- For Mao the process of collectivisation was too slow and he insisted on a 'high tide of socialism':
 - the process was speeded up and by November 60% of households were in cooperatives.
- Between early 1956 and August 1958, the process was further increased:
 - Higher Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives (HPCs) were created;
 - these contained between 100 and 300 families.
- By 1957, the party had not achieved full state ownership of land which was a key goal of party ideology:
 - redistribution of land was only ever a first step – maintaining peasant private ownership of land was not what socialism was about, hence the party's desire for collectivisation;
 - most peasants opposed collectivisation, as their goal – as with all peasants in developing countries – was to own their own land.
 - strong peasant resistance to the process was common.

Industrial development

Industrial development in China had been at best patchy.

- Underdevelopment had been made worse due to decades of war and civil war, and the hyper-inflation of the 1940s.
- The party's first economic action after 1949 was to centralise finance and taxation, and to restrict the circulation of foreign currency.
- The party decided to follow the Soviet model of economic development and create a centrally-planned economy.

From this came the First Five Year Plan (1953-57).

- In 1952, two bodies were set up to implement the plan: The State Statistical Bureau and the State Planning Commission.
- The key idea behind the plan was that China needed to quickly boost its heavy industry sector.
- Loans were accepted from the Soviet Union.
- The private sector in industry was virtually ended as state control took over though handicraft workshops and small shops remained in private hands.
- In 1955-56, there was a nationalisation push, or as it was termed the "socialist transformation of industry".

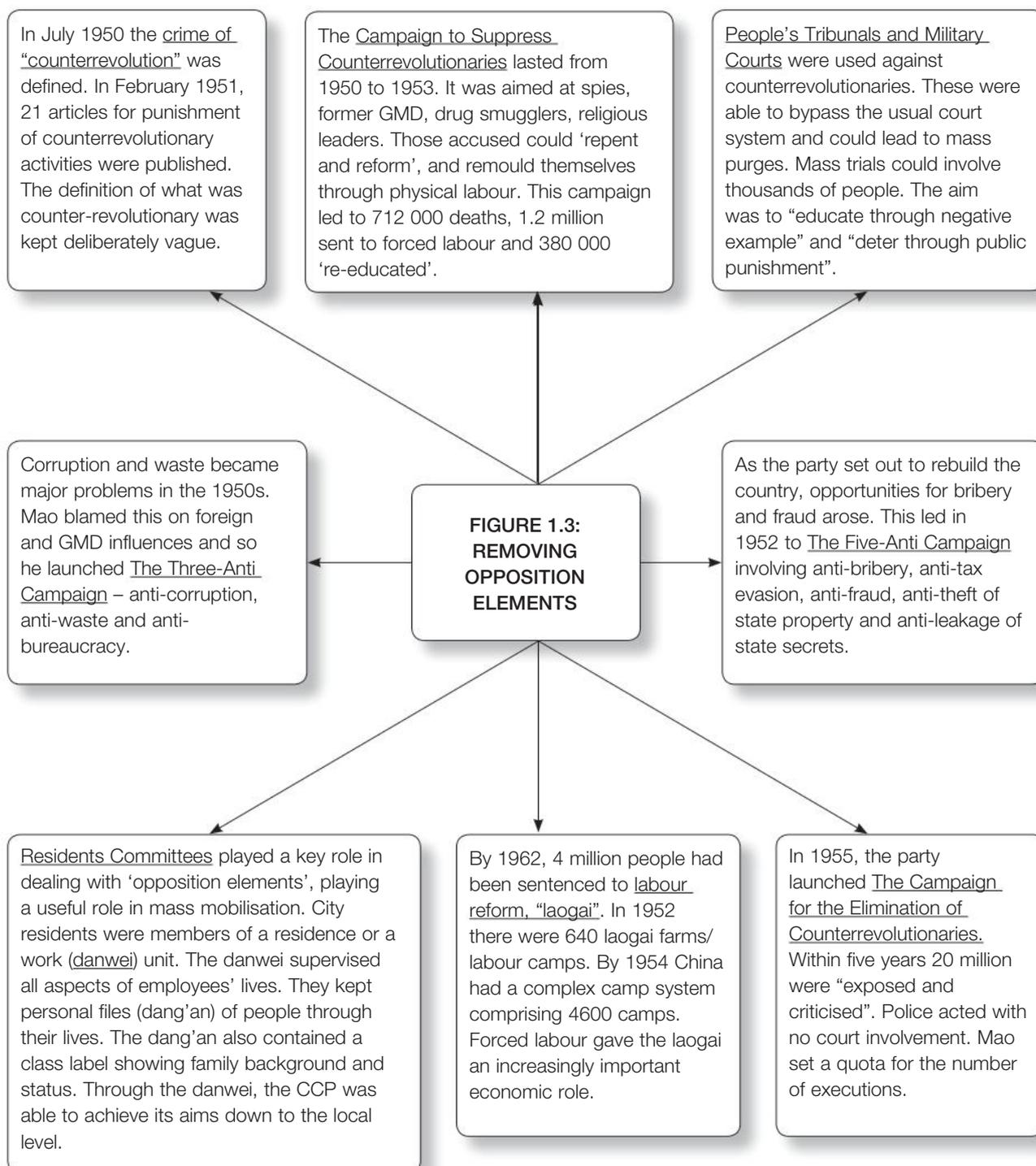
Though the plan was not without some problems, there were notable successes:

- per capita growth averaged 6.5%;
- steel production increased from 1.3 million tonnes (1952) to 5.2 million tonnes (1957).

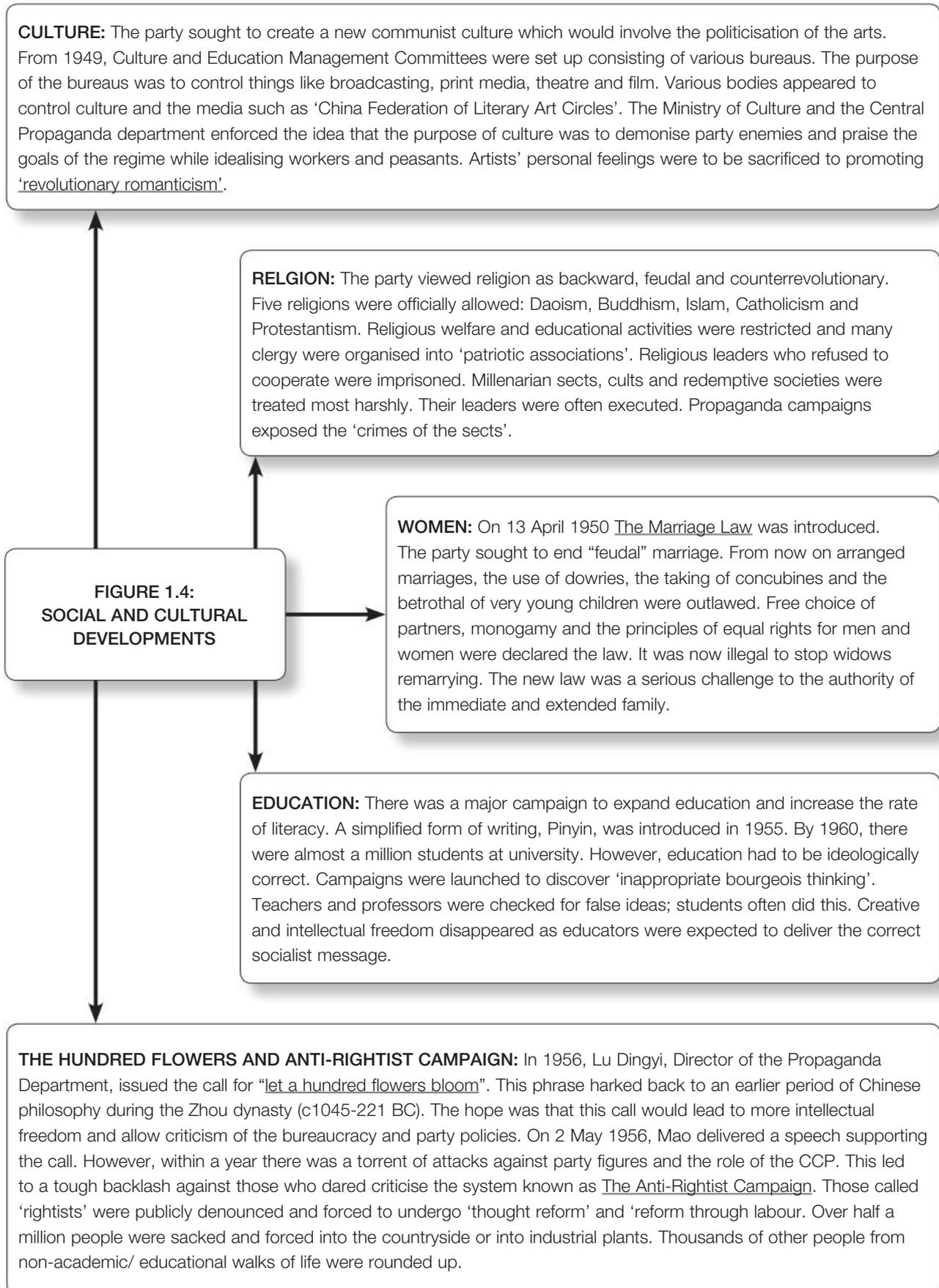
The elimination of opposition elements

The removal of opposition 'elements', was an ongoing process. It involved the use of brute force within various coercive institutions, and mass campaigns. These are outlined in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3 Removing opposition elements



There were significant developments in Social and cultural reform in the early 1950s. These developments are outlined in Figure 1.4.



Exercise 1.2 Match the description with the term on the left

1	The call to intellectuals to express their views about public issues		pinyin
2	Labour camps set up to bring about reform through labour		fanshen
3	Campaign encouraging peasants to speak out against landlords		danwei
4	The key decision-making body of the Communist Party		let 100 flowers bloom
5	A simplified form of writing introduced in 1955		anti-Rightist campaign
6	The campaign introduced to deal with such things as corruption and waste		the Three Antis campaign
7	The campaign introduced to deal with the fallout of the 100 Flowers Campaign		the middle kingdom
8	The work unit each Chinese worker was assigned to		speaking bitterness campaign
9	The personal files that were kept on each Chinese citizen		laogai farms
10	The campaign introduced to deal with such things as fraud and tax evasion		dang'an
11	The urge to revolt		the Five Antis
12	How China referred to itself before the arrival of the west		politburo

What do the historians have to say about “The legacy of the 1949 revolution”?

1. Michael Dillon

Dillon describes the nature of the 1954 Constitution and shows that it not only outlines the structure of the Party-State organisation, but also set out such things as the establishment of local people’s congresses at a provincial and local level, the rights and duties of citizens, the design of the national flag. Dillon makes the point that Control of the NPC and the post of Chairman:

*“...were permanently in the hands of the most senior members of the CCP, (and this) ensured that the party had control of the government... (electoral procedures) made it possible for the CCP... to control the entire process...”*⁵

2. Klaus Mühlhahn

Mühlhahn shows that violence and the universality of the mass campaigns resulted in the CCP destroying what was left of the GMD. The party was able to nip in the bud any possible actions by opponents of the new regime. It had managed to set up grassroots organisations and put in place institutions that would be ready to reorder the life of the country.

*“...The CCP government managed to significantly consolidate its authority and to establish key institutions of the Maoist era, including the work units (danwei)... the personal dossiers (dang’an)... and the class labels...”*⁶

3. O Edmund Clubb

Clubb describes how the party had been caught off balance by the “let one hundred flowers bloom” campaign, as it had not expected the strength of criticism that followed. The party introduced a rectification campaign – the Anti-Rightist Campaign. The effective freedom of the “flowers” campaign had lasted only a short time, and Clubb explains, intellectuals had learned a lesson.

*“...Undermined... was the remaining confidence of the intelligentsia in the good faith of the Communist regime... In theory, the Hundred Flowers policy continued, but it was much circumscribed... the Chinese intelligentsia had learned, once again, to remain quiet...”*⁷

5 Dillon, M, China: A Modern History, L B Taurus, London, 2012, p 281

6 Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 394

7 Clubb, O Edmund, 20th Century China, Columbia University Press, New York, 1978, pp 350-51

Chapter Two

The Great Leap Forward

In 1958, China began the “three red banners” movement. This movement comprised three fundamental elements:

- (1) the general line for socialist construction:
 - Mao had first introduced this thinking in 1953;
 - The general line exhorted the party and the people to: *“go all out, aim high, and build socialism with greater, faster, better, and more economical results... speed is the soul of the general line.”*
- (2) the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960):
 - with the emphasis on speed, the Great Leap Forward became the essence of the ‘general line’;
- (3) the rural people’s communes:
 - the communes were seen as being the main weapon to achieve the Great Leap Forward.

The Great Leap Forward was to devastate China. Its failures would result in the deaths of millions of people; estimates range from 10 million to 45 million. Scholars have tended to settle on the tragic figure of about 30 million.

This chapter will examine three elements of the Great Leap Forward:

- what was the motivation for the party, and in particular Mao Zedong, for launching the Great Leap Forward?
- what actually happened during the implementation of the Great Leap Forward?
- what were the results of the Great Leap Forward?

What was the motivation for the party, and in particular Mao Zedong for launching the Great Leap Forward?

By late 1957, it was clear that collectivisation was not achieving its ambitious goals of increased production to feed the population and provide funds for investments in industrial production. Many rural people were ignoring *hukou* restrictions.¹ Mao and the younger members of the party sought flexibility and mass mobilisation as a means to deal with the situation.

Mao had several motives for launching into the Great Leap Forward.

- In essence, the aim was to hurl China into the future to a Communists utopia:
 - China, said Mao, would catch up nations like Britain within 15 years;
 - this would be achieved by the harnessing the efforts of China’s people;
 - it would be an act of national will.

¹ Hukou was a system of residence registration that stipulated where people could live. It can be seen as the residence equivalent of the danwei (work unit) system.

- He rejected the Soviet Union's model of long-term planning:
 - the Soviet model's aim (in the 1930s) had been to siphon off much of the agricultural surplus for urban/ industrial development;
 - China faced different conditions – it first had to produce a surplus and its agriculture was backward compared to the previous Soviet situation;
 - China faced transport bottlenecks, a lack of engineers and technicians;
 - thus, the Soviet model of development could not work in China.
- Mao believed the solution was to take a decisive leap through the mass mobilisation of the Chinese population;
 - rather than a centrally-planned top-down model, Mao believed in using China's great asset – its people;
 - speed was essential as China's population was increasing and natural disasters in the second half of the 1950s had worsened the situation;²
- China had made some economic progress in the 1950s:
 - but this had been achieved as a result of:

“the relocation of labour and the redeployment of capital extracted from agricultural production... (there was no) sustained technological change... Once all resources that could be reallocated to industry had been reallocated, few economic gains were left to be made.”³
 - once the economy stalled, the idea of a 'giant leap' seemed to have some logic;
 - grain production had to be massively increased, exported to earn foreign exchange, with which China could purchase (mainly from the Soviet Union), entire factories and machinery.
- Mao's take on ideology was that revolution was an ongoing process:
 - in 1956 and 1957, he gave several speeches arguing revolution and counterrevolution were opposites, always antagonistic to each other;
 - thanks to the strength of the people, counterrevolutionaries can be changed into new people through labour;
 - ongoing struggle was necessary;
 - would socialism be victorious?
 - Mao believed the answer was not certain and so class struggle would continue for a long time.

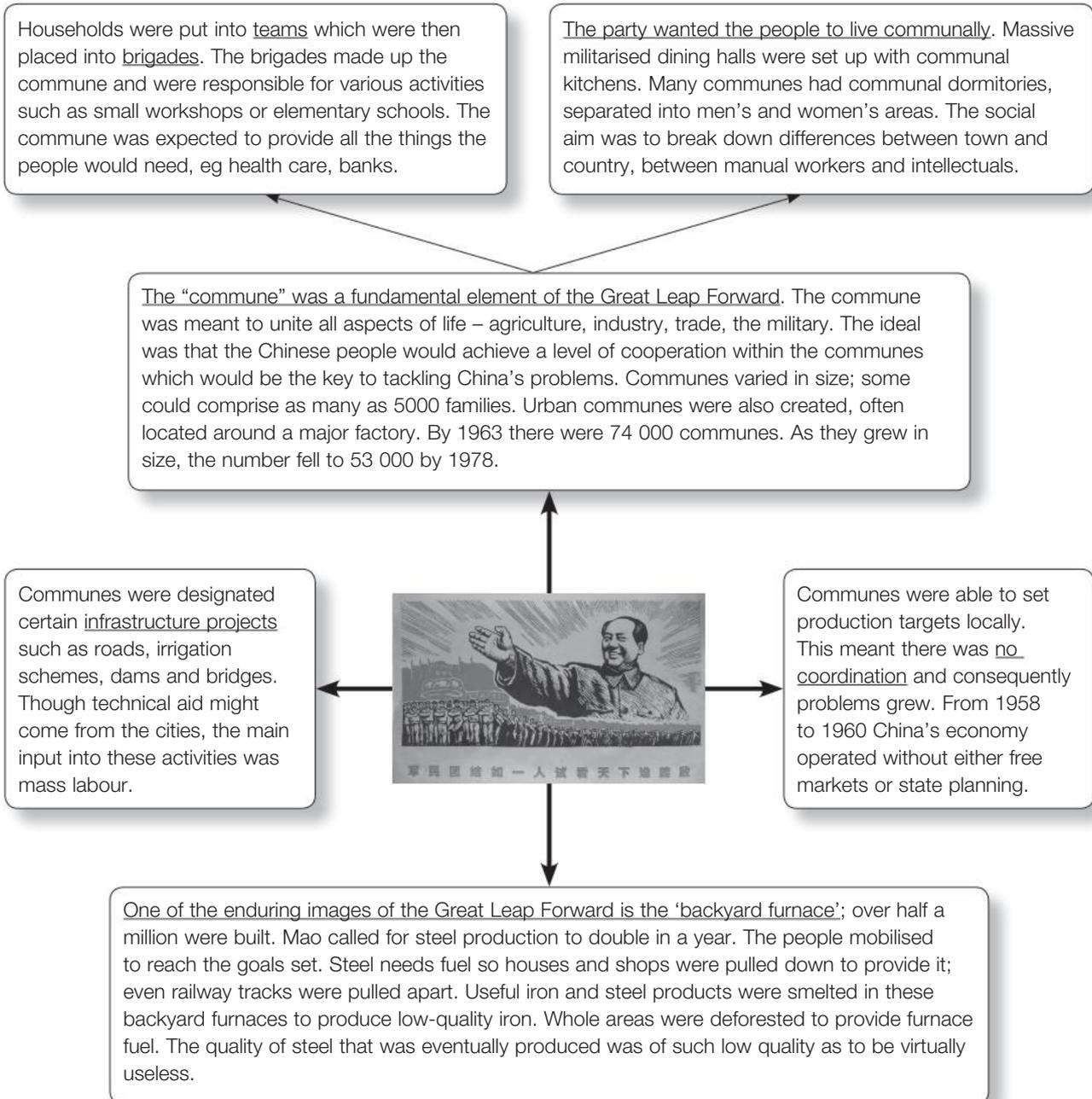
What actually happened during the implementation of the Great Leap Forward?

The 'commune' was to be a key element in the implementation of Mao's ambitious plans. Its organisation and other key features of the Great Leap Forward are outlined in Figure 2.1.

² China's population rose from 550 million in 1950 to 670 million in 1960.

³ Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 423

Figure 2.1 Aspects of the Great Leap Forward



What were the results of the Great Leap Forward? ⁴

The results of the Great Leap Forward were catastrophic for the country.

1. By 1961, economic output in the industrial sector had fallen by 17%. The naive view that peasants could produce quality steel in backyard furnaces held sway for long enough to have a devastating effect on industry. Resources were frittered away. Lack of technical expertise meant that machinery in factories often broke down and could not be repaired. The rate of industrial accidents increased greatly. The lack of any economic coordination

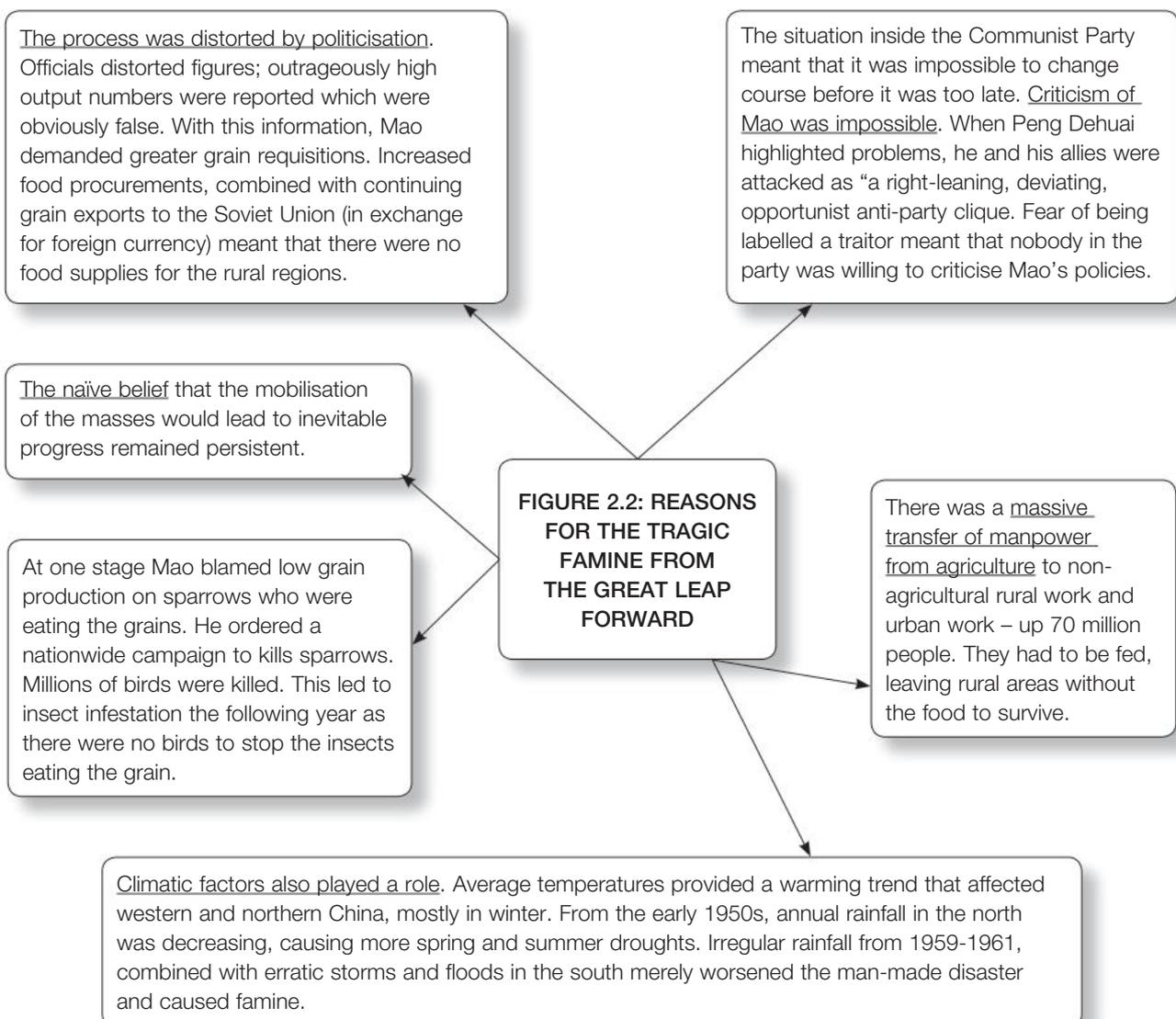
⁴ The failures of the Great Leap Forward affected relations between Mao and the rest of the Communist Party; this aspect will be more fully examined in Chapter Four. The Great Leap Forward should also be seen in terms of Sino-Soviet relations; this aspect will be more fully examined in Chapter Three.

ultimately led to a collapse in industrial production. The result of all this was that the advances that had been made in the first half of the 1950s were completely undone.

2. However, an even greater tragedy resulted from the collapse of agricultural production. By early 1959, famine was sweeping across China. Michael Lynch suggests that famine did not just happen but was deliberately allowed to happen as part of party policy.⁵

- People were resorting to eating anything from tree bark to snakes and toads. There were even reports of cannibalism.
- Frank Dikotter relates the story of a PLA soldier returning to his village and finding human bodies being boiled and reduced to liquid fertiliser.⁶
- By the time the Great Leap Forward process was brought to an end, up to 30 million people had died of starvation in China. How could such a catastrophe have occurred? Figure 2.2 suggests some possible factors that led to it.

Figure 2.2 The tragedy of the Great Leap Forward



⁵ Podcast: Mao Zedong Part 2 – The Great Leap Forward, from the Real Dictators series

⁶ Podcast: Mao Zedong Part 2 – The Great Leap Forward, from the Real Dictators series

3. There was a great environmental cost of the Great Leap Forward.
- As was mentioned earlier, much fuel is required to heat up even a small 'backyard furnace'.
 - In three years, vast areas of the countryside suffered deforestation as whole areas of woodland were cut down to fire the furnaces.
4. It is now known, that the Great Leap Forward led to a range of oppositional behaviour.
- This ranged from non-cooperation where possible, to hoarding to smuggling and black-market activity.
 - There was also an increase in support for religious groups, particularly those who were preaching an apocalyptic message.

Exercise 2.1 Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

1	Mao's 'general line', which he enunciated in 1953, emphasised caution and a gradual approach to the process of socialist construction.	TRUE/ FALSE
2	The purpose of the hukou system of residence registration was to stipulate where Chinese citizens were allowed to live.	TRUE/ FALSE
3	Mao had come to believe that the Soviet Union's model for long-term planning was not appropriate for the conditions that prevailed in China.	TRUE/ FALSE
4	Mao had little faith in the ability of the Chinese people to build socialism and so he emphasised a top-down approach to socialist development.	TRUE/ FALSE
5	Mao's attitude to ideology and the process of revolution was that it was not static, but that struggle had to be ongoing.	TRUE/ FALSE
6	The commune came to form a key part of Chinese society, both rural and urban, and was pivotal in the development of the Great Leap Forward.	TRUE/ FALSE
7	The party was opposed to communal living and preferred that the people maintain their traditional family groupings.	TRUE/ FALSE
8	The communes were closely coordinated and operated under the guidance of an overarching economic plan.	TRUE/ FALSE
9	China's peasant population were encouraged to construct backyard furnaces in order to raise the level of national steel production.	TRUE/ FALSE

10	In the industrial sphere, the Great Leap Forward achieved significant success in raising production levels.	TRUE/ FALSE
11	Lack of planning and unrealistic expectations meant that the Great Leap Forward became a humanitarian catastrophe that killed 30 million people.	TRUE/ FALSE
12	Despite his prestige, Mao faced opposition to his policies and large numbers of party members spoke up against the Great Leap Forward.	TRUE/ FALSE

What do the historians have to say about “The Great Leap Forward”?

1. Ross Terrill

In a 2006 essay in the “Wilson Quarterly”, Ross Terrill writes: “*Certainly Mao’s rule was destructive. Tens of millions of Chinese died in the forced collectivization of the Great Leap Forward of 1958–59, victims of Mao’s wilful utopianism and cruelty.*”⁷ This is an interesting contrast to how he wrote in his 1980 biography of Mao, due no doubt to the benefit of research made possible by some greater access to the Chinese archives. In his earlier biography, Terrill suggests that in 1958, excitement was provided for millions of young farmers, that local initiative was sparked and the communal spirit grew. The ‘Leap’, he suggested, was a brilliant success because 600 million people responded with “*impressive loyalty*” to Mao’s call to action. Terrill does comment, though, that the idea of ‘the Leap’ was evidence of an intellectual trying to change the external world by a force no stronger than his imagination. Here is Terrill’s description of the Great Leap Forward. Compare it to that of Chang and Halliday that follows.

*“...The experiment into which Mao bullied China did not work. An evening of euphoria gave way to a morning of dismay... as economic policy the Leap was a disaster... Grain output fell. By 1960 there was widespread hunger for the first time in Mao’s China...”*⁸

2. Jung Chang and Jon Halliday

Chang and Halliday do not hold back in their condemnation of Mao and his actions. They accuse Mao of attempting to turn cities into slave-labour camps when organising urban communes. They claim that such was the extent of the famine by 1960, the average calorie intake for urban housewives was less than that of slave-labourers at Auschwitz. They also refer to a post-Mao account (quickly suppressed) that referred to cases of cannibalism, such was the disaster of the famine. The figure they arrive at for the loss of life is 38 million.

*“...This was the greatest famine of the twentieth century – and of all recorded human history. Mao knowingly starved and worked these tens of millions of people to death...”*⁹

⁷ <http://archive.wilsonquarterly.com/essays/mao-now>

⁸ Terrill, R, Mao, Harper and Row, New York, 1980, p 269

⁹ Chang, J, and Halliday, J, Mao: The Unknown Story, Jonathan Cape, London, 2005, p 457

Chapter Three

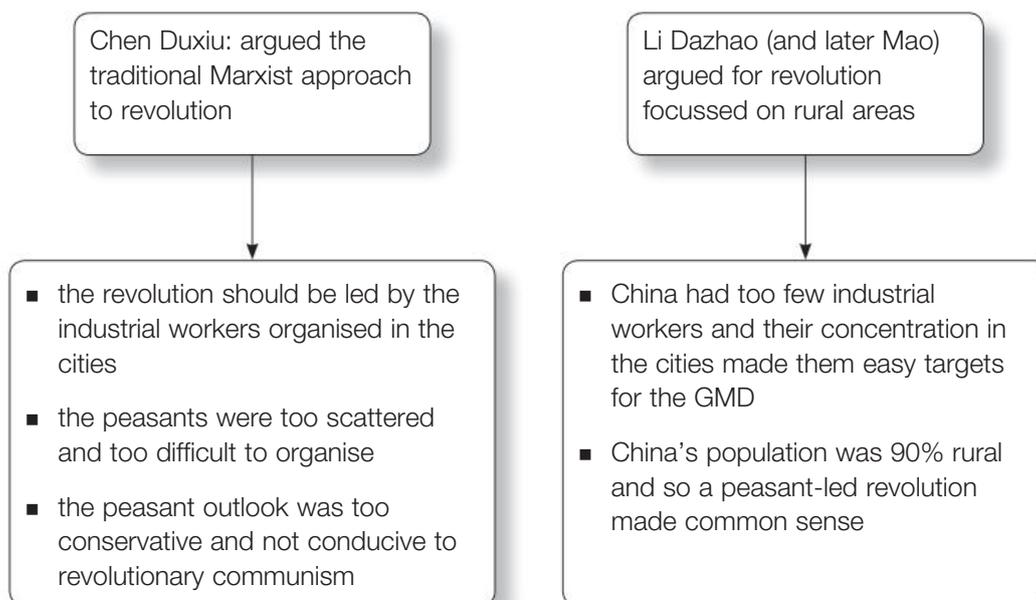
The state of Sino-Soviet relations

The CCP and the Soviet Union before 1949

The first congress of the Chinese Communist Party met in Shanghai in 1921. There were twelve delegates, including Mao Zedong; Chen Duxiu was elected secretary-general of the party. The CCP joined the Comintern. The Comintern – Communist International – had been established by Soviet leader, Lenin, in 1919 with the purpose of coordinating international communist revolutions. The Comintern would soon evolve into nothing more than an arm of Soviet policy.

During the early days of the CCP, there was a fundamental ideological split within the CCP. This is explained in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 The early ideological split within the CCP



The Soviets favoured the traditional approach. Comintern policy and later instructions from Stalin soured relations between the CCP and the Soviet Union:

- the Comintern urged a series of urban risings which the GMD easily and ruthlessly put down;
- even after Jiang's attack on the CCP in 1927-28, Stalin continued to urge GMD-CCP cooperation:
 - *"Under Comintern instruction the CCP was being marinated ready for Jiang Jieshi's oven."* (Ross Terrill).

After other abortive risings in Changsha and Nanchang, Mao and his supporters were convinced that an urban focus was suicidal. The remnants of the party joined Mao in Jiangxi

where they remained until the Long March of 1934-35. Mao became the Chairman of the Jiangxi Soviet and Zhu De his Commander-in-Chief. By the time the communist units had reached Shaanxi in the north west of China, Mao's leadership had been established.

Following Japan's defeat in 1945, the Soviet presence was felt in Manchuria. Soviet forces took what economic resources they could before handing back the cities to the nationalists. However, their delay in doing so had enabled the communist forces to dominate rural areas and take possession of large amounts of Japanese arms. By 1946, full-scale civil war was in progress between the nationalists and communists. By October 1949, Mao was able to proclaim the People's Republic of China.

Sino-Soviet relations 1949-1950

From December 1949 to March 1950, Mao made an extended visit to the Soviet Union. The Soviets had mixed feelings about the victory of the CCP. On the one hand, success for a brother communist party was obviously welcomed. However, distrust and frustrations were evident from the start.

- Stalin was determined to maintain Soviet, and thus his, leadership of the world communist movement:
 - the CCP was expected to accept its secondary status.
- The CCP had gained power independently, free of the Comintern:
 - Stalin feared the appearance of another independently-minded communist state such as Yugoslavia.¹
- Stalin was reluctant to return Manchurian territories and the Manchurian railway to China:
 - Mao was becoming frustrated at not quickly receiving concessions he sought on economic assistance and territorial issues.
- Mao and Stalin failed to establish a good working relationship.

Things improved when Zhou Enlai arrived in Moscow and he was able to use his renowned 'charm' in negotiations. On 14 February 1950, Zhou and his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Vyshinsky, signed *The Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance* and other separate agreements:

- Soviet troops withdrew from Manchuria;
- the Manchurian railway, and other properties in Dalian and Lushun were returned to China;
- the Soviet Union granted China a US\$300 million loan at 1% interest;
- about 10 000 Russians arrived to serve as 'expert advisors'.

When Mao and Zhou returned to China, they presented these agreements as a great triumph. However, Mao's experience in the Soviet Union and his dealings with Stalin, had left him with a negative view of China's communist ally.

¹ Yugoslav Communist leader Tito's partisans had gained power in 1945 without Soviet Red Army assistance. Tito sought an independent line for his country and by 1948 Soviet-Yugoslav relations were in deep freeze.

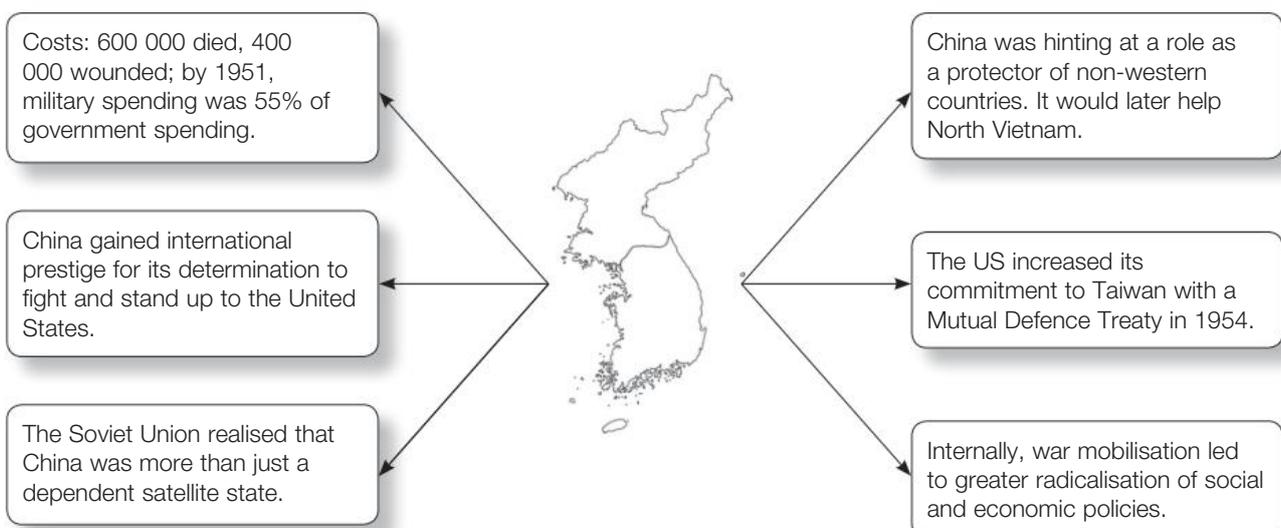
The Korean War: 1950-1953

After 1945, the Korean peninsula was divided (at the 38th parallel) into a pro-Soviet, communist North under Kim Il-sung, and a pro-western, non-communist South under Syngman Rhee. On 25 June, 1950, North Korean troops invaded the South in an attempt to unite the two halves of the country. Stalin approved of this action even if he had not openly encouraged it.

- South Korean forces were soon pushed to the extreme south east of the country around the 'Pusan Perimeter'.
- UN forces, mostly US, under the leadership of General Macarthur, arrived to drive the communists back:
 - UN troops were soon on the 38th parallel;
 - Macarthur continued north to the Yalu River, the border between Korea and China;
 - Macarthur was keen to move against China.
- China responded by sending large numbers of troops into Korea, and had soon managed to push the UN forces back to the 38th parallel.
 - Macarthur had suggested using atomic weapons against China, an action US President Truman quashed immediately and he sacked Macarthur;
 - Truman did not want the Korean War to become a 'hot war' between the US and the Soviet Union;
 - the fighting continued until mid-1953;
 - a truce was finally agreed to in July 1953 which resulted in the country's permanent division at the 38th parallel. ²

The consequences for China of the Korean War are outlined in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 The consequences of the Korean War for China



² North and South Korea remain divided at the 38th parallel. In 2020, the leader of North Korea is Kim Jong-un, the grandson of Kim Il-sung.

Sino-Soviet relations deteriorate

In February 1956, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, presented his 'secret speech' to the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.³ It did not remain 'secret' for long. Part of Khrushchev's motivation was to promote his claims to the leadership following Stalin's death in 1953. In his speech, Khrushchev, attacked Stalin, and exposed the crimes that had been committed during Stalin's time in power. By doing this, Khrushchev was undermining the very legitimacy of the communist system. Cracks were already appearing in the communist-ruled countries of Eastern Europe:

- in 1953, there were workers' protests in Czechoslovakia;
- in 1953, government forces had to suppress major anti-government protests in East Germany;
- similar events occurred in Poland in 1956 and the intervention of Soviet troops to deal with the protests was only narrowly averted;
- in Hungary in November 1956, Soviet troops did intervene; almost 30 000 people were killed during that operation.

Khrushchev's actions in rejecting Stalin had a major impact on China and on future Sino-Soviet relations.

- Mao might have had a cool relationship with Stalin, but he had based his political style on that of Stalin, and like the former Soviet leader, he was steadily developing a 'personality cult' around his rule:
 - Mao thus feared that an attack on Stalin and his cult, could develop into an attack on Mao and his cult.
- If there could be risings in East Germany and Hungary against communist rule, might not the same thing be possible in China?
 - by 1956, the secret police were reporting on protests against the CCP's policies and demands for more democracy.
- Mao believed Khrushchev was mistaken but others in the party did not share this view and were unhappy with Mao's growing monopolisation of power.
- Mao disagreed with Khrushchev's desire to change Soviet policies:
 - instead, Mao was developing his ideas about 'ongoing struggle' and the clash between 'revolution and counterrevolution' inside China.
 - the revolutionary struggle had to be intensified.

Mao's radical initiatives in the late 1950s, such as the Great Leap Forward, and his desire to deepen the revolution, strained China's already unsteady relationship with the Soviet Union. Khrushchev was pursuing a policy of "deStalinisation" at home, and "peaceful co-existence" with the west in foreign policy. The Chinese party was strongly opposed to both of these.

³ Deng Xiaoping was in Moscow at the time as the head of the Chinese delegation at the Congress.

The Sino-Soviet split: 1960

Throughout the late 1950s, China and the Soviet Union threw accusations at the other about the international behaviour of each and about their internal policies. Mao wanted to intensify the revolution both home and abroad; Khrushchev on the other hand was visiting the United States.⁴ These differences resulted in a formal split between China and the Soviet Union in 1960.

- Between April and June 1959, Peng Dehuai toured the Warsaw Pact⁵ countries, meeting Khrushchev in the Albanian capital, Tirana:
 - their discussions would have certainly focussed on China's communes and Sino-Soviet relations;
 - soon after Khrushchev was criticising the communes;
 - Mao saw this as further evidence of Peng's disloyalty.⁶
- In June 1959, Khrushchev cancelled the Soviet Union's nuclear aid agreement with China.⁷
- In 1960 Soviet advisors were withdrawn from China.
- Chinese media was soon attacking the Soviet Union for its 'revisionism':
 - by 1963, Mao was accusing the Soviets of betraying socialism and was arguing that China was the only sanctuary for socialism;
 - Mao also accused the Soviet Union of 'hegemonism', the practice of seeking to dominate various countries and regions;
 - as the Soviet Union took an increasing interest in the Third World, Chinese media accused the Soviets of 'social imperialism'.
- The relationship continued to deteriorate in the early 1960s:
 - China resented the Soviet Union's closeness to India at the time of the Sino-India war of 1962.
 - Khrushchev's backdown over the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 led to the Chinese media accusing the Soviet Union of being untrustworthy and of being a 'capitulator';
 - when the Soviet Union joined the US and Britain in the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, China accused it of creating 'an anti-Chinese conspiracy'.
- In 1964, Mao used his differences with Khrushchev for domestic purposes. Accusing Khrushchev of being a 'revisionist', Mao warned of the possibility of a 'Chinese Khrushchev'. (Inside China developments were leading the country towards the Cultural Revolution – see chapters four and five).⁸

4 Khrushchev paid a successful visit to the US in 1959 where he met President Eisenhower. However, relations soured in 1960 over the U2 incident when a US spy plane was shot down over Soviet territory and Eisenhower refused to offer an apology for the flight.

5 The Warsaw Pact was the Soviet-dominated military alliance of East European communist countries formed in 1955. The western equivalent was NATO formed in 1949.

6 Peng Dehuai was soon purged (see Chapter Two).

7 Despite the withdrawal of Soviet nuclear aid, China succeeded in conducting its first atomic test on 16 October 1964, becoming the world's fifth nuclear power (after the US, the Soviet Union, Britain and France).

8 Khrushchev was overthrown in a party coup in October 1964. Leonid Brezhnev became Soviet leader.

The split between the world's two great communist had become total. Each country's propaganda hurled accusations at each other. However, in essence, the bases of their differences can be explained as the following.

- There was the issue of ideology:
 - each saw itself as the true upholder of Marxism;
 - each sought to be the world's leader in the development of socialism;
 - hence, revisionism became a heinous crime.
- There was the issue of international rivalry:
 - each sought to have greater influence across the world with developing, and post-colonial nations.
- There was the issue of direct threats to each other:
 - by the late 1960s, armed clashes between Soviet and Chinese forces were occurring along their common border.

Exercise 3.1

Rearrange the anagrams of the personalities and match them with their roles.

1	I denounced Stalin and his cult of personality in 1956.		HCNE UXIDU
2	I signed the Soviet-China Treaty of Friendship for China.		CHUMRAART
3	Mao saw his talks with Khrushchev in 1959 as a sign of disloyalty.		LTSIAN
4	I was representing the CCP at the 20th Party Congress in 1956.		YHSVIKYSN
5	I was the first secretary-general of the CCP and supported the Comintern line on revolution.		OMA DGNZEO
6	I suggested that the US should use nuclear weapons against China in the Korean War.		CHRKEVHSU
7	Mao failed to develop a close working relationship with him.		NEGP HADEIU
8	I was strongly opposed to Soviet revisionism in the 1950s.		HUZO ALEIN
9	I became leader of the Soviet Union after Khrushchev.		NGED POXAIGIN
10	I signed the Soviet-China Treaty of Friendship for the Soviet Union.		HEZVERNB

Exercise 3.2 Complete the following passage using the terms below.

The _____ was established by Soviet leader, _____, in 1919, to coordinate internal communism. At first China followed its instructions and pursued _____ risings but these were easily _____. Mao said the party should focus on the _____. Mao visited Soviet leader, _____ in _____ but their relationship was cool. In _____, the new Soviet leader, _____, presented his Secret Speech which _____ Stalin. Mao was angered by this as he saw it as a _____ of communism and feared that the _____ cult being developed around his person might be threatened. Mao accused the Soviet leader of _____. Mao also opposed the Soviet policy of _____ coexistence with the west. Relations between the Soviet Union and China continued to _____ in the late 1950s. In _____, the Soviet Union ended its _____ assistance to China but China was still able to explode its first atomic bomb in _____. By _____, the Sino-Soviet split was total, and their _____ differences seemed irreconcilable. By the late 1960s, there were _____ clashes along the common border of China and the Soviet Union.

DENOUNCED – NUCLEAR – STALIN – IDEOLOGICAL – COMINTERN
 BETRAYED – 1960 – 1950 – 1956 – 1964 – 1959 – PERSONALITY – LENIN
 URBAN – ARMED – REVISIONISM – DETERIORATE – CRUSHED
 KHRUSHCHEV – PEACEFUL – PEASANTS

What do the historians have to say about “The state of Sino-Soviet relations”?

1. Jürgen Domes

Domes shows that before relations soured between China and the Soviet Union, Soviet aid had been very significant. As early as 1950, the Soviets were helping to establish 141 industrial projects; by 1956 the figure was 211. Some of the projects were merged, some were not realised but Domes says that most were completed before the end of the Five-Year Plan. These projects formed the core of China’s industrial establishment in the 1950s. Domes suggests that the Soviet Union’s assistance went well beyond this.

*“...China received more than 24 000 collections of scientific and technical data from the Soviet Union including 1400 blueprints of complete factories. About 10 000 Chinese engineers, technicians and skilled workers were trained in the Soviet Union, and more than 10 000 Soviet technicians supported economic reconstruction in China through their labour...”*⁹

2. Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

By April 1960, the Sino-Soviet split had become public. The Chinese leadership was strongly attacking the Soviet support for ‘peaceful co-existence’, arguing that this was weakening the socialist camp. Hoobler and Hoobler make the point that the Soviet line was that because of nuclear weapons, there needed to be a change in the communist strategy of world revolution.

*“...(the Chinese) said that local wars would not necessarily lead to world war and that anticolonial wars of liberation should still be encouraged and not be sacrificed to the Russians’ misguided notions of the need to appease the United States...”*¹⁰

⁹ Domes, J, *The Internal Politics of China 1949-1972*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney 1973, p 74

¹⁰ Hoobler, D, and Hoobler T, *US-China Relations Since World War II*, Franklin Watts, New York, 1981, p 51

Chapter Four

Tensions between the Chinese Communist Party and its leader Mao Zedong

The economic move away from The Great Leap Forward

By 1961, the catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward (GLF) could not be ignored but the policy was never officially refuted. The extent of the famine was never completely acknowledged and China even refused to accept international offers of grain. Mao's prestige suffered and his control of economic matters was greatly lessened. In April 1959, Mao was replaced as President of PRC by Liu Shaoqi, though he retained the influential position of Chairman of the CCP.

The party attempted to steer a different economic course:

- Deng Xiaoping was put in charge of the economy;
- Premier Zhou Enlai called for a focus on the 'four modernisations' – modern agriculture, industry, national defence, science and technology;
- the huge projects of the GLF were reduced, output targets were cut and the skilled engineers and scientists who had been removed as "anti-rightists" were brought back;
- balanced budgets and central planning were back in vogue;
- grain requisitions were cut, local markets reappeared and even though the communes remained, control of much of the farming in many areas was returned to individual households;
- the hukou system was reinforced and millions of people were returned to their original rural areas.

The combination of these new economic policies and more favourable weather conditions meant that by 1965, China's agricultural production had recovered to its 1957 level and industrial production was double that of 1957.

The political fallout of the Great Leap Forward

As mentioned above, Mao lost his post as state president. Mao policies were openly challenged at the Lushan Conference in July/ August 1959.

- Defence Minister Peng Dehuai led the attack, arguing that human error was responsible for 70% of the GLF disaster:
 - other leaders, such as Deng and Liu agreed with Peng;
 - but it had been a tradition within the CCP that party unity came above all else and so they remained quiet.
- With Peng isolated, Mao led a vicious attack on the defence minister and his allies accusing them of being a "*right-deviating, opportunist, anti-party clique*".
 - Peng was removed from all posts;
 - Mao's ally, Lin Biao, became Minister of Defence.

- Despite the removal of Peng, Mao had become increasingly isolated within the party. In January 1962, during the ‘Seven Thousand Cadres Conference’, Liu Shaoqi led the criticism of Mao’s policies:
 - Professor Frank Dikotter has pointed out, that by calling the Great Leap Forward a man-made disaster, Liu was attacking the whole vision proposed by Mao;
 - Dikotter says that from that time, Mao believed Liu would have to be punished but in good time – his skills could be used in the short term;
 - historian Dr Michael Lynch concurs, arguing that after Lushan, Liu Shaoqi was ‘a marked man’.¹

Mao was worried, not just for his political position but also because he feared for the fate of the revolution. Would the revolution fail? Would the party become revisionist? In a speech he gave to the conference but which was not made public, he stated that he feared that China could well become a fascist dictatorship.

With no influence in the economic area, and little say in central decision making, Mao decided to focus on other areas; he chose education:

- in September 1962, Mao launched the Socialist Education Campaign;
 - his aim was to renew the ‘class struggle’ and fight revisionism;
 - he said the GLF had been sabotaged by powerful cliques in the party;
 - his campaign called for ‘the four clean-ups’ – of accounts, warehouses, workplaces and finances – and the identification of corrupt officials.
- By early 1965, the campaign had faded. Mao’s attention now shifted to education in the urban areas. He said that schools had become too elitist, and he wanted to introduce part-work, part-study.

These developments were occurring at the same time that China was facing external difficulties. There was a large-scale uprising in Tibet in 1959 which led to flight of the Dalai Lama to India. India allowed the Dalai Lama to establish a government-in-exile in Dharamsala. In 1962, China and India fought a brief border war.

These external developments had internal ramifications. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) had performed well in the war with India and the army began to be seen as something the party should promote:

- there was the possibility of developing a cult of army heroes;
- the army was uniform and disciplined and could be used to overcome class differences and conform to political standards;
 - Lin Biao, backed by Mao, was keen to promote the PLA;
- army propaganda was promoted:
 - an example was the promotion of army hero Lei Feng;
 - Lei Feng had died in 1962, aged 21;
 - his “alleged” diary was found in which he glorified Mao Zedong.

Partly to stabilise party rule, and partly due to Mao’s own efforts, the personality cult around Mao was strongly promoted in the early 1960s. Lin Biao took things further. The General

¹ Podcast: Mao Zedong Part 3 – The Cultural Revolution, from the Real Dictators series

Political Department of the PLA produced a simplified version of Mao's writings – the 'little red book' of Mao's quotations. Such a publication, it was believed could be easily understood even by the broader masses:

- the army could become a school for the study of Mao Zedong thought;
- Mao called on the people to learn from the PLA;
- Lin Biao organised campaigns to study's Mao writings;
- in 1965, five million copies of the 'little red book' were distributed.

By the early 1960s, it was evident that there were fundamental divisions in political thinking and ideology within the CCP. These divisions are explained in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Divisions within the Chinese Communist Party



Exercise 4.1 Answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1	To what extent did the CCP acknowledge and publicise the extent of the famine that accompanied the Great Leap Forward?	
2	What change was made to the role of state president in April 1959?	
3	Identify three policies introduced by Deng Xiaoping and his supporters in the early 1960s to deal with the disaster of the Great Leap Forward.	
4	What was the role of Defence Minister, Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference in July/ August 1959?	
5	What twin fears did Mao have at the time of the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference?	
6	Who was Lin Biao? What was his relationship to Mao Zedong in the early 1960s?	
7	What external issues affected China between 1959 and 1962?	
8	How did the role of People's Liberation Army begin to affect the development of internal policy?	
9	What was the 'little red book'? Why was it promoted?	
10	What was Deng Xiaoping's attitude to economic policy after the Great Leap Forward?	
11	Why did Mao promote the concept of permanent revolution in China after having taken power?	
12	What was Deng Xiaoping's attitude to the idea of constant struggle and permanent revolution?	

What do the historians have to say about “Tensions between the Chinese Communist Party and its leader Mao Zedong”?

1. Michael Dillon

Dillon highlights the contrast between the thinking of Mao and Lin Biao, and that of Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi. Mao and Lin Biao were keen to promote ‘the little red book’ of Mao’s quotations, not only with the PLA but more widely in party organisations, government departments and schools. They were setting the stage for the widespread use of the ‘quotations’ as a basic educational resource. Mao and Lin Biao were keen to promote the PLA as a model which could be followed by society, particularly the young. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping took a totally different approach. Rather than the simplistic ‘quotations’, they produced weighty and detailed documents. Dillon makes the point that these works had extremely uninspiring titles, such as “Sixty Articles on Peoples Communes” and “Thirty-five Articles on Handicraft Trades”. The approach of Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi was dull but also very practical and contrasted to the dramatic style of Lin Biao and Mao.

*“...The thrust of most of the documents... emphasised quality, professionalism, modernity and large-scale developments. Experts and expertise were accentuated. Mao did not openly oppose these but was completely opposed to the direction that policy was taking...”*²

2. Alexander V Pantsov

Rival approaches to China’s future were being debated within the party. Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi attempted to steer the party and the country in the direction of moderate economic reform. Mao, on the other hand, suggests Pantsov, was more concerned with the issue of ‘revisionism’. To combat revisionism, it was necessary:

*“...to change the very worldview of people, to purge them of all vestiges of the past, to create a new person, a genuine builder of communism...”*³

3. Bill Brugger

Brugger argues that Mao’s main concern in the early 1960s (presumably apart from his declining influence), was not simply culture in the narrow sense. Certainly, pre-revolutionary themes were reappearing in art, literature and the press at the expense of socialist realism. However, suggests Brugger, Mao was beginning to view issues in a much more all-embracing manner. Mao saw that:

*“...the crux of the matter... was a much wider notion of culture comprising the whole realm of human thought. The way in which human activities were structured to produce a socialist consciousness (education in the broadest sense) revealed serious defects...”*⁴

2 Dillon, M, China: A Modern History, L B Taurus, London, 2012, p 319

3 Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 234

4 Brugger, B, China: The Impact of the Cultural Revolution, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p 26

Section Two ■ Focus of Study (1)
The Cultural Revolution

Chapter Five
The aims and methods of Mao Zedong

Introduction

The Cultural Revolution was Mao Zedong's mass campaign to totally transform the social and cultural complexion of China, and in so doing take the country to what he saw as the true goal of communism.

- It began in 1966, though there were signs of activity before this:
 - a five-man group had been set up in January 1965 on Mao's suggestion to examine how to carry out 'a cultural revolution';
 - the party leadership paid only lip-service to this group; ¹ the attack on renowned playwright/ historian, Wu Han (see below);
- Many commentators see the end of the Cultural Revolution coming with the death of Mao in September 1976, and the arrest of his closest supporters, 'the gang of four', shortly after:
 - the period of the Cultural Revolution was labelled by Chinese commentators as the *decade of disaster*, or the *decade of turmoil* or the *decade of internal chaos*.
 - radical sloganeering would continue into the late 1970s.
 - when the trial of the 'gang of four' began in late 1980, that certainly marked the end of any element of the Cultural Revolution.
- The main activities of the Cultural Revolution occurred between 1966 and 1969. By 1971-72, most of the key central government organs were functioning more or less normally. The country had quietened down enough to receive the unprecedented visit to China of United States President, Richard Nixon in 1972.

Since Mao had stepped down from the state chairmanship in April 1959, his standing in the party had declined significantly. His ideological opponents, such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, ² had their power base centred in Beijing. This was the seat of government and where the key organisations of the CCP were located. Mao realised that he did not have the support of the leading party figures.

- As a result, in October 1965, he left Beijing, and for the next nine months he was located to the south in Shanghai and neighbouring Hangzhou.
- Shanghai was the power base of Mao's wife, the former actress, Jiang Qing. She had built up a reputation in the literary and art world of Shanghai, and as Mao's wife, had established a solid and loyal political following.

¹ It would be superseded by the Central Cultural Revolution Group, or the 'Small Group' in May 1966.

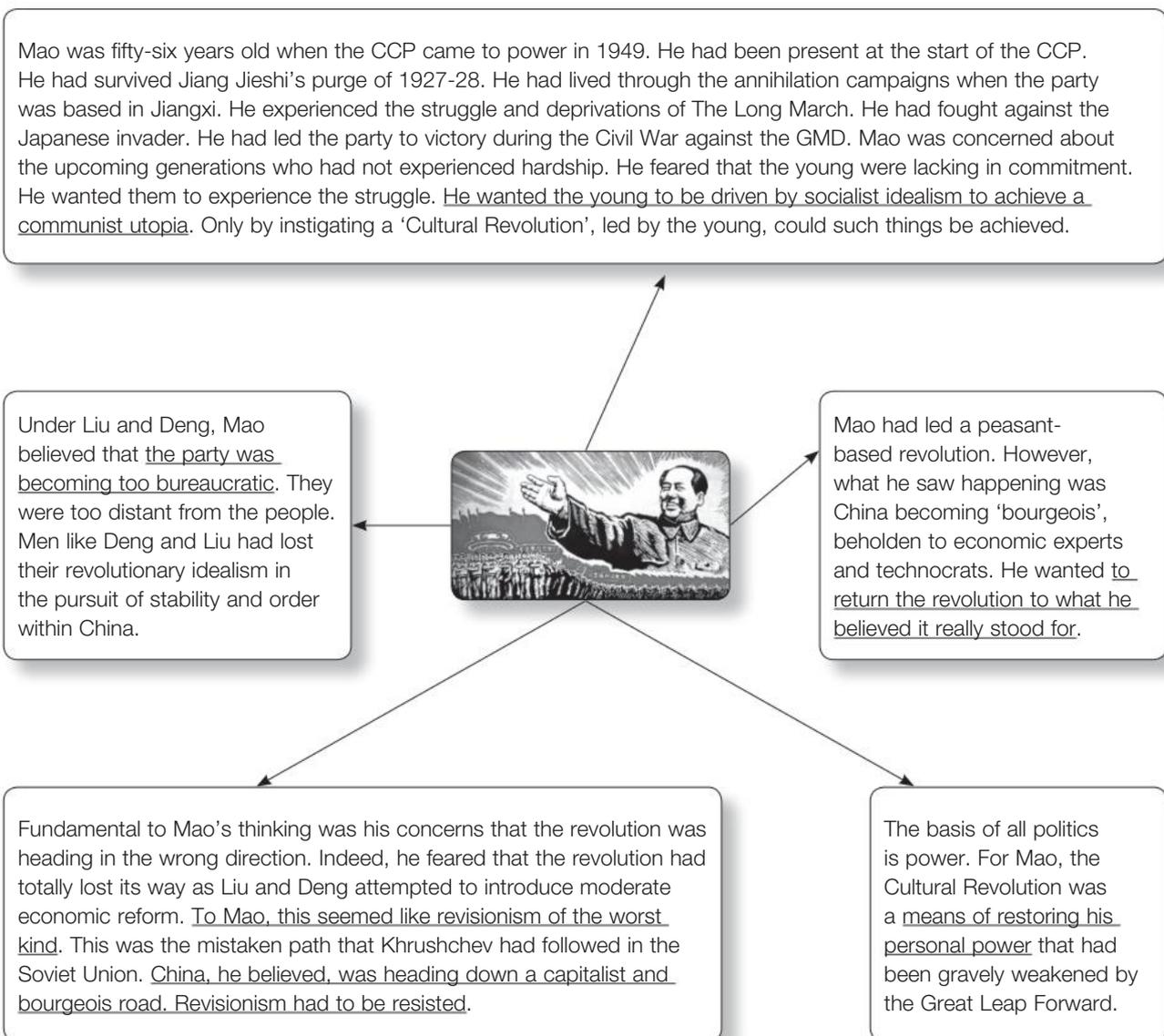
² See Chapter Four.

- The key figures who were to lead the Cultural Revolution came together in Shanghai. They included, Jiang Qing,³ Mao's personal secretary, Chen Boda, and Zhang Chunqiao, First Secretary of the East China Bureau of the CCP.
- This group was to operate independently of the party leadership in Beijing and use the Shanghai media to attack their opponents.

What was Mao's purpose in launching the Cultural Revolution?

Differences had arisen between Mao and other party leaders since the fiasco of the Great Leap Forward. These were examined in Chapter Four. Figure 5.1 outlines Mao's objectives behind the "Great Revolution in Proletarian Culture".

Figure 5.1 Mao's thinking behind the Cultural Revolution



³ Jiang Qing and Mao had been together since 1940. She has been described neurotic and a hypochondriac, who often feigned illness. She called herself Mao's dog, ready to bite. Opponents referred to her as 'the white boned demon'.

The start of the Cultural Revolution is said to be 16 May 1966 with the issuing of a document that has become known as the May 16 *Notification*. However, throughout 1965 and early 1966, there were already signs that the groundwork was being laid for Mao's great 'Proletarian Cultural Revolution'.

- The first target of Mao's campaign was the historian/ playwright Wu Han, who was also the acting mayor of Beijing:
 - in 1961, Wu Han had written a play called *Huai Rui Dismissed from Office*;
 - it told the story of an upright minister, *Huai Rui*, who was sacked by a cruel emperor of the Ming Dynasty;
 - at the time it was assumed that *Huai Rui* was an allusion to Peng DeHuai who was driven from office by Mao (the cruel emperor);
 - like *Huai Rui*, Peng DeHuai was a man who was willing to tell the truth and suffer in the process;
 - Wu Han was denounced as a 'poisonous weed' in Shanghai publications in November 1965.
- Soon other leading figures were attacked:
 - Peng Zhen, the mayor of Beijing was dismissed in April 1966;
 - he was followed by others, and their officials and secretaries;
 - Mao and his supporters suggested that there was an anti-party "black gang", particularly in the fields of education and propaganda.

Exercise 5.1 Rewrite the following passage in a logical sequence.

Deng and Liu wanted to follow a pragmatic, moderate line which they believed would help China recover. Wu Han's play, *Huai Rui Dismissed from Office*, was seen as an attack on Mao and a defence of the purged Peng DeHuai. In 1959, the state presidency was taken from him and he was replaced by Liu Shaoqi. However, this line was opposed by Mao. The Great Leap Forward had been a disaster for China. An early target of Mao and Jiang was the playwright Wu Han. By the early 1960s, the direction of CCP policy was in the hands of Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi. As a result, Mao's prestige suffered greatly. Soon other figures were under attack, such as the mayor of Beijing, Peng Zhen. In this, he was aided by his wife, Jiang Qing who was based in Shanghai. Thus, Mao saw the need for a Cultural Revolution. He saw it as heading along a capitalist road, and as evidence of the evil of revisionism.

The methods of Mao Zedong

In pursuit of his aims, Mao and his allies used a variety of methods.

1. The May 16 Notification (or Circular).

This was presented to the Politburo's Standing Committee on 16 May 1966; it proclaimed that a cultural revolution was about to happen:

- Mao explained that it was necessary to rid the party of revisionism and to *unmask academic authorities who revolted against socialism*;
- Mao said that the party had to be on guard against the possibility of the appearance of a Chinese 'Khrushchev'.

2. Creation of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

A 'five-man group' that had been set up in January 1965 by Peng Zhen to consider the need for a cultural revolution. In May 1966, Mao set up a rival 'Central Cultural Revolution Group' (the Small Group) led by Mao's personal secretary, Chen Boda:

- this was to become the key decision-making office of the CCP;
- it had to answer only to Mao;
- it soon was able to overrule the usual organs of the party;
- Mao was able to mobilise the masses through the Small Group and to determine the direction of the Cultural Revolution;
- by working this way, Mao was able to circumvent the party.

3. The use of wall posters.

Today, the cultural revolution would have made use of social media to achieve its goals. In 1966, a simpler but dramatic method was used: posters.

- the first (big-character) wall poster appeared on 25 May 1966 at Beijing University; it criticised the Vice-Chancellor, Lu Ping;
- 'big-character posters soon spread across China's university and school campuses;
- by late June, over 88 000 posters had been put up in Shanghai, attacking up to 1400 people;

- on 5 August, Mao brought out his own first big-character poster which was soon published widely across China; it called on the people to denounce and remove the senior leadership.

4. The mass mobilisation of the urban youth.

Mao called upon students, young soldiers, young party members, even school students to rebel. Mao had stated in 1966: “it is right to rebel”:

- soon the young were forming “Red Guard” units to storm schools, universities and other institutions and smash all that was old;
 - (the role of the Red Guards will be covered more fully in Chapter Six);
- the young were soon caught up in the excitement;
- millions would travel to Beijing in order to attend mass rallies where they might get to see Chairman Mao and show their devotion;
 - the promotion of Mao’s personality cult was bound up with this.

5. Mao’s personality cult.

As was outlined in Chapter Four, Mao’s personality cult was greatly expanded. The key figure behind this was Mao’s ally, Defence Minister Lin Biao. The result of the promotion of the personality cult was that the young in particular developed an unquestioning devotion to Chairman Mao:

- it was Lin Biao who organised the publication of Mao’s ‘little red book’;
 - the little red book became compulsory reading for young and old, and for members of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA);
 - hundreds of millions of copies would eventually be printed.
- the image of Mao appeared everywhere:
 - there were statues, giant portraits and banners;
 - no office or home or factory was complete without a bust of Mao;
- on 16 July Mao went for a swim, an action that became inextricably bound up with his personality cult:
 - accompanied by six bodyguards, Mao was alleged to have swum along the Yangzi River – 15 kms in 65 minutes;
 - the swim showed Mao to be ‘robust’ and ready to drive the Cultural Revolution;
 - a movie was made of the event in August 1966;
 - whether or not Mao actually achieved this feat as a 73 year old is actually irrelevant – it became a key piece of propaganda.



* “...The masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant, and without this understanding, it is impossible to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge...”

* “...We should be modest and prudent, guard against arrogance and rashness, and serve the Chinese people heart and soul...”

* "...In times of difficulty we must not lose sight of our achievements, must see the bright future and must pluck up our courage..."

6. Making use of ideology.

Apart from re-establishing his personal power, Mao's key aim in the Cultural Revolution was to reverse what he saw as the trend towards (Khrushchev-style) revisionism. Thus, ideology became a means by which Mao could push forward the Cultural Revolution:

- the 'little red book' became a key weapon in the campaign;
- Mao Zedong thought was used to denigrate the 'capitalist roaders' such as Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi.

7. Using the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

One of Mao's quotations which says much about his understanding of politics, was "*political power grows out of the barrel of a gun*". No matter how popular a leader, no matter how good the ideas are or how exciting the promises that are made, if the military are not behind you, power cannot be maintained. Mao had the total backing of the PLA:

- Mao's key ally was Defence Minister, Lin Biao who had successfully ensured that all PLA members had to study, accept and be imbued with Mao Zedong thought, above all else;
- the violence and mayhem of the early years of the Cultural Revolution was only possible because the PLA allowed it to happen;
- equally, when Mao wanted to slow down the process in later years, the PLA was equally happy to restore order.

Exercise 5.2 Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

1	It was from their power base in Beijing that Mao and his allies first planned and launched the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
2	Mao was concerned that the youth of China had not been able to experience the struggle and sacrifice of revolutionary experiences.	TRUE/ FALSE
3	Wu Han's play <i>Huai Rui Dismissed from Office</i> was lauded and promoted by Mao as it fitted in with his own thinking.	TRUE/ FALSE
4	Jiang Qing was a key supporter of Mao and used her influence in the arts community to promote the goals of the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
5	The youth of China excitedly took up Mao's call to rebel and to remove anything that was old in China.	TRUE/ FALSE
6	Mao never went as far as to encourage the youth of China to actually remove the senior leadership of the party.	TRUE/ FALSE

7	Mao's epic swim along the Yangze in 1966 was promoted and became a useful tool in developing the personality cult around him.	TRUE/ FALSE
8	Lin Biao ensured that all members of the PLA studied and attempted to live by the ideas of 'the little Red Book'.	TRUE/ FALSE
9	Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi were fully in tune with the ideas of Mao as he launched the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
10	Mao was a convinced supporter of Soviet leader Khrushchev and the policies that he attempted to develop in the Soviet Union.	TRUE/ FALSE
11	Mao seemed to have little understanding of the importance of the military in the overall political process.	TRUE/ FALSE
12	Mao's attempt at a Cultural Revolution was carried out with the unwavering support of members of the PLA.	TRUE/ FALSE

What do the historians have to say about “The aims and methods of Mao Zedong”?

1. Michael Dillon

Dillon explains that one of the regime's closely guarded secrets was the existence of “the Third Front” – this involved the strategic redistribution of resources from 1964 to 1971 to central China. The aim was to create a self-reliant economy there, safe from any possible military attack. The program involved a massive investment in the less accessible parts of China. He argues that this raises questions about the mayhem of the Cultural Revolution.

*“...in particular, to what extent the Cultural Revolution was a façade to conceal the work being done to create a military-industrial complex in the seclusion of the Chinese interior?...”*⁴

2. Alexander V Pantsov⁵

Pantsov says that the Cultural Revolution was the result of Mao's analysis of internal revisionism inside China and how it should be countered. Mao believed that the contradiction in Chinese society was not the clash between the labouring classes and the unreconstructed exploiting classes. It was instead between the politically conscious masses and party bureaucrats/ cadres who sought the capitalist road. It was no good,

4 Dillon, M. *China: A Modern History*, L B Taurus, London, 2012, p 323

5 This follows on from Pantsov's argument at the end of Chapter Four.

believed Mao, simply removing the leadership as it would only be replaced by other capitalist leaders. What was needed was to change the way people thought, how they approached life and the problems it threw up. This could only be done by destroying everything that was old. Only by doing this could the goal of communism ever be reached. In other words, what was needed was a cultural revolution:

*“...that is, class struggle in the sphere of culture directed at the total destruction of traditional morals, habits, ideas, and other cultural values of the Chinese people and their replacement with new communist ones...”*⁶

3. Tom Phillips

Phillips' piece in *The Guardian* (2016), marking the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Cultural Revolution, provides a useful summary of its aims, methods and impact. For all the talk about ideology and preventing the scourge of revisionism, Phillips suggests that the Cultural Revolution can also be seen as:

*“...an attempt by the elderly dictator, whose authority had been badly hit by the calamitous Great Famine of the 1950s, to reassert control over the party by obliterating enemies, real or imagined...”*⁷

4. Jonathan Clements and Michael Lynch

Clements argues that Mao was concerned about “capitalist leaders” in the party losing the goal of the communist utopia. He says that Mao's view was that the party and the people needed to be tough on themselves and not succumb to western temptations. The people must be purged of bourgeois thoughts. Michael Lynch makes the point that Mao saw “beauty” as a capitalist notion. “Beethoven and Mozart” were western constructs, merely a way of dominating the world through capitalist cultural values.⁸

6 Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 235

7 Phillips, T, *The Guardian*, 11 May 2016.

8 Podcast: Mao Zedong Part 3 – The Cultural Revolution, from the Real Dictators series

Chapter Six

The role of the Gang of Four and the Red Guards, and the Destruction of the ‘Four Olds’

The appearance of the Red Guards

Mao sought to achieve his goals through the mass mobilisation of the country’s urban youth. Mao told young soldiers, students and the younger members of the CCP that *“it is right to rebel”*. They would become Mao’s strongest support base during the Cultural Revolution. Students formed “Red Guard units”:

- the first units appeared in Beijing, spread to Shanghai and were soon appearing all across the country;
 - a series of mass rallies were held in Beijing;
 - millions of young people attended these rallies, in the desperate hope that they would get a glimpse of Mao himself;
 - as the Cultural Revolution gained momentum, Red Guard activists became hysterical at the thought of seeing Mao;
 - in his presence they jumped up and down, had tears streaming down their eyes and screamed out ‘Long Live Chairman Mao’.
- Mao attended the first rally on 18 August 1966;
 - he wore a green military uniform and enthusiastically took a red armband when it was proffered by one of the students;
 - soon Red Guards all over China were wearing a green or khaki uniform, complete with a red armband.

As the poster campaigns got underway (see Chapter Five), Mao issued instructions that made it easier for the students’ Red Guard units to become active:

- on 13 June 1966, Mao called for the cancellation of the nationwide university entrance examinations;
 - classes were cancelled, and the reopening of campuses was delayed;
 - this freed up the young to become active: 13 million in middle and high schools, half a million at colleges and universities and over 100 million in primary schools.¹
- On 8 August 1966, the CCP’s Central Committee put in place a document which became known as The Sixteen Points:
 - one part of this document stated: *“the only method is for the masses to liberate themselves... Don’t be afraid of disturbances”*;
 - this became an open call to the young masses to take power from the ‘bourgeois’ authorities;
 - the party and PLA were told not to intervene in the activities of the Red Guards.

¹ Figures from MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution*, Harvard University Press, 2008, p 60

In the popular imagination, the Red Guards are often associated with 'student radicals'. Some people might perceive them as a very extreme version of the student radical groups which were active in the west in the sixties, protesting against the Vietnam War or, as was the case in France, trying to bring down the government of President de Gaulle. However, this is a mistaken view:

- a large number of the Red Guards were not university students but students of secondary school age;
- they often linked up with worker groups, people whose education had never progressed beyond a basic secondary level;
- the Red Guards started out giving mass support to Mao Zedong but they became a nationwide youth movement;
- this movement contained rival groups who fought for supremacy in the name of different factions within the CCP;
 - this battling for supremacy reached extreme levels of violence.

The 'Four Olds'

At the rallies between August and November 1966, Mao Zedong and Lin Biao encouraged the Red Guard units to root out 'the capitalist roaders' and to destroy 'the revisionists'. They were exhorted to take their campaign on to the streets of China. Mao said that it was the duty of the young to seek out and destroy "***the Four Olds***". These comprised:

OLD IDEAS OLD CUSTOMS OLD CULTURE OLD HABITS OF MIND

What the nature of the 'Four Olds' meant was never fully worked out. Instead, it was left up to the Red Guard units themselves to decide. (See Figure 6.2, below for a detailed outline of Red Guard behaviour in pursuit of the destruction of 'the Four Olds'.)

The Cultural Revolution lasted from 1966, when Mao presented the Politburo Standing Committee with his 16 May Notification to his death in September 1976. There were echoes of Cultural Revolution actions after Mao but these were soon rubbed out by the post-Mao regime.

The Cultural Revolution was not one continuous process. It went through three distinct stages:

- Stage One went from May 1966 to mid-1968:
 - this was the period of radical, anarchic Red Guard activity (though it was not the end of the violence that accompanied the Cultural Revolution);
 - it was a period of enormous destruction as Red Guard units sought to implement the policy of destroying the 'Four Olds';
 - soon older students were forming 'rebel' factions and attacking the earlier Red Guard groups;
 - in some areas virtual civil war existed. ²

² See Historians 1 and 2.

- Stage Two went from mid-1968 to 1970:
 - a new system of 'revolutionary committees' was formed to replace government bodies at the provincial and local level;
 - the PLA was sent in to bring back some order;
 - some schools began to reopen;
 - in July 1968, Mao called on his Red Guards to become '*ordinary peasants and ordinary workers*' and '*to learn from the peasants*';
 - millions of urban youth were sent to the countryside – not all of them welcomed the experience: idealism is one thing, living the primitive life of a poor peasant is something else;
 - the violence did not come to an end as the campaign to 'cleanse class ranks' sought to wipe out any who opposed the goals of the Cultural Revolution;
 - up to one and a half million people were killed during this stage.
 - it was during this stage that Liu Shaoqi's humiliation was intensified;
 - he was removed as Deputy Chairman of the CCP in 1966;
 - he ceased to be State President in 1968 and was expelled from the party;
 - Liu died in November 1969; he had been in solitary confinement and apparently was mistreated and denied medical attention.
 - Deng Xiaoping was also forced to admit 'his mistakes';
 - Deng was not expelled from the party;
 - he was sent to the country and forced to work in a rural tractor repair shop from 1969 to 1973.
- Stage Three went from 1970 to 1976:
 - this was a more moderate period of the Cultural Revolution;
 - some of those who had been purged were allowed back;
 - more emphasis was put on economic/ social improvement:
 - peasants could work private plots, craftsmen private workshops;
 - medical care was boosted:
 - short-term training saw the appearance of 'barefoot doctors'.
 - however, campaigning still continued:
 - attempts were made to end the distinction between urban and rural, worker and peasant, manual workers from intellectuals;
 - correct class status and a record of political activism were the qualifications needed to enter university.

Just before the death of Mao in September 1976, China did seem to be returning to what could be called 'normal'. However, there could be no escaping the enormous price that had been paid in terms of human suffering during the Cultural Revolution.

Figure 6.1 The human cost of the Cultural Revolution

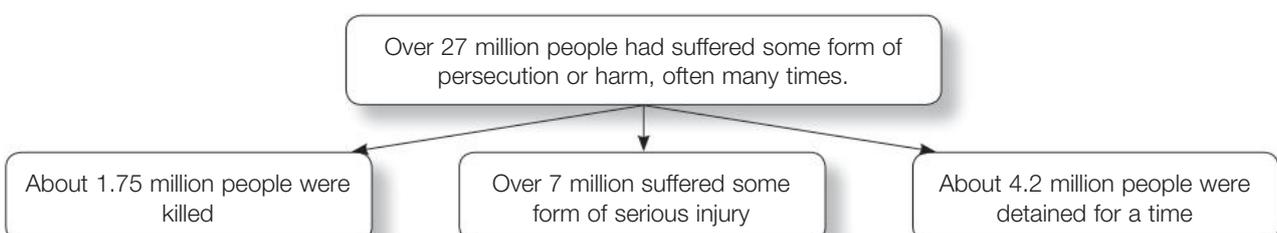
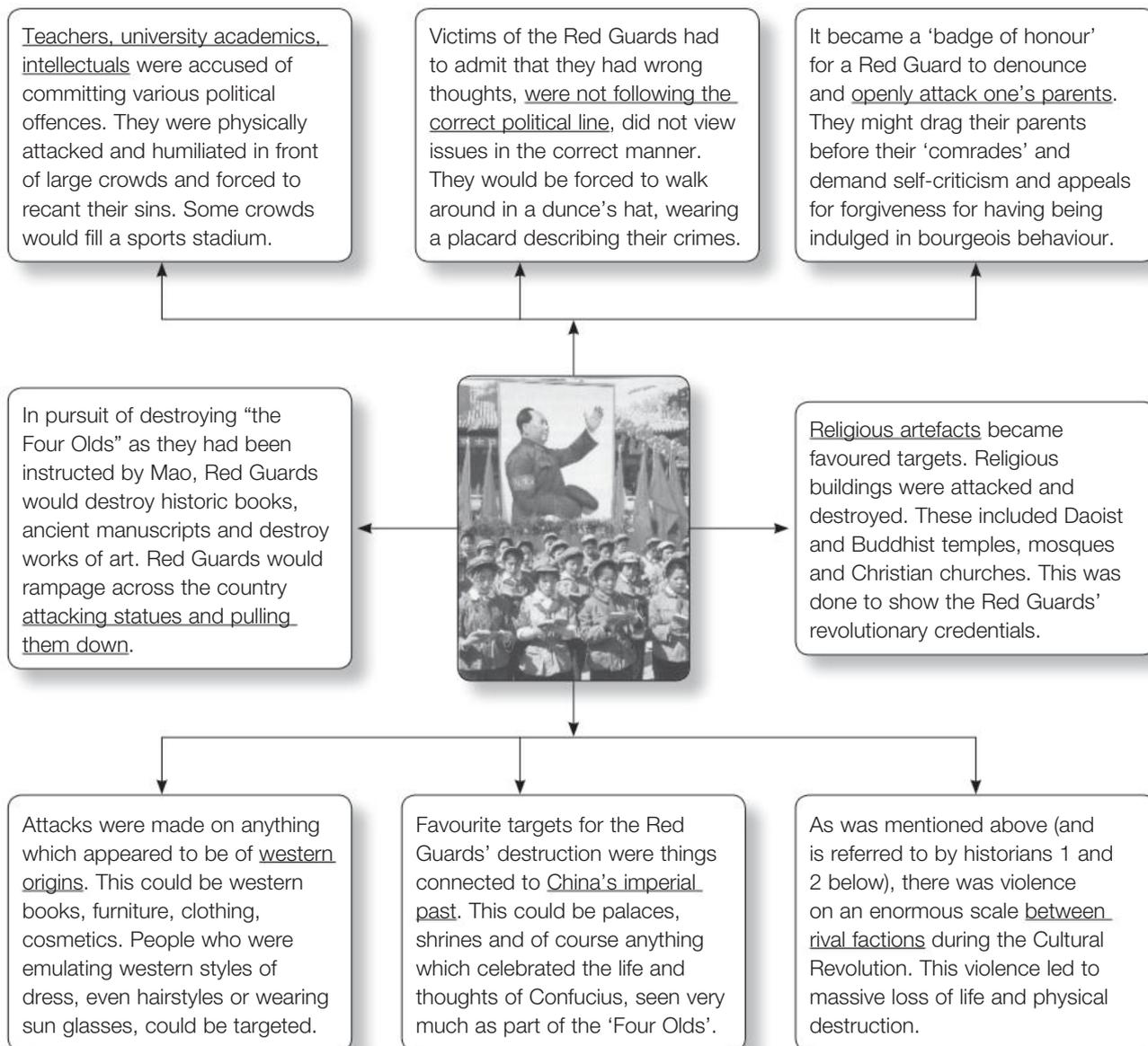


Figure 6.2 The activities of the Red Guards



Exercise 6.1 Indicate whether each of the following is a fact or an opinion.

1	Mao Zedong gave strong encouragement to the young to attack and criticise existing structures in China.	FACT/ OPINION
2	Only the young could be naïve enough to go along with the exhortations of the Cultural Revolution.	FACT/ OPINION
3	China needed to get rid of the Four Olds so that it could move uninterrupted towards socialism.	FACT/ OPINION
4	Former Red Guards were called upon to go into the country so they could 'learn from the peasants'.	FACT/ OPINION
5	Only good could come from forcing previous important figures to recognise and admit their errors.	FACT/ OPINION

Exercise 6.2 Complete the following passage using the terms given below.

The Cultural Revolution began with Mao's _____. Mao intended to use the mass _____ of the country's _____ to achieve his Cultural Revolution _____. On _____ university entrance _____ were cancelled and so millions of young people were able to form _____ units. On _____ the party announced The Sixteen Points that called on the young to take power from the _____ authorities. Massive rallies were held in _____ where Mao would appear before masses of the young, who were known to become quite _____ on seeing him. Many of the campaigning young were only of _____ school age. Mao and his close supporter, _____, called upon the young to destroy the _____. This led to massive destruction of _____ and _____ sites. A key feature of Red Guard action was the _____ of their former _____ and _____. Enormous violence was a feature of the Cultural Revolution as rival _____ battled each other. Leading CCP figures were stripped of power such as former State President, _____ and economic moderate, _____. Some Red Guards willingly _____ their parents for their wrong behaviour. The Cultural Revolution eventually came to an end with the death of _____ in _____.

PROFESSORS – SECONDARY – GOALS – IMPERIAL – PARENTS – YOUTH –
13 JUNE 1966 – SEPTEMBER 1976 – 8 AUGUST 1966 – TEACHERS – FACTIONS –
BEIJING – RED GUARD – MOBILISATION – HYSTERICAL – 16 MAY NOTIFICATION –
LIU SHAOQI – LIN BIAO – RELIGIOUS – DENG XIAOPING – BOURGEOIS – MAO –
HUMILIATION – FOUR OLDS – EXAMINATIONS

The Gang of Four³

One of Mao Zedong's key allies during the Cultural Revolution was his wife, the former actress, Jiang Qing. From the time of the Great Leap Forward, Mao made increasing use of his wife. She was to become a key figure in the Cultural Revolution (see the box section). Jiang represented the extreme left wing of the party. She was a strong opponent of the kind of pragmatic policies that were associated with people like Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai. In Jiang's view, the crime of 'revisionism' had to be countered wherever it raised its ugly head.

³ The final period of the Gang of Four's influence, and their arrest and trial, will be dealt with in Chapter Fourteen.

Jiang's power base was in Shanghai. During the course of the Cultural Revolution, she formed a strong block of leftist allies. Chief among these were:

- Zhang Chunqiao
- Wang Hongwen
- Yao Wenyuan.

Jiang, Zhang, Wang and Yao are known in history as **"The Gang of Four"**.

During the early years of the Cultural Revolution, the Gang of Four did much to promote the mass mobilisation of the Red Guards and to encourage their radicalism. Jiang was a frequent speaker at Red Guard mass rallies.

- The Gang of Four worked to bring down leading party figures such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.
- By the end of 1969, Wang and Yao had become members of the ruling Politburo.
- Wang had become Second Vice-Chairman of the CCP and the Politburo's third highest ranking member by 1973.

In 1972 Mao suffered a serious stroke and Zhou Enlai was dying of cancer. The issue of the succession to Mao now became a key issue. Mao and Zhou decided to bring Deng Xiaoping back from his rural exile. As a result, by 1973, the party was again experiencing fundamental political and philosophical splits. This is shown in Figure 6.3

Figure 6.3 Splits in the CCP by mid-1973

The extreme left – The Gang of Four	The moderates – Zhou and Deng
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ continuation of mass mobilisation ■ continue to pursue the class struggle ■ anti-intellectualism ■ pursuit of egalitarianism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ priority to economic growth ■ restore political stability ■ promotion of education ■ a pragmatic opening to the west

Lin Biao had been a key ally of Mao in the 1960s. He disappeared under suspicious circumstances in 1971. ⁴ In January 1974, the Gang of Four launched a movement which criticised Lin Biao and Confucius. The "Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius" campaign was an example of that age-old Chinese practice of "allegory".

- The attack on Lin Biao is easy to understand; he was identified as a traitor and Soviet spy by the Gang of Four.
- However, why would they bother attacking the venerated sage Confucius who had lived two and half thousands earlier?

⁴ See Chapter Eight.

- The reason was that their real target was Zhou Enlai, who to many epitomised the thoughtful, wise traits of Confucius.
- The Gang of Four was not able to openly attack a major figure like Premier Zhou Enlai. Thus, an allegorical attack was pursued.

In January 1976, Zhou Enlai died.⁵ Following the death of Zhou, there were anti-leftist demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. The Gang of Four retaliated by once again removing Deng and his supporters from their positions. They were accused of 'right deviationism' and for 'criticising Mao's Cultural Revolution'.

The Gang of Four's days were numbered. In October 1976, they would be arrested and later tried.⁶



Jiang Qing was born Li Shumeng in 1914, in Zhucheng in Shandong Province. Under the name Lan Ping, she pursued a career as a B-grade film actress. When Japan attacked Shanghai in 1937, she fled and arrived at Yan'an in 1938. She replaced Mao's wife, He Zizhen; Mao suggested that she adopt the name Jiang Qing. The party was suspicious of her and would not allow her direct involvement in political affairs for twenty-five years. For many years she suffered from severe bouts of hypochondria. In the early 1960s, she became very interested in Marxist analysis of the performing arts and worked on 'reforming opera and ballet'. In 1964 she was elected to the National People's Congress. Jiang was one of the key figures in the attack on Wu Han for his play "Huai Rui Dismissed from Office".

Jiang had become a key figure in promoting Mao's Cultural Revolution:

- she became cultural advisor to the PLA;
- she was a member of the Cultural Revolution Group of the Central Committee;
- in 1969 she was elected to the Politburo;
- Jiang was one of the promoters of the "Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius campaign".

As Mao's health faded in 1975, Jiang's influence declined. Mao's successor, Hua Guofeng, ordered the arrest of Jiang and the rest of the Gang of Four following Mao's death. She was put on trial in 1980 and the following year received a suspended death sentence. Jiang committed suicide in May 1991 while under house arrest.

⁵ See Chapter Eleven for Zhou's death and its significance.

⁶ See Chapter Fourteen.

Exercise 6.3 Place the events on the left in the correct chronological order.

1st event		DEATH OF MAO
2nd event		16 MAY NOTIFICATION
3rd event		ARREST OF THE GANG OF FOUR
4th event		DEATH OF LIN BIAO
5th event		MAO TELLS RED GUARDS TO LEARN FROM THE PEASANTS
6th event		TRIAL OF THE GANG OF FOUR
7th event		MAO ATTENDS FIRST RED GUARD RALLY
8th event		SUICIDE OF JIANG QING
9th event		DENG XIAOPING SENT TO THE COUNTRY
10th event		DEATH OF ZHOU ENLAI
11th event		LIU SHAOQI NO LONGER STATE PRESIDENT
12th event		THE CRITICISE LIN BIAO AND CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN

What do the historians have to say about “The role of the Gang of Four and the Red Guards, and the Destruction of the ‘Four Olds’”

1. Tang Win

In 1966, Tang Win was a fifteen year old school student. Like so many of his generation, he became caught up in the mania of the Cultural Revolution.

- It meant the end of his studies and years of violent struggle and later forced relocation to a distant rural region.⁷
- In 2016, he wrote a memoir of his experiences, detailing the campaigns and extremely violent clashes which became a major feature of the Cultural Revolution.
- His story details the extent of the violence of the time, involving, military-style campaigns between rival Red Guard groups, and attack on opponents of Chairman Mao, bloody massacres of prisoners and mass destruction.
- He says that after a year and a half, the Cultural Revolution had become a mess of mass fighting. He comments that the fighting:

*“...became more cruel and fierce, with modern advanced weapons against each other, like tanks, anti-aircraft guns and artilleries. The scale of the mass fighting became larger, with tens of thousands on both sides in a single battle...”*⁸

2. Klaus Mühlhahn

Mühlhahn suggests that the whole situation spun totally out of control. Different groups would barricade themselves in streets, factories and other buildings. They managed to commandeer machine guns, tanks, anti-aircraft weapons and artillery. This was full-scale urban warfare. Almost a quarter of a million people could have been killed in these clashes. The different groups battled it out:

*“...over the correct interpretations of the current political line. In many cities, civil war-like conditions erupted... China plunged into chaos. Death and injury from street battles was ubiquitous...”*⁹

7 Once the mayhem of the Cultural Revolution was over, Tang Win was able to enrol in the Sichuan Foreign Languages Institute. Following his graduation, he was able to pursue a career as an interpreter and manager of international trade.

8 Tang Win, *Bygones*, Austin Macauley Publishers, London, 2018, p 117

9 Mühlhahn, K, *Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, pp 467, 468

3. Jung Chang

In 1966, Jung Chang became a Red Guard aged fourteen. She later worked as a peasant and a 'barefoot doctor'. In her book 'Wild Swans', Jung Chang tells the story of her grandmother, her mother and herself throughout China's traumatic twentieth century.

- She relates how on 18 August 1966, Lin Biao called on the Red Guards to 'smash up the four olds'.
- This was soon followed by Red Guards units giving full vent "to their vandalism, ignorance and fanaticism'.
- Houses were attacked, bonfires lit to destroy unacceptable books. Museums, temples and statues were pillaged.

*"...Many writers and artists committed suicide after being cruelly beaten and humiliated, and being forced to witness their work being burned to ashes..."*¹⁰

- Beatings and humiliation became commonplace.
- Policemen were told that if Red Guards had so much hate for class enemies that they wanted to kill them, then the police did not have to act to prevent this.
- People were forced to kneel and kowtow to Red Guards who would then beat them with the brass buckles of their belts.

*"...They were kicked around, and one side of their head was shaved, a humiliating style called the 'yin and yang head', because it resembled the classic Chinese symbol of a dark side (yin) and a light side (yang)..."*¹¹

¹⁰ Jung Chang, Wild Swans, Flamingo, London, 1993, p 377

¹¹ Jung Chang, Wild Swans, Flamingo, London, 1993, p 378

Chapter Seven

The removal of Deng Xiaoping from politics

Background of Deng Xiaoping

- 1904 – Deng (named Xiansheng) is born into the family of a wealthy landowner in Sichuan Province.
- 1920 – Arrives in France/ works, studies and is engaged in political activities/ joins the European branches of the Chinese Socialist Youth League and the CCP
- 1926 – Travels to Moscow where he studies for the next twelve months
- 1927 – Returns to China/ August: meets Mao Zedong for the first time
- 1929 – Is sent to Guangxi to organise an anti-GMD rising
- 1930-33 – Is involved in various unsuccessful uprisings/ becomes political commissar of the Red Army's 7th and 8th Corps/ assumes position of director of Department of Propaganda of the Jiangxi Party Committee
- 1934 – Leaves on the Long March with Red Army troops
- 1935 – Attends the Zunyi Conference where Mao established his leadership
- 1935-45 – Occupies a series of military and leadership positions in the Red Army/ he rises through the ranks/ accepts Mao's line and becomes a trusted follower of 'the Chairman'/ in August 1939 he marries Zhuo Lin ¹
- 1945 – Is elected to the Central Committee
- 1946-49 – Plays a significant role in military operations during the Civil War
- 1949 – Mao proclaims the People's Republic/ Deng is appointed mayor of Chongqing
- 1950 – Deng's troops and He Long's army 'liberate' Tibet
- 1950-52 – Deng in charge of SW China/ carries out major suppression
- 1952 – Mao transfers Deng to Beijing; rises up through the party bureaucracy
- 1956 – Is in Moscow, at the time of Khrushchev's "secret speech" to the 20th Party Congress, as head of the CCP delegation
- 1956 – By the end of 1956 Deng had reached the heights in the party/ he was elected a member of the Central Committee, made a member of the Politburo/ was now the sixth ranked member of the party ²

¹ Zhuo Lin was Deng's third wife. They would be together for fifty-eight years. Deng died in 1997; Zhuo Lin died in 2009.

² Sixth ranked after Mao, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De and Chen Yun.

- 1957 – On Mao's orders carries out party purge/ oversees 'Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom' campaign, and then runs the campaign of repression against intellectuals
- 1958 – Keenly supports the beginning of The Great Leap Forward
- 1961 – Supports Liu Shaoqi who is strongly criticising the Great Leap Forward/reports to the party on the growing Sino-Soviet rift
- 1962 – Mao begins his campaign against party moderates, including Deng
- 1963 – Leads CCP delegation to Moscow; relations between the Chinese and Soviet parties are effectively broken

The Fall of Deng Xiaoping

Mao's prestige had suffered enormously following the catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward. Mao wished to reassert his political power and combat the revisionist tendencies that he saw creeping into the party's thinking and activities. These of course were the fundamental reasons for the Cultural Revolution.³ It was in this context that Mao's suspicions of Deng Xiaoping began to grow. Mao's growing antipathy towards Deng (and Liu Shaoqi) stemmed from a series of issues:⁴

- Liu and Deng called for a delay in the internal political struggle; Mao believed that that struggle had to be an ongoing affair;
- Deng was keen to re-establish Sino-Soviet ties;
 - Mao was strongly opposed to any rapprochement with the capitalist roader/ revisionist Khrushchev;
 - similarly, Mao opposed Deng's desire to work with the Soviet Union in assisting North Vietnam;
- in June 1964, Deng supported regulations that were allowing peasants private plots and to sell in the limited free market:
 - to Mao this would lessen the importance of revolution in the country.

In January 1965, Mao stated in his 'Twenty-Three Articles' Speech that the main enemies of the party were 'revisionists'. The finger was being pointed squarely at Deng (and Liu Shaoqi). By October 1966, a mass campaign was being carried out against the 'bourgeois reactionary' line of Deng and Liu:

- when Deng was in charge of SW China in the early 1950s, he made sure to 'look after his family' and was willing to indulge some bourgeois pleasures:
 - the family home had the rare luxury of air-conditioning;
 - because his wife was a poor cook, he employed special chefs;
 - to improve his billiards game, he employed a private instructor;

³ See Chapters Five and Six.

⁴ The differences between Ma/ Lin Biao, and Deng/ Liu Shaoqi, are covered more fully in Chapter Four.

Such behaviour was exposed by the Red Guards who claimed that:

“Deng Xiaoping is truly the filial son of the landlord class who has lost any sense of shame”.

- the treatment meted out to Deng was far less severe than that Liu Shaoqi was to experience;⁵
- in 1969, Deng presented a ‘self-criticism’ to the party:
 - he was removed from all his positions;
 - but he was not expelled from the party.

Deng Xiaoping’s rural exile

Deng was to spend the next three years and four months in rural exile in Jiangxi, placed under house arrest in the former Nanchang Infantry Academy of the Fuzhou Military District. During this time, Deng was to undergo “re-education through labour” and to rectify himself. However, it was not going to be an overly arduous exile:⁶

- on 22 October 1969, Deng, along with his wife and his step-mother, flew from Beijing to Nanchang in Jiangxi province;
- they took with them boxes of books and various household items;
- Deng’s new home was a large, red-brick building, complete with a balcony and surrounded by cinnamon and plane trees;
- Deng was expected to work for three and a half hours a day, reduced to two and a half hours in early 1970;
- it was not long before Deng and his wife were allowed to have their children, except their son, Pufang, visit them and stay, for sometimes up to three months at a time:
 - June 1971, Deng succeeded in having Pufang brought to their house.

In February 1973, Mao ended Deng’s rural exile and brought him back to Beijing.

The fate of Deng Pufang

Deng Pufang was the second child of Deng Xiaoping and Zhuo Lin.⁷ He was born in April 1944. In late August 1968, Deng Pufang was being interrogated by Red Guards. Unable to take any more, he jumped from a fourth story window, resulting in major injuries. No hospital would accept him because he was Deng’s son, the loathsome offspring of the black gang. He was eventually examined but not treated. “The physicians diagnosed a compression fracture of the 11th and 12th vertebrae and of the first lumbar vertebra, but they refused to treat him, also on political grounds.”⁸ As a result of his injuries, Pufang, aged twenty-five, became paralysed from the chest down.⁹

⁵ For details of Liu Shaoqi’s fate, see Chapter Six.

⁶ See Historian 1 for Zhou Enlai’s instructions regarding Deng’s treatment in the country.

⁷ Deng had six children, one with his first wife, Zhang Xiyuan, and five with Zhuo Lin.

⁸ Pantsov, A V, *Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life*, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 262

⁹ Deng Pufang became a major campaigner for people with disabilities in China. In 2003 he won a UN Human Rights prize for his work. He was the executive president of the Beijing Organising Committee for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

What do the historians have to say about “The removal of Deng Xiaoping from politics”?

1. Zhou Enlai

Zhou Enlai made several ‘personal’ calls to the various authorities in Jiangxi, where Deng was to spend his period of rural exile. He wanted to make sure that Deng was treated well. He told those who would be supervising Deng that he (Deng) was an old man and not in good health, and so must be well taken care of. Zhou wrote:

*“...The best thing would be for him and wife to stay in a small two-storey house. They could live upstairs, and a helper live downstairs. It should be a single house in a courtyard. That way they would have space to move around in, and it would be safe...”*¹⁰

2. Jung Chang and Jon Halliday

Chang and Halliday relate the terrible treatment experienced by Deng’s son, Pufang. Deng was not told about his son’s condition for a year after he became paralysed, and he was forbidden to see him. The two were eventually reunited in June 1971.

*“...Deng was visibly shaken. His son had been a buoyant young man. Deng nursed Pufang devotedly, helping him to turn every two hours to prevent bedsores, which was no light work (Pufang was big), and wiping his body several times a day, as the climate in Jiangxi was hot and humid...”*¹¹

¹⁰ Zhou Enlai, quoted in, Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 264

¹¹ Chang, J, and Halliday, J, Mao: The Unknown Story, Jonathan Cape, London, 2005, p 636

Chapter Eight

The flight of Lin Biao

Background of Lin Biao

- 1907 – Lin Biao is born into a prosperous merchant family from Hubei province
- 1926 – he joins the Socialist Youth League/ attends the Whampoa Military Academy and develops an admiration for Jiang Jieshi/ at this time he meets Zhou Enlai for the first time/ takes part in the Northern Expedition
- 1927 – Lin Biao joins the Communist Party
- 1930s – he joins fellow party members in the Jiangxi Soviet
- 1934-35 – he takes part in the Long March
- 1938 – Lin Biao is wounded during clashes with Japanese troops
- 1943 – he divorces his wife, Liu Ximin and marries Ye Qun/ Ye Qun will eventually become a Politburo member
- 1946-49 – during the Civil War, Lin Biao plays a key role/ by 1948 his troops had taken control of Manchuria/ he plays a significant role in the capture of Beijing, Wuhan, Guangzhou and Hainan Island
- 1950 – Lin Biao opposed China's involvement in the Korean War and turned down a request from Mao to command the 'People's Volunteer Army'
- 1955 – he reached the rank of Marshal
- 1958 – Lin Biao joins the Politburo Standing Committee/ he becomes one of China's vice-chairmen/ Mao launches the Great Leap Forward
- 1959 – Defence Minister Peng Dehuai highlights problems associated with the Great Leap Forward/ Mao sees this as a personal attack/ he turns on Peng and his supporters/ Peng Dehuai is purged and Lin Biao is appointed Defence Minister in his place/ he strongly praises Mao's leadership and infallibility

Mao Zedong and Lin Biao as allies

Lin Biao had doubts about the Great Leap Forward (as he later did about the Cultural Revolution). However, it suited his political purpose to hide his doubts and instead build up Mao's personality cult.

The early 1960s saw China facing a worsening international situation; in 1962 there was a brief border war with India, and relations with the Soviet Union were heading into deep freeze. The impressive performance of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the Indian war strengthened the role of the PLA. Mao and Lin now sought to make the PLA 'a model organisation':

- a cult of 'army heroes' began to appear;

- the alleged diary of 'war hero' Lei Feng, killed in 1962, was promoted, as this young soldier apparently filled his account with constant praising of Mao; ¹
- the soldier-communist was being seen as the best role model;
- the uniformity and the discipline which is so much part of military life were seen by Lin as tools that could transcend class differences and train the troops to rigorous, acceptable political standards;
- the General Political Department of the PLA under Lin Biao revived and sought to refashion the personality cult around Mao.

Not surprisingly, these were ideas that appealed to Mao as he was trying to restore his political influence after the disaster of the Great Leap Forward.

As was explained in Chapter Five, it was Lin Biao who simplified Mao's works into the 'little red book of quotations', which now made Mao Zedong thought accessible to the general population:

- Lin tried to show that the PLA could combine technical skill with the development of correct ideological thinking;
- Lin ensured that all PLA troops became imbued with the thought of the 'little red book; millions of copies were published;
- between August and November 1966, Lin appeared at mass rallies with Mao where the young Red Guards were encouraged to 'destroy the Four Olds'.

The breakdown of the Mao-Lin Biao partnership

Mao and Lin worked together closely during the early years of the Cultural Revolution. However, their partnership began to break down by 1969-70. Lin was beginning to act more independently and so Mao sought to cut back his Defence Minister's power.

The foreign situation played a significant role in this breakdown. By 1969, war between China and the Soviet Union was becoming a distinct possibility; there had already been major clashes along their common frontier. Defence spending was increased and the civilian population was being readied for what might come; underground shelters were being built in the major cities. The new constitution that appeared at this time designated Defence Minister, Lin Biao, as Mao's successor. It was clear that the military was tightening its grip on the party and on society.

In October 1969, Lin Biao announced his directive *On Strengthening Defence and Guarding Against an Enemy Surprise Attack*:

- the armed forces were put on high alert;
- spending was increased on defence industrial production;
- Lin moved PLA commanders into combat positions.

¹ See Chapter Four.

Lin's directive might have had merit, given the tense situation with the Soviet Union. However, it angered Mao. Lin Biao had acted without consulting Mao. Mao, Jiang Qing and even Zhou Enlai were becoming uneasy at Lin's behaviour and looked at ways to cut back on his power. By 1970, attempts were being made to restore some normality to the country but this was causing strains in the party leadership. Lin wanted to continue with Red Guard actions longer than did Mao. Lin Biao, along with Mao's secretary, Chen Boda and their supporters spoke against Mao in Central Committee meetings. Mao retaliated by accusing leading PLA figures of raising military authority over civilian authority. In March 1971, Lin was instructed to present himself before the party for self-criticism.

By September 1971, Lin was no longer seen and he was being denounced throughout the party. References to him, his books and his portraits disappeared. What had happened?

- Lin Biao's son, Lin Liguo, along with supporters in the military started planning for a coup against Mao;
 - the scheme was given the code name '571';
- three possible courses of action were being considered for the coup:
 - assassinate Mao;
 - establish a rival government in Guangzhou;
 - escape to a foreign country.

In September 1971, Lin Biao and several close family members flew out of China, presumably towards the Soviet Union in a Trident 1-E aircraft. It crashed over Mongolia; all onboard died. Is this what really happened? The disappearance and death of Lin Biao remains as one of history's mysteries and an interest for conspiracy theorists. Figure 8.1 outlines some of the ideas that have been developed about the end of Lin Biao.

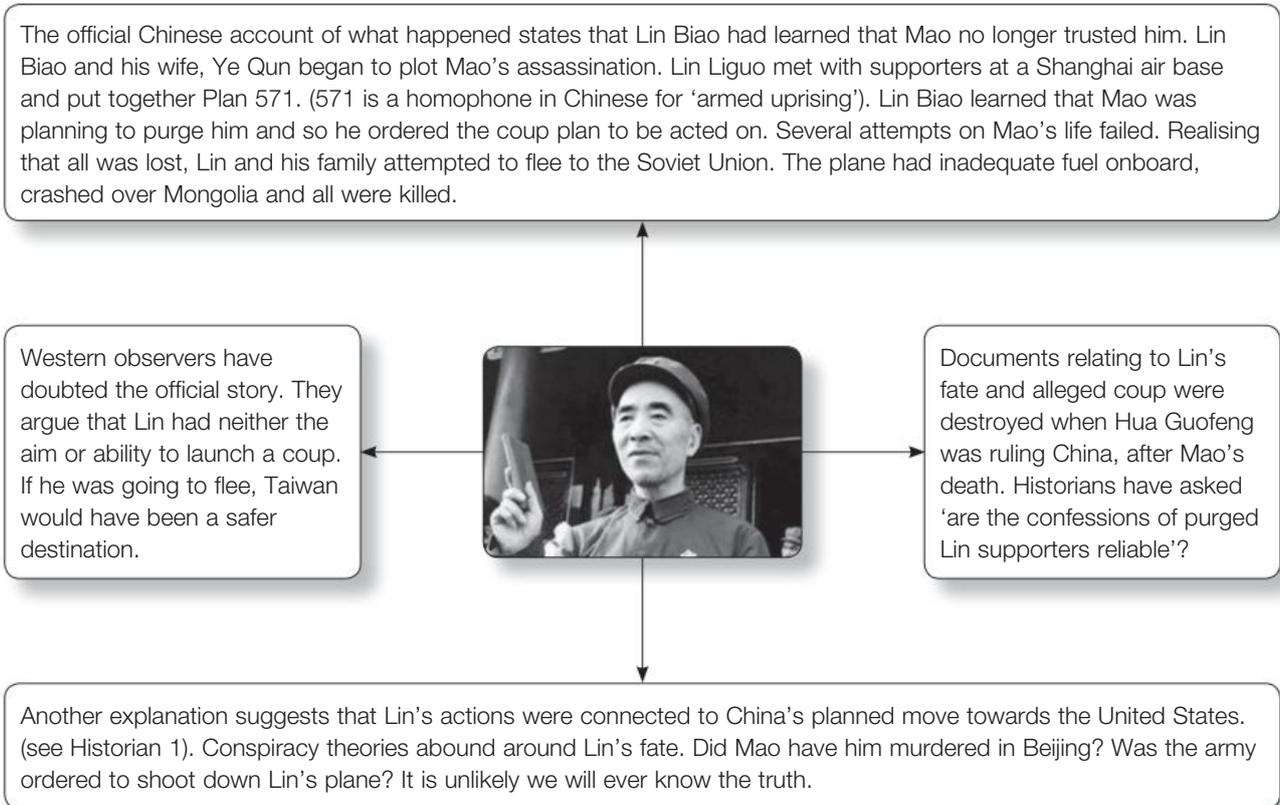
Lin Biao's mental and physical condition

*Not only is the eventual fate of Lin Biao shrouded in mystery. Much has been written about his 'health issues'. There were stories that he was addicted to opium or morphine, though he never smoked or drank alcohol. Apparently, he had a morbid fear of the sun, light, water and wind. When he stayed in hotels, he insisted on having the blinds drawn. It has been said that such was his aversion to water, even the sound of it could bring on diarrhoea. His fear of water, it is said, led to him in later life refusing to bathe or eat fruit. His fear of wind meant that his office never had any ventilation. Mao's personal physician, Dr Li Zhisui, whose book, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, came out in 1994, refers to Lin Biao wearing his uniform so tightly fitting "it might have been glued on". In the early 1950s, Soviet doctors are alleged to have diagnosed manic depression, though Lin's wife, Ye, strongly repudiated such claims. If only some of the above is true, it is amazing that Lin Biao achieved as much as he did, whatever his eventual fate might have been.*

What was the truth about Lin Biao's flight?

The flight of Lin Biao was, and is, shrouded in mystery. Figure 8.1 presents some of the theories about what was alleged to have happened in September 1971.

Figure 8.1 The flight of Lin Biao



Exercise 8.1 Answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1	How successful had Lin Biao been as a military figure before the Communists took power in 1949?	
2	How did Lin Biao assume the position of Defence Minister?	
3	What foreign policy issues were causing concern for China in the early 1960s?	

4	In what ways were Mao and Lin Biao in agreement about the role of the PLA in the early 1960s?	
5	What was Lin Biao's attitude to the personality cult surrounding Mao Zedong?	
6	What was Lin Biao's connection to 'the little red book'?	
7	What was Lin Biao's attitude to Mao's call to 'destroy the Four Olds' during the Cultural Revolution?	
8	What was the fundamental reason for the cooling in the relationship between Mao and Lin Biao?	
9	In what way did Mao and Lin Biao come to differ over their attitude to the role of the PLA?	
10	What was Lin Biao's attitude towards the policy of reaching out to improve relations with the United States?	
11	What happened to Lin Biao and his family in September 1971?	
12	Why might it be difficult to give a definitive answer to question 11?	

What do the historians have to say about “The flight of Lin Biao”?

1. Klaus Mühlhahn

Mühlhahn suggests that tensions between Mao and Lin Biao were in part the result of China’s reaching out to the United States. Zhou Enlai had had talks with Soviet Premier, Aleksey Kosygin in 1969. However, Zhou was also involved in top-secret talks with the United States. Relations between China and the US had been in deep freeze since the Communist takeover in 1949. However, by the late 1960s, it was a case of ‘my enemy’s enemy is my friend’. Both China and the US had concerns about the Soviet Union. Thus, it suited the two sides to consider a rapprochement. Zhou arranged for US National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, to visit China, secretly, in July 1971. Lin Biao was not happy with such developments.

*“...Lin Biao strongly opposed the opening to the United States – probably in part because he knew that this development would strengthen the political stand of his opponents. Kissinger’s visit was tantamount to a major defeat for Lin...”*²

2. Yao Ming-Le

Yao Ming-Le is pseudonym. Yao is a citizen of the People’s Republic of China and could not reveal his real identity when the book was produced in 1983. “Yao” claims to have drawn on top secret documents to produce his account of the fate of Lin Biao. “Yao’s” book attempts to argue that the official version of the Chinese government regarding Lin’s death is full of holes. Is this indeed a reliable account? That cannot be known but Yao tries to raise questions to leave one wondering ‘what did really happen?’ Yao refers to:

*“...the lack of evidence of the crimes that Lin Biao was accused of committing... Why would he (Lin) choose to abandon his schemes before acting on them? ... (Lin Biao was supposed to have taken off from Shanhaiguan Airport near Beidaihe, but government documents)...neglected to mention that Lin Biao himself had returned to Beijing before September 12...”*⁴

Yao also comments on the fact that Mao requested that the bodies be buried in Mongolia. Crash victims’ remains are usually returned to their home country. Yao suggests that considering the victims were high-ranking members of the Chinese military, and that the crash occurred only a few hundred kilometres from the border:

*“...there seemed to be little justification for burying them hastily in the Mongolian People’s Republic...”*⁵

2 Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 475

3 This refers to Lin’s alleged contingency plan to go to Guangzhou if the plot did not work out.

4 Yao Ming-Le, The Conspiracy and Death of Lin Biao, Collins, London, 1983, p 8

5 Yao Ming-Le, The Conspiracy and Death of Lin Biao, Collins, London, 1983, p 8

Chapter Nine

The impact of the Cultural Revolution on society, the economy, education and culture

Introduction

The impact of the Cultural Revolution was both short-term and long-term. The immediate impact of the Cultural Revolution will be examined below. However, it is worth considering the longer-term impact.

- In 1981, the CCP declared that the Cultural Revolution was the greatest setback and disaster that the country had experienced since the founding of the People's Republic: ¹
 - for China's leaders it was a case of 'never again'.
 - the goals for China since that chaotic period have been economic growth, stability and tight political control:
 - these goals continue to be pursued by the current leadership in China (2020) under President Xi Jinping.
- President Xi was a teenager during the Cultural Revolution:
 - his education was disrupted, his father was purged from the party and later thrown into prison.
 - his mother was forced to denounce her husband.

Xi's experience is not unique. This perhaps helps explain the strong desire of the China's modern leadership for stability and control.

China's immediate post-Cultural Revolution leadership had no illusions about the impact of the Cultural Revolution, the damage that had been done and the talent that had been wasted. By 1979, Deng Xiaoping had become China's leader. ² On a visit that year to the United States, he attended a banquet and found himself seated next to the actress, Shirley Maclaine. She told him how impressed she had been on an earlier visit to China. She recalled a conversation she had had with a scientist who had expressed his gratitude to Mao Zedong for taking him from his university campus and sending him to work on a farm. Deng simply replied: "*He was lying.*" ³

Chapters Five to Eight have already dealt with aspects of the impact of the Cultural Revolution. Politically, the CCP was riven between Maoists and 'right deviationists.' Liu Shaoqi was destroyed while Deng Xiaoping's career was put on hold for three and a half years. ⁴ Lin Biao's career ended on the windswept plains of Mongolia. China did survive the Cultural Revolution, and as the period since 1980 has shown, it has thrived. However, the impact at the time was devastating. What follows is an outline of the impact of the Cultural Revolution on society, the economy, education and culture. (Some points in the following section were mentioned in earlier chapters).

¹ In fact the loss of life and economic disaster of the Great Leap Forward was far greater but China prefers not to dwell on the events of that period.

² See Chapter Fifteen.

³ Source: The New Yorker Magazine, 6 May 2016

⁴ Deng would be purged again in 1975-76.

Figure 9.1 The impact of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese society

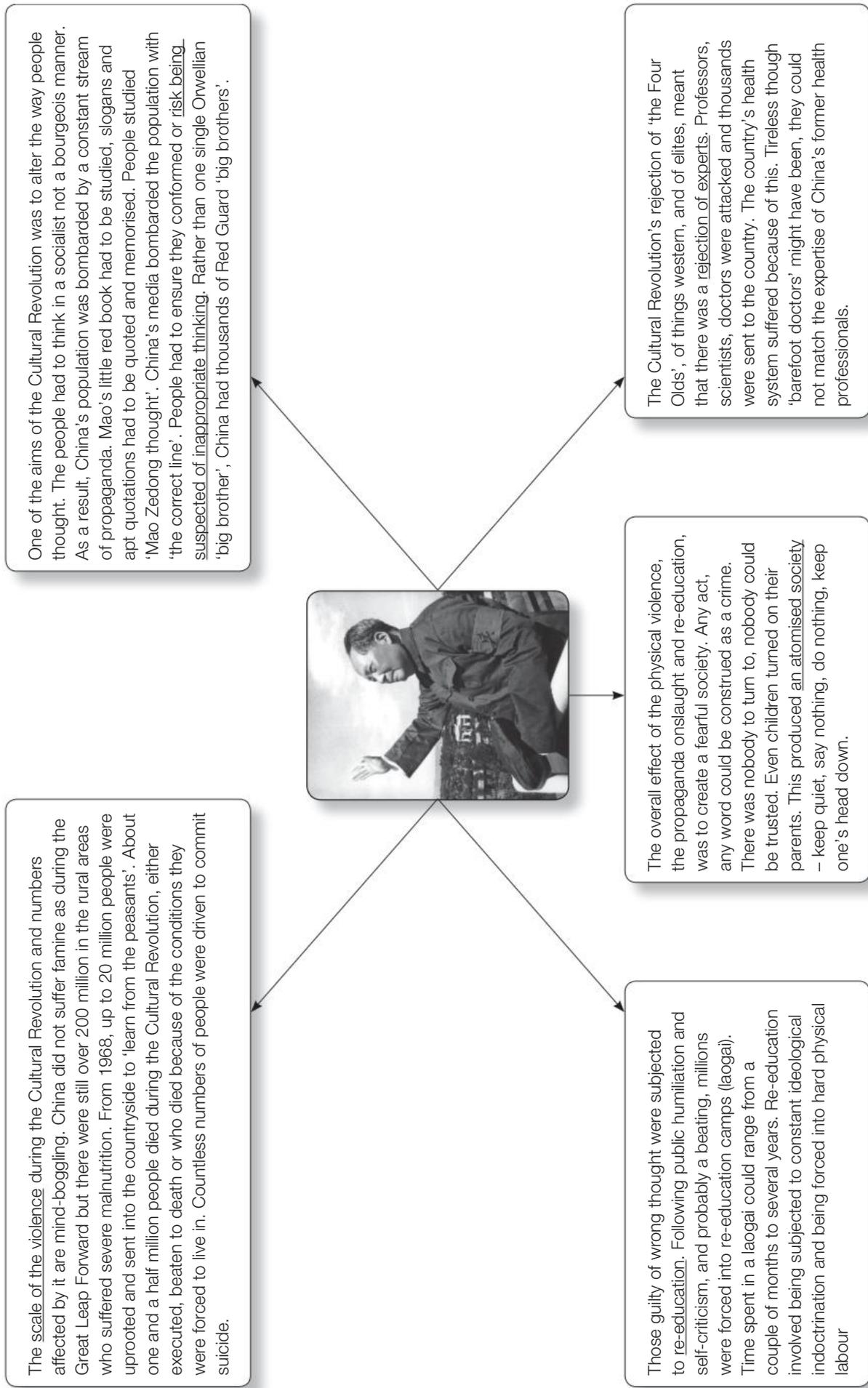
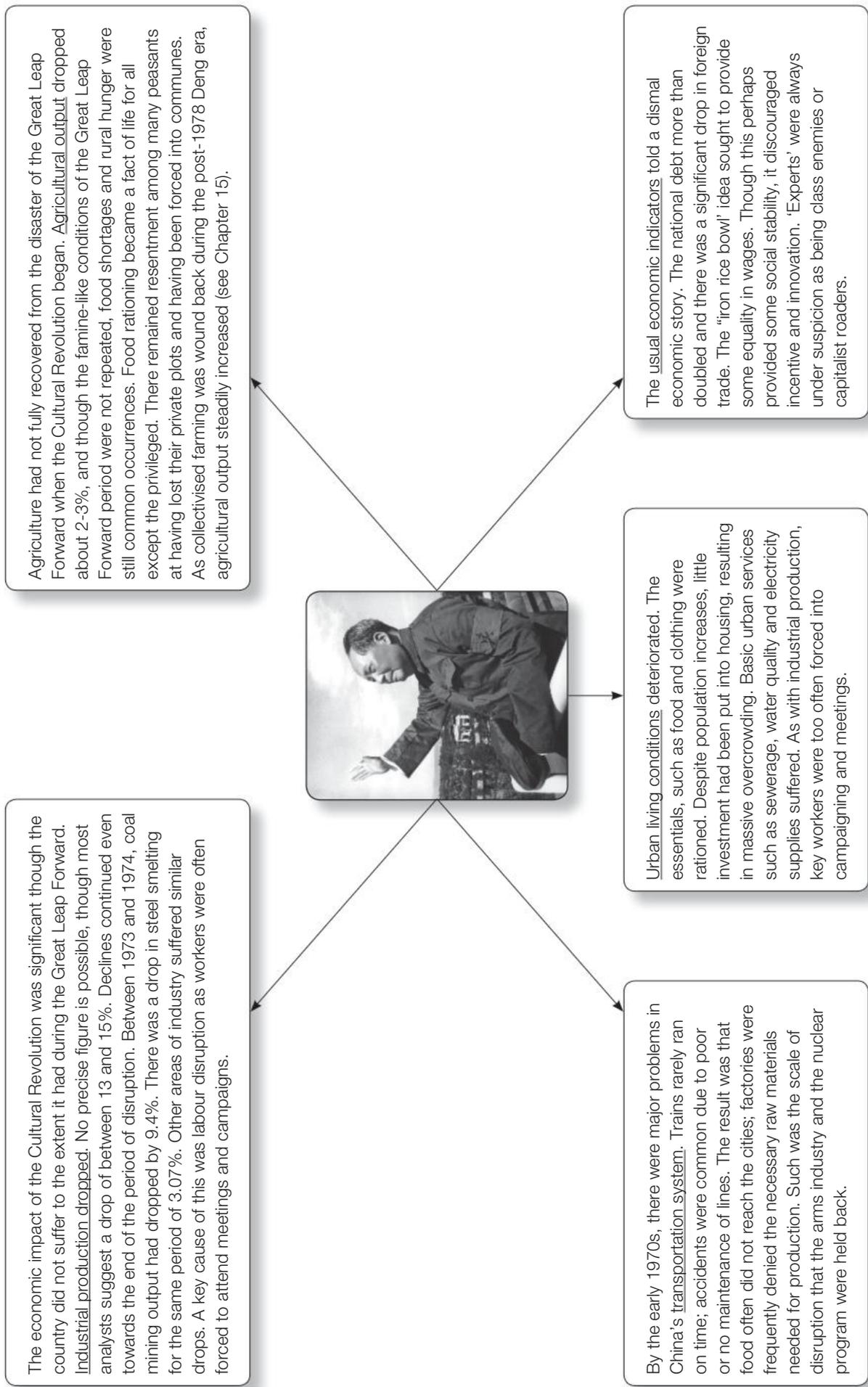


Figure 9.1 The impact of the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese economy



The impact of the Cultural Revolution on education

It is not surprising that the impact of the Cultural Revolution on China's education system was enormous. Traditionally, scholars, teachers and elders received respect in China. This was part of the old Confucian approach to society, and concepts such as filial loyalty and respect of elders. However, during the Cultural Revolution, such ideas were turned on their head as Mao told the young that *"it was right to rebel"* and that they should *"destroy the Four Olds"*. The Cultural Revolution sought to destroy the status of teachers and professors, to humiliate them.

- Historians sometimes refer to China's "lost generation" when discussing the impact of the Cultural Revolution on education:
 - whereas traditionally Chinese students (and not only Chinese students) are taught to see the value of education, during the Cultural Revolution, education was now viewed as a waste of time;
 - tens of millions of students did not attend any educational institutions during the first five years of the Cultural Revolution, though more returned to education after 1970;
 - millions of students obeyed Mao's call to go to the country and *"learn from the peasants"*; many of these would never return to education.
- Universities became key targets of Mao and the Red Guards:
 - in June 1966, classes were suspended and university entrance examinations were cancelled on Mao's orders;
 - the number of operating universities inside China during the Cultural Revolution dropped by two-thirds;
 - the cancellation of classes of course freed up millions of students for political action and the creation of Red Guard units;
 - some of the earliest targets of Red Guard attacks were professors;
 - in June 1966, 65 000 "Big-character posters" (*dazi bao*) appeared in Beijing's Tsinghua University attacking professors and university officials;
 - academic ability and study became less important as criteria for entrance to a Chinese university; a record of manual work and the correct class background now became the tickets to entry.
- On the positive side, the years of the Cultural Revolution saw an increase in the levels of basic literacy, particularly in rural areas:
 - however, such a development would almost certainly have occurred anyway, and without the disruptions of the Cultural Revolution, basic education might have expanded even more.

The impact of the Cultural Revolution on culture

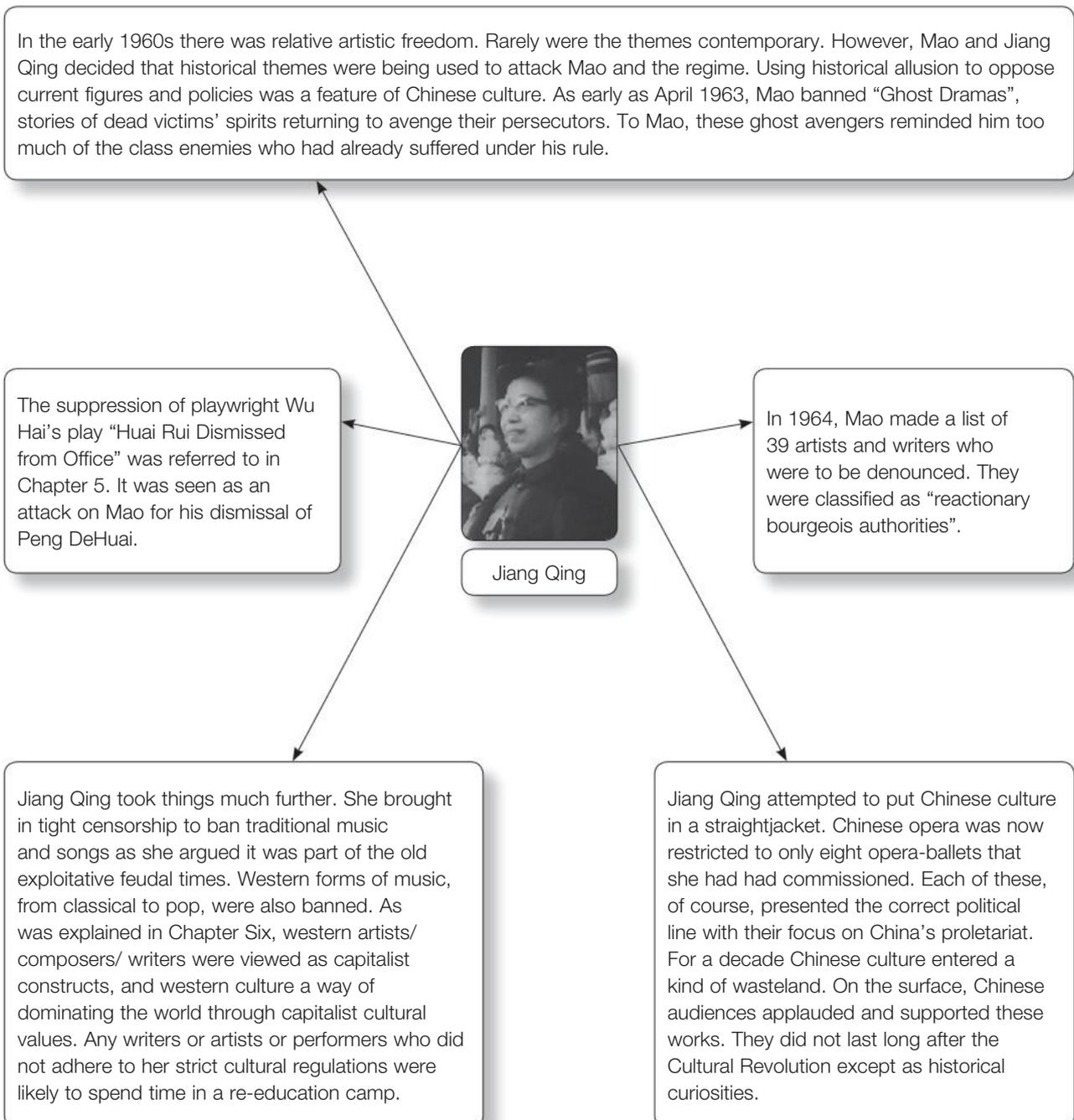
The attack on traditional Chinese culture was sustained and began even before the official commencement of the Cultural Revolution. The essence of the stance of the Cultural Revolution regarding culture, centred on the role of culture in a socialist society:

- in western democratic (bourgeois) society, the artist or poet or novelist or composer or film maker is free to express his or her own feelings;
 - the artist is free to express their beliefs or lack of them;

- they are free to attack and criticise.
- in the China of the Cultural Revolution, this was not the case:
 - artists, in whatever field, were expected to promote the revolutionary values of the party;
 - ‘art’ should attempt to mould the minds of the people into thinking along socialist lines not self-indulgent, bourgeois lines.

As a result, culture underwent major changes during the Cultural Revolution. Much of the campaigning in the field of artistic endeavour was promoted by Mao Zedong’s wife, the former actress, Jiang Qing (one of the Gang of Four). Figure 9.3 outlines some of the impacts of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese culture.

Figure 9.3 Impact of the Cultural Revolution on culture



Exercise 9.1 Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

1	China's current President (2020), Xi Jinping, had no experiences of the Cultural Revolution during his youth.	TRUE/ FALSE
2	Deng Xiaoping had positive views about the activities of the Cultural Revolution and its impact on people's lives.	TRUE/ FALSE
3	The economic impact on China of the Cultural Revolution was not as serious as that of the Great Leap Forward.	TRUE/ FALSE
4	Up to one and half million people died during the Cultural Revolution, not including the many who took their own lives.	TRUE/ FALSE
5	Despite its destructive nature, the leaders of the Cultural Revolution maintained their confidence in experts.	TRUE/ FALSE
6	Such was the fear generated during the Cultural Revolution, Chinese society in effect had become 'atomised'.	TRUE/ FALSE
7	Time in a re-education camp was divided between solid ideological indoctrination and solid physical labour.	TRUE/ FALSE
8	Despite the disruption of the Cultural Revolution, agricultural production remained high and rationing was not necessary.	TRUE/ FALSE
9	One of the results of the rejection of experts and the constant campaigning was an inefficient and dangerous rail system.	TRUE/ FALSE
10	The main proponents of the Cultural Revolution were seeking to reinforce China's traditional Confucian value system.	TRUE/ FALSE
11	Professors and teachers in universities were keen advocates of the protests during the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
12	During the years of the Cultural Revolution, there was an increase in the level of rural literacy despite the disruption of the times.	TRUE/ FALSE
13	During the Cultural Revolution, people in the arts were encouraged to express their own innermost feelings.	TRUE/ FALSE
14	Jiang Qing was strongly opposed to the performance of traditional Chinese plays and operas, and western styles of music.	TRUE/ FALSE
15	During the Cultural Revolution, Chinese audiences were able to experience a very wide variety of operas and ballets.	TRUE/ FALSE

What do the historians have to say about “The impact of the Cultural Revolution on society, the economy, education and culture”?

1. Jung Chang

Jung Chang describes her experiences at school in 1966. She refers to her school's Deputy Headmaster, a man called Mr Kan, whom she describes as “a jolly, energetic man”. Mr Kan was accused of being a “capitalist-roader”, and that everything he had done at school was “capitalist”. He was even condemned for his study of Mao's works, on the grounds that he did not spend enough time on them, preferring to focus on his academic studies. Mr Kan, says Jung Chang, felt incredibly wronged as he had been a devoted party member. One evening he wrote a suicide note and slashed his throat with a razor. The work team that had been sent to the school tried to hush this incident up as his suicide attempt was regarded as a “betrayal”.

Jung Chang's mother worked at another school. Students there were being swept up by articles in the *People's Daily* and Mao's own words. Mao was saying that the examination system was part of the vicious designs of bourgeois intellectuals, ie the majority of teachers. One day, her mother arrived at the school to find the headmaster, academic supervisor and teachers had been rounded up.

*“...They had shut them all up in a classroom and put a notice on the door saying ‘demons class’... The pupils now seemed to have some sort of authorisation, undefined but nonetheless real...”*⁵

2. Tang Win

In his memoir of his Cultural Revolution experiences, Tang Win describes the *disillusionment* that he felt as the period was coming to an end. He describes the tedium of his forced labour in the country. He goes on to explain that like so many of his fellow Red Guards, he had been taught to listen to Chairman Mao's teachings and do everything according to his instructions. He says that that kind of education had turned millions of young Chinese into:

*“...flocks of lost lambs, poor and foolish... We felt that we had been deceived, used and fooled all the time. We felt that the blood of the Red Guards all shed in vain, and their lives were dedicated so insignificantly... I regretted so much, I hated myself so much...”*⁶

5 Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*, Flamingo, London, 1993, p 372

6 Tang Win, *Bygones*, Austin Macauley Publishers, London, 2018, p 146

Notes

Chapter Ten

Political disruption and its impact on the Chinese Communist Party

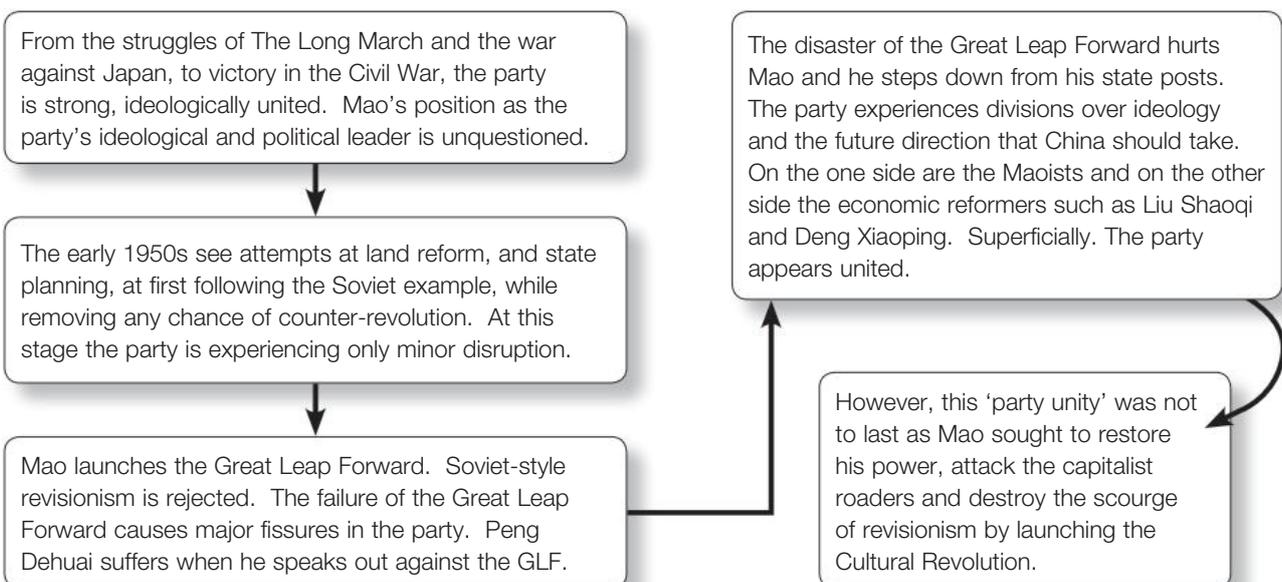
Introduction

Involvement in the political process in a Communist dictatorship can be a precarious, indeed extremely dangerous experience. This can be seen in a range of past and present Communist regimes from Hungary to Cuba to North Korea to Cambodia. The Soviet Union had shown this all too clearly during the period of Stalin's domination. As the ideological debate moved back and forth in the 1920s, leading party figures rose and fell. In the 1930s, party rivalries inside the Soviet Union became bloody as leading figures were removed and hundreds of thousands of party cadres moved in and out of labour camps. After World War II, the precariousness of party involvement in the Soviet Union continued. It took several years for things to settle down inside the Soviet Union following the death of Stalin.

So too was political involvement in China both precarious and dangerous. Political life inside China following the Communist takeover in 1949 was not a smooth process. The constant in China's political world was the position and veneration of Mao, which only grew over time as his personality cult reached ever greater heights. However, though Mao Zedong's position was unquestioned, and the party's devotion to him continued, the Chinese Communist Party was far from the united force it had been before 1949.¹

The Cultural Revolution had brought massive political disruption to China and had a major impact on the Communist Party. Figure 10.1 outlines the pre-Cultural Revolution phases of the CCP.

Figure 10.1 Outline of the pre-Cultural Revolution phases of the CCP

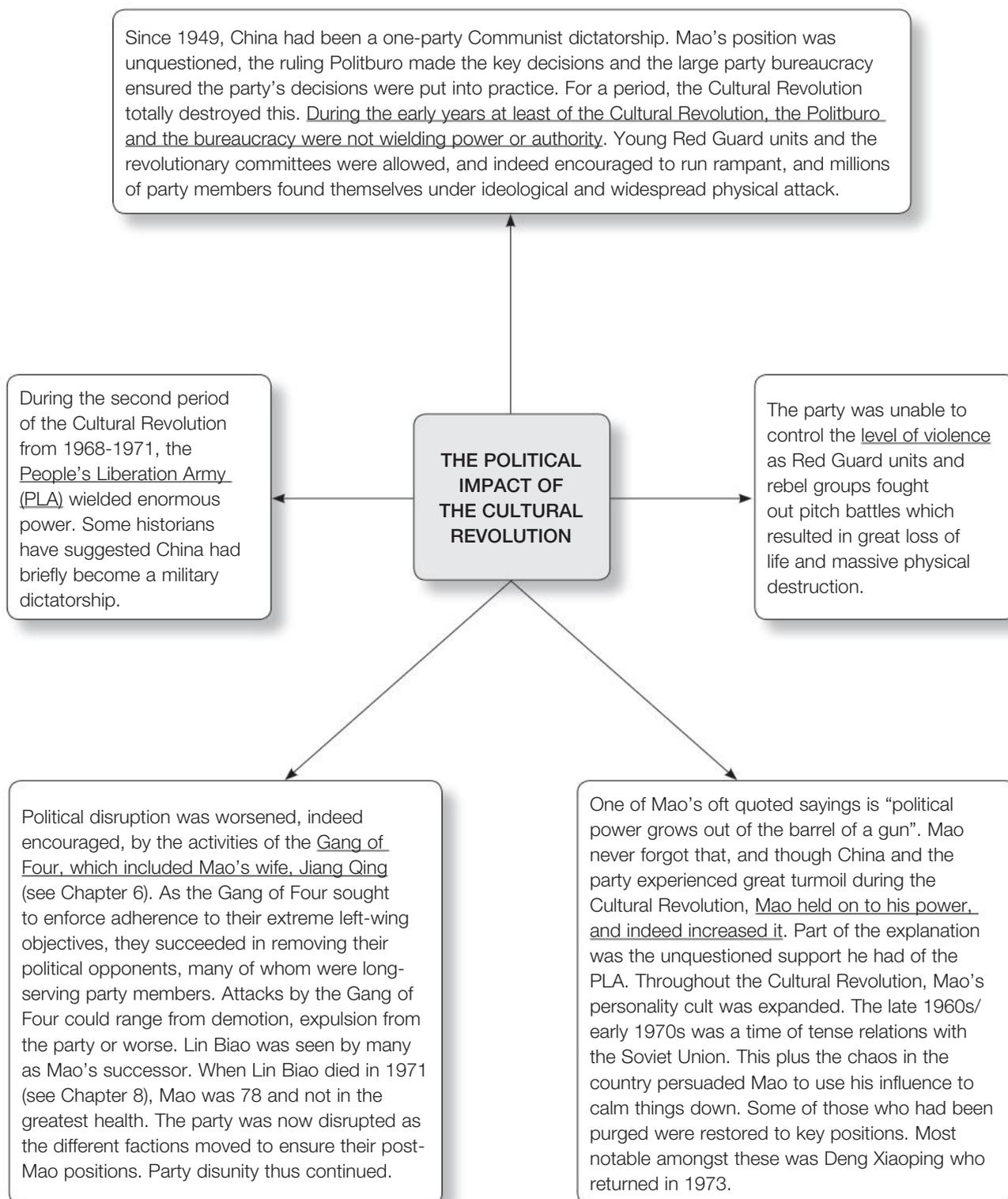


¹ Even in the 21st century under President Xi Jinping, the role of Mao Zedong in the history of the Communist Party continues to be lauded.

The political impact of the Cultural Revolution years 1966-76

In Chapter Nine, detail was provided on the social, economic, educational and cultural impact of the Cultural Revolution. Figure 10.2 outlines the impact that the Cultural Revolution had on the Communist Party and the political process in China.²

Figure 10.2 The political impact of the Cultural Revolution



² Some of these points have been discussed in Chapters Five to Eight.

Exercise 10.1 Complete the following passage using the terms below.

The two key issues which caused disruption within the Chinese Communist Party were _____ and the future _____ the country should take. Up to takeover of _____ in 1949, the CCP was very _____, and the leadership of _____ was unquestioned. However, deep _____ in the party occurred over the _____ of the Great Leap Forward. Mao was _____ over the Great Leap Forward but people who spoke out _____ Mao, such as _____, were purged. Mao stepped down from his _____ posts after the Great Leap Forward. The party now found itself divided between _____ and economic reformers like _____ and Deng Xiaoping. The party's _____ appearance of unity ended with the onset of the Cultural Revolution. During the early years of the Cultural Revolution, the _____ and the party bureaucracy lost all authority as _____ units were allowed to run rampant. From about 1968-71, the _____ wielded great power. Figures such as _____, of the Gang of Four, were able to use their influence to enforce _____ objectives and remove opponents from positions of power. Throughout all the chaos of the Cultural Revolution, Mao was able to consolidate his power due to the absolute _____ of the PLA and the strengthening of the _____ which had been steadily growing around him. In the early 1970s, Mao tried to stabilise things in the China, and brought back previously purged moderates, men such as _____.

ATTACKED – DIRECTION – JIANG QING – PERSONALITY CULT – SUPERFICIAL
LIU SHAOQI – DIVISIONS – RED GUARD – UNITED – IDEOLOGY
DENG XIAOPING – PENG DEHUAI – DISASTER – POWER – LEFT-WING – MAO
STATE – POLITBURO – LOYALTY – PLA – AGAINST – MAOISTS

What do the historians have to say about “Political disruption and its impact on the Chinese Communist Party”?

1. O. Edmund Clubb

Clubb comments on the enhanced position of the PLA after the first anarchic phase of the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution had reduced the authority of the party and of the government. Half of the regular and alternate members of the Party Central Committee had been purged or “*badly battered*”. Twenty-one of the twenty-nine new provincial-level revolutionary committees were now run by military men. The military had built up its role in society with its growing police, administrative and productive roles performed during the Cultural Revolution.

“...Mao’s standing dictum that the Party commanded the gun, and that the gun should never be permitted to command the Party, still stood in theory. But the hard fact was that, as of the effective end of the GPCR³ in October 1968, the Army dominated the China scene...”⁴

2. Dennis Woodward

Woodward takes issue with Clubb’s conclusion. He concedes that during the Cultural Revolution, the army had played a major role. The army in China had always been more than just a fighting force, argues Woodward. They had had an economic role and there have always been organisational connections between the party and the army. Woodward argues that between the 9th Party Congress (April 1969) and the 10th Party Congress (August 1973), the focus of the PLA switched more to military affairs and military training. The military presence on the Central Committee that was elected at the 10th Party Congress was back to its pre-Cultural Revolution level.

“...Furthermore, if there were still any lingering doubts as to the Party controlling the ‘gun’, the massive reorganisation of the PLA high command at the end of 1973 dispelled them...”⁵

3 Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

4 Clubb, O Edmund, 20th Century China, Columbia University Press, New York, 1978, p 422

5 Woodward, Dennis, Political Power and Gun Barrels – The Role of the PLA, in China: The Impact of the Cultural Revolution, Croom Helm, London, 1978, p 92

Section Three ■ Focus of Study (2)
Deng Xiaoping and the modernisation of China

Chapter Eleven
The death of Zhou Enlai

Background of Zhou Enlai

- 1898-1910 – Zhou Enlai was born to a gentry family in Jiangsu province/ by the age of twelve his adoptive parents and his birth mother had died/ he was sent to live with an uncle in Manchuria/ he proved to be an able student
- 1917 – Zhou studied for two years in Japan
- 1919 – He returned to China to study but became more interested in political activism
- 1920 – Zhou was arrested and spent six months in detention/ after his release he travelled to Europe to study
- 1921 – he spent time in France and Britain/ joined a Communist cell and became a member of the CCP/ he became a key recruiter and organiser within the party
- 1924 – Zhou returned to China/ he joined the political section of the Whampoa Military Academy
- 1927-28 – when Jiang Jieshi turned on the CCP, Zhou just managed to escape and went to Wuhan/ he was elected to the CCP Central Committee
- 1928 – Zhou attended the 6th National Congress of the CCP in Moscow/ at the Congress he was elected Director of the Central Committee Organisation Department
- 1930s – as the GMD increased its hold over China's cities, Zhou moved to the Jiangxi Soviet/ he replaced Mao as political commissar of the Red Army but the two soon developed close ties
- 1934-35 – Zhou participated in the Long March
- 1936 – Jiang Jieshi was kidnapped and Zhou negotiated his release and the start of joint GMD/CCP actions against the invading Japanese/ Zhou was the CCP's main representative to the GMD government during the war with Japan
- 1945 – Zhou represented the CCP in the abortive talks with US General Marshall
- 1949 – following the Communist takeover, Zhou became Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs

1949-76: Zhou as Premier and Foreign Minister

- Zhou Enlai remained as premier until his death in 1976, though he gave up the Foreign Minister post in 1958.
- Zhou was known as a patient, effective negotiator and did much to enhance China's foreign relations position.
- He forged close ties with India in the early 1950s, gaining India's acceptance of China's takeover of Tibet.
- He worked hard to maintain harmonious ties with the Soviet Union as the Sino-Soviet relationship deteriorated.
- He represented China at the 1954 Geneva Conference and the 1955 Bandung Conference.¹
- In 1971, it was Zhou who met secretly with US National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, to work out the details of President Nixon's visit to China in 1972.

Zhou was loyal to Mao, and backed the Great Leap Forward. However, he was quick to assist Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in dealing with the worst outcomes of the Great Leap Forward in the early 1960s. Zhou was effective as a 'behind the scenes operator'. During the Cultural Revolution, he worked to limit the violence of the time and attempted to limit the impact of the 'destruction of the Four Olds' campaign. Mao leaned on him during the early 1970s to maintain some semblance of government despite Zhou's poor health. Zhou was partly responsible for Mao bringing Deng Xiaoping back into the government.

Zhou Enlai's political involvement in his final years, and the changing political standing of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, will be examined in Chapter Twelve.

The death of Zhou Enlai

Zhou Enlai had been suffering from cancer for some time and had had several operations in the early 1970s. He had a final operation on 5 January 1976 but fell into a coma two days later. Zhou Enlai died on 8 January. Deng Xiaoping called a meeting of the Politburo to arrange the composition of a commission to organise the funeral. The commission would be formally headed by Mao. The Chinese people were told of Zhou's death on 9 January.

- Zhou was highly regarded amongst the Chinese people:
 - he was seen as honest, a wise man, empathetic;
 - many credited him with limiting the worst of the Cultural revolution.
- The funeral took place on 11 January and over a million people in Beijing bid him farewell on his final journey.
- On 15 January, Zhou's ashes were scattered across the land of China.

Deng Xiaoping delivered the official party funeral speech for Zhou. To the Chinese people, this was a sign that Deng would succeed the beloved Zhou. However, within a short time, Deng again experienced a purging.²

¹ The Geneva Conference was called to settle affairs relating to the Korean War (1950-53) and the situation in Indochina following the French-Vietminh War (1946-54). The Bandung Conference (Indonesia) was a meeting of 29 African and Asian states to discuss common concerns.

² This will be examined more fully in Chapter Twelve.

The response to the death of Zhou

In late February and March, the Gang of Four launched their denunciation of Deng with a full-scale propaganda campaign. However, they had misjudged the public mood. The people saw Deng as a man who had been shielded by Zhou. Deng's name was associated with the struggle against the leftist extremism of the Cultural Revolution. Rumours even began to spread that Zhou's death might have been the result of action taken by the leftists. In March a wall poster (dazibao) appeared attacking the Gang of Four.

- When an article appeared in a Shanghai literary magazine, accusing Zhou of being a 'capitalist roader', a wave of popular dissatisfaction began:
 - in Nanjing, leaflets were published calling on the people to protest;
 - close to 40 000 local Nanjing students demonstrated;
 - this protest was broken up by the police.
- The action then moved to Beijing:
 - On 19 March at the Monument to the People's Heroes that towered above Tiananmen, bouquets and wreaths were laid in memory of Zhou;
 - trees around the Square were soon covered with white paper flowers;³
 - on 30 March poems and eulogies to Zhou appeared;
 - wall posters appeared attacking female rulers such as Indira Gandhi and the Empress Dowager, Cixi – Jiang Qing was not mentioned but in its allegorical way, the poster campaign left people in little doubt who the real target was.⁴

An important festival for Chinese people is the 'Day of Remembrance of the Dead' or Qingming. A key element of the day is visiting, sweeping and repairing ancestors' graves. Family members visit their relatives' tombs, take paper money and food offerings. If tomb inscriptions have faded, they are repainted. In 1976, the Qingming Festival fell on 4 April.

- On 4 April:
 - Tiananmen Square was full of people;
 - there was chanting praising Zhou;
 - Jiang Qing and her followers, backed by Hua Guofeng,⁵ called the people's actions a 'counter-revolutionary' incident;
- On 5 April, police moved in and tried to collect and destroy the wreaths:
 - the people became angry and police were attacked;
 - a building on the square was set alight;
 - police and military were brought in to quell the demonstration.

³ White is the colour of mourning in China.

⁴ Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister of India (1966-77; 1980-84). The reactionary Cixi was the effective ruler of Imperial China at the turn of the century until her death in 1908.

⁵ Hua was Premier, 1976-80 – see Chapters 12-14.

Michael Dillon explains that the tactics of the police at the start of the demonstration honouring Zhou were “*clumsy and boorish*”. What started as commemoration of a beloved leader soon became a political demonstration.

“...Hundreds were arrested on the day and many more in the days that followed and there were many executions of those accused of being the ringleaders...”⁶

What happened on 5 April 1976 became known as the Tiananmen Incident.⁷ It is sometimes referred to as the *April Fifth Movement*. Jiang Qing and her associates blamed Deng for what had happened and demanded Deng be expelled from the party. In the short term, Deng’s position was again weakened. However, the influence of the Gang of Four was not to last much longer.⁸

Exercise 11.1 Answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1	What two key posts did Zhou Enlai hold after 1949?	
2	What was arguably Zhou’s greatest political skill?	
3	How did Zhou behave during the Cultural Revolution?	
4	What was the popular perception of Zhou Enlai?	
5	How many people attended Zhou’s funeral in January 1976?	
6	Whom did the Gang of Four denounce in February/ March 1976?	
7	What did people start doing in Beijing on 19 March 1976?	
8	What is the Qingming Festival?	
9	How did the police react to the events of 5 April 1976?	
10	What has 5 April 1976 become known as?	

⁶ Dillon, M, *China: A Modern History*, L B Taurus, London, 2012, p 351

⁷ This should not be confused with the far more brutal Tiananmen Square incident of 1989 (Chapter 18).

⁸ See Chapters 12-14.

Chapter Twelve

Changing political standing of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping

The return of Deng Xiaoping

In 1969, Deng Xiaoping had been purged and sent to work at a tractor repair shop in Jiangxi province; he stayed there for three and a half years. Deng was never expelled from the party, and his exile was far less onerous than that experienced by other victims of the Cultural Revolution. ¹ Deng's name first reappears in the Chinese media in April 1973 when he attends a banquet in honour of Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk. His presence at the event is in his capacity as vice-premier.

By 1973, Mao still held the reins of power, but though his ultimate control of the party and the nation was not in doubt, his political position had weakened:

- the flight of Lin Biao had cost him some political capital and credibility as the two had been so close for many years;
- in 1972, Mao suffered a major stroke and from now on his health steadily deteriorated;
- Zhou Enlai was suffering from cancer; Mao was happy for Deng to take on some of the burdens Zhou was carrying;
- Mao was now trying to balance the leftist/ Maoist faction within the party led by Jiang Qing, with the moderate/ pragmatic faction of Deng and Zhou.

Deng's star began to rise steadily. He worked with Zhou in advocating the importance of economic growth, restoring China's education system, restoring political stability and opening up to the west in a pragmatic manner.

- In April 1974, Mao selected Deng to speak for China at the United Nations General Assembly;
 - Deng met Henry Kissinger for the first time.
- Throughout 1975, Deng was taking the lead in developing policies for achieving Zhou's 'Four Modernisations'.

However, though Deng was back in Beijing, this did not mean that his struggles with the leftists, most notably Jiang Qing as part of the Gang of Four, were over. The Gang of Four was demanding a continuation of the radical Maoist line of the Cultural Revolution – namely the continuation of the class struggle, mass mobilisations, and their anti-intellectual and egalitarian line.

- In January 1974, the radical Maoists launched their "Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius" campaign:
 - few were fooled by this – attacking Confucius meant attacking Zhou, whom the left saw as the "greatest Confucian mandarin" of all;
 - the leftists were targeting Zhou as representing the bourgeoisie.

¹ See Chapter Seven.

- Jiang's supporters succeeded in having some of 'their people' put into influential positions, such as Wang Hongwen and Wu De, major of Beijing.
- By late 1975, Jiang had managed to persuade Mao that Deng's (and Zhou's) policies would only result in the denial of the 'achievements' of the Cultural Revolution, and by inference were an attack on Mao himself.
- As a result, Mao allowed Jiang and her supporters to launch a denunciation of the moderate policies of Deng by the traditional means of wall posters and big public meetings.

Deng Xiaoping is purged again

In June and July 1974, Zhou Enlai had two heart attacks. From now on, he was often confined to bed though he did meet foreign visitors, and he did manage to finish a report on a new draft constitution that was to be considered at the forthcoming National People's Congress in early 1975.

Zhou's health finally gave way and he died on 8 January 1976. Deng delivered the official party eulogy for Zhou, and to the public at large, seemed to be the man who was now destined to take over. However, soon after Zhou's passing, Deng would once again be stripped of power:

- Mao was becoming dissatisfied with Deng;
- Mao accepted the views of the leftists and after Zhou's funeral, Deng Xiaoping was no longer seen in public;
- In late January, Mao instructed Hua Guofeng (see below) to take over the day to day activities of the Central Committee;
 - the Politburo agreed to this appointment on 2 February;
- Soon after, the Central Committee handed out the new "Important Directives of Mao Zedong" which, in part, said of Deng:

"...This person has never paid proper attention to class struggle... He does not understand Marxism-Leninism and he represents the bourgeoisie..."

Deng and the fallout of the Tiananmen Incident (5 April 1976)

As was explained in Chapter Eleven, public protests arose in March 1976 when Zhou was being attacked in publications as a 'capitalist roader'. Soon, bouquets and wreaths were covering parts of Tiananmen Square. On 5 April, during Qingming (the Day of Remembrance of the Dead), police action against demonstrators led to hundreds of arrests and the executions of many protestors.

- Deng had not been present during the Tiananmen Incident;
- He had played no part in organising the protests.
- However, the leftists blamed Deng. They accused him of:
 - planning the action in advance;
 - cultivating the majority of public opinion;
 - preparing events over a long period;
 - of being involved in a counterrevolutionary incident.

- On 6 April Jiang Qing visited Mao and told him that the protestors' (she called them mutineers) boss was Deng – she demanded that Deng be expelled from the party.

On 8 April Deng was relieved of all his duties but he was allowed to remain in the party. Deng now departed Beijing with his family and moved to southern China. He would sit out events and see what the future might bring. Mao appointed Hua Guofeng as First Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee and premier of the State Council.

Hua Guofeng

Hua Guofeng, aged 55, was a little-known figure in the party and he was not aligned to either the leftist Maoist faction or the moderate Deng-Zhou faction. He became a member of the CCP in 1938 and progressed unspectacularly through the ranks of the party. At the start of the Cultural Revolution, he was appointed secretary of the party committee in Hunan province. In 1969 he became a member of the Central Committee and two years later began work in the State Council. In 1972, Hua became the Minister for Public Security. In August 1976, Mao announced that Hua would be his successor. Few would have predicted that this modest, gentle man would one day lead China, and have a big impact on the career of Deng Xiaoping.

Exercise 12.1 Place the following events in the correct chronological order.

1st event		Death of Zhou
2nd event		Deng sent to Jiangxi
3rd event		Hua named Mao's successor
4th event		Tiananmen Incident
5th event		Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius campaign
6th event		Deng again relieved of his positions
7th event		Deng's UN speech
8th event		Deng returned to power
9th event		Hua becomes Minister of Public Security
10th event		Deng blamed for the Tiananmen Incident

What do the historians have to say about “Changing political standing of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping”?

1. Ross Terrill

Terrill comments on Mao’s performance at the 10th Party Congress in August 1973. Though Mao was “riding the crest of a foreign policy wave” as he received over twenty nations’ leaders following US President Nixon’s historic visit, Terrill suggests that Mao was weakening at this stage. In August 1973, Mao had “presided” over the 10th Party Congress, though he was not really a working chairman and he gave no speeches. Mao’s prestige had fallen since the 9th Party Congress in 1969. Terrill highlights this in the following manner:

*“...At times he was called simply ‘Comrade Mao’, a term which in the late 1960s had disappeared in favour of ‘Great Helmsman’... or at a minimum ‘Chairman Mao’. Zhou quoted Lenin where he could have – and would have in the late 1960s – quoted Mao...”*²

2. Jung Chang and Jon Halliday

Chang and Halliday suggest that Mao was determined to remove Deng from power, and perhaps needed less prompting from Jiang Qing. They say that Deng was willing to denounce ‘Madame Mao’ to Mao’s face. They argue that Mao sought to stop Deng’s initiatives at the time and demanded Deng draw up a Party resolution that promised to maintain the practices of the Cultural Revolution. Deng defied Mao, refusing to draw up the resolution, and announcing this in front of 130 senior cadres.

*“...Mao had to give up on the resolution. For him, this was the last straw. He made up his mind to discard Deng...”*³

² Terrill, R, Mao, Harper and Row, New York, 1980, p 376

³ Chang, J, and Halliday, J, Mao: The Unknown Story, Jonathan Cape, London, 2005, p 644

Chapter Thirteen

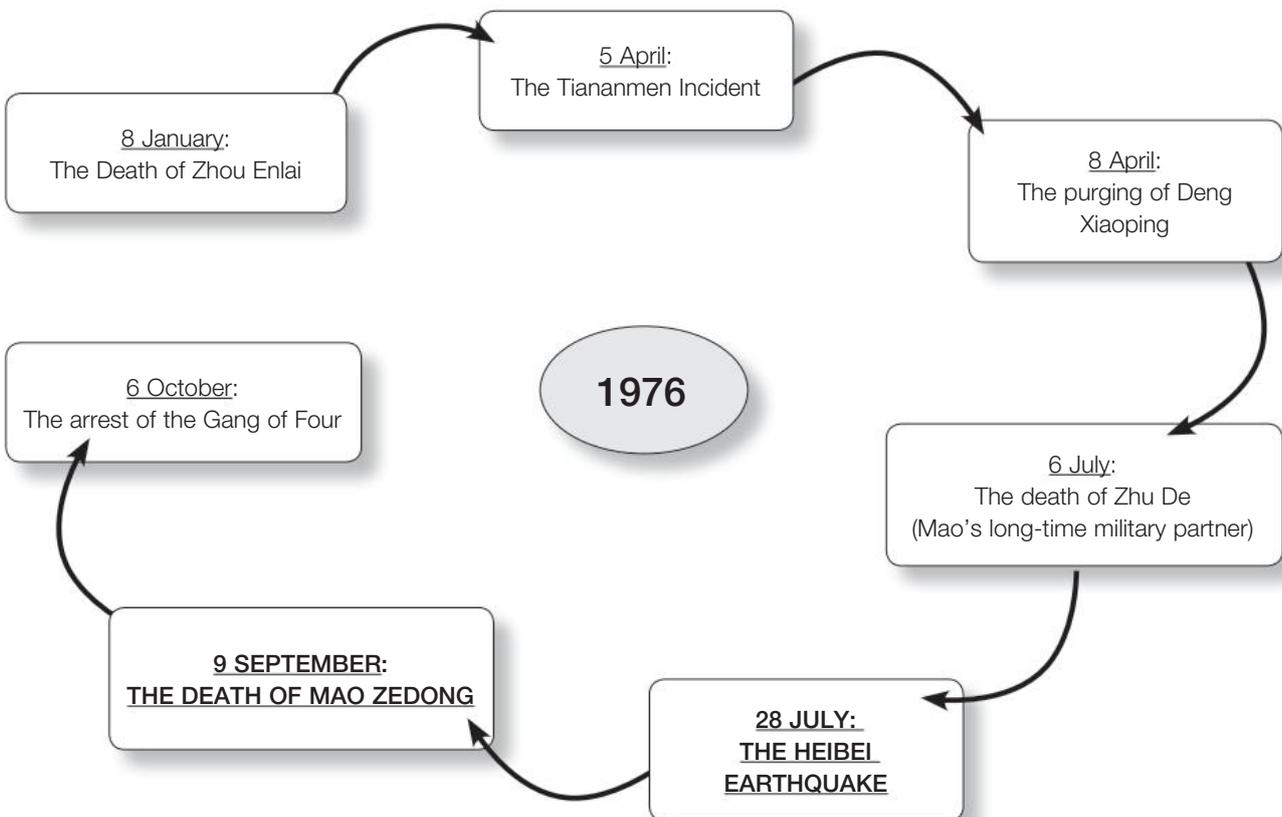
Death of Mao Zedong and the end of the Cultural Revolution

The fateful year of 1976

A key feature of China's long history is the story of the rise and fall of dynasties or ruling families. These have included the Tang, the Song and finally the Qing. This 'rise and fall' is sometimes referred to as "the dynastic cycle". A ruling dynasty was obliged to rule benevolently, protect and care for its people. It was obliged to maintain harmony with nature. If the dynasty did this, the people in turn were obliged to obey their rulers, as clearly the Emperor had "the mandate of heaven". In essence, the gods were bestowing approval on the rulers. Evidence of the loss of the "mandate of heaven" could be foreign defeat, poor upkeep of irrigation systems, famines and natural disasters. If the dynasty had lost "the mandate of heaven", the people had a right, indeed an obligation, to rebel.

Imperial rule had come to an end in China in 1912. However, old beliefs die hard. The confluence of a series of traumatic events in China in 1976 caused much apprehension amongst the Chinese people, particularly in the less developed areas. Figure 13.1 outlines the series of traumatic events that affected China in 1976.

Figure 13.1 China in the year 1976



The Hebei Earthquake: 28 July 1976



On 28 July, the province of Hebei, in north eastern China, suffered a massive earthquake, measuring 7.6 on the Richter Scale. The coal mining/ industrial city of Tangshan (pictured) was totally destroyed; Beijing itself, about 110 kilometres away, was jolted and a third of its buildings were damaged. The Hebei earthquake was the worst that China had experienced in living memory. The official toll death was given as 240 000 but could have been as high as 650 000. Up to 700 000 people were injured.

The Chinese government refused offers of international assistance at the time of the earthquake. Rescue work was carried out by units of the PLA and civilians.

Not only were Tangshan and smaller neighbouring settlements affected. The earthquake also badly damaged a range of infrastructure in the province such as railway lines, bridges, dams and wells. The earthquake triggered sand blows in the region which in turn silted wells and irrigation ditches.

The death of Mao Zedong

Mao Zedong had been in poor health for several years and in his final months he was barely capable of speech. On 9 September he had a heart attack and died. Mao was a few months shy of 83 years old. ¹ A public memorial was held for Mao in Tiananmen Square on 18 September; over one million people attended. Hua Guofeng delivered the eulogy. Mao had wanted to be cremated but plans were quickly put in place for embalming his body so that future generations would be able to pay their respect to 'the Great Helmsman'. ²

The Politburo was split into two key groups: the Gang of Four and their supporters and the supporters of Mao's chosen successor, Hua Guofeng.

- Jiang Qing claimed that she had the authority to continue the leftist ideological path of the Cultural Revolution.
- She was determined that Deng Xiaoping should be expelled from the Communist Party.
- However, it soon became apparent that Jiang's power had rested on her relationship with Mao, alone.

Jiang Qing and the other members of the Gang of Four were quickly outmanoeuvred and on 6 October 1976, they were placed under arrest. The Cultural Revolution had already calmed down considerably since the chaotic and violent days of its early years. The demise of the Gang of Four would see it soon come to a final end. ³

¹ Mao was born 26 December 1893, died 9 September 1976.

² Mao's body can still be seen today in the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong on Tiananmen Square.

³ See Chapter Fourteen for the arrest of the Gang of Four.

What do the historians have to say about “Death of Mao Zedong and the end of the Cultural Revolution”?

1. Klaus Mühlhahn

Mühlhahn comments that China’s one-party system, hierarchically organised as it was towards a major central figure, suffered from the same problem that all similar one-party systems face – what happens when that major figure is no longer there? The Cultural Revolution decade had brought violence, destruction and political instability. The question all along was who will pick up the pieces after Mao’s passing.

*“...The turmoil in Chinese society caused by the Cultural Revolution was, above all, a dragged-out succession crisis at the top which saw intense jockeying in the leadership...”*⁴

2. Alexander Pantsov

Pantsov comments on how Deng Xiaoping reacted following Mao’s death. Deng clearly had good reason not to think fondly of Mao. His demise during the Cultural Revolution, followed by three and half years in the country, and his fall in again in 1976, was ultimately Mao’s doing. However, Deng also realised that Mao had not allowed the Gang of Four to totally destroy him, as had happened to Liu Shaoqi. On 18 September, Deng and his family even conducted their own personal memorial in their home. Pantsov quotes Deng saying later of Mao:

*“...We must never sully the glorious image of Comrade Mao Zedong... Despite the fact that Comrade Mao wanted to ‘rectify’ anyone who disobeyed him, he still gave some consideration to how far he should go...”*⁵

4 Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 485

5 Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 303

Chapter Fourteen

The role of Hua Guofeng in the arrest of the Gang of Four

The Gang of Four

The Gang of Four comprised Jiang Qing (Madame Mao), Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Hongwen and Yao Wenyuan (see Figure 14.1). During the years of the Cultural Revolution, they led the most radical leftists pursuing what they called 'the Maoist line'. The Gang of Four favoured mass political mobilisation, the continuation of the class struggle, a campaign of anti-intellectualism and egalitarianism.

Figure 14.1 The Gang of Four



In 1976, between the death of Zhou Enlai and the Hebei earthquake, the Gang of Four moved against Deng Xiaoping. For a short while they were successful:

- after the Tiananmen Incident in April, they had Deng removed from his offices and he disappeared from public view;
- they launched a campaign to “criticise Deng Xiaoping and his right deviationist attempt to reverse correct verdicts” (about the Cultural Revolution);
- after Mao’s death in September, they tried to isolate Hua Guofeng and demanded ‘the overthrow of revisionism’.

Hua Guofeng and the arrest of the Gang of Four

On 6 October 1976, Hua Guofeng, backed by leading Politburo members, Minister of Defence Ye Jianying, and Deputy Premier Li Xiannian, ordered the arrest of the Gang of Four. The arrest was to be carried out by Unit 8341 of the PLA under the command of Wang Dongxing. Twenty-nine of the most reliable guard officers were broken into four groups for the operation.

- One group was to arrest Jiang Qing (and Mao Yuanxin, Mao’s nephew and a strong supporter of the Gang):
 - Mao Yuanxin was arrested at 8.00 pm;
 - Jiang Qing was arrested in her home at 8.30pm and driven away.

- the other three groups were to arrest Wang, Zhang and Yao:
 - Zhang, Wang and Yao were summoned to a bogus Politburo meeting where a discussion was to take place about the proofs of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, in readiness for publication;
 - on arrival at the 'meeting' they were soon overwhelmed and taken away.

The immediate aftermath

Forces loyal to Ye Jianying moved quickly to take control of the mass media, including radio and the New China News Agency. Soon after, Hua Guofeng nominated Ye Jianying as Chairman of the Central Committee and Chairman of the Military Commission. These were the two key posts in the system, giving the holder control of the party and the military. Ye declined, arguing that at 80 years old, he was too old to take such role.

Much of this was play acting of course.

- It is a tradition in Chinese politics to always decline a position on the grounds that one is not worthy, only to be then persuaded to take the role:
 - however, Ye meant what he said.
- Of course, everyone knew that Mao had already chosen Hua as his successor:
 - while on his death bed, Mao was alleged to have said to Hua: *"With you in charge, I can set my mind at rest"*.

On 24 October there was a victory parade in Tiananmen Square celebrating the downfall of the Gang of Four. About one million soldiers and civilians attended. Charges were soon brought against the members of the Gang of Four. They included:

- attempting to seize control of the party;
- illegally 'contaminating' the political instructions that Mao had passed down;
- taking action against Hua Guofeng, Mao's anointed successor.

The Trial of the Gang of Four

The trial of the Gang of Four began on 20 November 1980. The trial was presided over by Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Jiang Hua, heading a panel of thirty-four judges. Many of the judges had no legal training (though this was not unusual in China at this time).

The trial did not involve only the Gang of Four. Chen Boda, who had been Mao's personal secretary was also tried, as was a group of generals who had been close to Lin Biao. Other names of people, already deceased, were added to the list of those charged. These included Lin Biao, Lin Biao's wife and son, former Security Chief Kang Sheng and Xie Fuxhi (who had succeeded Kang in the security post).

Figure 14.2 outlines the key charges which were brought against the Gang of Four at their trial.

Figure 14.2 Charges laid against the Gang of Four



At the trial, Jiang relived her acting days as she gave a dramatic performance, trying to present herself as a revolutionary martyr. The others merely tried to implicate each other in an attempt to defend themselves.

The verdict came on 25 January 1981. Jiang and Zhang were sentenced to death, with a two-year reprieve, which in effect meant a life sentence. Wang and Yao received long prison sentences. The sentences were considered quite light as many people wanted death sentences to be handed down.

- Jiang Qing was sent to Qincheng Prison:
 - when she developed cancer of the throat, she was allowed serve her time in house arrest;
 - she committed suicide on 14 May 1991.
- Zhang Chunqiao was released from prison in 1998 to seek medical treatment:
 - he died of cancer in 2005.
- Wang Hongwen died in hospital from liver cancer in 1992:
 - he was the youngest of the Gang of Four.
- Yao Wenyuan was released in 1996:
 - he died in December 2005, outliving the other members of the Gang of Four.

Following the arrest of the Gang of Four, Deng Xiaoping sent a letter to China's new leader, Hua Guofeng. Part of what he said included:

*"...Together with the whole people, I feel sincere emotions of great joy, and unable to restrain my feelings. I loudly shout... Long Live the Central Committee of the party under the leadership of Chairman Hua! Long live the great victory of the party and the cause of socialism..."*¹

¹ As will be explained in Chapter Fifteen, despite his 'joy' at Hua Guofeng's actions, Deng Xiaoping would soon be manoeuvring to oust Hua from power.

Exercise 14.1 Match the personality on the right with each description.

1	I was Defence Minister in 1976 and played a key role in the arrest of the Gang of Four.		LIN BIAO
2	I was a frequent target of attacks from the Gang of Four but never expelled from the party.		HUA GUOFENG
3	I was Mao's nephew and strong supporter of the Gang of Four, arrested along with them.		MAO YUANXIN
4	I protested at being put on trial. I go to my grave as a brave revolutionary martyr.		JIANG HUA
5	I commanded Unit 8341 which carried out the arrests of the Gang of Four.		DENG XIAOPING
6	I ordered the arrest of the Gang of Four. Mao had already chosen me as his successor.		JIANG QING
7	I outlived the other members of Gang of Four; I died in December 2005.		WANG HONGWEN
8	I was given the important job as presiding judge in the trial of the Gang of Four.		YE JIANYING
9	Had I still been alive at the time of the trial of the Gang of Four, I too would have been tried.		WANG DONGXING
10	I was the youngest member of the Gang of Four and died in 1992.		YAO WENYUAN

Chapter Fifteen

Deng Xiaoping: his rehabilitation, his reforms and the modernisation of the economy

Deng: from outcast to outcast

As was explained in Chapter Twelve, Deng Xiaoping was brought back from his rural exile in 1973. Mao had ensured that Deng was not expelled from the party, or worse; he still wished to make use of Deng's abilities. Deng soon regained his former posts, and even spoke for China at a meeting of the UN Security Council in April 1974. Throughout 1975, Deng was working on the "four modernisations" that Zhou Enlai had been considering years earlier.

However, Jiang Qing and her supporters were not finished with Deng. They continued their denunciations of Deng. As was mentioned earlier, Mao was becoming dissatisfied with Deng. Mao instructed Hua Guofeng to take on the day to day activities of the Central Committee.

- Zhou Enlai had died in early January 1976.
- By March, protests were growing in Tiananmen Square which culminated in the Tiananmen Incident on 5 April (see Chapter Twelve):
 - Deng had played no part in the protests but Jiang Qing managed to convince Mao that Deng was behind the protests;
 - on 8 April, Deng was again removed from his posts, though he remained in the party.
- Hua Guofeng became First Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee and premier. Seemingly out of nowhere, Hua had risen to the top, while Deng had again disappeared into obscurity.

Mao died on 9 September 1976. Within a month, Jiang Qing and the other members of the Gang of Four had been outmanoeuvred and were arrested on 6 October.¹ However, the destruction of the Gang of Four did not mean any immediate change in the fortunes of Deng Xiaoping.

The rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping

After Mao's death, Hua Guofeng maintained the attack to unmask the Gang of Four but he also backed the ongoing attack on Deng Xiaoping. Hua backed an article that appeared in the *People's Daily* and the *Liberation Army Daily* on 7 February 1977. The essence of the article called on the party to support and continue:

- "whatever decisions Chairman Mao made" and "whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave";
- these became known as the "two whatevers";

Hua's motivation in doing this was to consolidate his power by showing that he was the natural successor to Mao.

¹ See Chapter Fourteen.

However, Hua lacked charisma, experience, the numbers and close army links for him to realistically inherit the mantle of Mao. He was soon facing significant opposition from within the party:

- an early opponent of the “*two whatevers*” was the Commander of the Guangdong Military Region, General Xu Shiyou;
- at a Central Committee Conference of 10-22 March 1977, Chen Yun and Wang Zhen called for Deng to be brought back into power;
- Hua was forced to concede that Deng was not behind the Tiananmen Incident and that the outpouring of grief for Zhou had been ‘justified’.
- on 10 April, Deng wrote to the Central Committee, and in his letter openly attacked the “*two whatevers*”;
 - the Committee accepted Deng’s view and Hua had to allow Deng’s letter to be widely circulated.

On 17 July, the Third Plenum of the Tenth Central Committee unanimously approved the “*Resolution to Restore Comrade Deng Xiaoping*” to his posts. Pantsov lists the posts which Deng was once again holding: ²

- member of the Central Committee
- member of the Politburo
- member of the Politburo Standing Committee
- member of the Military Commission
- Deputy Premier of the State Council
- Chief of Staff of the PLA

At the 11th Congress of the CCP between 12-18 August, Deng was officially ranked third in the party hierarchy, after Hua and Ye Jianying. On 19 August, he was nominated as vice-chairman of the party. However, with Hua’s influence and power receding, and Ye’s reluctance to take power due to his age and health, it was little surprise that Deng was soon being acknowledged as paramount leader.

In December 1978, the party had become fully engaged in discussions about modernising and reforming China. The Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee marked a real turning point for the party. Gone was the *revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat*, in came *economic construction*. The Plenum:

- was a political triumph for Deng and his ally Chen Yun;
- past injustices such as the treatment of Peng DeHuai were corrected; ³
- pragmatic policy and believers in economic rationality were promoted;
- on 25 December Hu Yaobang was nominated Secretary General of the Party;
 - Hu would later be a prominent reformer;
 - he would later be dismissed by Deng for ‘excessive liberalism’; ⁴

² Pantsov, A V, *Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life*, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 328

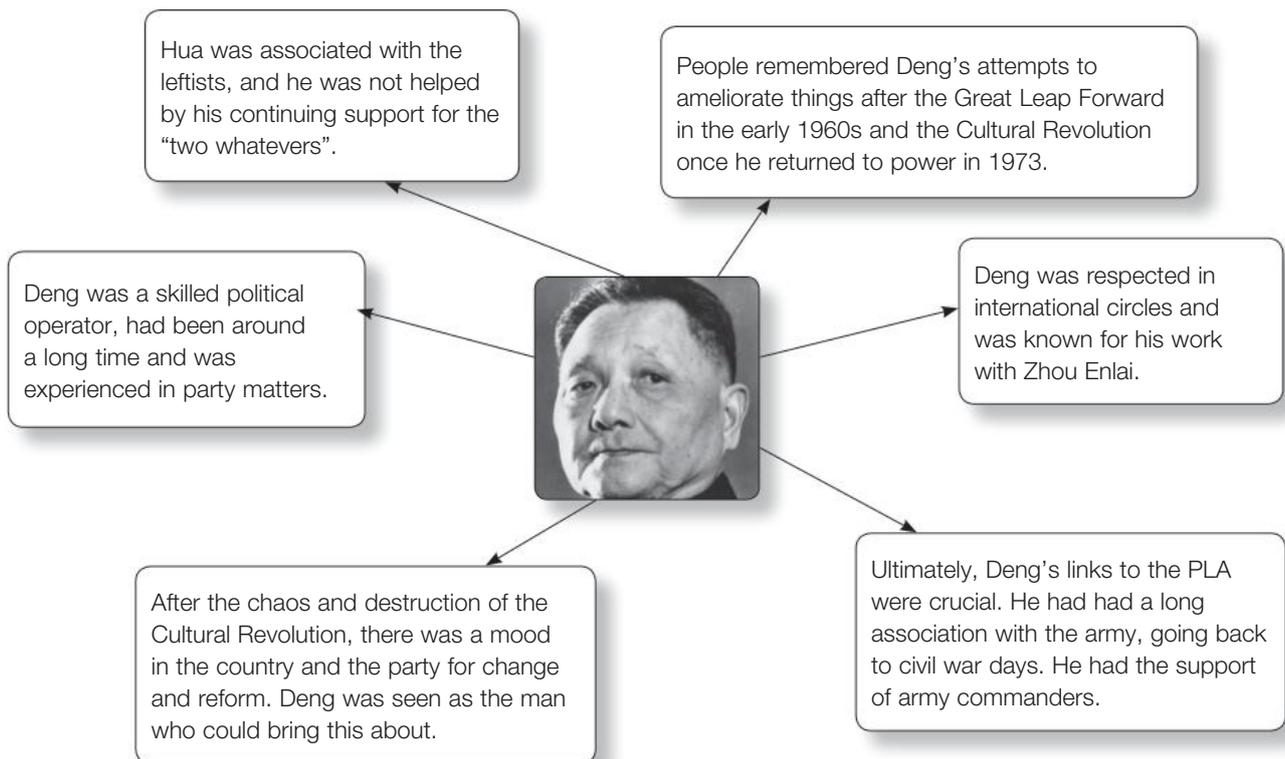
³ See Chapter Two.

⁴ See Section Four.

- Zhao Ziyang became Deng's close assistant in the reform process;
 - he was appointed Premier in 1980;
 - he later backed the protesters at Tiananmen Square in 1989 and would be placed under house arrest.⁵

Deng's ascent seems almost inevitable, though of course in Chinese politics nothing is inevitable. Events since 1949 in China had shown that leaders could fall just as quickly as they could rise. However, Deng Xiaoping's eventual success can be explained by certain factors. These are outlined in Figure 15.1.

Figure 15.1 Why was Deng victorious?



Exercise 15.1 Complete the following passage using the terms below.

Deng Xiaoping returned from _____ in 1973 and soon resumed his duties. In April 1974, he spoke for China at the UN _____. Deng supported the Four _____ of Zhou Enlai. _____ died in January 1976. Popular celebrations of Zhou were ruthlessly repressed during the _____ Incident on _____. _____ managed to persuade Mao that _____ was behind the protests and celebrations. He was again _____ from his posts. After the death of _____ in September 1976, _____ assumed the leadership. He pursued a joint attack on both Deng and the _____. Hua insisted that the party accept the _____. Hua was no match for Deng, and on _____ Deng was restored to his party positions. By the end of

⁵ See Section Four.

1978, Deng was being recognised as China's _____ leader. Hua Guofeng's influence waned as Deng moved his supporters _____ and _____ into key positions. Arguably, Deng's greatest asset in the leadership struggle was his standing with the _____.

GANG OF FOUR – PARAMOUNT – JIANG – HU YAOBANG – PLA – MAO
GENERAL ASSEMBLY – TIANANMEN – ZHAO ZIYANG – EXILE – ZHOU
17 JULY – 5 APRIL – TWO WHATEVERS – REMOVED – MODERNISATIONS
DENG – HUA GUOFENG

Deng's reforms and the modernisation of the economy

Overview

The decade following Deng's restoration to power brought enormous change to China. Deng introduced practices which his critics described as 'capitalist'. However, Deng was no 'capitalist roader'; his contempt for capitalism and faith in socialism had not disappeared. For Deng, capitalism made only a few rich; socialism would make all rich, though it would take time, and some people would achieve this earlier than others. Modernisation and reform, and the use of market mechanisms were necessary if China was to achieve what Deng called "*socialism with Chinese characteristics*".

Several principles underpinned what Deng and his like-minded reformers sought to achieve in the 1980s:

- the removal of the *ideological blinkers* and new, *unideological thinking*;
- making room for incentives and individual initiative;
- limiting centralised state planning;
- shifting the emphasis from heavy industry to agriculture and consumer goods;
- China's opening to western markets;
- attracting foreign investment.

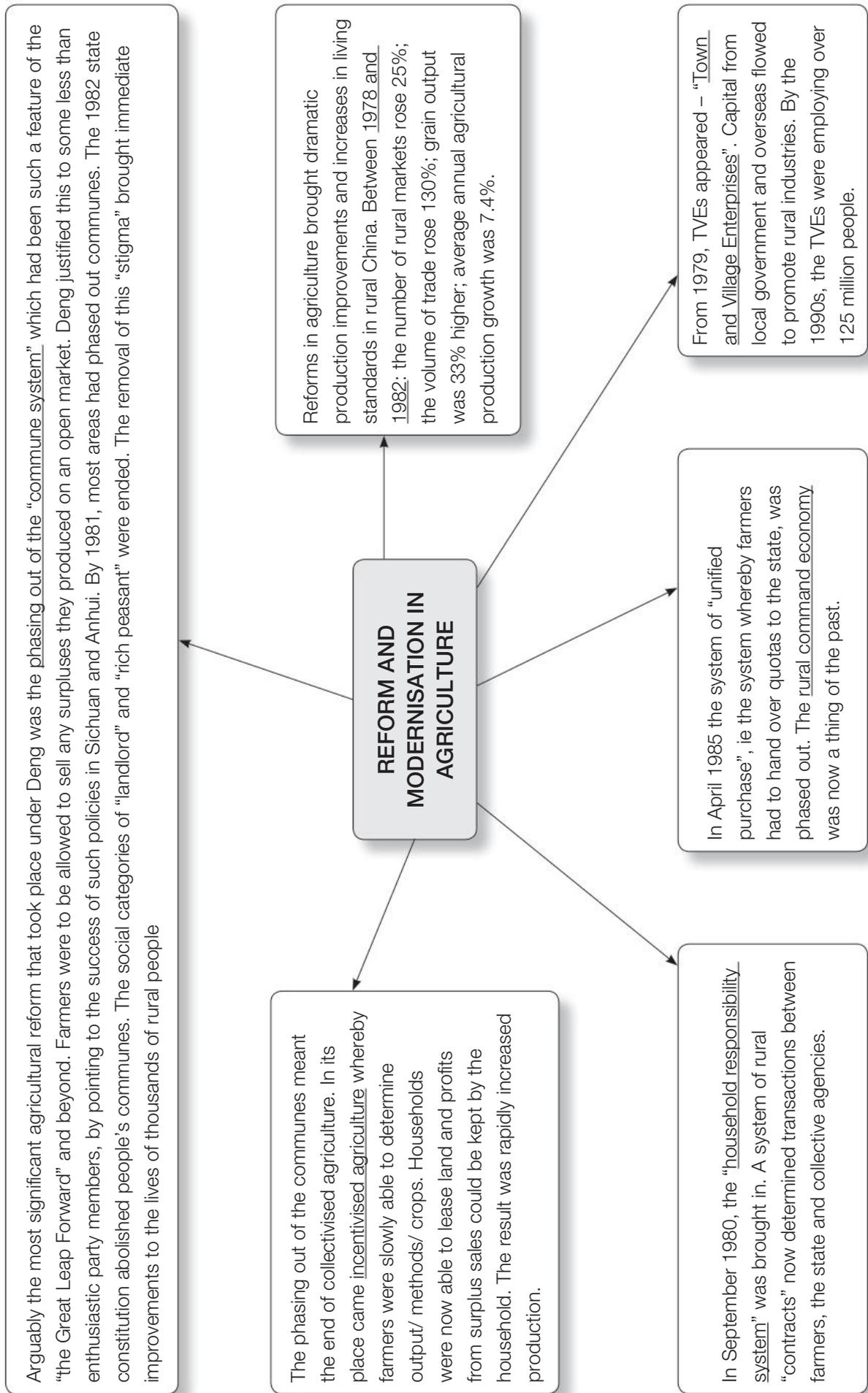
In economic terms, China achieved much in the 1980s but there were costs as well:

- by the late 1980s, the economy was "overheating" and inflation was very high;
- as rural people flocked to the cities, urban living standards suffered and unemployment rose;
- corruption and nepotism flourished;
- social tensions grew as people began demanding political liberalisation as well as economic liberalisation.
 - Deng might support the latter; he would not allow the former. ⁶

Much of what was achieved and aimed for during the 1980s followed on from Zhou Enlai's call in 1963 for the "Four Modernisations" – modern agriculture, modern industry, science and technology, and national defence. Figure 15.2 outlines the changes that occurred in agriculture; Figure 15.3 outlines the changes that took place in industry.

⁶ See Section Four.

Figure 15.2 Reform and modernisation in **agriculture** under Deng Xiaoping



Arguably the most significant agricultural reform that took place under Deng was the phasing out of the “commune system” which had been such a feature of the “the Great Leap Forward” and beyond. Farmers were to be allowed to sell any surpluses they produced on an open market. Deng justified this to some less than enthusiastic party members, by pointing to the success of such policies in Sichuan and Anhui. By 1981, most areas had phased out communes. The 1982 state constitution abolished people’s communes. The social categories of “landlord” and “rich peasant” were ended. The removal of this “stigma” brought immediate improvements to the lives of thousands of rural people

The phasing out of the communes meant the end of collectivised agriculture. In its place came incentivised agriculture whereby farmers were slowly able to determine output/ methods/ crops. Households were now able to lease land and profits from surplus sales could be kept by the household. The result was rapidly increased production.

REFORM AND MODERNISATION IN AGRICULTURE

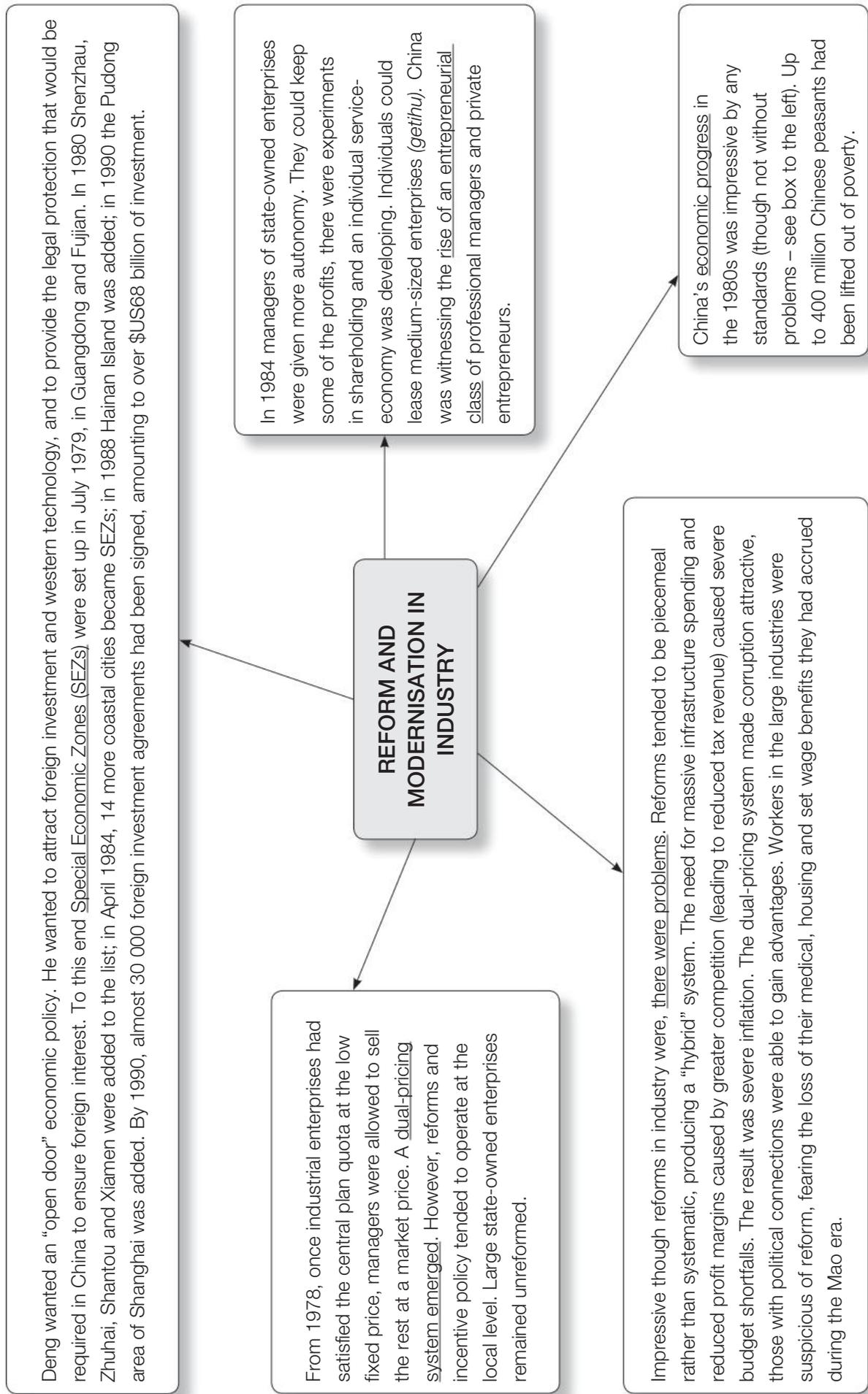
Reforms in agriculture brought dramatic production improvements and increases in living standards in rural China. Between 1978 and 1982: the number of rural markets rose 25%; the volume of trade rose 130%; grain output was 33% higher; average annual agricultural production growth was 7.4%.

In April 1985 the system of “unified purchase”, ie the system whereby farmers had to hand over quotas to the state, was phased out. The rural command economy was now a thing of the past.

From 1979, TVEs appeared – “Town and Village Enterprises”. Capital from local government and overseas flowed to promote rural industries. By the 1990s, the TVEs were employing over 125 million people.

In September 1980, the “household responsibility system” was brought in. A system of rural “contracts” now determined transactions between farmers, the state and collective agencies.

Figure 15.2 Reform and modernisation in **industry** under Deng Xiaoping

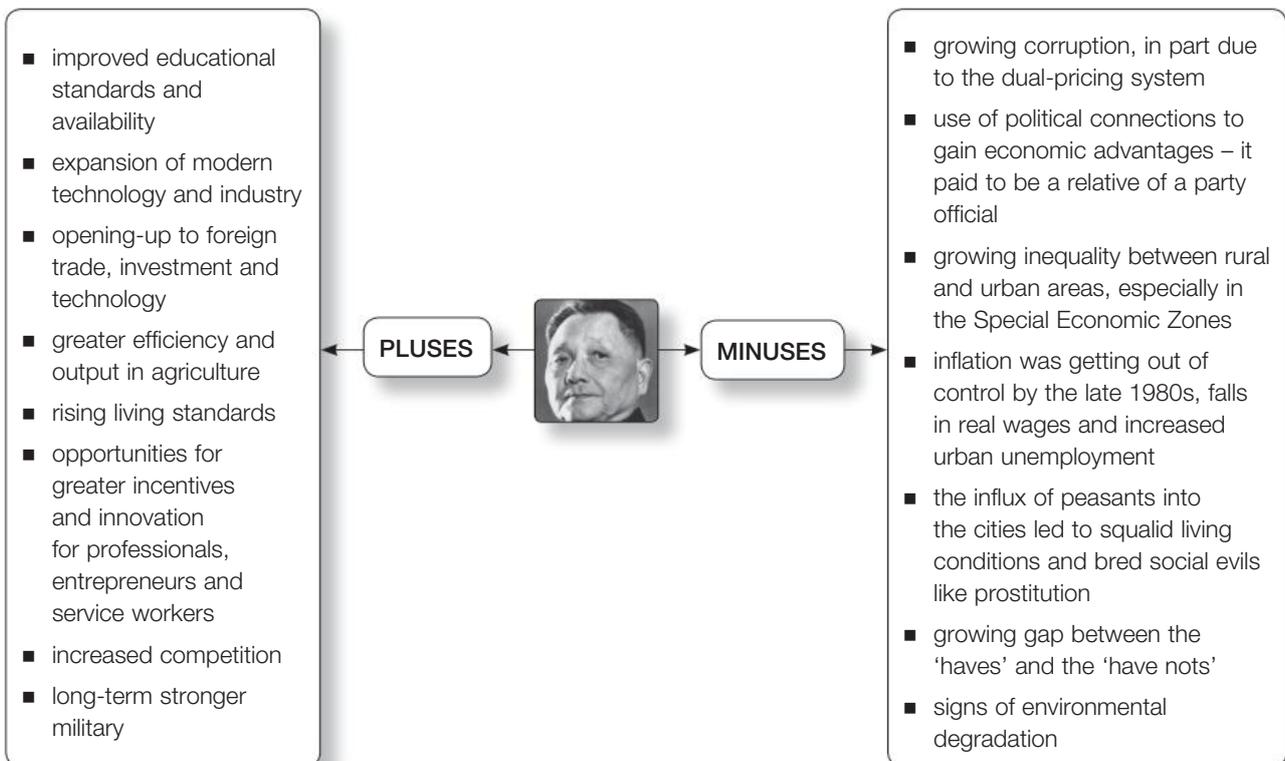


Like Zhou, Deng realised that China needed a top-rate education system at all levels; he also understood China's need for modern technological skills.

- Education in China had been devastated during the Cultural Revolution. Some amelioration had occurred from the early 1970s but changes were still required at all levels:
 - the status of teachers, university professors and the like was restored;
 - university entrance examinations became competitive;
 - Chinese parents eagerly tried to get their children into the best schools and universities;
 - there was a major increase in the number of colleges and universities.
- There was a push to attract foreign investment and technology:
 - Figure 15.3 explains the role of the “Special Economic Zones” in this;
 - universities placed an emphasis in technical education;
 - students were being allowed to study overseas (and expected to return to use the skills gained).

Deng's economic modernisation would have a long-term beneficial effect on China's defence forces as more modern, technological weapons systems and training became available. However, in the short-term military spending was reduced, falling 60% between 1980 and 1988. The PLA was cut in size by one million men between the mid-1970s and 1990. China was a nuclear power, but it was dwarfed by the US and the Soviet Union. Its under-performance in the brief war with Vietnam in early 1979 had revealed poor tactics and military inefficiencies.⁷

Figure 15.4 summarise the pluses and the minuses of Deng's modernisation program of the 1980s.



⁷ China attacked Vietnam in early 1979 to “teach that country a lesson” after Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in late 1978. There had been major border provocations by Cambodian Khmer Rouge forces in the mid-1970s. Cambodia was an ally of China.

Exercise 15.2 Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

1	Deng Xiaoping had given up on his belief in socialism and realised that China needed to become a capitalist country.	TRUE/ FALSE
2	Deng Xiaoping and his fellow reformers still accepted the need for rigid, unquestioning adherence to ideological goals.	TRUE/ FALSE
3	Much of what Deng was pursuing in the 1980s was in line with the Four Modernisations espoused by Zhou Enlai.	TRUE/ FALSE
4	One of the most significant changes in the agricultural field that came about was the end of the commune system.	TRUE/ FALSE
5	Deng was opposed to incentivised agriculture and wanted to maintain tight central control over farming production.	TRUE/ FALSE
6	By the early 1980s, there had been significant increases in agricultural output and in the number of markets.	TRUE/ FALSE
7	Special Economic Zones played a major role in attracting foreign investment and foreign technological expertise.	TRUE/ FALSE
8	Under Deng, China quickly relinquished all state controls over quotas, prices and any economic planning.	TRUE/ FALSE
9	By the late 1980s, China was witnessing the rise of a professional managerial and entrepreneurial class.	TRUE/ FALSE
10	Increased inequality between urban and rural areas became a feature of China as economic modernisation continued apace.	TRUE/ FALSE
11	The status of teachers and professors continued to be attacked as it was during the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
12	There was an expansion in university education during the 1980s with an emphasis on technological subjects.	TRUE/ FALSE
13	Chinese students were allowed to leave China to study overseas and were then expected bring their new skills back home.	TRUE/ FALSE
14	During the 1980s, Deng vastly increased expenditure in the area of defence and increased the size of the PLA.	TRUE/ FALSE
15	Western economic problems such as inflation, unemployment and falling real wages were not present in Deng's China.	TRUE/ FALSE

What do the historians have to say about “Deng Xiaoping: his rehabilitation, his reforms and the modernisation of the economy”?

1. Klaus Mühlhahn

Deng wanted to create a non-Maoist program. For him the party had to change from being ‘radical and revolutionary’ to being ‘reform-minded and pragmatic’. Articles began to appear in official publications such as ‘Practice is the Sole Criterion for Resting Truth’. Deng placed people into positions who were willing to experiment with new ideas and new methods. He realised that not every idea would work, and if an idea failed, it would be abandoned.

*“...Deng Xiaoping officially favoured pragmatism and realism over ideological correctness and revolutionary zeal...”*⁸

2. Alexander Pantsov

Pantsov describes how Deng and other key party figures of the reform period became greatly interested in the policies of Nikolai Bukharin. Bukharin was a leading figure in the Soviet Union in the 1920s.⁹ Bukharin was a supporter of the Bolshevik policy of the time called *The New Economic Policy (NEP)*. In essence, NEP allowed small-scale capitalism to coexist with state-control/ ownership of the largest enterprises in the Soviet Union. Deng and others were attracted by Bukharin’s defence of prosperous peasants, gradual industrial development, the achievement of harmony between state planning and market forces, and the importance of the rule of law. However, Deng and co, and Bukharin differed in one major respect, argues Pantsov. Bukharin saw NEP as “temporary”, a step towards the Soviet Union achieving socialism; Deng and his colleagues:

*“spoke of combining the plan and the market under conditions of socialism itself...”*¹⁰

8 Mühlhahn, K, *Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 500

9 Bukharin would later be executed by Stalin in 1938.

10 Pantsov, A V, *Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life*, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 373

Notes

Section Four ■ Focus of Study (3)
The Tiananmen Square protests

Chapter Sixteen
The demand for political, social and economic reform

Introduction

The modernisation and reform of China under Deng Xiaoping was watched with enormous interest in the west.

- There was relief that the chaos of the Cultural Revolution was finally over and that China might be able to become a true part of the family of nations:
 - the US and China formally normalised relations in January 1979;
 - Deng undertook a successful visit to the US in January/ February 1979.
- There was admiration for the success that China experienced in its attempts to reform and modernise.



Deng Xiaoping meeting United States President, Jimmy Carter, February 1979

- Many in the west believed that the economic and social changes that were happening inside China would inevitably lead to political changes:
 - it was the economic and social changes during the 18th and 19th centuries which had spurred Britain along the road to democracy;
 - the accepted wisdom was that economic change and modernisation in China could not happen without political change and the evolution of a democratic form of government;
 - once the people had experienced “economic freedom”, they would soon be demanding “political freedom”.

However, popular though Deng might be in the west, and well-received as his reforms were by most people in China, few seemed to understand the true nature of the man. He believed in socialism and was dedicated to taking China along the road to true communism. He made it very clear that he was not going to allow China to pursue “bourgeois liberalism”. Deng had spent a lifetime struggling for his beliefs. He had had close associations with the PLA. He knew the risks of a political life in Communist China, having experienced purging and exile himself. Mao had given Deng some advice when he was brought back to key positions in 1973:

*“...Hey you! People are afraid of you. (But) I’ll give you my two cents, ‘Be firm inside and soft on the outside, hide the needle in the cotton’. Externally be more affable, but inside as hard as steel...”*¹

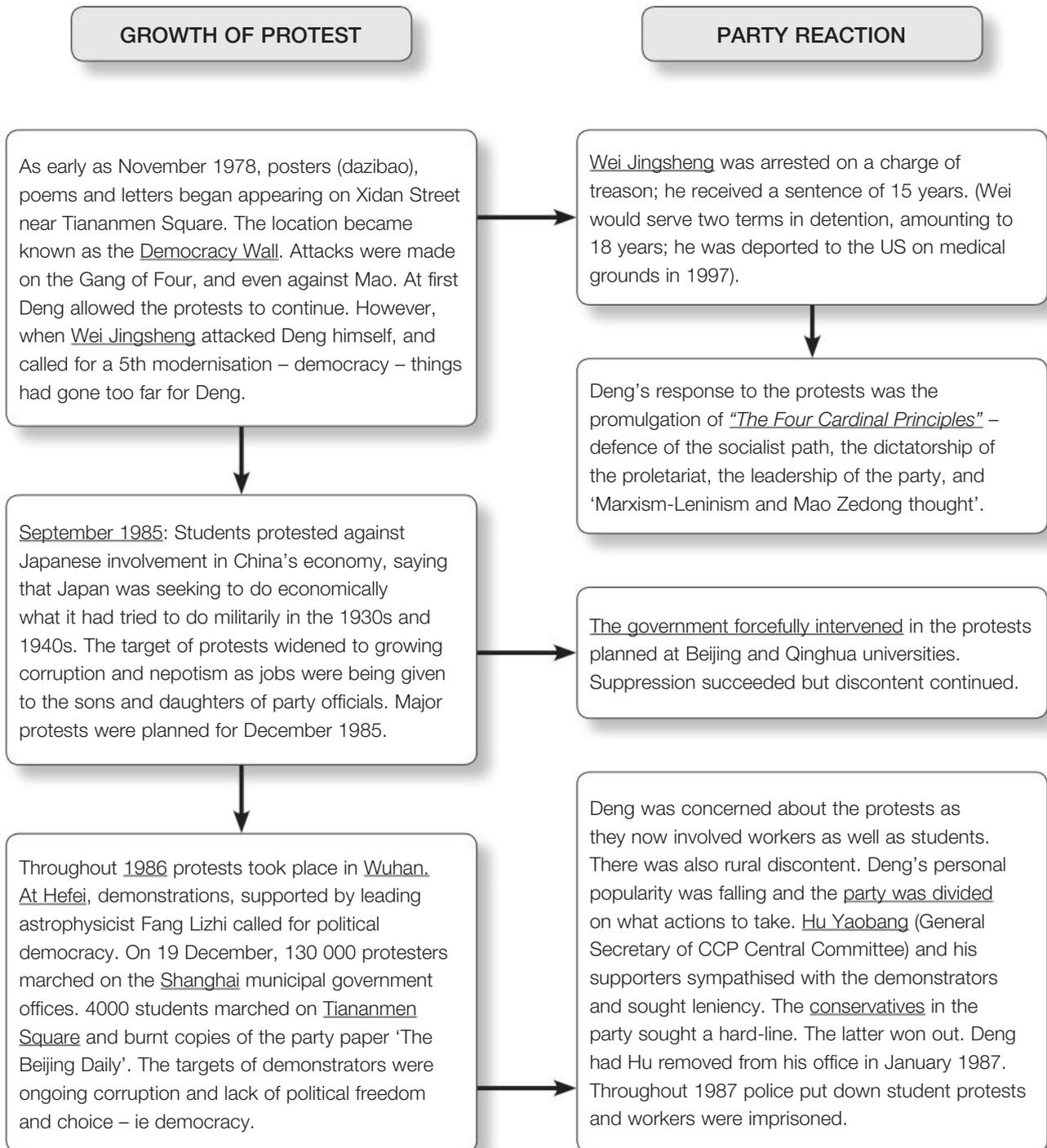
It was advice that Deng never forget.

¹ Quoted in: Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 281

Demands for reform

Modernisation brought with it many problems despite its successes. By the end of the 1980s, inflation had become a serious problem; as millions moved from the country to the cities, urban unemployment rose and living conditions in the cities for many were squalid. There was growing inequality, corruption and nepotism were rife. Such developments spurred on protest, and often led to demands for political change. These actions are outlined in Figure 16.1.

Figure 16.1 Demands for change and the Party's response



The Thirteenth Party Congress: October/ November 1987

At the Thirteenth Party Congress, Deng organised the retirement of many veteran party figures who had been prominent since Long March and Civil War days. These included Peng Zhen, former mayor of Beijing and Deng Liqun, head of the CC CCP Propaganda Department and close ally of Deng.

- To set an example, Deng also retired from the posts he held.
- All but one post – ‘he was urged’: to retain his post as *Chairman of the Central Military Commission*:
 - the Commission was the party body that held the ultimate political authority over the PLA;
 - Deng had learned something else from Mao: “*political power grows out of the barrel of a gun*”.

Following the sacking of Hu Yaobang, former prime minister Zhao Ziyang became CCP general secretary (16 January 1987). Li Peng, a former engineer, became prime minister. The Thirteenth Party Congress backed a program to “speed up and deepen reform”. However, any reform proposals were couched in Marxist terms as the party’s goal remained, as ever, the goal of communism.

Exercise 16.1 Answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1	What was the overall reaction of western nations to the progress of reform in China?	
2	What expectations did many westerners have about China’s ongoing economic and social reform in China?	
3	In what fundamental ways did the west seem to have misjudged Deng Xiaoping?	
4	What issues were causing major unrest in China in the 1980s?	
5	What did Xidan Street near Tiananmen Square become better known as?	
6	Why was Wei Jingsheng arrested, tried and given a lengthy prison sentence?	
7	How did Deng Xiaoping react to the pro-democracy protests of late 1978?	
8	What is nepotism? How did it become a feature of student protest in 1985?	

9	What was Hu Yaobang's attitude to the student protests of 1986?	
10	Did Deng Xiaoping really give up his political power in 1987? Explain your response.	

Exercise 16.2 Identify the person described on the left.

1	In response to demands for democracy, I demanded adherence to the Four Cardinal Principles.	
2	My call for a fifth modernisation, democracy, landed me a lengthy prison term.	
3	In 1986, I showed sympathy with student protesters which resulted in my dismissal from key party posts.	
4	I advised Deng to be firm inside and soft on the outside.	
5	Though a scientist, I lent my support to calls for political democracy in 1986.	
6	I was a former engineer who rose to become Prime Minister in 1987.	
7	I was the US President who welcomed Deng Xiaoping to the United States in 1979.	
8	I was a close ally of Deng and head of the party's Propaganda Department. I retired in late 1987.	
9	I was a veteran party member and former Mayor of Beijing who retired in late 1987.	
10	I became CCP General Secretary in January 1987.	

LI PENG – ZHAO ZIYANG – MAO ZEDONG – DENG LIQUN
PENG ZHEN – WEI JINGSHENG – JIMMY CARTER – HU YAOBANG
FANG LIZHI – DENG XIAOPING

Chapter Seventeen

The lead up to the June Fourth Incident 1989

Introduction

Deng Xiaoping had made it clear that he had no intention of bowing to the various demands for “liberalisation” that had appeared throughout the 1980s. Economic reform and modernisation were one thing; “bourgeois liberalism” was quite something else, and it would not be tolerated. The evidence for this was clear for all to see, and would soon be displayed in the most violent and brutal fashion.

- Astrophysicist, Fang Lizhi, was expelled from the party in January 1987 because of his political activities:
 - he and his wife, academic Li Shuxian, would flee to the US Embassy after the military suppression of the Tiananmen Square protests;
 - they were allowed to leave China in June 1990, never to return.
- Author and journalist, Liu Binyan, was also expelled from the party in 1987:
 - in the spring of 1988, he went to the United States;
 - he became a major critic of the Tiananmen Square suppression and would also never see China again.
- Meanwhile, Wei Jingsheng continued to languish in prison.

By January 1987, Deng had become very unhappy with party secretary, Hu Yaobang, who had shown open sympathy for student protesters. For this, and Hu’s failure to crack down on dissent, Hu was dismissed. Hu’s successor, Zhao Ziyang, would soon show similar sympathies, and would suffer a similar fate (see below).

Deng’s clear refusal to contemplate political liberalisation had been in evidence well before the events of Tiananmen Square, and were seen in:

- the 1983 Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign;
- the 1987 Anti-Bourgeois Liberalisation Campaign.

In April 1989, Deng left his party colleagues in little doubt about his view of the student protests of that year. He was to describe the actions of the students as “a rebellion... a well-planned plot.”

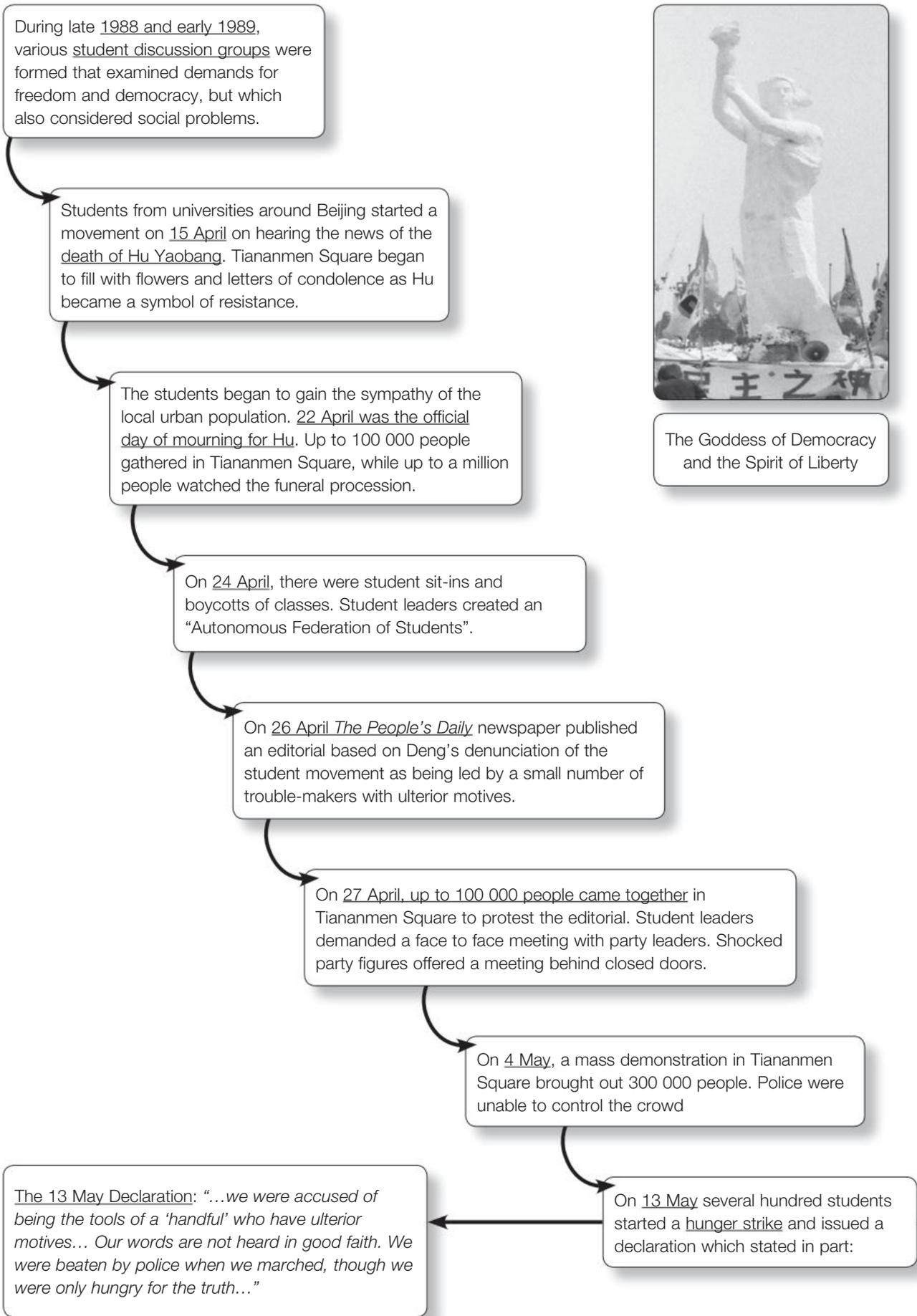
“...We must do everything possible to avoid bloodletting, but we should understand that it will probably be impossible to avoid it completely...”

The immediate road to the 4 June, 1989 “incident”

In history, certain locations, by mere mention of their name, bring forth images, meaning and understanding which can never be erased. Arguably, such places include “Munich”, “Dallas”, and Hiroshima”.¹ Tiananmen Square in another. Figure 17.1 outlines the key events leading to the actions of the PLA on 4 June 1989.

¹ Munich refers to the September 1938 conference where Britain and France deserted Czechoslovakia to avoid having to fight Germany. Dallas refers to the November 1963 assassination of President John F Kennedy. Hiroshima, of course, refers to the dropping of the Atomic bomb.

Figure 17.1 The immediate road to the 4 June, 1989 “incident”



30 May: Students in Tiananmen Square displayed a massive plaster statue called “*The Goddess of Democracy and the Spirit of Liberty*”. As Michael Dillon comments the statue was a clever, if ‘unsophisticated’ combination of New York’s ‘*Statue of Liberty*’ and the Chinese Buddhist god, ‘*Guan Yin*’. Deng and Li Peng were horrified by the massive public revolt. They feared the capital could be paralysed. The decision was made to use military force. By the end of May, there were only about seven to ten thousand protesters in Tiananmen Square.



Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping: May 1989

15-19 May:
The Sino-Soviet Summit
(see below)

27 May: Deng met with party elders and said Shanghai party boss, Jiang Zemin, should succeed Zhao.

26 May: 400 000 troops were deployed around Beijing. Hundreds of thousands of Beijing citizens blocked roadways, stopping the troops in the suburbs. The troops had to withdraw.

A student leader, Wang Dan, called on people to defend the square against the “forces of darkness”.

20 May: martial law was declared.

19 May: Zhao tearfully addressed the students showing his support. The hunger strike ended. Zhao was dismissed from his leading post.

Zhao spoke at the Asian Development Bank the next day: “These students do not oppose our underlying system but they do demand that we eliminate flaws in our work.”

The party was deeply split. On his return from a North Korea trip, Zhao called on the party to treat the students properly.

Soon protests had spread to hundreds of cities across China. There were calls for the dismissal of Deng and Premier Li Peng.

Comparisons were being made to events in Communist Poland as the “Solidarity” movement was challenging the entire system of that country.

As the conditions of the hunger strikers worsened, ordinary citizens began to show support.

The Sino-Soviet Summit between Deng Xiaoping and Mikhail Gorbachev:

On 15 May 1989, Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, arrived in Beijing and met Deng Xiaoping. This was the first Sino-Soviet summit since 1959. There was a large international press contingent to cover this historic event and this stimulated further student protest. On 17 May, events involving Gorbachev had to be cancelled. The Soviet leader's motorcade could not reach the Great Hall of the People and so an official reception had to be held at the Capital Airport, a long way from Beijing. This caused Deng enormous embarrassment. Gorbachev flew back to Moscow on 19 May. With the Soviet leader gone, Deng was now able to 'deal' with the problem of the protests enveloping the country.

Exercise 17.1 Place the following events into the correct chronological order.

1st event		Martial law is declared
2nd event		People's Daily editorial
3rd event		Death of Hu Yaobang
4th event		Students erect statue of the Goddess of Democracy
5th event		Gorbachev returns to the Soviet Union
6th event		Zhao Ziyang becomes General Secretary
7th event		PLA troops stopped in the Beijing suburbs
8th event		Decision taken to use military force
9th event		Start of student hunger strike
10th event		Zhao Ziyang speaks up for the students

Chapter Eighteen

The military and political response to the protest

Introduction

In his play “Romeo and Juliet”, Shakespeare has Juliet say:

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet.”

Shakespeare’s line is worth a thought when one comes to examine the events in and around Tiananmen Square on 4 June 1989.

What is in a name?

- Officially, the Chinese refer to what happened as *“The Tiananmen Incident”*.
- Outside of China, the events are referred to as *“The Tiananmen Square Massacre”*.

What happened on 4 June 1989 on Tiananmen Square?

At about 4.00am, PLA troops were ordered to advance down Chang’an Boulevard, from west to east, dispersing demonstrators at Muxidi, close to the headquarters of the CCP. They then went through the square south to the great gate of Qianmen. Tanks drove straight into barricades that had been erected and shot directly into the crowds. At least 200 000 PLA troops were involved in the action.

- Troops opened fire with automatic weapons and snipers fired from rooftops.
- Armoured personnel carriers drove over bodies, some of whom had been bayoneted on the ground.
- Reports from the time stated that bodies were cleared away by bulldozers and that blood was hosed into the gutters.
- Many of the wounded were taken to hospital on bicycle rickshaws.
- Many protesters tried to flee while others fought back, hurling Molotov cocktails at the tanks.
- Individual soldiers who had become separated from the main force were beaten to death by protesters.

*“...angry demonstrators threw Molotov cocktails at the military vehicles and lynched individual soldiers and officers who strayed from their columns...”*¹

Official figures state that about 200 civilians were killed (including 36 students) and 3000 people were injured. Other sources suggest the figures are far higher, with most deaths not actually occurring in the Square itself. The number of dead has been estimated to range anywhere from 500 to 3000, with up to 10 000 injured. It is probable that the true figure will never be known. The suppression of the protests occurred not only in Beijing but also across China.

¹ Pantsov, A V, Deng Xiaoping: A Revolutionary Life, OUP, Oxford, 2015, pp 416

The party had concerns about the loyalty of the PLA for a time.

- Earlier in May, officers had refused to use force against protesters, who had surprised them with their welcome and ‘geniality’; this was not what the troops had been told to expect.
- Once martial law had been declared, commanders had to clearly show they accepted it, and some commanders were removed from their positions.
- After the “incident”, soldiers had to hand over their ammunition. There were even stories of brief clashes between various PLA units, though this was short-lived.

Britain’s ambassador to China at the time was Sir Alan Donald. He wrote a secret memo at the time which was declassified in 2017. In the memo, Donald expressed his belief that the number of dead was really 10 454, and suggested that the 27th Group Army was “*60 per cent illiterate and called primitives*”, and that the 27th had been especially picked for the task because of its reputation for unquestioning obedience. The ambassador had warned the British government as early as 20 May that a massacre was “inevitable”.

The most enduring image from the time is the photo that was taken of an unidentified man, standing defiantly alone, blocking the passage of a column of Chinese tanks.

- He has been immortalised as “*Tiananmen Square Tank Man*”.²
- Doubts remain about the identity of the lone man.
- The (UK) Independent newspaper in 2020 stated that he was identified as Wang Weilin, an archaeology student. His fate remains a mystery.
- Jiang Zemin later stated the man had not been arrested and had not been run over by the tanks or later executed.

The official Chinese view of Tiananmen Square

It is not surprising that the official Chinese view of what happened at Tiananmen Square is at great variance with the views that are expressed about it in the west.

On 9 June 1989, Deng spoke for the first time about “the 4 June” and asserted that a counterrevolution had been put down. He was full of praise for the PLA heroes who had sacrificed themselves. There was no remorse and Deng made it very clear that there had been no alternative to the use of force.

The events of 4 June 1989 are given scant coverage in Chinese schools, textbooks and the media generally. Attempts to ‘commemorate’ the events are quickly suppressed. Such is the extent of Chinese government control and censorship, that many Chinese citizens today are unaware of what happened:³

- if the Chinese government does acknowledge what happened, it makes the point that the PLA was not crushing ‘peaceful protests’:
 - instead, the PLA was protecting itself and defending the country against violent “counterrevolutionary” elements.

² The photo was smuggled out of China. In 1990, press photographer Charlie Cole, won the award for “World Press Photo of the Year”, though it is the photo of a colleague, Stuart Widener, that is most widely used.

³ Some Chinese students studying in western universities have been known to remonstrate with their lecturers/ tutors when details of the Tiananmen Square Massacre are discussed.

- in 1990, Secretary General Jiang Zemin ⁴ referred to the international controversy surrounding Tiananmen Square as “much ado about nothing.”
- in 2003, Premier Wen Jiabao dismissed the events of Tiananmen Square as occurring “*in the last century.*”
- in June 2020, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian, referred to the protests and their aftermath as just “*a political disturbance*”.
- In June 2020, the Chinese Defence Minister, Wei Fenghe, speaking at Singapore’s “Shangri-La Dialogue” stated: “*That incident was a political turbulence and the central government took measures to stop the turbulence.*”

Though commemorations have always been quickly suppressed in mainland China, over the years the people of Hong Kong have made a point about reminding the world of what happened on 4 June 1989. In 2020, such commemorations have been much more muted:

- this has been partly because of the COVID 19 pandemic and the need to adhere to social distancing rules;
- however, it has more to do with the increased restrictions against protesters that have been imposed on Hong Kong following sustained students protests since 2014; ⁵
- on 30 June 2020, Beijing passed a new “National Security Law” which in future will probably limit commemorations of Tiananmen Square in Hong Kong even more.

The work of Wu Renhua

Wu Renhua is a Chinese scholar, now resident in the United States. Wu was a twenty-three year old student when he participated in the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. He managed to escape from China and in 1990 reached the United States. Wu spent many years collecting documents and eye-witness reports regarding the events of 4 June. He has published three books on the “incident”:

- *The Bloody Clearing of Tiananmen Square in 2007*
- *The Martial Law Troops of June Fourth in 2009*
- *The Full Record of the Tiananmen Movement in 2014.*

Wu Renhua’s work provides specific details about the events, even down to descriptions of each army unit that was involved.

(For an extremely detailed examination of Tiananmen Square, students might like to go to the website below, though the information it contains is far more detailed than is required to answer a possible HSC question on this topic. The website has background information, eye-witness accounts, details of PLA units involved and an extensive bibliography.)

<http://factsanddetails.com/china/cat2/sub7/item77.html>

⁴ For more detail on Jiang Zemin, see Chapter Nineteen.

⁵ The protests of 2014 are sometimes referred to as ‘The Umbrella Movement’.

Exercise 18.1 Answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

1	What terms are used by Chinese authorities and western writers to describe the events of 4 June 1989?	
2	How many people were killed and injured according to official Chinese figures?	
3	How many people were killed and injured according to some western estimates?	
4	Why had some of the commanders of various PLA units been changed at the time of 4 June 1989?	
5	Why does former British Ambassador Sir Alan Donald say the 27th Army Group was chosen for the 4 June?	
6	How did Deng refer to what had happened on 4 June when he spoke for the first time about it on 9 June?	
7	How are the events of 4 June 1989 covered in Chinese schools, textbooks and the media?	
8	How did the student protesters react when the PLA arrived to suppress their actions?	
9	Who was " <i>Tiananmen Square Tank Man</i> "?	
10	How did Jiang Zemin comment on the fate of " <i>Tiananmen Square Tank Man</i> "?	

Chapter Nineteen

The rise to power of Jiang Zemin

Introduction

Described variously as 'bland', 'uncharismatic' and 'wooden', Jiang Zemin surprised many who observed Chinese political life with his longevity. Critics have suggested that developments within China after 1989 occurred despite Jiang Zemin's presence and that he was not a great innovator. This chapter is not concerned with Jiang's career as China's leader after 1989, but perhaps it is fair to say he provided some stability, sorely needed after the tragedy of Tiananmen Square. After a stall in economic development and reform in the early 1990s, he oversaw a continuation of China's economic rise.

Jiang Zemin has been referred to as the 'Core of the Third Generation of Communist Party leaders in China'. His earlier career (see below) was markedly different to that of previous key CCP figures such as Mao Zedong, Lin Biao, Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang.

- Jiang was not old enough to have suffered at the hands of the GMD in the 1920s and 1930s.
- He was not a veteran of the Jiangxi Soviet or of the Long March.
- He was not a war hero from the Sino-Japanese War.
- Jiang does not feature in the heroics of the Civil War as did men like Mao, Deng and Lin.

Another difference with Jiang Zemin is that he was China's first communist leader to have graduated from university. Jiang's early forte was his knowledge of engineering and his technical prowess. He does not feature as a significant player in political life until he is well into his fifties.

Jiang Zemin took over from Zhao Ziyang¹ as Party Secretary General in 1989. His was a surprise appointment; commentators believed at the time that Li Peng was the more likely successor to Zhao.² At the time, it was believed that Jiang would be only a transitional leader; his longevity surprised many. Jiang Zemin served as:

- Secretary General of the CCP: 1989-2002
- President of China: 1993-2003
- Chairman of the Central Military Commission 1989-2004

Following the death of Deng Xiaoping in 1997, Jiang became China's paramount leader, though his power was never as all-embracing as that of a Mao or a Deng (or a future Xi Jinping).

On a lighter note, Jiang was acknowledged for his ability to play several musical instruments, was happy to entertain guests with his singing, he had a fair command of various languages

¹ Deng Xiaoping had Zhao Ziyang removed from that post due to Zhao's obvious sympathies with the student protesters in Tiananmen Square. Zhao was placed under house arrest where he would remain until his death in 2005. (See Chapter seventeen).

² Li Peng supported Deng's hard line approach to the protests in Tiananmen Square. In some quarters he was referred to as 'the butcher of Beijing'. Li Peng served as Premier of China from 1988-1998, and was the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress from 1998-2003.

(including Romanian). It was said that Jiang could recite (in English), large chunks of Hamlet's monologue "To be or not to be", the "Gettysburg Address" and Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind". And like Mao, Jiang Zemin enjoyed a long swim!

Background of Jiang Zemin's technical career

Jiang Zemin's early years were largely in engineering and technical work.	
1926	Jiang Zemin was born on 17 August in Yangzhou in Jiangsu province.
1943	He participated in student underground organisations during the Japanese occupation.
1946	Jiang joined the Communist Party.
1947	Jiang graduated from Shanghai's Jiaotong University with a degree in electrical engineering.
1947-55	Over the next few years, Jiang took on a series of technical roles including director of the Shanghai Yimin No 1 Foodstuffs Factory and the Shanghai Soap Factory.
1955	Jiang went to the Soviet Union and trained at the Stalin Automobile Plant in Moscow.
1956	He returned to China, worked at the Changchun No 1 Auto Works, eventually rising to become its power plant director.
1960s	Jiang took on a series of leading positions in areas such as electric equipment research, machine-building and thermo-technical machinery research
1970	By 1970, Jiang was working at the Ministry of Machine Building in Romania (thus escaping the traumas of the Cultural Revolution).

Jiang Zemin married Wang Yeping (born 1928) in 1949. They had two sons, born in 1951 and 1956. Wang is a graduate of the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute. At the time of writing (September 2020), both Jiang and Wang are still alive, aged 94 and 92 respectively.

Jiang Zemin's political rise

Jiang Zemin's early years had not given any real indication that he was destined to become a world leader of some longevity. In 1980, he became the Vice-Chairman and Secretary General of the State Commission on the Administration of Imports and Exports and the State Commission on the Administration of Foreign Investment. Such roles do not sound terribly

exciting. However, at a time when Deng had established his supremacy and was pushing hard for reform and modernisation, they were roles which mattered to China's economic progress.

1982	Jiang was appointed First Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Electronics Industry. He was also deputy secretary of its main party group. He was elected to the Central Committee of the CCP at the party's Twelfth National Congress.
1983	He became Minister of the Ministry of Electronics Industry.
1985	Jiang became the Mayor of Shanghai. He was also the Deputy Secretary, and then Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.
1986	As the Shanghai party boss, Jiang became concerned at the extent of student demonstrations in his city by December. Fang Lizhi at one time spoke to a crowd of 60 000. Jiang requested that the students return to their campus but this request was ignored. He brought in an order declaring the demonstrations illegal and ultimately resorted to force. Such decisive action did not go unnoticed by Deng Xiaoping.
1987	Jiang became a member of the Politburo.
1989	An influential newspaper in Shanghai, <i>The World Economic Review</i> , had been closely following events inside the Soviet Union. ³ The 24 April edition of the paper planned to commemorate the late Hu Yaobang (see Chapter 17) and print his speeches. Hu had shown significant sympathy to the demands of the student protesters in Tiananmen Square. Jiang believed this was too inflammatory, given the situation which was developing inside the country, and so he closed down the newspaper.



Jiang Zemin

Deng selected Jiang Zemin to succeed Zhao Ziyang as General Secretary. This was a surprise choice; many expected Li Peng to take on the role. At first, it was assumed that Jiang was a compromise candidate who would not be in power long. However, Deng believed Jiang was the man for the job. He had shown resolution against student demonstrators in his own domain of Shanghai.

³ Since becoming Soviet leader in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev had been pursuing the policies of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring). Though well-intentioned, these policies would act as a catalyst to the demise of the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, Jiang shared two important beliefs with Deng:

- both men believed in a continuation of free-market reforms;
- both men accepted without question the monopoly of Communist Party power.

In November, Jiang became Chairman of the Central Military Commission.

Exercise 19.1 Indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

1	Jiang shared many of the hardships and military experiences of former communist leaders.	TRUE/ FALSE
2	Jiang was the first of China's communist leaders to have graduated from university.	TRUE/ FALSE
3	Jiang's early career was focussed on technical and engineering issues rather than political.	TRUE/ FALSE
4	Like many in the Communist Party, Jiang fell victim to the purging that took place during the Cultural Revolution.	TRUE/ FALSE
5	Jiang's first significant political posts came in the early 1980s and were focussed on the economic area.	TRUE/ FALSE
6	Before moving into national prominence, Jiang was the party boss of Shanghai in the mid-1980s.	TRUE/ FALSE
7	Jiang sympathised with Shanghai's student protesters in 1986, and spoke at rallies in their support.	TRUE/ FALSE
8	Jiang was a frequent contributor to <i>The World Economic Review</i> and supported the line it took about Hu Yaobang.	TRUE/ FALSE
9	Jiang was a surprise choice to take over from Zhao Ziyang, as it was assumed the Li Peng would take on the role.	TRUE/ FALSE
10	Jiang was a surprise choice to take power in 1989 because he and Deng differed strongly on many fundamental issues.	TRUE/ FALSE

Chapter Twenty

The impact of the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989

Introduction

China seems to have a remarkable ability to push the traumas of its past out of the collective mind. Whether it is the suppression of intellectuals after the “Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom” campaign in 1957, or the famine that killed millions after the Great Leap Forward, or the suffering of the Cultural Revolution, the suppression of protest and democratic demands after Zhou’s death, and the suppression of the various student calls for change in the 1970s and 1980s, all these things seem to be removed from the collective memory. As some writers have put it, China seems to have a “collective amnesia”.¹

So too, it seems, there is a national case of amnesia regarding Tiananmen Square. As was explained in Chapter Nineteen, the government in China has made a concerted effort to erase the events of 4 June from the collective consciousness. In this it has been extremely successful. Chinese people have little desire to discuss what happened. This is perhaps partly due to a fear of official sanction, but also due to a wish to move on with life. For anybody younger than forty-something, Tiananmen Square is at best a remote historical event, if it is remembered at all.

However, in the short to medium term, the events of Tiananmen Square did have a significant impact on China. The impact on political life and the workings of the ruling Communist Party were profound. These are examined in Figure 20.1. The economic, urban-rural effects, and international effects are discussed below.

The economic impact of Tiananmen Square

There were many in the party who saw the student demands for “bourgeois liberalism” as a result of the reforms and modernisation of the 1980s. As a result, debate ensued about the value of a market economy versus a planned economy.

- The days of fully centrally-planned schemes, 1950s-style, would never return. However, it was clear that in the short term at least, planned economy thinking won out.
- Restraints were placed on economic reform:
 - this affected economic growth. GDP growth dropped to 4.1% in 1989 and 3.8% in 1990.
- However, there were some advantages in this:
 - the “overheated” nature of the Chinese economy, with its inflationary pressures, was reduced.

However, provincial leaders, often younger than figures in Beijing, wanted to continue economic reform. Change was flagged in 1992 when Deng toured the south of the country and spoke in favour of more reform.²

¹ For a consideration of this idea, see Louisa Lim’s *The People’s Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited*.

² By 1992, Deng, now aged 88, had retired but he was still capable of ‘influencing’ party thinking.

By the mid-1990s, China was ready to commit itself to a market-based economy and to throw itself into the international economy.

- Such a policy was to lead to China's rise as an economic superpower rivalling the United States:
 - millions would be pulled out of poverty.
- However, there were also costs such as growing inequality, environmental degradation in certain locations, and corruption:
 - since 2012, under President Xi Jinping, the party has targeted corrupt officials.³

The urban-rural divide

The protest movements of the 1980s were primarily urban-based. Some in the party saw this as a result of worsening urban living conditions and the pressures brought on by economic expansion. As a result, efforts were made to improve urban life, and hopefully reduce the likelihood of protest in the future.

- Urban reforms were introduced and soon urban incomes were increasing.
- In the regions, peasant incomes stagnated and as a result the gap between living standards in the cities and the country began to widen:
 - not surprisingly, this led to a steady movement of people from rural to urban areas.
- This movement of people from the country to the cities resulted in the creation of a massive pool of cheap labour in China's burgeoning cities:
 - this cheap labour supply was to be a major factor in China's spectacular economic growth in the years to come.

The international fallout of Tiananmen Square

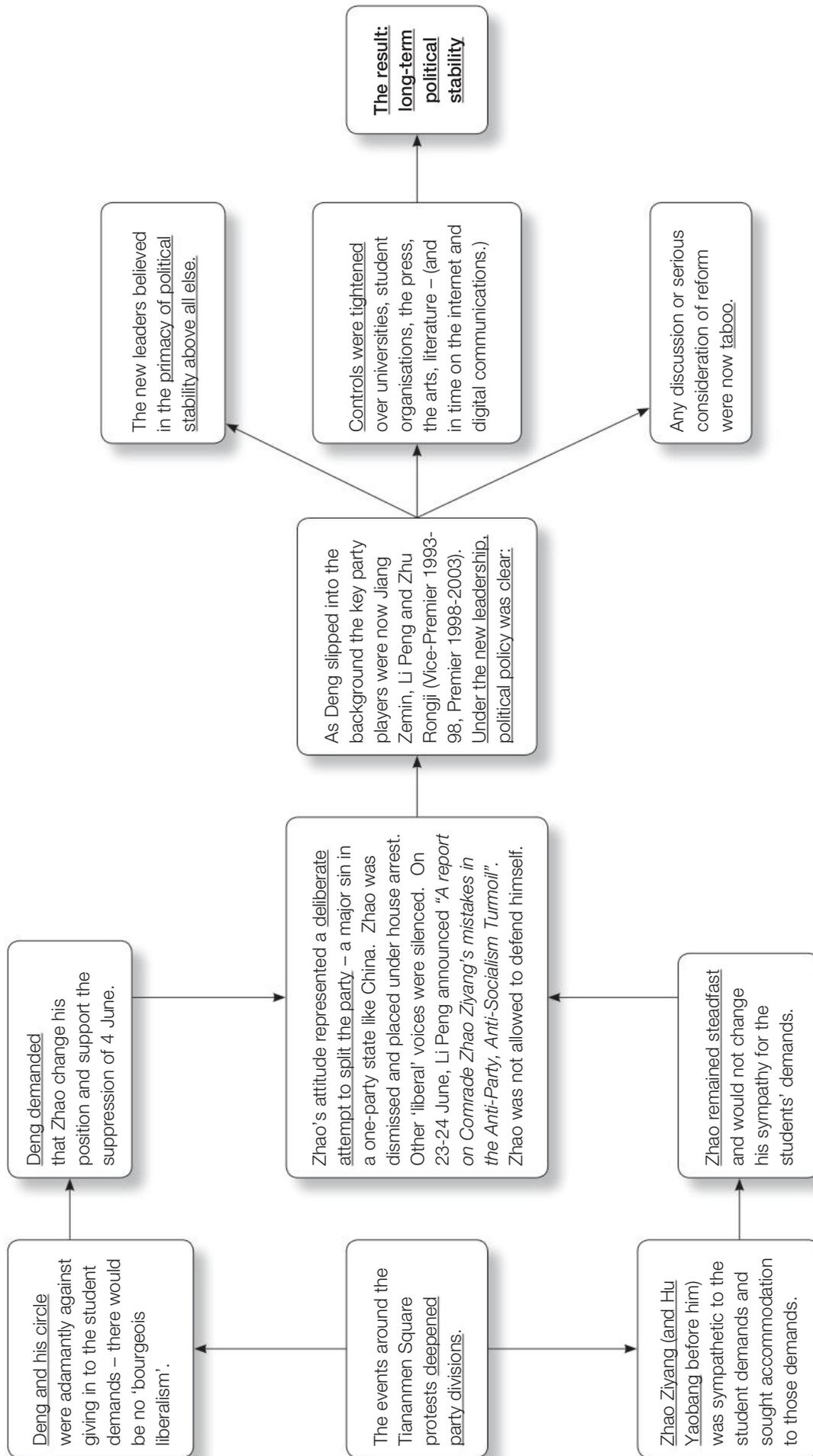
In the short term, the events of Tiananmen Square brought much damage to China's international reputation and standing. Shock at China's violent response to the student protests was mixed with disgust.

- To traditional 'Cold War' warriors, it was a case of 'what do you expect from a Communist dictatorship?:
 - the violent actions of the Chinese regime stood in sharp contrast to the largely non-violent response of most East European regimes who were facing growing protest to communist rule in 1989.⁴
- Several nations and trading blocs placed restrictions on trade and contacts with China including a freeze on loans (Japan) and an arms embargo (the European Union).
- In Australia, Prime Minister Bob Hawke gave a tearful address to the House of Representatives and announced that the 20 000 Chinese students who were studying in Australia, would be allowed to stay.

³ Some critics have suggested that recent anti-corruption moves inside China have had as much to do with neutralising potential political opponents as dealing with corruption.

⁴ In November 1989, the East German regime allowed the Berlin Wall to come down. By 1990, communism had disappeared from East Europe. At the end of 1991, the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

Figure 20.1 The impact of Tiananmen Square on political life



Many residents in Hong Kong put in place arrangements to leave the British colony for when it was handed over to China in 1997 – just in case. ⁵

However, when it comes to economics, memories can be short. As China’s economy continued to expand, western nations saw a growing middle-class market in China to which they could export. Primary producers like Australia eagerly sought to feed China’s insatiable raw materials appetite. Consumers everywhere were happy to take advantage of cheap Chinese exports.

Exercise 20.1 Complete the following passage using the terms below.

The Tiananmen Square protests revealed great _____ within the party. _____ was adamantly opposed to the student demands, while _____ spoke out in sympathy for the students. On 23-24 June, _____ presented a report to the party attacking Zhao. Zhao was _____ from his posts and for the rest of his life would live under _____. The new party leadership now comprised _____, Li Peng and _____. The goals of the party were _____ and _____. There was no room for _____ reform. Economically, China suffered a _____ in the short term. However, by the mid-1990s, China again embraced _____ reform and became a major part of the _____ economy. Urban reforms were brought in and _____ and _____ improved in the cities. As _____ incomes stagnated, there was a major movement of population from the _____ to the cities. This provided a large _____ of cheap labour, a key factor that _____ China’s economic growth. Internationally, China’s _____ suffered in the short term. However, as China’s economy continued to boom, foreign nations decided to place memories of Tiananmen Square into the _____.

MARKET – STABILITY – ZHAO – SLOW DOWN – DIVISIONS
 RURAL – DISMISSED – LI PENG – BACKGROUND – DEMOCRATIC
 ZHU RONGJI – DENG – HOUSE ARREST – COUNTRY – INTERNATIONAL
 JIANG ZEMIN – REPUTATION – POOL – WAGES – LIVING STANDARDS
 GROWTH – STIMULATED -

⁵ Hong Kong island had been taken by Britain in the Treaty of Nanjing (1842) following the First Opium War. In 1897, the New Territories and outlying islands were leased for 99 years. In 1984, Britain and China agreed that Hong Kong and the territories would revert to Chinese rule, under specified arrangements, in 1997.

A final word on “The impact of the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989”

Klaus Mühlhan

Mühlhan argues that the long-term impact of Tiananmen Square focussed on two key elements of the regime’s thinking. China had to be strong on “two fronts”. These two fronts were “economic reform” and “political stability”. After a brief economic slow-down, China’s economic reform “accelerated and expanded”. At the same time, other aspects of Chinese life – political, social and cultural – were to be subject to an uncompromising demand for “stability and security”. The student idealism of 1989 that sought democracy and freedom was over.

“...A new, authoritarian, yet self-confident China emerged. Amid the bloody chaos in Tiananmen Square and the transformations in the world of 1989, the China model was born...” ⁶

Figure 20.2 Looking back



⁶ Mühlhahn, K, Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2019, p 526

Exercise 20.2

Identify these fifteen personalities from China's story. Then locate them in the following find-a-word Exercise 20.3 opposite.

1	I took over as General Secretary from Zhao Ziyang	
2	I was China's respected Prime Minister, died 1976	
3	I was purged during the Cultural Revolution	
4	I was known as the Great Helmsman	
5	I was imprisoned for calling for a 5th modernisation	
6	I was Prime Minister 1987-98	
7	I was the nephew of Mao Zedong	
8	I was behind the 1980s modernisation and reform	
9	I was Mao's wife, Jiang _____.	
10	I was chosen by Mao to be his successor	
11	I was an astrophysicist and democratic campaigner	
12	I wrote a play that angered Jiang Qing	
13	I was a Tiananmen Square student leader	
14	I was Mao's colleague who disappeared mysteriously	
15	I was a member of the Gang of Four	

Exercise 20.3 Locate the leading Chinese players in this “find-a-word”.

(See Exercise 20.2).

M	A	O	Y	U	A	N	X	I	N
A	C	F	Z	X	I	J	N	W	I
O	M	P	W	D	S	V	A	E	M
Z	H	O	U	E	O	M	U	I	E
E	U	G	H	N	Y	C	Y	J	Z
D	A	N	A	G	T	X	N	I	G
O	G	H	N	G	J	H	E	N	N
N	U	Q	N	B	H	B	W	G	A
G	O	A	N	R	B	O	O	S	I
A	F	D	L	A	A	G	A	H	J
F	E	U	M	I	D	M	Y	E	Y
O	N	W	B	C	I	G	G	N	P
L	G	N	W	S	O	Z	N	G	H
L	I	P	E	N	G	T	I	A	E
L	I	U	S	H	A	O	Q	I	W

Advice on writing HSC responses on “Change in the Modern World”

Basic examination information

The examination paper for HSC Modern History comprises four parts:

- Section I: Power and Authority in the Modern World 1919-1946
- Section II: National Studies
- Section III: Peace and Conflict
- Section IV: **Change in the Modern World**

Each section is worth 25 marks. It is important that students allocate their time correctly and give 45 minutes for each section.

Section IV – Change in the Modern World – comprises six options of which **The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989 is one**. It will appear as Option B in Section IV.

- There will be one question set on *The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989*.
- It will be in the form of a “structured essay question”:
 - that is, it will not be a single essay question;
 - it will contain several parts, possibly three parts, possibly four parts;
 - all parts of the question must be answered.
- One part of the question will be worth 10 to 15 marks.
- Questions set on *The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989* may come from any part of the syllabus including “Survey”, “Focus of Study” or “Key Features”.
- The allocation of marks for each part of the question will probably vary over the years. Possible mark distributions might be:

Part (a)	Part (b)	Part (c)	Part (d)
5 marks	8 marks	12 marks	
4 marks	6 marks	15 marks	
3 marks	4 marks	8 marks	10 marks
5 marks	5 marks	15 marks	
3 marks	4 marks	6 marks	12 marks

Time allocation within the question on *The Cultural Revolution 1966-1989* is of crucial importance.

- Questions that have a low mark value will probably commence as “describe” or “outline” or “how did” or “what is”. Such questions are aiming at low level skills. They are essentially narrative or descriptive questions.
 - If a question is worth 3 marks, students should provide three distinct points, in a paragraph and spend no more than five minutes answering it.
 - If a question is worth 4 marks, students should provide four distinct points, in a paragraph and spend no more than seven minutes answering it.
 - A student could write three pages on such a question but will still only receive three (or four) marks.

- Questions that have a mark value of about 6-8 marks, will probably commence as “explain” or “account for” or “what was the most significant factor” or “why”. Such questions are aiming at higher level skills. They require some argument in the answer.
 - If a question is worth 8 marks, students spend about 15 minutes answering it.
 - 5 minutes on this type of question would clearly be insufficient; 30 minutes is a misallocation of time.
 - This is a more lengthy response. It needs a brief introduction and to be written with paragraphs.
 - Students could almost treat it as a mini-essay.

- Questions that have a mark value of 10-15 marks, will probably commence as “to what extent” or “discuss the view” or “assess” or “evaluate”. Such questions are aiming at much higher-level skills. They seek a judgment, require analysis, and the more sophisticated that analysis can be, the better.
 - Time allocation is crucial.
 - As a rough guide, a 10 mark question needs about 18 minutes, a 12-mark question about 23 minutes and 15-mark question about 27 minutes.
 - These will be lengthy responses.
 - These types of questions need to be treated as a mini-essay with all the usual techniques required for an essay: an introduction, paragraphs that are linked, an argument throughout and a conclusion.
 - Markers will be looking for an argument in the introduction which will be supported throughout the response with specific evidence.
 - Students need to avoid falling into ‘a narrative trap’ and simply ‘telling the story’ and ‘reeling off a string of facts’.

Responding to HSC questions on “The Cultural Revolution to Tiananmen Square 1966-1989”

Three-mark questions might be similar to the following:

- Describe the impact of the Great Leap Forward.
- Who were the Red Guards?
- Describe the events surrounding the flight of Lin Biao.
- Outline the events that resulted in the fall of the Gang of Four.
- What happened in Tiananmen Square in May-June 1989?

Outline the events that resulted in the fall of the Gang of Four. (3)

Five minutes, a paragraph, provide three clear points – response might include:

- The Gang of Four represented the leftist/ Maoist wing of the CCP and were responsible for much of the harm caused by the Cultural Revolution.
- Following Mao’s death, Mao’s successor, Hua Guofeng, moved quickly to have the Gang of Four arrested.
- It was clear Jiang Qing’s power was based mainly on being Mao’s wife.
- They were tried in 1980 for crimes including the killing and persecution of thousands. Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao received death sentences but ended up with a long prison sentence like Yao Wenyan and Wang Hongwen.

Four/ five-mark questions might be similar to the following:

- Describe the motives of Mao Zedong in launching the Cultural Revolution.
- Describe the official and unofficial reactions to the death of Zhou Enlai.
- Describe the immediate impact of the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989 on China and its standing in the world.

Describe the motives of Mao Zedong in launching the Cultural Revolution. (5)

About eight/ nine minutes, a paragraph or two, provide clear facts – response might include:

- After the disaster of the Great Leap Forward, Mao’s prestige in the party had suffered and he been forced to stand down as President of the PRC.
- The Cultural Revolution on one level was Mao’s attempt to reassert his power.
- Mao believed the revolution was going in the wrong direction; he wanted to counter the development of revisionism and the capitalist road.
- Mao wanted the young to experience revolution and to be driven by socialist ideals.

- He saw that the party was becoming too bureaucratic and was too distant from the people it was meant to serve.

Eight-mark questions might be similar to the following:

- Explain the aims and methods of Mao Zedong in the Cultural Revolution.
- What was the impact of the Cultural Revolution on two of the following: society, education, culture, the economy?
- Explain why Deng Xiaoping’s fortunes after 1949 were so varied.
- Explain the role of Hua Guofeng in the 1970s and 1980s.
- Explain the growth of protest inside China in the decade leading to Tiananmen Square, 1989.

Explain the role of Hua Guofeng in the 1970s and 1980s. (8)

About fifteen minutes, treat as a mini-essay, needs a brief introduction, paragraphs

- Hua Guofeng’s rise to the top position came as a surprise as he was not a well-known figure in the party and he was not aligned to either the Maoists or the moderate group based around Zhou and Deng.
- He became Minister of Public Security in 1972.
- In 1976, Mao announced Hua would be his successor, saying that knowing Hua would take over meant he had nothing to worry about.
- Backed by Ye Jianying and Li Xiannian, Hua had the Gang of Four arrested in October 1976.
- The Gang of Four went on trial in 1980 charged with various offences including persecuting party and state leaders and planning the assassination of Mao Zedong.
- Once the Gang of Four were in prison, Hua soon lost his influence and was outmanoeuvred by Deng Xiaoping.

Higher-mark questions might be similar to the following:

- Evaluate the role of Deng Xiaoping in the reform and modernisation of China.
- To what extent did the Cultural Revolution do irreparable harm to China?
- To what extent was the Cultural Revolution a success for Mao?
- Assess the significance of the student protest movement of 1989 and its suppression for China and its standing in the world.
- To what extent had Deng Xiaoping achieved his aims in the 1980s?

Evaluate the role of Deng Xiaoping in the reform and modernisation of China. (15)

About twenty-seven minutes, treat as a mini-essay, needs an introduction, and the response should incorporate the usual essay rule. Ensure that the introduction outlines the argument of the response.

- Provide your introduction with arguments that the essays will pursue:
 - Despite what his opponents said, Deng was no capitalist roader.
 - He sought socialism “with Chinese characteristics” as he called it.
 - He believed ‘as long as a cat catches mice’, who cares if it is black or white, and so was prepared to use even market mechanisms to achieve his goals.
 - Enormous change and progress were achieved thanks to the thinking and policies of Deng in the 1980s though success also had its costs.
- Deng sought to:
 - remove the ideological blinkers, encourage initiative and limit central planning;
 - he wanted China opening to western markets and sought foreign investment;
 - he changed the emphasis from heavy industry to agriculture and consumer goods.
- Thanks to Deng, reforms included:
 - phasing out the commune system;
 - introducing the ‘household responsibility scheme’;
 - giving peasants incentives to sell surpluses in rural markets;
 - setting up Town and Villages enterprises in the country;
 - setting up Special Economic Zones;
 - encouraging entrepreneurial behaviour, shareholding, a service economy;
 - introducing more technology, often brought in from the west;
 - raising living standards for millions of people.
- However, Deng’s reforms and modernisation program did create problems:
 - corruption due to the dual-pricing system;
 - growing inequality between poorer rural and richer urban areas;
 - growth of nepotism;
 - overheating of the economy which created very high inflation by the late 1980s;
 - an unregulated influx of peasants into the cities which caused massive strains on housing and services, and bred various ills, such as prostitution.

Deng’s reforms were not without their problems and drawbacks, but thanks to Deng’s efforts, China made enormous strides under his rule, and the basis was laid for the country’s rapid economic progress from the mid-1990s.

Timeline

- 1911-12 – The fall of the Qing dynasty and the abdication of Pu Yi
- 1912-16 – President Yuan Shih-kai
- 1921 – Establishment of the Chinese Communist Party
- 1927 – Jiang Jieshi turns against the CCP
- 1934-35 – The Long March
- 1937-45 – The Sino-Japanese War
- 1946-49 – The Civil War
- 1949 – Communist victory in the Civil War
Mao Zedong proclaims the People's Republic of China
Jiang Jieshi and his GMD forces flee to Formosa (Taiwan)
- 1950-53 – The Korean War – China enters the war to repel UN forces
Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union
- 1952 – The First Five Year Plan is put into place
- 1956 – Khrushchev's 'secret' speech to Soviet Party's 20th Congress
- 1957 – "Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom" campaign
- 1958-61 – The Great Leap Forward
- 1959 – Mao steps down as President; replaced by Liu Shaoqi
- 1960 – The Sino-Soviet split is fully revealed to the world
- 1961-64 – Zhou, Deng attempt to ameliorate worst effect of Great Leap Forward
- 1964 – China explodes its first atomic bomb
- 1966 – Start of the Cultural Revolution
- 1968 – Liu Shaoqi is purged – he dies in 1969
- 1968-69 – Military clashes along the Sino-Soviet border
- 1969 – Deng Xiaoping sent into rural exile
- 1971 – Lin Biao dies in plane crash in Mongolia
Henry Kissinger secretly visits China
China joins the UN
- 1972 – US President Nixon visits China
- 1973 – Deng returns from exile as Vice-Premier

- 1976 – Death of Zhou Enlai
Deng is purged again
Heibei earthquake
Death of Mao Zedong – succeeded by Hua Guofeng
Arrest of the Gang of Four
- 1977 – Deng is returned to positions of power
- 1978 – Appearance of the Democracy Wall
Wei Jingsheng calls for the 5th modernisation
Deng modernisation program begins apace
- 1979 – First Special Economic Zones appear
Deng announces the Four Cardinal Principles
US-China diplomatic relations established
Deng visits the United States
- 1980 – Trial of the Gang of Four
- 1986 – Jiang Zemin puts down demonstrations in Shanghai
- 1987 – Hu Yaobang is removed from office – replaced by Zhao Ziyang
- 1989 – Student protests in Tiananmen Square
Some students begin a hunger strike
Sino-Soviet summit between Deng and Mikhail Gorbachev
Students erect the statue Goddess of Democracy
The PLA's suppression of the student protests in Tiananmen Square
Zhao Ziyang removed from office – replaced by Jiang Zemin
- 1990s – Jiang Zemin solidifies his position
Renewed economic program takes off from 1994
- 1997 – Death of Deng
Jiang Zemin becomes paramount leader

Glossary

April Fifth Movement	refers to the police attack on demonstrators on Tiananmen Square 5 April 1976
Boxer Protocol	agreement forced on China after the 1900 Boxer Rebellion
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
comintern	communist international, set up to promote revolutions in 1919
communes	collective, communal living unit for Chinese people
concubine	mistress or secondary wife taken by Chinese men in pre-Communist times
cultural revolution	Mao's mass campaign to combat revisionism and restore his power
dang'an	personal files kept on citizens
danwei	work unit
dazi bao	Big-character posters
Democracy Wall	name given to the protest wall at Xidan Street
deStalinisation	campaign inside the Soviet Union to ease up on the excesses of Stalinist rule
fanshen	the call to revolt (literally to 'turn the body over')
Fifth Modernisation	Wei Jingsheng 1978 call for modernisation
Four Cardinal Principles	Deng's response to calls for democracy, reinforcing dedication to communism
four olds	old ideas, customs, culture, habits of mind
Gang of Four	Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan, leftists promoting the Cultural Revolution
Goddess of Democracy	statue erected by protesting students in Tiananmen Square May 1989
Great Leap Forward	Mao's disastrous plan for developing China 1958-61
Guomindang, GMD	Nationalist Party, later headed by Jiang Jieshi
hukou system	means of determining where a person could live
Jiangxi Soviet	Communist base 1928-34
laogai	labour reform
little red book	simplified version of Mao's writings in the form of quotations for mass consumption
Long March	flight of the CCP from Jiangxi to Shaanxi 1934-35
middle kingdom	term used by China to describe itself before the arrival of the west
peaceful coexistence	Soviet policy of normalising relations with the west under Khrushchev
People's Daily	official newspaper of the Central Committee of the CCP

permanent revolution	Mao idea that class struggle and revolutionary action had to be continuous to reach communism
personality cult	promotion of Mao's image to almost a divine status
PLA	People's Liberation Army
Plan 571	title of Lin Biao's alleged coup plot against Mao
Qingming	Day of Remembrance of the Dead
rapprochement	coming together of two parties who had previously had bad relations
Red Guards	radical young of China mobilised to carry out the Cultural Revolution
revisionism	practice of deviating away from strict Marxist principles
secret speech	Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the Soviet 20th Party Congress 1956
Solidarity	trade union-based movement that campaigned against the Polish communist regime in the 1980s
Third Front	alleged build-up of a secret military-industrial complex in the interior of China
three red banners movement	collective term for Mao's ambitious 1958 plan for developing China
Tiananmen Incident	5 April 1976, police attack on demonstrators
unequal treaty	a treaty that China was forced to sign by stronger western powers
vassal state	a state or region, nominally independent but which accepted the domination of a stronger neighbour
warlord era	anarchic period in China 1916-1928
Zunyi Conference	held in early 1935, Mao establishes his leadership

Dramatis Personae

Brezhnev, Leonid	Soviet leader from 1964-1982
Carter, President Jimmy	US President 1977-81
Chen Boda	Mao's personal secretary, member of the Gang of Four
Chen Duxiu	first secretary-general of the CCP
Cixi	Empress Dowager, effective ruler of China late 19th century to 1908
Dalai Lama	spiritual leader of Tibet, fled Chinese rule in 1959
Deng Liqun	head of the CC CCP Propaganda Department, retired November 1987
Deng Pufang	son of Deng Xiaoping, paralysed during the Cultural Revolution
Deng Xiaoping	moderate opponent of Mao, purged, became China's paramount leader after the Cultural Revolution
Donald, Sir Alan	British ambassador to China in 1989
Fang Lizhi	astrophysicist who supporters calls for democracy in 1986
Gorbachev, Mikhail	Soviet Union leader 1985-1991
Hu Yaobang	General Secretary of the CCP, forced to resign early 1987
Hua Guofeng	successor to Mao
Indira Gandhi	Prime Minister of India, 1966-77; 1980-84
Jiang Hua	presiding judge in the Trial of the Gang of Four
Jiang Jieshi	(or Chiang Kai-shek), leader of the GMD
Jiang Qing	wife of Mao, member of the Gang of Four
Jiang Zemin	Shanghai party boss, General Secretary of CCP 1989-2002, President of PRC 1993-2003
Khrushchev, Nikita	Soviet leader from 1956-1964
Kim Il Sung	leader of North Korea 1945-1994
Kissinger, Henry	US National Security Advisor (1969-75), US Secretary of State 1973-77
Kosygin, Alexsey	premier of the Soviet Union, 1960s
Li Peng	Prime Minister 1987-98
Li Shuxian	wife of Fang Lizhi, fled China June 1990
Li Xiannian	Deputy Premier, assisted in the arrest of the Gang of Four
Lin Biao	ally of Mao, defence minister after Peng Dehuai, died suspiciously 1971
Lin Liguo	son of Lin Biao
Liu Binyan	author, journalist, critic of the Tiananmen Square suppression
Liu Shaoqi	became state president April 1959, an ally of Deng Xiaoping

Macarthur, Douglas	UN Commander during the Korean War
Mao Yuanxin	nephew of Mao Zedong, supporter of the Gang of Four
Mao Zedong	Communist leader from the mid-1930s until his death in 1976
Nixon, Richard	US President 1969-74, visited China in 1972
Peng Dehuai	Minister of Defence 1954-59, removed for criticising the Great Leap Forward
Peng Zhen	mayor of Beijing, dismissed during the Cultural Revolution, retired late 1987
PRC	People's Republic of China
Pu Yi	last Chinese emperor, abdicated 1912
Song Jiaoren	founder of the GMD
Stalin	leader of the Soviet Union 1928-53
Sun Yisian	(or Sun Yat-sen), revolutionary leader of the GMD until his death, 1925
Syngman Rhee	leader of South Korea 1948-1960
Vyshinsky, Andrei	Soviet premier 1950
Wang Dan	student leader, Tiananmen Square 1989
Wang Dongxing	PLA commander of the unit which arrested the Gang of Four
Wang Hongwen	member of the gang of four
Wang Weilin	allegedly the Tiananmen Square tank man
Wang Yeping	wife of Jiang Zemin
Wei Jingsheng	1978 protester who called for democracy
Wu Han	playwright, historian, author of Huai Rui Dismissed from Office
Wu Renhua	Chinese scholar who has researched the 4 June 1989 incident
Xi Jinping	paramount leader of China since 2012, President since 2013
Yao Wenyuan	member of the gang of four
Ye Jianying	Defence Minister, assisted in the arrest of the Gang of Four
Ye Qun	wife of Lin Biao
Yuan Shikai	Chinese military leader 1912-1916
Zhang Chunqiao	member of the gang of four
Zhao Ziyang	General Secretary of the CCP 1987-89
Zhou Enlai	premier of the State Council from 1949-1976
Zhu Rongji	vice-premier 1993-98, premier 1998-2003
Zhuo Lin	third wife of Deng Xiaoping

Answers to revision exercises

Exercise 1.1

1st – abdication of Pu Yi; 2nd – warlord era; 3rd – Jiang turns on his communist allies; 4th – Japanese invasion of Manchuria; 5th – Jiang’s annihilation campaigns; 6th – The Long March; 7th – start of the Sino-Japanese War; 8th – start of the Civil War; 9th – Battle of Huahai; 10th – Mao declares the People’s Republic of China

Exercise 1.2

1 – let 100 flowers bloom; 2 – laogai farms; 3 – speak bitterness campaign; 4 – politburo; 5 – pinyin; 6 – three antis campaign; 7 – anti-rightist campaign; 8 – danwei; 9 – dang’an; 10 – five antis campaign; 11 – fanshen; 12 – middle kingdom

Exercise 2.1

1 – false; 2 – true; 3 – true; 4 – false; 5 – true; 6 – true; 7 – false; 8 – false; 9 – true; 10 – false; 11 – true; 12 – false

Exercise 3.1

1 – Khrushchev; 2 – Zhou Enlai; 3 – Peng Dehuai; 4 – Deng Xiaoping; 5 – Chen Duxiu; 6 – Macarthur; 7 – Stalin; 8 – Mao Zedong; 9 – Brezhnev; 10 – Vyshinsky

Exercise 3.2

Comintern – Lenin – urban – crushed – peasants – Stalin – 1950 – 1956 – Khrushchev – denounced – betrayed – personality – revisionism – peaceful – deteriorate – 1959 – nuclear – 1964 – 1960 – ideological – armed

Exercise 4.1

1 – very little, tried to hide it, even refused offers of international help; 2 – Mao stepped down as state president and was replaced by Liu Shaoqi; 3 – central planning, reduced targets, cut in grain requisitions; 4 – he criticised Mao’s policies in the GLF/ he was removed from office; 5 – his own power, and revisionism; 6 – an ally of Mao, became Minister of Defence after Peng’s purging; 7 – Tibet and the brief war with India; 8 – began to be seen as a role model; 9 – a simplified version of Mao’s writings for mass consumption; 10 – he sought a more moderate approach based on expertise; 11 – his belief that revolution was not static and had to be ongoing to reach communism; 12 – he opposed it, he sought rational planning

Exercise 5.1

The Great Leap Forward had been a disaster for China. As a result, Mao’s prestige suffered greatly. In 1959, the state presidency was taken from him and he was replaced by Liu Shaoqi. By the early 1960s, the direction of CCP policy was in the hands of Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi. Deng and Liu wanted to follow a pragmatic, moderate line which they believed would help China recover. However, this line was opposed by Mao. He saw it as heading along a capitalist road, and as evidence of the evil of revisionism. Thus, Mao saw the need for a Cultural Revolution. In this, he was aided by his wife, Jiang Qing who was based in Shanghai. An early target of Mao and Jiang was the playwright Wu Han. Wu Han’s play, *Huai Rui Dismissed from Office*, was seen as an attack on Mao and a defence of the purged Peng DeHuai. Soon other figures were under attack, such as the mayor of Beijing, Peng Zhen.

Exercise 5.2

1 – false; 2 – true; 3 – false; 4 – true; 5 – true; 6 – false; 7 – true; 8 – true; 9 – false; 10 – false; 11 – false; 12 – true

Exercise 6.1

1 – fact; 2 – opinion; 3 – opinion; 4 – fact; 5 – opinion

Exercise 6.2

16 May Notification – mobilisation – youth – goals – 13 June 1966 – examinations – Red Guard – 8 August 1966 – bourgeois – Beijing – hysterical – secondary – Lin Biao – Four Olds – religious – imperial – humiliation – teachers – professors – factions – Liu Shaoqi – Deng Xiaoping – parents – Mao – September 1976

Exercise 6.3

1st – 16 May Notification; 2nd – Mao attends First Red Guard rally; 3rd – Mao tells Red Guards to learn from the peasants; 4th – Liu Shaoqi no longer state president; 5th – Deng Xiaoping sent to the country; 6th – Death of Lin Biao; 7th – The Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius campaign; 8th – Death of Zhou Enlai; 9th – Death of Mao; 10th – arrest of the Gang of Four; 11th – Trial of the Gang of Four; 12th – suicide of Jiang Qing

Exercise 7.1

Deng was born into a comfortably off family in Sichuan province. At age sixteen, he went to France where he studied and soon became involved in political activities. Next he spent a year in Moscow before returning to China. Deng took part in the Long March and became a firm supporter of Mao. During the Civil War he played a significant role. Following Mao's proclamation of the People's Republic, Deng became mayor of Chongqing. At first, Deng was a keen supporter of Mao's Great Leap Forward. However, as chaos ensued, he joined Liu Shaoqi in criticising Mao's ambitious program. Mao became suspicious of Deng, accusing him of revisionism. As the Cultural Revolution reached its peak, Deng was forced to self-criticise and was sent into rural exile to Jiangxi province. He would remain there for almost three and a half years.

Exercise 8.1

1 – very successful/ gained a good reputation as a commander following his campaigns in Manchuria and southern China during the Civil War; 2 – he took over from Peng Dehuai, removed because of his criticism of Great Leap Forward policies; 3 – the war with India and souring Sino-Soviet relations; 4 – they saw the PLA as possible role models, a good target for Maoist propaganda; 5 – he supported and promoted it; 6 – he condensed Mao's works into a book of quotations and promoted it within the PLA; 7 – he was in agreement; 8 – Lin Biao's independent actions, Lin as a rival; 9 – Mao disagreed with military authority exceeding civilian authority; 10 – he opposed reaching out to the US; 11 – they died in an air crash over Mongolia; 12 – lack of documents, secrecy of the Chinese government at the time

Exercise 9.1

1 – false; 2 – false; 3 – true; 4 – true; 5 – false; 6 – true; 7 – true; 8 – false; 9 – true; 10 – false; 11 – false; 12 – true; 13 – false; 14 – true; 15 – false

Exercise 10.1

Ideology – direction – power – united – Mao – divisions – disaster – attacked – against – Peng Dehuai – state – Maoists – Liu Shaoqi – superficial – politburo – Red Guard – PLA – Jiang Qing – left-wing – loyalty – personality cult – Deng Xiaoping

Exercise 11.1

1 – premier, foreign minister (to 1958); 2 – his negotiating skill; 3 – he tried to limit its worst features; 4 – wise, honest, empathetic; 5 – over a million; 6 – Deng Xiaoping; 7 – bringing wreaths and bouquets to Tiananmen Square; 8 – Day of Remembrance of the Dead; 9 – violently and tactlessly; 10 – the Tiananmen Incident/ the April Fifth Movement

Exercise 12.1

1st – Deng sent to Jiangxi; 2nd – Hua becomes Minister of Public Security; 3rd – Deng is returned to power; 4th – Criticise Lin Biao and Confucius campaign; 5th – Deng speaks at the UN; 6th – Death of Zhou; 7th – Tiananmen Incident; 8th – Deng blamed for the Tiananmen Incident; 9th – Deng relieved of his posts again; 10th – Hua named as Mao's successor

Exercise 13.1

Zhou Enlai had been suffering from cancer for some time, and he finally succumbed to his illness in early January. Zhou was admired and respected by the Chinese people and a couple of months later, there were attempted commemorations for him in Tiananmen Square. However, in early April, the government felt these had gone too far and the protests were squashed. The suppression that occurred in April has become known as the Tiananmen Incident. In July, Hebei province experienced a massive earthquake which killed hundreds of thousands of people. The city of Tangshan was totally destroyed. Mao Zedong had been in very poor health for some time, also. He died in early September. Hua Guofeng delivered the party's eulogy to Mao to masses gathered in Tiananmen Square. Jiang Qing believed that she would now continue great power. However, her hopes of further influence in China came to an end when she, and the other members of the Gang of Four, were arrested in early October.

Exercise 14.1

1 – Ye Jianying; 2 – Deng Xiaoping; 3 – Mao Yuanxin; 4 – Jiang Qing; 5 – Wang Dongxing; 6 – Hua Guofeng; 7 – Yao Wenyuan; 8 – Jiang Hua; 9 – Lin Biao; 10 – Wang Hongwen

Exercise 15.1

exile – General Assembly – modernisations – Zhou – Tiananmen – 5 April – Jiang – Deng – removed – Mao – Hua Guofeng – Gang of Four – two whatevers – 17 July – paramount – Zhao Ziyang – Hu Yaobang – PLA

Exercise 15.2

1 – false; 2 – true; 3 – true; 4 – true; 5 – false; 6 – true; 7 – true; 8 – false; 9 – true; 10 – true; 11 – false; 12 – true; 13 – true; 14 – false; 15 – false

Exercise 16.1

1 – overall positive, keen for China be part of the international family; 2 – that economic reform would lead to democracy; 3 – he was tough, he was totally committed to communist ideology; 4 – inflation, unemployment, corruption, nepotism; 5 – The Democracy Wall; 6 – he called the Fifth Modernisation of democracy; 7 – promulgation of The Four Cardinal Principles; 8 – giving jobs to friends and family; party leaders' children were being favoured for good jobs; 9 – he sympathised with them; 10 – no; he retained control of the military

Exercise 16.2

1 – Deng Xiaoping; 2 – Wei Jingsheng; 3 – Hu Yaobang; 4 – Mao Zedong; 5 – Fang Lizhi; 6 – Li Peng; 7 – Jimmy Carter; 8 – Deng Liqun; 9 – Peng Zhen; 10 – Zhao Ziyang

Exercise 17.1

1st – death of Hu Yaobang; 2nd – Zhao Ziyang becomes General Secretary; 3rd – People's Daily editorial; 4th – start of student hunger strike; 5th – Zhao Ziyang speaks up for the students; 6th – Gorbachev returns to the Soviet Union; 7th – martial law is declared; 8th – PLA troops stopped in the Beijing suburbs; 9th – students erect the statue of the Goddess of Democracy; 10th – decision taken to use military force

Exercise 18.1

1 – the Tiananmen Incident, the Tiananmen Square Massacre; 2 – 200 killed, 3000 injured; 3 – 500-3000 killed, up to 10 000 injured; 4 – fears of their unwillingness to act against the protesters; 5 – they were known for their unquestioning obedience; 6 – he said the protests were counterrevolutionary and he praised the heroism of the PLA troops; 7 – hardly at all, or it was a counterrevolutionary revolt; 8 – some fled, some fought back, even killing some PLA troops; 9 – the man who stood alone to block a column of tanks; 10 – the man had not been arrested, run over or executed

Exercise 19.1

1 – false; 2 – true; 3 – true; 4 – false; 5 – true; 6 – true; 7 – false; 8 – false; 9 – true; 10 – false

Exercise 20.1

divisions – Deng – Zhao – Li Peng – dismissed – house arrest – Jiang Zemin – Zhu Jongji – stability – growth – democratic – slow down – market – international – wages – living standards – rural – country – pool – stimulated – reputation – background

Exercise 20.2

1 – Jiang Zemin; 2 – Zhou Enlai; 3 – Liu Shaoqi; 4 – Mao Zedong; 5 – Wei Jingsheng; 6 – Li Peng; 7 – Mao Yuanxin; 8 – Deng; 9 – Qing; 10 – Hua Guofeng; 11 – Fang; 12 – Wu Han; 13 – Wang Dan; 14 – Lin Biao; 15 – Yao Wenyaun

Exercise 20.3

M	A	O	Y	U	A	N	X	I	N
A	C	F	Z	X	I	J	N	W	I
O	M	P	W	D	S	V	A	E	M
Z	H	O	U	E	O	M	U	I	E
E	U	G	H	N	Y	C	Y	J	Z
D	A	N	A	G	T	X	N	I	G
O	G	H	N	G	J	H	E	N	N
N	U	Q	N	B	H	B	W	G	A
G	O	A	N	R	B	O	O	S	I
A	F	D	L	A	A	G	A	H	J
F	E	U	M	I	D	M	Y	E	Y
O	N	W	B	C	I	G	G	N	P
L	G	N	W	S	O	Z	N	G	H
L	I	P	E	N	G	T	I	A	E
L	I	U	S	H	A	O	Q	I	W

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