**Summary of Key Points**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | AQA History. Robert Whitfield. *The Impact of Chairman Mao: China, 1946-1976*. |
| 2-35  36-60  61-95  96-144 | **The Civil War, 1946-9**  From Dynasty to Republic  “Mao Zedong was born in 1893 in Hunan Province. In later years, he would make much of his peasant origins although, in fact, his father was a well-to-do grain merchant and farmer” (p.2)  He showed himself to be rebellious in his youth; at the age of 10 he ran away from home in protest against his father’s beating and refusing to enter into an arranged marriage.  Over thousands of years the Chinese had demonstrated their superiority over Western nations in many ways: standardized written language, complex systems of government and education, invention of printing and gunpowder, etc., however by the 19th century China had fallen behind the West in the development of technology, particularly in weapons.  By the 1890s, the Chinese Empire was being carved up between various European powers and Japan.  Unrest in the later years of the Qing dynasty, culminating with the Boxer Rising of 1900 further weakened Cixi’s power, resulting in constitutional reform. The reforms however, came too late to save the dynasty. The abdication of the Emperor in 1911 marked the end of the dynastic rule in China (p.3)  Effective power rested in the hands of the new army and its commander-in-chief, Yuan Shikai. Although he allowed political parties to be established and elections to be held, he was not prepared to share power with elected politicians. After the nationalistic National People’s Party (Guomindang), led by Sun Yat-sen, won the largest share of the vote, he outlawed political parties and had himself declared Emperor in 1915. His death in 1916, left no clear successor or stable form of government for the next 10 years. This was the period of the warlords. [1894 GMD founded as Revive China Society]  The Allied victory in the WWI resulted in the German-held territory in China being given to Japan. This provoked major student protests in Beijing that would later give rise to a movement committed to revive China as an independent nation (May 4th Movement). [1919]  Communists and Nationalists  During the early 1920s, those who wanted a strong, united China had a choice between two main political parties. The Guomindang (GMD), led by Sun Yat-sen until his death in 1925 was the largest party. This party was committed to nationalism and democracy. The Communist Party of China (CPC), established in 1921 and led by Chen Duxiu, was heavily influenced by Russian advisers. Because they were the minority, they were advised to work closely with the GMD. Chen Duxiu would later broke with the CPC and join an opposition group. (p.4)  In 1926 the GMD, now led by Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi), led campaigns against the warlords and with the assistance of the CPC, they were able to take control of the whole China. In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek turned against the Communists and decided to destroy them. This led to what was later called the “White Terror”, where Communists were tortured and killed (an estimate of 5,000-10,000 were killed during this time).  The Soong sisters.  Over the next 10 years, Chiang Kai-shek consolidated his control over China. China became a one-party state under Chiang’s dictatorship (p.5)  By this time, Mao had abandoned his base in Hunan and moved to the mountainous area of Jiangxi province. Later he was forced to abandon his Jiangxi base in search of a more secure base. What followed was the Long March of 1934-5, which has been given legendary status by Communist Party propaganda ever since. (p.6)  After crossing 18 mountain ranges, fighting through the ranks of 4 GMD armies, 368 days and a journey of 12,500 km, the survivors arrived in the area around Yan’an in Shaanxi province. Of the 80,000 who set out in the journey, only 5,000 had survived. By the mid-1930s, it seemed that the CPC was on the verge of extinction.  Their fate was however changed when Japan began to invade northern China. Chiang Kai-shek called a national conference to coordinate resistance, to which the Communists were invited. The United Front between Communists and Nationalists was, in theory at least, revived. By this time Japan had conquered the coastal cities of Shanghai and Hong Kong. Chiang Kai-shek retreated to Central China, making Chongqing his new capital. Meanwhile Mao had established himself as the undisputed leader of the Communist Party whose members had risen from 40,000 in 1937 to 800,000 in 1940. The Party was also able to achieve military victories against the Japanese while the GMD’s military campaigns always ended in defeat. (p.7)  After Japan was defeated in WWII, the Communists and the GMD began to struggle for the soul of the nation in 1946. US tried to mediate the conflict, but Chiang Kai-shek’s constant attempt to back-stab the Communists led to continual strife between the GMD and the Communists.  As the Communists were gaining territory against the GMD, Stalin attempted to persuade Mao to stop the offensive against nationalistic forces in the south and to establish a communist regime only in the north of China. He feared that Americans might intervene if they believed that Chiang Kai-shek’s regime was on the point of final collapse (p.19)   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | August 1945 | Nationalists | Communists | | Troops | 2,800,000 | 320,000 | | Artillery pieces | 6,000 | 600 | |  |  |  | | June 1948 | Nationalists | Communists | | Troops | 2,200,000 | 1,560,000 | | Artillery pieces | 21,000 | 22,800 |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | Strength | Weakness | | Nationalists | Numerical superiority, experience in conventional battle, aircraft, foreign support and recognition | Low morale of troops, soldiers were unpaid, unfed and unfit, they gained a reputation for brutality, they were not disciplined, increasing desertions, huge territory but weakly controlled | | Communists | Experience in guerrilla, highly disciplined, strong unity among soldiers, they were committed to their cause, strong ideology, had the support of the peasants | Small numbers, not experienced in conventional battles, small territorial control |   Chiang’s Leadership  Weak regime divided by factional rivalry  Interfered in military decisions with impractical and contradictory policies (he could not trust his subordinates)  He was a poor judge of character  He promoted people because of loyalty not talent  Corruption in his government alienated the people  The three principles (nationalism, democracy and people’s livelihood) that made the party popular in its early years were undermined by Chiang Kai-shek.  “Chiang same as ever, a grasping, bigoted, ungrateful little rattlesnake” – American General Joseph Stilwell (also known as ‘Vinegar Joe’ for his sharp tongue)  Disciplines Behavior by Communist Troops ( See p.26)  In areas controlled by Communists (before the civil war), Mao introduced land reforms to get the support of the peasants. At first he confiscated lands belonging to richer peasants and redistributed among poorer ones. In the later years however, Mao took a cautious approach to land reform, reducing rents instead of confiscating lands, so not to antagonize the landlords (p.27).  When the Civil War started, Mao returned to his more radical policies and decided to confiscate land from landowners again, for there was no more need to compromise over the United Front.  The reign of terror  (hundreds of thousands were killed, and approximately 16 million people were subjected to some form of abuse or physical torture)  As the peasants began to confiscate lands from landlords, violence was an integral part of the process. Richer peasants would be subjected to violence and humiliation. Fear of revenge from the landlords if the GMD recaptured control of the area, pushed the peasants to support the Communists (Mao would later blame lower level communists for these excesses)  Once back in control the landlords would exact revenge on the peasants that participated in land reform. The land was forcibly taken back, rents were collected at gunpoint and in some cases landlords executed one member of every family that had participated in land reform.  The Communists were also successful because they had agents infiltrated in the highest levels of the nationalist forces (See p.30).  Inflation  High inflation under Chiang Kai-shek resulted in loss of popularity.  By May 1946, prices had risen by 1,000 per cent over their September 1945 levels.  In February 1947, the rate of inflation reached 3,000 and by 1948-9, the rate of inflation was in the tens of thousands (6.7 million yuan to buy a sack of flour in 1948, by August the price had risen to 63 million yuan).  Foreign Aid  Chiang relied heavily on foreign aid; in total, the Americans gave $3 billion in aid to the Nationalists (“Cash my check”). Mao pointed out that China would never become independent under Chiang Kai-shek. However, the Communists also receive aid from the USSR in form of arms and training.  Mao and Stalin however had major disagreements. Stalin put USSR’s interests above the Chinese’s; he didn’t want to be seen as giving assistance to the CPC. *He also signed a treaty with Chiang Kai-shek in which he promised to hand over territory occupied by the Red Army to the Nationalists.*  “If you do not leave, we will use tanks to drive you out” (p.33)  The Communists finally won the Civil War. On October 1st, 1949, Mao declared the foundation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). To avoid capture, Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan and established a Guomindang government there.  **The Consolidation of Power, 1949-53**  Mao modified Marx ideas to the Chinese conditions. The working class in China was less than one percent of the population, unable to carry out revolution. Revolution then, should be carried out not by the proletariat, but by the peasants. Mao Zedong Thought became the major doctrine of the Communist Party. Some of its ideas were:   1. Self-reliance – China should not be reliant on foreign power. Mao always felt uncomfortable with the unequal relationship with the USSR 2. Continuing revolution – it was essential for each new generation to be involved in revolutionary struggle, to prevent the threat of counter-revolution and to support the regime. Maintaining the revolutionary zeal had priority over political stability 3. Class struggle – Mao believed that there was a danger that the Communist Party once in power could become a new ruling, class exploiting the people it was supposed to serve. Officials would enjoy benefits and privileges and detach themselves from the people. Therefore, the Communist Party needed to be periodically rectified. 4. Learning from the people – The Communist Party should listen to the concerns of the people, and not become like the Communist Party in USSR; the people should act as a check on the power of the Communist Party. 5. Mass mobilization – mass mobilization should be used to achieve specific objectives.   Challenges facing the new government in 1949   1. A soaring inflation 2. The GMD took all of China’s foreign currency reserves with them to Taiwan 3. The Communist victory created a rift between China and the West, cutting China off from trade and contact with the West 4. The outlying provinces and semi-autonomous regions had been left on their own since 1911. The new government would have to reassert its authority once more   Deng Xiaoping – veteran of the Long March, military leader in the PLA in the Civil War, Party’s General Secretary in 1957  Large network of labor camps (lao-gai, “reform through labor”) used to punish those who didn’t have enough zeal or were accused of being “counter-revolutionaries”.  Chang and Halliday estimate that as many as 27 million people were either executed, committed suicide or worked to death in the camps (*Mao: The Unknown Story*, 2006)  Four major campaigns in the years 1950-2:   1. “Resist America and Aid Korea” – Westerners in China became the targets of persecution. Christian churches were closed, their properties seized, missionaries, priests and nuns were expelled. 2. “Suppression of Counter-revolutionaries” – public executions of 28,332 people within a year. “[Mao’s] aim was to scare and brutalize the entire population in a way that went much further than either Stalin or Hitler, who largely kept their foulest crimes out of sight” – Jung Chang and J. Halliday (p.47) 3. “Three-Antis” – its targets were corruption, waste and obstructionist bureaucracy 4. “Five-Antis” – its targets were bribery, tax evasion, the theft of State property, cheating on government contracts and economic espionage. It is estimate that 2 or 3 million took their own lives rather than face further humiliation. Mao wanted total subjugation of thoughts, large and small. Private and independent thoughts were considered dangerous. (See p.47)   Party Purge: In late 1953, Gao Gang (leading CPC official in Manchuria) with the support of Rao Shushi (CPC leader in the Shanghai region) attempted to usurp the position of Zhou Enlai and become Vice-Chairman of the CPC. Alerted by Deng Xiaoping, Mao denounced Gao Gang and Rao Shushi. Gao Gang committed suicide in 1954 and Rao was arrested and died in prison some 20 years later (p.48)  Social Reforms   1. The emancipation of women – arranged marriages were banned, the act of having concubines was banned. Mao however kept a select group of women around him, officially known as the PLA dance troupe, they were in fact treated as ‘imperial concubines’ and expected to provide the Chairman’s sexual needs. 2. Improvements in education – by the time the CPC took over, there were 31 schools and universities run by British and American foundations and 32 run by Christian missionary organizations. Elementary education became compulsory, however the best school districts had seats reserved for the children of high-ranking party officials. 3. Improvements in public health   Imperial Examinations: Candidates had to learn by heart 431,286 characters and five classic texts.  **Economic Planning and Its Results, 1953-67**  Bo Yibo (1908-2007) – See p.62  By 1956, 75 million households (63 percent of the peasant population) had been pushed into Agricultural Producer’s Cooperatives (APCs)  Mao as opposed to Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, became more convinced that, given the will to succeed, material conditions need not be the decisive factor in dictating the pace of change. This was a theme he would return to in the years to come, sometimes with catastrophic results (p.64)  First 5 Year Plan, 1953-7  By deliberately limiting the supply of consumer goods, the government ensured that Chinese peasants and workers had little money to spend on and more money to save in State banks. This money would be used by the government to finance industrial investment. A proportion of the food would also be taken from the peasants by the government as a form of quota. This food would be used to feed the growing urban population while keeping their salaries low (p.65)  Targets and achievements of the first five-year-plan (p.66)  The Hundred Flowers Campaign, 1956  “Let a hundred flowers blossom, let a hundred schools of thought contend”  Mao demanded that intellectuals should feel free to openly voice criticisms of the Communist Party and its policies.  Writer Hu Feng in 1955 wrote that the Communist Party’s control over culture had stifled creativity and art. For this counter-revolutionary crime, he was dismissed from the writer’s union, charged with being an agent of the GMD and leader of an anti-communist underground organization. He was imprisoned and released only after 1979.  Mao believed that the Hundred Flower campaign would serve as another ‘rectification’ movement in which officials (who were in his way) would be subjected to criticism from outside the Party and obliged to mend their ways. (p.69)  However, the result of the campaign shocked Mao. In the press, magazines and on posters, intellectuals attacked the regime for treating the people as their obedient subjects, for abusing human rights, for following the Soviet model of development and for controlling the intellectual life of its citizens. Mao’s attention began to shift from encouraging flowers to bloom to the eradication of ‘poisonous weeds’. In the following anti-rightist campaign, 500,000 intellectuals were branded as rightists and subjected to varying degrees of persecution (p.71)  Independence of thought was systematically crushed; intellectuals would never trust Mao or the CPC again.  The Great Leap Forward  Quote from page 74  Mao’s vision: China could be transformed into a leading industrial power in record time. This was a gigantic experiment with far-reaching and potentially devastating consequences for China.  Mao wanted China to develop very quickly from Socialism to fully developed Communism. He first predicted that China would be producing 40 million tons of steel by the 1970s, a figure twice as high as the one approved by the Central Committee and 8 times as high as China’s actual steel output at the end of the five-year plan (5 million)  As his confidence grew his expectations were raised even higher; by fall of 1958, he was predicting steel output of 100 million tons and by 1962 he was predicting 700 million tons by the early 1970s.  As with steel, so with agriculture. In December 1958 he set a target for grain production of 430 million tons, twice as much as had ever been produced even in the best years.  In order to achieve this, he had to set communes with the aim of abolishing the private family-sphere of peasant life. The peasants’ plots of land were taken over by the commune; all meals were provided in mess halls. Family ties were dismissed as “bourgeois emotional attachments’. (p.75)  Mao drew up an eight-point constitution based on the discredited theories of the Soviet ‘scientist’ Lysenko, which farmers were forced to follow. Among the eight point were the instructions to plant crops closer together, and to plough the soil much deeper than normal practice. Both of these policies had disastrous results for grain yields (p.76)  The Four Noes campaign was also initiated with the attempt of eradicating flies, mosquitoes, rats and sparrows on the false belief that sparrows consumed large quantities of seed and grain. The result was that the ecological balance was upset and caterpillars, on which the sparrows did feed, became more prevalent and consumed large areas of crops.  The Great Leap Forward also saw the establishment of ‘backyard furnaces’ in schools, colleges and other institutions that had little experience of iron melting. Metal implements of all kinds, from cooking pots to iron fences, radiators and even locks, were requisitioned to be melted down into pig iron, while wooden furniture, doors and trees were used as fuel.  Large civil engineering projects were also undertaken where bridges, canals and dams mobilized tens of thousands to dig and build by hand rather than using machines.  See Source p.77  Chen Yun (1900-95)  There was nobody with the courage or the authority to stand up to Mao and ensure that the Party followed a policy based on reasoned argument.  Mao’s motivation behind the Great Leap Forward was his desire to develop an independent and powerful China. He was looking for a Chinese road to Socialism and in order to do that he needed first to catch up with Britain and the USA as fast as possible.  The Great Leap Forward ultimately failed, despite Mao’s expectations to the contrary. It failed because it was a project based on the total denial of the actual capacity of China’s agricultural and industrial base, a refusal to be bound by economic laws and an assertion that economic targets could be based on political necessity rather than rational calculation (p.81)  Inflated figures by political cadres who told Mao what he wanted to hear (or else they would be branded as ‘rightists’) contributed to the atmosphere of euphoria in the early stages of the Great Leap Forward. This project also involved a monumental waste of both human and material resources.   1. Propagandas reporting an abundance of food encouraged peasants to consume and waste more. 2. Work teams too busy fulfilling the government quota left the grains to rot on the fields 3. Melting farm implements to make steel left the peasants with too few tools with which to cultivate land   Aftermath of the Great Leap Forward  Bad harvests aided by an even worse central planning by Mao led to a catastrophic shortage of food. Party officials were in charge of seizing grains from the peasants and sending it to the cities. As a result during the years of 1959-62, more than 20 million people died, most of starvation and malnutrition. Jung Chang and Halliday place the toll of death at 38 million. This was the worst famine of all recorded history, all caused by one man: Mao Zedong. (p.85)  What followed were reports of banditry, prostitution, rebellion and cannibalism by the peasants. However, in one case, the Henan militia unit committed crimes of robbery, rape and murder.  The purge of Peng Dehuai  During this time, the minister of Defense, Peng Dehuai (1898-1974) sent Mao a private letter arguing that the Great Leap Forward was correct in theory but flawed in practice. He did not however exempt Mao from criticism. What was intended as a private letter was published by Mao to all delegates. Peng Dehuai’s impeccable credentials and his incorruptible character was not enough to save him from Mao’s determination to destroy him.  The Third Five Year Plan – launched in 1962 (scientists and intellectuals brought back)  Mao on the defensive (See Source on p.89)  He was caught by surprise when Liu gave a speech blaming the Party center for the failings of the Great Leap Forward  In the annual summer conference of 1962, Mao decided to combat what he considered to be the ‘revisionist’ policies of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping who were willing to compromise on the ideology to restore China’s economy (e.g. restoring some elements of private farming and private trade)  “it doesn’t matter if the cat is black or white; so long as it catches the mouse, it is a good cat” – Deng Xiaoping  ‘Oppose revisionism (abroad), prevent revisionism (at home)’  Mao’s Prophecy – see p.90  Liu Shaoqi had been seen as Mao’s successor and he had taken over the chairmanship when Mao had stepped down at the end of 1958. However Mao’s discontentment with Liu’s lack of ‘ideological purity’ was reaching its climax.  Support for Mao: the PLA  During this time the level of indoctrination in the PLA increased when Lin Biao compiled a selection of Mao’s quotations under the title *Quotations from Chairman Mao* (otherwise known as the *Little Red Book*). Thus the cult of Mao was encouraged in the armed forces (p.91).  In 1965, Lin Biao abolished all ranks within the PLA, transforming it into a highly politicized organization, totally committed to supporting Mao.  Another support for Mao came from Jiang Qing, his wife (fourth wife, 1914-91 married Mao in 1939) who along with her allies in Shanghai, were much more radical than the leadership in Beijing.  With support coming from Chen Boda (1904-89), Mao’s political secretary, and Kang Sheng (1898-1975), his security chief, notorious for his extravagant and corrupt lifestyle, Mao was ready to challenge the leadership of the CPC. His challenge would come in the form of the Cultural Revolution, which he would launch in 1966.  The Cult of Personality  See p.93  The Account of Lei Feng – doing the everyday, boring things with a sense of commitment is in itself a form of heroism (See p.93)  The Cultural Revolution and its aftermath, 1966-76  See Source 1 (p.96)  The Aims of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution were:   1. A struggle to remold Chinese culture: “the Cultural Revolution was an attack on all modes of thought and behavior that did not conform to Mao’s vision of a socialist society” (p.97). The first battle took place over a play *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*. Campaign against the ‘Four Olds’: old culture, ideas, customs and habits. Western music was banned; temples, works of art, ornamental gardens were liable to be destroyed. Recruiting youngsters was the key idea for Mao, for these were untainted by the thoughts, habits and customs of old China. 2. A power struggle to remove opposition in the Party: Mao sought to undermine the leadership of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping indirectly by secretly sponsoring criticism of the Party through university students. Mao also swan in the strong current of the Yangtze at Wuhan, to prove that he still had physical strength to fight revolutionary battles. Mao then proceeded to criticize Liu Shaoqi and accuse him of resisting the Cultural Revolution. Liu Shaoqi was demoted from 2nd to 8th place while Lin Biao was promoted to 2nd place and established as Mao’s chosen successor. Although they retained their posts, their careers were over. Liu died in prison in 1969 and Deng survived, largely because of Zhou Enlai, being rehabilitated in 1973. Wang Renzhong, the Party chief of Hubei province, was also purged. 3. A rectification campaign: Mao believed that the Party had become over-bureaucratic, accustomed to a privileged lifestyle that set them apart from the mass of the population. Nothing short of an assault on the Party itself would suffice to save the Chinese revolution from counter-revolutionary elements. Mao also believed that the young people (who were born after the Chinese Revolution) needed to gain a direct experience in revolutionary struggle, which included engaging in acts of violence and killing in his name. In this way the Party could be purified of ‘capitalist-roaders’ and ‘counter-revolutionary elements’, and the revolution itself would gain new impetus with the infusion of new blood.   The Cultural Revolution was a mass rectification that bypassed the control of the Party. Mao’s purpose was to unleash “a great disorder across the land leading to great order” (p.103)  “Bombard the Headquarters” – Mao Zedong  ‘Red by birth’ vs. ‘Red by action’  Red Guards Rallies (p.104)  Red Guard units composed of students from bourgeois, non-Party backgrounds were the most radical and the most inclined to attack Party officials.  At the end of December 1966 there were street battles between rival Red Guard factions in Shanghai (the “January Storm”). The Party leadership was brought down in Shanghai and revolutionary rebels filled in their place.  Profile: Yao Wenyuan (1925-2005) – a member of the Gang of Four  Peng Zhen (1902-97)  Zhang Chunqiao (1917-2005) – a member of the Gang of Four  Wang Hongwen (1933-92) – a member of the Gang of Four  As chaos prevailed in society, the Politburo decided to impose limits on the use of force by the Red Guards and the PLA was ordered to restore order.  Mao considered this a challenge to his own authority and PLA officers who had attempted to crack down on radical Red Guards were denounced as ultra-rightists and court martialled. The PLA was ordered to refrain from using armed force against Red Guards (p.108)  Factional rivalry in Wuhan (See p.109)  In August 1967, Mao had a change of heart and he drew back from his radical policies as public order was being undermined by the Red Guards. In September, 1967 Mao forbade Red Guards from seizing weapons. The PLA was also authorized to open fire on radical groups in self-defense.  During August 1967 to July 1968, it was the time for the Red Guards to be purged. Under the pretext of clamping down on the excesses of the May 16 Group, 10 million people fell under suspicion, 3 million of whom were detained for questioning.  Key Events & Source (See p.110)  The suppression of the Red Guards was followed by a large-scale, compulsory rustication (expelled temporarily) program in which young people from the cities were sent to work and live in the countryside (5 million young people were sent for work-study programs).  By April 1969, the Cultural Revolution was officially over. Liu Shaoqi was kept a prisoner in an unheated room at the local Party headquarters in Kaifeng. In November 1969, he developed pneumonia for a second time, permission to move him to a hospital was denied. He died on 12 November.  It is estimated that 500,000-750,000 people were killed during the Cultural Revolution. Public places had become venues for systematic killings in the 2 ½ years that the Cultural Revolution lasted. In the town of Daxing, 300 people were clubbed to death in the town square.  The pressure to conform in terms of thought, appearance and lifestyle intensified during these years.  Homes would be ransacked and searched for materials such as antiques, valuables, musical instruments, paintings and porcelain (evidence of a “bourgeois lifestyle”.  See Source 2 on p.115  See Source 4, 5 on p.117  “the more books you read, the more stupid you become” – Mao Zedong  The Cultural Revolution Group (CRG), which included Jiang Qing, specifically ordered the Red Guards from Beijing to travel to Shandong Province and desecrate the museum dedicated to Confucius.  It became counter-revolutionary to show respect for the aged or one’s own parents since this was one of the Four Olds  Aftermath of the Cultural Revolution  In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution there were three main power groupings within the Chinese political system (Mao was 76 years old in 1969 and the issue of his succession was in everyone’s mind):   1. Lin Biao and the PLA – he would compete with Jiang Qing to win Mao’s favor 2. Jiang Qing and the Shanghai radicals – she sought to undermine State Premier Zhou Enlai. 3. Zhou Enlai and the bureaucracy – an able diplomat, skilled in the art of compromise, he was the great survivor of the Communist Party, able to read Mao’s coded signal and put forward suggestions that Mao supported but was unable of putting forward himself. He could read the times and he knew when to withdraw support from former allies and colleagues when it was clear that their fate had already been sealed.   Mao however started to have doubts about Lin Biao, especially when Mao was planning to abolish the post of State Chairman (a vacant post that once belonged to Liu Shaoqi). Lin Biao who was usually complacent and passive, made strenuous efforts to persuade Mao to keep the post.  Later the conflict intensified when Mao relocated PLA officers who supported Lin to areas outside Beijing; Mao also forced Lin’s allies to make self-criticism. When his position was becoming unattainable, Lin Biao along with his son, Lin Liguo, made plans for a possible coup. Plans had been made for the possible assassination of Zhang Chunqiao and Mao himself. As the plan became unviable, Lin with his son decided to fly to the south and set up a rival regime in Guangdong but as his plan was found out, he changed his course and decided to go north, to the USSR. With insufficient fuel to reach its destination the plane clashed in Outer Mongolia, killing all eight people on board.  This intrigue within the Party had a major effect on the people who begin to see that Mao was not infallible and they began to undermine their faith in Mao and in the system. As Mao’s health deteriorated, factions within the Party began to vie for power. No one could however fill the gap left by Lin Biao. Zhou Enlai was too moderate and Jiang Qing was widely detested, no one could carry on Mao’s ideological legacy.  Zhou Enlai meanwhile began to reestablish order in the economy and industry. He was involved in the decision to invite President Nixon in 1972 for talks on reopening diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries. This was part of his broader strategy of the Four Modernizations: agriculture, industry, national defense and science and technology. Zhou also re-introduced the university entrance exams.  Zhou Enlai was also a firm believer in technology transfer. China was lagging behind the West in the economy and technology. Zhou championed a policy of purchasing foreign equipment and employing foreign experts to help in the modernization of its industries, particularly the energy and aerospace. Under this program the Nippon Steel Corporation of Japan built a complete steel plant at Wuhan in 1974. Rolls Royce of UK signed a $100 million agreement in 1975 to build jet engines in China. (p.131)  The radicals however had control of the media and propaganda (including the most influential Chinese newspaper, the *People’s Daily*) and most importantly, Mao’s backing. (p.130)  At the 10th Party Congress in 1973, Mao elevated Wang Hongwen to 3rd place in the Party (Zhou Enlai was 2nd). This was Mao’s way of presenting a new successor. At the same time he rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping and placed him under Zhou Enlai. This was however an inherent unstable mixture, to have Deng Xiaoping, a moderate, working closely with Wang Hongwen, a radical.  In 1973, Jiang Qing launched the anti-Confucius campaign. This campaign was presented as a struggle between those who wanted to go forward with Communism and those who wanted to turn back the tide of history. The real target was not Confucius. Lin Biao was being described as ‘one of the Confuciuses of contemporary China’. But even Lin Biao was not the main target. This was Zhou Enlai. The radials opposed Zhou Enlai’s ‘transfer of technology’ policy.  Learn from Dazhai (p.131)  In October 1974, Wang visited Mao, warning him that Zhou and Deng were planning to seize power. Mao advised him not to be manipulated by Jiang Qing. By 1975, it had become obvious that Wang Hongwen didn’t have the political experience or the independence of mind to be his successor. Once again the question of Mao’s succession became open and the political situation became unstable.  Deng Xiaoping’s Rise  By 1975, Mao had become virtually blind, unable to read, his speech had to be interpreted by his secretary, Zhang Yufeng. He needed oxygen to help him breath. Zhou Enlai also suffering from a terminal disease made his last public appearance in January 1975. Meanwhile Deng Xiaoping was promoted to Vice-Premier in the government, assuming control of the PLA, and being admitted to the Party Politburo. He had then assumed key positions within the three pillars of the PRC’s system: Party, System and the military (p.133).  The Gang of Four accused Deng of reversing the verdict of the Cultural Revolution. During October and November 1975 Mao, despite his growing infirmity, made clear his opposition to the policies being pursued by Deng. Deng retained his posts but his power was diminished.  The death of Zhou Enlai in January of 1976 ushered a new phase in the power struggle. Zhou had been the most popular leader of the revolution after Mao himself. The Gang of Four, using their control of the media, tried to suppress reports of the public outpouring of grief at Zhou’s death (one million lined up to see his funeral procession). In March 1976, Zhang Chunqiao, published an article implying that Zhou was a ‘capitalist-roader’. His article backfired sparking a spontaneous reaction to Zhou. In early April, at the Festival of the Dead ceremony held in Tiananmen Square, over two million people attended to pay their respects. The event turned into a political protest when posters began to appear attacking Jiang Qing (the ‘mad empress’), her allies (the ‘wolves and jackals’) and Mao himself (the ‘Qin Emperor’). This spontaneous demonstration was unprecedented in Communist China where all the previously held mass demonstrations were organized by the Party. This was a sign that Mao and the Party were beginning to lose control of the events (p.134)  These demonstrations were condemned by the Party and Deng was held responsible. Mao agreed with the verdict and Deng was stripped of all his posts, except Party membership. Hua Guofeng was appointed as Mao’s successor. Deng had gone into hiding in Guangzhou. Hua was neutral and didn’t belong to any faction. As Mao was approaching his death, the Gang of Four sought to undermine Hua. This serious tactical mistake drove Hua to seek alliances with PLA military commanders. (p.136)  Mao died on 9 September 1976. Hua immediately succeeded to all top positions within the Party. The Gang of Four committed the mistake of staying in Beijing after Mao’s death while their powerbase was in Shanghai. They were arrested by Hua and the PLA. Deng Xiaoping was rehabilitated (for the second time) in 1978, and would succeed Hua as Chairman in 1980. Despite all his efforts to ensure that his legacy was entrusted to someone who would defend the ‘verdict’ of the Cultural Revolution, Mao was unable to prevent the old ‘number two capitalist-roader’, Deng Xiaoping, from returning to power. (1904-1997)  See Source 1, 2 (p.138)  “Had Mao died in 1956, his achievements would have been immortal. Had he died in 1966, he would still have been a great man. But he died in 1976. Alas, what can one say?” (Chen Yun, 1979)  “Revolution has more to do with tearing down the old than with painstakingly constructing the new. Mao’s legacy was to clear the way for less visionary, more practical men to build the shining future that he could never achieve” (P. Short, Mao: A Life, 1999)  Although Communist China has abandoned many of Mao’s policies, it has not abandoned the myth of Mao, to do so would undermine the foundations on which their rule is based.  Source 3 (p.139)  Mao’s Achievements   * Warlordism and civil war was ended and a strong central government was established in Beijing * China became a great power after more than a century of humiliation under foreign powers. Under communist rule, Chine regained its pride, independence and self-respect. China acquired nuclear weapons and entered the space race. * Greater equality for women * China’s population became more educated and more healthy * Major industrial development   The costs of Mao’s rule   * It is estimated that over 60 million people died directly or indirectly as a result of Mao’s policies. * In Mao’s defense, it might be argued that he rarely gave personal instructions for the executions carried out in his name (however as a leader of the nation with unchecked power, he was directly responsible) * He showed indifference to the sufferings of millions and considered their deaths unavoidable and as a necessary cost to bear in the pursuit of his ideals. The end justifies the means. * Mao’s policies could not take China further in its economic developments * Whereas in the 1950s Mao had been leading China towards a solution for its chronic economic underdevelopment, by the 1970s he had become part of the problem, an obstacle to further progress. |