

**VISUAL MAO ZEDONG: IDEOLOGICAL IDEALS  
AND RHETORICAL ORDEALS**

**By**

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## VISUAL MAO ZEDONG: IDEOLOGICAL IDEALS AND RHETORICAL ORDEALS

## Abstract

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This dissertation takes a rhetorical approach toward the ideological identifications and contradictions of Chinese national and global politics implied by Mao Zedong's physical presence and his painted or printed images. Making historical and theoretical selections that should inform and challenge scholars who work in English, I have analyzed the visual codes, cultural and linguistic contradictions, and political emotions that have promoted ideological interactions around these images of Mao Zedong. Closely related to Lenin's impermanence idea about public propaganda, the portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, Beijing, China, typically presents the complex relationships of ideology and power in our modern world. On the one hand, it is only a simple portrait on canvas in a humble frame. On the other, it is a giant image displayed at a politically prominent spot, the painting of which is constantly renewed. The dissertation explores the visual rhetoric of this kind of metonymic display of Mao Zedong, considers how its signifying functions operate in the changing social and ideological realities of China and the global political economy, and suggests how these images articulate and represent a selective persona of Mao Zedong as a consistent factor amidst such changes.

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## **Introduction**

### **Portrait of Mao Zedong at the Capital**

At the very beginning of 2008, a billboard for the French carmaker Citroen appeared in Madrid: an unusual portrait of Mao Zedong. The advertisement meant commercial promotion—in an industrial country like Spain where individualism and liberalism are the backbones of market economy, the abuse of a totalitarian icon would appeal to a lot of car drivers. Such rhetoric would easily create a shocking sensation. But the visual violence only hurt many Chinese. The artists would have to shake their heads—“We thought the Chinese in Madrid would hate Mao Zedong. Didn’t he kill millions of his own people when he became the leader of his country?” But at the thought of the large population of Chinese, Citroen had to issue an apology on January 15.

There are two points to study. Why was Mao Zedong placed in a position of such a visual power? The ideological contention, which most countries are now trying to avoid, actually surfaced immediately when Mao Zedong was displayed in this way. Although only a few people would go into the debate between communism and capitalism, cultural and national sentimentalism was both the reason for resistance and compromise. When the French and Spanish artists projected their freedom onto their undemocratic car, they meant to make use of a communist icon to appeal to most Western populace. Yet their laissez-faire advertisement also brought the Chinese culture and nationality in question. The European designers, though maybe not conscious of the Westphalian model of respecting separate states and individuals, could not get over their awareness of hurting another equal nationality. But the second question is—Will they change the picture if it is purely a matter of communism and capitalism, or communism

and Christianity? The answer, then, would have to face the old cries of class, which are now lost in the segregation of human rights in race, gender, and nation studies. The French or Spanish or any other European artist would undoubtedly use other ways to oppose the Communist icon of Mao Zedong.

In the age of images, ideology and power are shown through the visual media, and are mediated by the visual devices. This dissertation is an analytic attempt to answer the questions about the ideological sign of Mao Zedong. This is a sensitive topic. When such considerations came to my head, I found myself hesitant to continue the project. Our ideological contentions have been exclusive, polemical, offensive, and aggressive. Most often, the victims are usually the ordinary citizens who know only one side of the story and thus become the victimizers for their leaderships. Because the Portrait of Mao Zedong is still up in the age of Lenin in ruins, the ideological tension becomes all the more accentuated and makes the rhetorical analysis more difficult. Situated in most antagonistic oppositions—capitalism and socialism, religion and anti-religion, communism and liberalism, Western and Eastern cultures—the sight of Mao Zedong can easily lead to the either-or arguments. But if this project may inform, not convince, a readership that holds totally different worldviews than what the images of Mao Zedong may have suggested for most Chinese, then it provides some common ground to change the either-or tension into a dialogic channel. The intention of this dissertation is to better understand our ideological conflicts in hope of reaching better rhetorical approaches that will reduce ideological pressure. Personally, the portrait of Mao Zedong is a good visual forum that may offer informed experience of balance. The portrait—comparatively much vulnerable than his other images in metals—is increasingly viewed as a symbol of public

art for the disadvantaged classes.

It is a great chance for me to use both Western and Chinese theories of visual rhetoric to approach this portrait and present it as an ideological sign and rhetorical forum. In his *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics*, Thomas Sebeok defines “sign” as a generic concept that can be specified into a dominant aspect with others co-operating or subordinated (21). This goes well with the different aspects of ideology, and becomes an important guideline to formulate the interpretive terminology. The portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, the ideological sign, can be interpreted as an ideological icon, a cultural emblem, a political index, or a philosophical symptom. These terms are useful devices to describe the portrait and its signified or referent in certain historical contexts. Sebeok’s discussion of minimalism is also a convenient support to the analysis of the portrait as a highly charged or recharged example of public art. Therefore, he shares some space with Mark Lewis, and Gao Minglu, a Chinese art critic, in differentiating the public arts and popular arts. Mark Lewis’ rhetorical analysis of Lenin in ruins offers some idealistic insights about Lenin’s own desire that “contemporary public works [should] be temporary” (10). Yet Lewis does not see the ideological side. It is Gao Minglu who points out the reasons that make different spectatorships—the portrait as an ideological state apparatus to promote collectivism or as an artifact of popular art to appease the Western individualism and liberalism. These ideological matters are really the motives behind those rhetorical differences. Mao Zedong has been placed at the two extremes of visual rhetoric. In terms of ideological visions, my dissertation will draw in many powerful concepts. Louis Althusser and Michael Barkun who complexly formulate the concepts of “new world order,” Henry Kissinger whose Westphalian mindset has shaped

up the nationalist hegemony of our global politics, Xu Jiamei who looks closely at the concept of “peaceful evolution,” and others have built up theoretical frameworks to show the different signifying powers in the portrait of Mao Zedong.

The unconventional devices of rhetoric—the packaging of emotion and reason, and image event, for example—have been helpful for my analysis of political emotions and visual activism. These theoretical interests make the portrait as an ideological sign become tangible interpretants, or in Charles Sanders Peirce’s words, “sign[s] overlying a sign” (qt. in Sebeok 11). Today, we argue with images emotionally. Kevin DeLuca’s idea of “image event,” Barbara Emmel’s “visual enthymeme,” George Marcus’ “sentimental citizen,” and many other insightful formulas give me much visual confidence. My visual literacy owes much to Marguerite Helmers who concisely outlines the rhetorical devices to process “visual information,” and Roland Barthes who has conceptualized “coded or non-coded iconic messages.” These visual techniques serve the ideological purposes, and should have their fair share of theoretical space in this dissertation.

### **Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen Square**

At a time when the rhetorics of democracy and multiculturalism are applauded without questioning, many people cannot believe their own eyes that a single person’s portrait is conspicuously placed as a national symbol at the national gate of China and that the national emblem above it looks like a complementary ornament. Unbelievably, it has been meant to be so.

The Chinese, most of them, do not take the portrait as a personal image of Mao Zedong. They regard it as a selected persona of China, a country that has stood up after a

hundred years' deep sleep in which—as the English, French and the whole United Nations wished—the tiger was crouching and the dragon was hidden. Many people believe or are made to believe that Mao Zedong led China to her own feet—in the very sense of “feet”: Mao Zedong's China did not just get rid of the bullying foreign countries but saved its women's beautiful feet from the binding cloth of the old patriarchal system. However, the point is not Mao Zedong's achievements but the collective identity of Mao Zedong's personality. Mao Zedong was elected from many other great personalities to represent the Army, the Party, and the Country. Mao Zedong was not himself when he was elected, and is commemorated with the dignities of China in the issues of nation, class, race and gender. Many Chinese associate Mao Zedong's images as reminders of Mao Zedong's ideals of equality and justice in contrast to the political corruptions of Old China or even today's China. These Chinese are sensitive to any form of criticism against Mao Zedong. For them, any bad word about Mao Zedong means an insult to the Chinese working classes.

On the central entrance to the imperial palaces of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties that functioned from 1267 to 1911 CE, the portrait of Mao Zedong changes the view in many paradoxical ways. Though a personal picture, it is supposed to be the symbol of a new China, a country where the people should be the host. Mao Zedong, as a singular person of peasantry, becomes an emblem of democratic dictatorship in which, conventionally, urban workers take the lead. Devoid of any religious symbolism, the 6.4-meter high and 5.04-meter wide painting, in the format of a photograph, has been worshiped by many with the most fanatical fervor. It is an Eastern subject that is exposed and asserted in the boldest Western way because, in the feudal Chinese tradition, a

sovereign was revered by not allowing any bottom-up gaze. This West-oriented iconography, however, also goes against the emotional interpretation of many who are used to viewing democracy as the patent political form of West Europe and North America. Based on their emotional repertoire, scholars and ordinary people have tried to analyze this visual state apparatus. Their stances and conclusions always bifurcate: on the one hand is the card of a most selected personality, on the other is mere personality cult. Both sides claim to be rational, but like any other debate of the modern world, the argument about Mao Zedong's image will not produce any constructive insight if the rhetoric of persuasion is the order of the day.

Tiananmen Square is 440 thousand square meters, meaning a capacity of holding one and a half million people if necessary. Major national parades have been held on this square—January 1, New Year's Day (Western calendar); around February 1, Spring Festival (Chinese traditional new year's day); May 1, Labor's Day; May 4, Youth's Day; June 1, Children's Day; July 1, Party's Day; August 1, Army's Day; October 1, Nation's Day. Other big events include Sun Zhongshan's birthday (April 12), Mao Zedong's birthday (December 26), and birthdays or death days of other political leaders such as Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping. The pavilion of Tiananmen—with red paints, red flags, red lanterns and large red wooden columns—is the rostrum for the VIPs to address the audience on the Square. Portrait of Mao Zedong is right in front of the focal point of the rostrum—about 15 meters above the Square. Three tunnels go beneath the deck, and the portrait is above the entrance of the middle and much higher one. It is unmistakably the center of visual attention for any visitor who comes to the Square. Also, since July 1, 1976, *Nationwide News* of China Central TV Station (CCTV)

has always presented the portrait as a lead accompanied by the music of the national anthem, every day and every hour. In this way, the Portrait of Mao Zedong has become a capital and national sight.

### **Emotional Tradition**

The picture is actually changed once a year or more when emergencies happen. Every year, a newly painted one replaces the old one at the midnight before the Nation's Day. Interestingly, the whole large picture has always been completed by only one person at a time. The current painter is Ge Xiaoguang. Up to now (2010), thirty-five of his portraits of Mao Zedong have been put up. Usually he has to do two each year, one for the Gate, the other for emergency. That means a lot of his muscle and brains. Two emergencies happened. At 2:00 pm May 23, 1989 during the charged moments of the Student Movement, three young men from a county not far from Mao Zedong's birthplace smashed some paints onto the Portrait. A new portrait was placed at 10:00 pm of the same day. Then at 5:00 pm May 12, 2007, Gu Hai'ou, a thirty-five-old man from Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Province, threw a self-made fire bomb onto the portrait, and the left lower corner was burnt. By midnight of the same day, the prepared portrait was installed into the same spot. On May 22, the fifty-four-year painter finished his third Portrait of Mao Zedong of 2007 as a preparation at ready. Of course, he would like to see more vigilant security guards on Tiananmen Square. On July 1, another attempt was stopped when a bag of firecrackers and fireworks was ignited and the man was about to throw it.

The changed portrait does not look different for ordinary viewers, and is being

painted by the same painter, so people usually do not realize the fact that portrait of Mao Zedong has its own life. As long as the country keeps her present name, a devoted painter will always make sure that Mao Zedong will have a fresh life in the yearly-changed pigments.

The tradition of hanging a picture as an ideological symbol goes back to the time when a guarded and secured meeting of the Communist Party of China was in session. On the central wall were the enlarged pictures of the photos of Marx and Engels. Later at the end of Long March when Mao Zedong led the 6,000 survivors out of the 86,000 troops at the start, Mao Zedong's pictures began to replace those of Marx and Engels. Mao Zedong definitely earned the respect of the whole party by his theoretical formulations and military tactics, but the large body of opportunists within the Party accelerated the process of Mao Zedong's absolute authority. The military victories during the long wars of Chinese Revolution increased the fervor of Mao Zedong to the general populations of China. Also, for a long time, Mao Zedong's personal will of democratic leadership could not control his personal authority because of the Party's unanimous dependence on him and persistent conspiracy to maintain Mao Zedong's individual leadership. Mao Zedong's image became not only a pragmatic symbol but also a protective shield for many Chinese leaders in face of their responsibilities during major historical events. At first, Mao Zedong was modest to parry obligatorily such flattery, but when he saw the political benefit of hanging his picture, and that the cost was not high, he managed to turn a blind eye. He was soon used to such a ritual before he could speak to his followers. While he did successfully stop printing his image on money bills, the badges and statues were largely produced out of his control, especially when

comparatively China had undisturbed time of construction and production.

According to Yang Yufeng, a distinguished reporter and writer for *Beijing Morning*, Zhou lingzhao was the painter of the first Portrait of Mao Zedong on the Gate of Sky Peace. It was the military Mao Zedong who had a red star on his octagonal cap. Shortly after it was put up, on October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong declared the founding of the People's Republic of China. In the next year, Xin Mang, a professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, and his colleagues presented the theorist Mao Zedong who looked up at the sky, which incurred some criticism from the viewers. People said their Mao Zedong would not look away from them. This group of painters tried to improve the spectacle until Zhang Zhenshi took the position in 1954. He was mostly left alone in a narrow courtyard of Tiananmen. Probably because the underground forces from Taiwan and its allies were still rampant, and probably Mao Zedong did not want personality cult to be an open practice, Zhang's activities were kept as a secret. For eleven years, he climbed up and down the wooden ladder, carrying a heavy brush and a pail full of paints. The Buddhist Mao Zedong he displayed played a soothing role for the country after so many wars. After Korean War ended in 1953, big domestic riots did not occur until 1967. Therefore, Zhang's Mao Zedong reflected or probably promoted a relatively peaceful period of construction and production. Later, his Mao Zedong was used as the model head for the money bills. In 1965, Wang Guodong took over the lonely work from the tired Zhang. Again for political reasons, Wang's most demonstrative work required the public oblivion about him. He was treated slightly better in the sense that he was allowed to sit in a front row in the Hall of People's Congress, and saw Mao Zedong in person for the only time in his life.

Ge Xiaoguang became Wang's apprentice in 1971. For the purpose of assurance, in 1975, Wang also recruited ten middle school students from Beijing. In 1976, when Wang was about to paint Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong died. Wang, under the requirement of the government, re-used Zhang Zhenshi's model and mixed all his devotion and sorrow into paints. It became his last Portrait of Mao Zedong on the Gate of Sky Peace. Ge Xiaoguang presented his first Mao Zedong for the Gate in 1977. In 1978, the other ten apprentices were tested by experts to get certification. Liu Yang won the first award. So in 1979, the Gate had his only Mao Zedong. In the next year, probably because of professional and cultural ethics, Liu Yang retreated into other avenues of portrait painting so that Ge could focus on Mao Zedong's Portrait for the Gate.

Compared with Mao Zedong's images at other places, portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen plays undoubtedly a most important role in China. For pragmatic reasons, Mao Zedong's images are ubiquitous in almost any medium of visual arts—statues, badges, posters, prints, memorials, woodcuts or money bills. These forms of symbolism—including Chairman Mao Zedong's Memorial Hall that takes a large part of Tiananmen Square and is maintained at high costs—are actually adulation, blatant consumerism, and false respect for a devoted political leader. But the picture at Tiananmen has its rhetorical value for the purpose of maintaining political and diplomatic balances in today's world, where Western thoughts are dominant in making judgments, capitalist materialism is sweeping the surface of the Earth, and social Darwinism has entered the souls of today's social systems. Portrait of Mao Zedong is a Western concept—it is a Western-style oil painting, not the traditional Chinese-style ink painting. But it does have a momentum of contradiction and opposition if we do not just listen to

the West for “What is good?” “What is right?” and “What is possible?”

Portrait of Mao Zedong is a Western-style oil painting, but viewers use the traditional Chinese values to interpret those Westernized ideals. In other words, it is Chinese content in Western formula to adopt Western ideology through Chinese characteristics. In such a perspective, the Western elements of rationality, emotion and morality tend to be a package with a relevant focus for the spectator at a specific angle. This should have been a good reinforcement to the resumed interest in the packaging of ration, emotion and morality in Western rhetoric studies (Barbara Koziak 155). The trouble is the dialectic nature of Marxist aesthetics. When the Chinese emulate the Western rhetoric, they, too, practice separatist arguments. Mao Zedong himself increasingly used his images in that way. That is, during the Cultural Revolution, he treated his images with separate focuses of rationality, emotion and ethics. This has undoubtedly encouraged the antagonistic forces in his image events.

### **Contradictions and Mao Zedong’s Images**

As an ideological sign, the portrait of Mao Zedong lives on such different rhetorical sources and opens up a good channel for the dialogues between the state and the people, between national and international contradictions. Today’s increasingly rhetorical world makes the rhetorical roles of visual Mao Zedong function more acutely along the dialectical tradition of Mao Zedong’s theory of contradiction: Marxist universality and Chinese particularity, individual acumen and collective leadership, the agent and agency of democracy, class struggle and common wealth, material and spiritual civilizations. The ideology of Mao Zedong’s China means to study both sides. But

because of the antagonistic oppositions are so strong, its rhetorical devices are moved to the other extremes so that the power can be balanced.

The motives of identification are the major clues to understand the portrait of Mao Zedong as a balancing reference, not only for the goggled Chinese Communist Government (Most Chinese leaders now wear glasses), but also for the Western political leadership that is still favoring the strategy of survival of the fittest, and individualism. It is the rhetorical function of Mao Zedong's portrait that runs against the philosophical bases of the liberalistic concept of identification. The physical existence of the picture is not just an ephemeral decision. It is deeply rooted in an aftermath of the violent interactions between Eastern tradition and Western technology, between Marxist liberation and Western imperialist hegemony. Based on the dialectical tradition, Mao Zedong's argumentative discourse is contradiction that proves "paradoxes" rather than "opposites." When one substance is asserting upon another, its matter may dress up in the form of the other. Many Western liberals view substance as a unit of corresponding form and matter. When the form becomes identical to that of the addressed, identification takes place. The application to the Chinese and Western leaderships would be that their ideological struggle is now "at peace," the Chinese side identifying itself with the dominant polity. Mao Zedong's rhetorical response would be that the core of the matter—i.e. the political state of the world, instead of that of China or the West—is still developing and will not end without a better unification in which both sides may disappear.

The fashion for the competing political states of the current world is that the rhetorical strategies are often practiced at the level of matter cryptically, and at the level

of form unreservedly. As Kenneth Burke observes, rhetoric is used in almost every field other than the study of language skills. Today's political campaigns, commercial advertisements, public relations, and other social communications are all based on **[explicit?]** rhetorical skills. These rhetorical performances fully show Western rhetorical maturity in formalism. Considering the Western influence, our world has moved to a situation in which form is the diplomat, content the servant. This can be shown in the moment when Kenneth Burke is fully engaged in commenting on Carlyle's idealistic rhetoric that "the first spiritual want of a barbarous man is Decoration"—and Marx's materialistic economics that the modern division of labor began in earnest with the manufacture of [c]loth (II 119).

Though he seems balanced, at heart Burke is more concerned with the "mystifying condition" in the agents and agencies of his dramatism. Under such mystifying analyses, images of Mao Zedong may eventually be regarded as artistic creations and may lead to the conclusion that portrait of Mao Zedong is a decoration and can be removed or substituted. However, this dissertation maintains that the argument in the portrait stands on its historical content rather than the artistic formats. As a support of Leninist public art, it constantly denies the artistic tastes, but leaves the material to the hands of those who do not have to ask what art is.

## **Chapter Arrangements**

This dissertation traces the rhetorical identifications and contradictions symbolized in the visual Mao Zedong. Through the examination of this ideological sign

and its referents (mainly Mao Zedong himself and copies of the portraits), different rhetorical issues are presented in hope of understanding this visual and historical phenomenon.

Chapter one aims at analyzing the political emotions in the creation of the images of Mao Zedong. For a long time, Mao Zedong was seen with the social members of different classes. In return, the viewers—who identified themselves with those personalities in the pictures of Mao Zedong—recreated the images of Mao Zedong. Most often, they used the package of emotion, rationality and morality or the traditional Chinese trio of Zhen (truth), Shan (kindness) and Mei (beauty). But that was changed when his visual rhetoric was actually confined in the castle the Chinese Communist Party had built. Mao Zedong became a much wanted legend that could be reviewed only at the ramparts. His physical presence was also, in some way, limited to the walls of worship and protection. For the entire period of socialist construction, Mao Zedong did not have much chance to know the actually complicated relations among the populace that was blindly devoted to him. The emotional ties were separated from rational clues. Mao Zedong himself, especially during his last years, also separately used reason and emotion. His huge misunderstanding was that all the masses had reached the level of unity. In reality, the gaps of education were everywhere so that any difference of class, race, gender, or citizenship was resolved by emotional impulses.

The Chinese had four political ambitions under Mao Zedong's banners: 1) a new nation of the East that is liberated from feudalism, colonialism, and imperialism; 2) a socialist state that serves the best interests of the working classes; 3) an ideological system that supports the emancipation causes of the oppressed people in the world; and 4)

a just and equal society in which each works according to ability and is paid according to work.

This chapter will discuss how Mao Zedong's images were internalized by the citizens to represent those political ambitions. Using the recent theoretical development of emotion and visual rhetoric, the chapter traces the rhetorical forces behind the flourish of Mao Zedong's images. Mao Zedong was first emotionally and culturally visualized. A comprehensive distributing system helped his images to dominate most of the public spheres of discourse. Tiananmen was most frequently used for such a purpose. Mao Zedong's presence above his own portrait strengthened the political emotions the government tried to provoke among the citizens. After his death, his successors have continued to promote those rhetorical functions. The chapter will also look at the visual connections of Mao Zedong with political goals: what were the paradigm scenarios, how identity manifested through the spectacle of Mao Zedong, and how these political emotions developed Mao Zedong's images into ideological symbols. These processes were not as easy as they might suggest. Numerous contentions and contradictions accompanied the growth of Mao Zedong's authority. The symbolic messages, however, were strengthened. Though many symbolisms of Mao Zedong lost their original connotations, Mao Zedong, as a national symbol, was taken for granted during the period of socialist construction. Nationalism of China and its rhetorical modifications and consequences seems to be the right points to conclude this chapter.

Chapter two is about Cultural Revolution. Mao Zedong used his own images as tools for a large social movement that would contain USA and USSR's ideological sabotage. The meetings with red guards showed his increasing worries about the future of

communism. He had to make sure that most citizens would remain red and a dependable successor would be found through confrontational activism. He also frequently met his emotional allies so that they, as model citizens, would multiply these visual effects. His attention to peasants and women successfully brought the substantial sentimentalism that was needed to train reliable younger generations and young leaders. The young graduates went to live with the peasants, and the memories of Mao Zedong's meetings were assembled into productive emotions. Then the chapter goes on to examine how Mao Zedong's images were meant for the selection of his successor and how they failed with or without his actual presence. Eventually his first choice— Deng Xiaoping under the help of Liu Shaoqi—became reality after Mao Zedong's death, though definitely Mao Zedong would never accept. For Deng Xiaoping, Mao Zedong's images were his pragmatic veils to unite the country and, under the cover of these red pictures, retaliate for the emotional damages he received during the Cultural Revolution.

An important part of this chapter is the Leninist influence on the creation of Mao Zedong's images. The portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen Square were radical development of Leninist public arts. Instead of following the Soviet tradition of valuing the artists, Mao Zedong encouraged the artists to learn from the masses. Under such a guideline, the portraits were meant to appeal to the tastes of the ordinary citizens, not to the tastes of artists.

Mao Zedong left behind many structures that were open to both developments and recourses. Like his personal glories and setbacks, his followers would have to figure out where to put his image. Deng Xiaoping was denigrated three times by the Central Committee of the Party. Rhetorically, however, he still followed Mao Zedong's basic

principles. His remarks about Mao Zedong also roughly reflected the complicated feelings of the people who suffered in or benefited from the socialist turbulences. As a faithful associate of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping was the actual China's Khrushchev. Like the Russian "revisionist," Deng led the country to appreciate the material enjoyments in America and other "advanced" Western countries. Unlike Khrushchev, who ripped open Stalin's coffin and shot him, Deng Xiaoping removed the insignificant images of Mao Zedong to emphasize those at politically unmistakable places. He also actually allowed Mao Zedong's head to be printed onto money bills so that the world would accept Mao Zedong in a popular way.

The focus of Chapter three is the international activism related to the visual rhetoric of Mao Zedong's images. Undoubtedly, Mao Zedong's projections with Soviet and US leaders shaped the rhetorical forces of most global politics in the second half of the twentieth century. The physical and psychological symptoms of these political leaders will be studied so that the rhetoric of the collapse of communism can be understood. A neglected aspect has been Mao Zedong's political signals in today's scholarship of **[the]** cold war. Scholars overemphasized the separation of China from Soviet Union but overlooked the fact that it was an ideological separation. Kissinger and his political allies successfully placed Mao Zedong as a national icon and bypassed the ideological contentions. Yet the ideological card is always present in the portraits of Mao Zedong. It has become more so after Mao Zedong was not physically present. Although the rapprochement between US and China has never been broken, the ideological contentions occurred once in a while. This can be typically shown at Tiananmen Square during the 1989 student movement. Seemingly, the 1989 image events of Mao Zedong's portraits

and red flags were a national phenomenon. The target was Deng Xiaoping's revisionism. Deng Xiaoping, on the one hand, let his loyal successors, especially Zhao Ziyang, appealed to the students. On the other hand, he tried to look for new successors from the hardliners. When the real purpose of the student movement became clearer, that is, the subversion of communism through the support of Western peaceful evolution, Deng Xiaoping immediately cracked down the social movement.

Chapter three is difficult because the readers will have to question their own emotions and ideologies. As excellent communicators of Western liberalism, many American professors would find it justifiable for the students to challenge autocracy. But ironically, Deng Xiaoping, unlike Mao Zedong, liked the intellectuals. In this sense, the students and their instigators were fighting against the autocrat that liked them. Another point is that the students, under the visual power of Mao Zedong, initiated a new social movement that turned out to be an experimental test of peaceful evolution by the Western non-Marxist ideologies. The double nature of the participants and Deng Xiaoping makes many Chinese re-think about Mao Zedong's ideological worries in last few years: 1) Some Western politicians predicted that Chinese socialism would collapse within the third or fourth leadership of Chinese Communist Party. Deng Xiaoping was the second leader, and socialism has no longer been the actual practice in China; 2) Knowledge makes egomaniacs, cynics and traitors. These thoughts were signals in Mao Zedong's talks with Khrushchev, Kissinger and Nixon. These visual signals of Mao Zedong at the international levels, which are far more complicated than what has been studied, are the main goals of this chapter.

Chapter four has three goals that will intertwine in the discussion. The first is a rhetorical analysis of Mao Zedong's images in the Chinese tradition and development. Within this framework, specific references are made to accomplish the second goal of presenting the national and international visual rhetorics of Mao Zedong in the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao Administrations—and the third one of drawing some conclusions. Comparatively, today, Mao Zedong's images are not as political in China as in international debates. Nationalistic competitions, so ubiquitous in the world, make most Chinese review their painful history of being bullied by Western powers. The rhetoric of China Threat has further prompted the Chinese to focus on economic development and material power. At international level, Western outward low opinions about China have stimulated the actually deeper cult of Mao Zedong's personality. Mao Zedong's images will continue to be used in the ideology-related contentions. It is necessary to understand Mao Zedong's images in the context of today's ideological impasses that have sustained the antagonistic nature of viewing the same images.

This dissertation tends to regard the internalized emotional responses as the determinant factors for the spectators' ideological preferences and arguments. Before the European Enlightenment, the package of rationality, emotion, and morality in many societies was still effective no matter how cruel the living conditions were. With the development of Western separatist ontology and epistemology, our world becomes more and more antagonistic. This is becoming more true when the widespread materialism and pragmatism have intensified our emotional contentions. These two Western ideologies have influenced the rules and goals of rhetorical promotion of our emotional responses. From the analyses of the rhetorical nuances that make a certain ideological argument to

dress up a certain emotional need, we can see the separated emotional forces behind Mao Zedong's images. It is these ideologically charged emotional forces that keep Mao Zedong's pro-Western visual presentations of polarity and plurality that are politically paramount but economically accessible and inclusive to the most ordinary populations, in contrast to its counterparts of popularity and singularity that are culturally valuable but artistically only appealing to the personal tastes of the elite classes.

## **Chapter 1. Native Reactions to Mao Zedong's Persona: Political Emotions**

This chapter tries to portray the political emotions of Mao Zedong in China through the examination of related visual dialogues and emotional reactions. Many people have tried to understand the Chinese leader through logical arguments. But not many people realize that the visual effects of him—deeply saturated with emotion and habit—are the actual forces that keep the conversation alive. When the visual power and emotional motives are considered in the discussion of these images, the persistence of political identifications with Mao Zedong for many Chinese becomes easy to understand. As a consummative representative, the portrait at Tiananmen typically assembles the political principles of socialist praxis that have shaped China's citizenship and public sentiments.

### **MAO ZEDONG: VISUAL DISCOURSES AND POLITICAL SYMBOLISMS**

As an ideological state apparatus, the images of Mao Zedong are a relevant source to explore the visual and emotional considerations in the field of rhetoric studies.

Many rhetoricians have paid new attention to the importance of non-discursive discourses. Some, in the usual Western way, went back to the Greek and Roman sources and pulled out relevant proofs. For example, Barbara Koziak found in Plato and Aristotle the concept of thumos to argue against the “scientific” separatist rationalism that has twisted the classic rhetorics (3). Others tried hard to formulate their own theories through the contributions made in fields of philosophy and communications. John Trimbur, borrowing the concepts of cultural and structural paradigms of sociology, develops his

articulation theory to unravel the tangles of subjective versus objective discourses (38). Following the recent trends of social studies, many rhetoricians begin to adopt the packaging mindset. Instead of labeling logos, pathos or ethos one by one, packages can be set to have a comprehensive view.

As Kevin Michael DeLuca rightly points out in his book *Image Politics: the New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism*, many scholars have placed the “extralinguistic confrontational activities” into a constitutive position in rhetoric (15). That is to say, the non-verbal activism has increasingly caught the attention of rhetorical studies. This is partly because the linguistic confrontations often move toward impasses. The “linguistic” evaluations of Mao Zedong have been set in the either-or spectrum that does not provide any constructive development. When such linguistic statements are transcended, however, we find that actually the same kinds of emotional roots are splitting people into antagonistic groups. Mao Zedong’s achievements of justice and equality have made many Chinese to select him as the best person and personality. Meanwhile, his sense of equality would argue against his personal authority. From the same kind of emotional sentiment come two totally different verbal arguments. For one, Mao Zedong stands for the best interests of the public, and his images should always be raised as a force of political education. For the other, Mao Zedong’s images are an incompatible sight for the progress of democracy, and should be removed from public spheres.

It is true that people find, once in a while, that their intuitional and emotional senses convince them better than their minds. When some Chinese view Mao Zedong, their sense of nationality and citizenship can be revealed without considering how much education they received in the Communist China. Their emotion would bring forth all

their intelligence to support their stance for or against Mao Zedong. Such non-verbal rhetorical forces around Mao Zedong's images are literally broadcasting the political emotions in China.

Many scholars' increasing interest in emotion theory is bringing new light to rhetorical studies. Contrary to the traditional notions of rationality and logic that actually build verbal and rhetorical barriers for not only the field of rhetorical studies but also the praxis of social activism, the concept of emotion helps to make the cognitive and reasonable discussions function properly. People tend to think that a rational person makes more contributions to the society than an emotional person. Yet without an organic package that includes emotion and ethics, rational persons will either repeat what is already accomplished or just defend their own self-interest. DeLuca believes that agitation, coercion, confrontation, and other emotions can sometimes rhetorically constitute political identities, because these emotions reveal a person's deep structure of political interests. Barbara Koziak, in her *Retrieving Political Emotion*, examines emotion's political roles, and defines political emotions in the "paradigm scenarios of political involvement and affect" (29). "Interpreting these scenarios," she continues—"give us an important insight into how political regimes work, how they generate loyalty, how they create images of the relationship between citizens...." Mao Zedong's images, as a most important ideological state apparatus, tell the most recent relationship between the Chinese citizens and the Communist Party. His image in every money bill, for instance, shows the Government's newly attempt to reconcile the public and private sides of economic development. China is still moving on Deng Xiaoping's economic model that serves private talents and needs. Yet by placing Mao Zedong's image onto the

money bills, the less rich citizens would still have the good memories of Mao Zedong's absolute emphasis on public interests. Or at least Mao Zedong is not forgotten. Through the money bills, the subtle relationships between the political leaders and citizens are adjusted to a less confrontational degree: the government will say that improving people's living conditions was Mao Zedong's wish; the discontented citizens would know that they will be probably compensated now that the government still remembers him.

Such emotional ties to Mao Zedong have been a process of political abstraction. It was at first a story-telling sensation. As the story became more dramatic, the protagonist was increasingly mystified. When some anticipated effects came true, people sought to interpret the political significance through cultural or religious emotions. Considering the highly hieroglyphic nature of the Chinese language and culture, an analytic study of the visual implications of Mao Zedong's images is a convenient application of and relevant support to the abovementioned theoretical efforts in rhetoric studies.

### **Red East**

From the Red East rises the sun,  
 There appears in China Mao Zedong,  
 He works for the people's welfare,  
 He is the people's great savior.  
 ——*The East is Red*

Almost anyone who lived in China before 1981—when Deng Xiaoping officially became the actual leader of the country—can sing *The East is Red*. The words translated into English, which keep only the rough meaning like all other cases done in translation from Chinese to English, sound ostentatious and dull. The original

Chinese characters, however, do carry inspiring images and stimulating sounds. First, the song fits naturally into the play of Mao Zedong's name: "Mao" means "sonny" in many rural villages, "Ze" can be roughly put into "bring felicity," and "Dong" is "East." Therefore, "Mao Zedong" is the good "son" that "brings felicity" to the "East." Mao Zedong did not choose his own name. Probably Mao Zedong's grandfather, Mao Enpu who died when Mao Zedong was ten, chose "Dong" because this was the only place he had to work on, and the other two characters were already prescribed—"Mao," the paternal surname, and "Ze," the generation character taken out of the naming poem in the Genealogy Book of Mao Family. In the Taoist tradition, the east, where the sun rises, is always the good-natured sign of this world. The song plays the loud and deep associations of the etymology, metonymy and synecdoche of Mao Zedong's name. From the "East" to the "sun," from the "sun" to "savior," the "red" connotations find their deep roots in Taoism where "red" embraces "life," "happiness," and "justice." From the "sonny" to the "sun," from the "East" to this world, and from this world to "the people," the "red" messages are close posters of communism. The fourth stanza, in which the Communist Party is compared to the "sun," offers a compatible contradiction—"Mao Zedong" is not just a single person but a universal personification of Communists as a whole; "Mao Zedong," is a collective entity that consists of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and other revolutionaries.

The sounds in the words of the three-stanza song are suitable for the combination of singing voices of tenor, soprano, mezzo-soprano, and baritone. Following the traditional Chinese poetic rhythm regulations of *Ping-Ze* (the first and

second tones are *Ping*; the third and fourth tones are *Ze*), the lines make rigorous and fearless melodies.

Most of the vowels function well with the requirements of high pitches, deep breath, and long ranges for choruses of three kinds: soprano and tenor, mezzo-soprano and baritone; soprano and mezzo-soprano; tenor and baritone. The first stanza was usually sung by men and women together with the same pace. The second was soprano, and the third tenor and baritone.

This serious hymn, however, was derived from a folk song that had been popular in the Yellow Plateau of China for hundreds of years. The original title was *Sesame Oil*, and, from the words, people would just regard it as a vulgar love song: *Sesame oil, Cabbage heart/Green beans whose strings have to be removed/Having not seen you for three days, I'm going insane/Hoo-er-hai-yo, ai-ya, my third brother.*

When Mao Zedong led the survivors of the Long March out of Tibet, and settled in Yan'an, a central city of the Yellow Plateau, in January 1937, people did not pay special attention to this Southerner who spoke with a strong accent. But Mao Zedong's frequent lectures trained their hearing, and by the summer of 1937, his reputation had reached the major cities of China. The local people, mostly peasants, loved talking to him. Then young people all over the country came to this small city, and were immediately attracted to his lectures and seminars. One of them was Jiang Qiang, a famous actress from Shanghai. She and Mao Zedong lived together in the autumn of 1938, and were bound in marriage for the rest of their lives.

The difficult and successful battles fought under the leadership of Mao Zedong during the Red Base and Long March periods were told from village to village, and soon

Mao Zedong's military talent was proved to be magical. On September 25, 1937, under his direct arrangement, the newly-built Division 115 of the Eighth Route was sent to block the Japanese invasion of Shanxi, a nearby province. The ambushed Japanese invaders were defeated. It was the first major success of the Chinese troops since 1931 when Japan invaded China. Mao Zedong's Eighth Route became the center of praise among the ordinary people. In 1938, *Sesame Oil* changed its narrator and words: *On white horses, and carrying foreign hand arms/the Third Brother is now fed by the Eighth Route/Though crazy about the girl at home, I cannot go because the Japanese has come...*

By 1943, the originally fifty-thousand-person Eighth Route was three hundred thousand troops, and was fighting almost half of the invading Japanese and all their Chinese regiments. The song changed its words for the second time in 1943: *From the Red East rises the sun/There appears in China Mao Zedong/He works for the people's welfare/ He is the people's great savior*. Li Youyuan, a working model, Li Jinqi, Liu Zhi, a musician, made the significant changes (Sun Shao 24-26). The song became serious when it changed from single first-person narration to plural first-person narration. The song praises Mao Zedong as the leader of the liberated areas, as it implies in the second and fourth stanzas—"Frontier districts" that include Shaan-Gan-Ning, roughly today's Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia provinces. But of course, the song went well with the propaganda of the Chinese Communist Party to raise Mao Zedong's authority so that the people could be inspired to drive away the Japanese invaders. The first stanza was politically powerful, and has been never changed, except that the exclamation of *Hoo-er-hai-yo* in the original song was added to make it more dramatic and musical. The other

three stanzas would have to undergo complete changes in 1949. The song was changed to have only three stanzas, and the second and third stanzas were worded by Gong Mu, an established poet: *Chairman Mao Zedong loves the people/He is our walking guide/In order to build New China, Hoo-er-hai-yo, he leads us move forward; the Communist Party is like the sun/It is bright wherever it shines/Where there is the Communist Party, hoo-er-hai-yo, there is liberation for the people.*

### **Visual Enthymemes of Mao Zedong**

The development of *The East is Red* shows the multiplying and relaying power of emotion through the visual and vocal appeals. At first, Mao Zedong only interested a few peasants who just learned to write. But these peasants' elemental emotion moved the professional writers and singers. Their professional ways of putting emotion into sight and sound increased emotional spread among other ordinary peasants. Mao Zedong's images carry such inflated emotional needs. After generations of dependence, these visual presentations have become habitual icons that do not allow any ephemeral change. No matter how hard his comrades vied for the successorship, and how cruelly they treated each other, and how much they rejected his will, his shadow has lived on each new leadership.

Mao Zedong's images are a historical phenomenon. They represent an emotional process of forming a political symbol from many to one. In an East culture, the philosophy of natural respect for social order has played a vital role in that abstraction. This individualization of a collective identity has strong historical context in which equally aggressive political forces have been deployed.

The song *Red East* was later adopted into a long opera *Red East*. It displays all the hardships and victories Mao Zedong and his armies have experienced. After watching it, Hu Jintao, a student of Hydropower Engineering at Qinghua University, wrote an article that was published on October 6, 1964 by *People's Daily*. The twenty-one-year-old declared in the end, "I'm a young student that should listen more attentively to the Party and Chairman Mao, should study Mao Zedong Thought harder ...should never let down the revolutionary forerunners."

Hu Jintao is now the president of China.

Emotion plays a significant role in a society like China that pays special attention to interpersonal relations. Around the network of clearly defined relations, the Chinese have adopted different philosophies, religions and life styles, but friendship and cultural affinity have always been effective appeals.

The only soldier that has survived a battle becomes the name of the whole military unit. If it was a squad, he will be remembered by all the relatives of the whole ten or twelve soldiers. If it was a division, about ten thousand families will treat him as a family member. When photography was more and more the most convenient technology, many family members of those who died in the battlefields would ask for that only soldier's photo. Two Chinese phrases—Jian Wu Si Ren and Jian Yi Si Qin—should be mentioned here. The first means "see object miss person"—"miss someone when seeing an object (that belongs to that person)." The second is "see strange miss familiar." Here the soldier's photo is an object, and the soldier is the stranger. Through the photo, the appearance of a dead relative is fully re-constructed. The stranger gives the clues to visualize the details. Usually with a lot of tears.

Roland Barthes sees three messages in a photograph: a linguistic message, a coded iconic message, and a non-coded iconic message. Depending on the viewer's literal and cultural abilities, these three messages will denote a literal image and connote a symbolic image (138). Strangers will only have the literal image, and may collect it as an artwork or forget it as a trinket. Only those who have emotional ties to the subject of the picture will discern the symbolic image, or in some way develop an iconic sense out of the sight. Such an inter-relationship between the picture and viewer can be developed by the viewer's instinctive impulses. But often, educated or culturally inherited emotions sustain or change the symbolic image.

Emotions make ideas and significance. Without emotions, people will not want to know or remember a certain truth or a highly crafted fact. Visions are—since our strongest or most popular sense is visual—the most powerful medium of our emotions. The sublime churches explain lasting faiths. The visual evidences of incompatible habits prompt estrangement. Visions record and develop our emotions. When photography was not a luxury, most Chinese soldiers had their own photos in their pockets during the wars. When someone died, their leaders would collect their photos, and presented them for public commemoration. Because it was war, these images usually aroused deep sorrow, hatred, honor, and fanatic patriotism. Sometimes many dead soldiers did not leave their photos. Then one of their survived comrades—and usually the only survivor of the whole company—would be presented to the public as a representative. Such moments saw even stronger outburst of emotions than those public situations in which the dead soldiers' photos were presented. People cried silently for such tragic yet courageous battles. The families and friends of the dead soldiers would ask for the survivor's photo. When they

saw it, all the good memories became tears and often became more memorable because the actual persons were not present. Here we can see how people make a photo a symbolic image through emotions.

The portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen is such a photo that is painted and yearly renewed. It is the result of public commemoration and represents many ideological emotions. When the People's Republic of China came into being, undoubtedly the majority of the people did believe in the magic of Mao Zedong as a name, as a leader, and as a person. From the Western idea of rewarding a talented person, Mao Zedong had all kinds of achievements (politics, tactics, ethics, poetry, etc.) to be honored. From the Eastern idea of obeying an established authority and sacrificing self-interest for the unification of the country as a big family, Mao Zedong was selected to stand for all the collective identities of a new Republic. Obviously the praise of Mao Zedong had a close relation between Mao Zedong's contributions to the country and people's gratitude for being liberated from all kinds of oppressions. But the necessity of using Mao Zedong's authority to strengthen the new state of Communists and argue against internal and external antagonistic forces has been the almost unanimous motivation of promoting Mao Zedong as an omnipotent leader within the country. The mass media and educational institutions were all used for this purpose. It is the educated sense of national and ideological dignity that has developed this special photo into a systematic icon.

A symbolic image is a metonymy that has carried emotional abstractions. A soldier's printed image represents a certain deep emotion that may or may not reflect his actual contribution. The soldier who survived a battle may have been brave or may have been cowardly. It does not matter. The important rhetorical power in the photo is that the

only survived soldier represents so much more emotional attachments—the cruelty of war, the honor of victory, and the hope of safety. Through the rhetorical and ideological practices that engage emotions, this symbolic image becomes a most important component of a visual enthymeme as Koziak suggests (qt. in Mason 3).

The evolution of a visual enthymeme usually goes from personal thumos to public identification or contradiction, and political symbolism. The idea of hanging a portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen began before the National Day of People's Republic in 1949. On March 24 of that year, Mao Zedong and other leaders arrived in Beijing (Liu 296). At this point, the Nationalist Government had retreated to the South of China. The military success of the People's Liberation Army brought Mao Zedong undisputable authority over the working classes. In April, the Communists and the Nationalists held the last meeting of negotiation. The Nationalist Leader Jiang Jieshi could not accept the conditions of forming a united government in which the Communist Party would take most seats. The Civil War continued and gave Mao Zedong more chances to increase his fame and prestige. As a result, the PLA occupied the whole country except Tibet, Taiwan and Yunnan Province in September. Once more the PLA became legendary, and Mao Zedong was completely the center of praise.

Many people admired him, and for those that were close to him, he was a wise and just head of the country. Zhou Enlai, the first premier of the new China, asked the preparing committee for the founding ceremony of the People's Republic to paint a large portrait of Mao Zedong and put it above the central doorway at Tiananmen at the eve of the National Day. Painters immediately got excited, and recommended the best oil painter in the country. These individual thumos came together as a powerful force that activated

the tempestuous outburst of affection toward Mao Zedong who declared the founding of the People's Republic above his own portrait. The portrait satisfied most of the audience who could not see the speaking Mao Zedong very well at the Tiananmen Square. Mao Zedong's trembling voice combined with his image inspired exciting outbursts of affection, honor, patriotism, and loyalty. The portrait was probably arranged as a temporary decoration for the ceremony. But it was such a successful propaganda for the Communist state that the portrait stayed at the Gate and has been changed to a new painting at least once a year.

That is the demonstration of the sophist concept of enthymemata—in Eric D. Mason's interpretation—"the kairotic 'emotively charged reasons' that rely on stylistic force to create an 'enthymemic moment' in the audience's experience that produces persuasion or belief (iii). The portrait of Mao Zedong was put at the right time and right place to call up people's devotion. Then it has become a habit in many people's emotional life. It is almost the very habit of devotion to an emperor that inspired people's new ways of expressing the new changes.

We see that a literal image may bring a different symbolic message. A visual enthymeme sustains its momentum by finding literal energy into the symbolic mechanism. So the symbolic message may change when the literal source conveys a different emotion for the same viewer. The symbolic meaning of Mao Zedong images has gone through fanaticism, skepticism, and pragmatism. It will not be strange that many of Mao Zedong's red guards are now denouncing Mao Zedong's crimes. But for the majority of people, Mao Zedong's images are pragmatic symbols that may bring them political, cultural, economic, or philosophical benefits. Again, as visual enthymemes that

have been historically modified, Mao Zedong's images have the potentials of converting the same literal sources into different symbolic energy at different levels, different political occasions and different emotional loci. Because of the large scale of their literal and symbolic implications, Mao Zedong's images may continue to operate for different purposes, as ideological state apparatus or oppositional political weaponry.

A visual enthymeme actually needs a distance between the literal image and the symbolic image so that it can record and encourage selectively the highly charged emotions. In other words, it is created by an emotional need that is visualized in a symbolic image derived from a literal image. This needs characteristic representations in the composing steps and contributive modifications according to the feedback from the viewers. In the process of these selections, it becomes "a form of argument ... in which the arguer deliberately leaves unstated a premise that is essential to its reasoning. Doing so has the effect of drawing the audience to participate in its own persuasion by filling in that unexpressed premise" (Blair 41). Enthymeme is an argument that is realized in an individual's thumos. But because this premise is only culturally accessible, this argument is hypothetical in the sense that it stipulates an ideal state in which the arguer will win over the opponents, most of whom, if not all, are excluded from the scene in reality.

Therefore, the same photo of a Chinese soldier—when it passed to the hand of a Vietnam Veteran—would arouse different emotions or the same emotions toward the other side of the war. Because of the antagonistic nature of most historical events, these visual enthymemes often bring visual arguments. In these visual arguments, the different seeing and looking experiences may bring totally different symbolic messages out of the same literal sources. While a Chinese may see in the photo the hardship and honor of

protecting a newly established country, a US citizen may see the brutality and hatred of Communist devotion. Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen functions in the same way. Most Chinese leaders have launched their social projects near this giant picture. Because of its long stored rhetorical forces, it often encourages tremendous patriotism and loyalty, even though most often the leaders showed bad vocal and verbal abilities. On the other hand, whenever a rhetorical campaign of “China Threat” is launched, the giant portrait is often the first point of attack—dictatorship, corruption, abuse of human rights, one million or ten million victims, or other scandals.

### **Allegorical Interpretants in Mao Zedong**

It would be most inappropriate to place Mao Zedong and Dalai Lama together. But the fact is that some Chinese did worship Mao Zedong in a religious way. Of course, “savior” that has been used to describe Mao Zedong is a strong religious concept. Though Mao Zedong proclaimed himself to be a Marxist atheist, the overwhelming Buddhist culture around him was too deeply rooted for him to bypass. It will be both revealing and contrastive to analyze the religious influence behind the worship of Mao Zedong and Dalai.

Unlike Christianity, which emphasizes the faith in Heaven, Buddhism connects the deeds of this world with the nirvana of afterlife. Therefore, Buddhists have to go through the daily temptations until a great personality is established. That is to say, a person has to achieve some merits in this world in order to reach the state of Da Che Da Wu, “completely see and completely understand.” Personality cult in Buddhist culture, then, becomes natural. Because a certain amount of achievements is the premise, when a

person has achieved that amount, that person is naturally worshiped as Buddha. Mao Zedong, because of his achievements, has always been associated with Buddha, though he would never have been proud of that. That accounts for the popularity of Mao Zedong's portraits in many ordinary Tibetan families ("Grand Occasion of the Snow Plateau"), though most Chinese families now switched to their own newly dead older family members. The Tibetans worship the "chosen" representative of divinity.

It would be worthwhile to compare the religious devotion of the Tibetans to Dalai with the emotional admiration of the Chinese for Mao Zedong. One of the reasons is that the rise of Mao Zedong began with Tibet and Mao Zedong's political life seemed to be coincidentally connected to Dalai. On July 6 1935, Mao Zedong and his Central Red Army climbed over the fourth snow mountain—Mount Dagu—in Qinghai Province ("Long March"). Not far away at Tengtser of Yushu, a boy was born on that day. He was chosen to be the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai. That day more and more Party leaders followed Mao Zedong as the first leader of the Party after Zhang Guotao, who had more troops and Soviet support, moved toward Tibet. Edgar Snow asked Mao Zedong in October 1960—"When was your darkest moment in your life?"(X). It was the last section of the Long March where, in the winter of 1935, Mao Zedong and Zhang Guotao had a political fight that almost brought the last straw for the survived Red soldiers. Mao Zedong told Snow: "At that time the Party was about to be divided. It was possible that internal warfare would occur within the Red Army" (Liu Tong).

Also, it was for Tibet that Mao Zedong compromised his ideological disciplines for the first time—he wanted the Chinese to respect the religious faith of the Tibetans and the authority of Dalai Lama. The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet—Tenzin Gyatso—was among

the first activists that had praised Mao Zedong as a religious icon. Another important person from Tibet is a singer, Chedan Dolma, meaning “Fair of Longevity.” She, a slave’s daughter, is two years younger than Dalai Lama. Her clear and high voice, genetic of high-altitude air, made her one of the most successful singers in China. Her *Chairman Mao Zedong’s Glory* and *The Golden Hill of Beijing* (a metaphor for Tiananmen) were among the most loved songs before Deng Xiaoping came to power. The political emotion can also be connected to the fact that Hu Jintao, the current president of China, was the Party secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region from 1988 to 1992, the years in which the collapse of communism was finally completed according to the Western mindset. These interesting historical coincidences are very helpful sources for analyzing the visual rhetorics of Mao Zedong images.

For this chapter, it is relevant to compare the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama as a religious icon and Man as a social icon. Though in their belief systems, Dalai Lama is worshiped because of his very body (that has inherited the great achievements of his predecessors) and Mao Zedong because of his social merits, the development of their iconic messages has gone through similar emotional abstractions. The sources of the two enthymemes are different—one from Nature and the other human society. But both images, for many of their kinds, represent ultimate, yet mystical, fanatic and abstract emotions—love for justice, patriotism, and optimism.

The birth name of the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama was Lhamo Dongrub, born in Tengtser, Qinghai Province in July 1935 (Huang Weizhong 24). On November 24, Tibetan Calendar October 13, 1939, he was crowned as Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, in short Tenzin Gyatso, meaning “Defender of the Faith (with) Ocean of

Wisdom” (Huang 127). Dalai (talavi, Romanized Mongolian) means “Ocean,” and Lama (blama, Romanized Tibetan) “Super-mentor.” Officially the four-year-old boy—the Super-mentor (as big and rare as) Ocean (and) the Defender of the Faith (with) Wisdom (as big and generous as) Ocean—became a sprulsku—incarnation of Buddhisattva—of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama. Though most Tibetan people would not discern any rhetorical element in this monastic title, from the Western point of view, it shows strong stylistic forces to visualize a pious worship for the Ocean—a phenomenon most Tibetans have not seen. The visual enthymeme of ocean leaves the insiders abundant inspirations—hope, perseverance, and faith. To imagine an ocean is a purifying effort that eliminates human worries in the highest and largest plateau, where in some places it takes weeks to meet another human soul if a villager goes out alone, where the sun seems to rise below the viewer, and where the snow on the mountaintop looks like Heaven. It will render awe for a Westerner—how did they know that Tibet was a sea millions of years ago?

It was the faith in Nature that made the Tibetan people so pious to an innocent boy because Nature had given some visual signs. When their leader, the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, passed away on December 17, 1933, Tibetans began to look for any clues that would suggest the location of a genius boy to succeed the vacancy. These superstitious attempts could be interpreted as visual enthymemes because the signs are processed through emotional abstractions.

When the important religious leaders put together the prophetic signs, the rebirth places were suggested. After further discussions, three search teams were sent out to the northeast, east and southeast of Lhasa respectively. It was the autumn of 1936 (Huang Weizhong 21-27). In the winter of 1937, under the help of the ninth Banchan Thubten

Chökyi Nyima's help, one group of the northeast team came to Tengtser. Lhamo Dongrub was chosen to be a candidate. In 1939, he was identified as the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama's new life. On July 15, the search party began to travel back to Lhasa with Lhamo Dongrub and his relatives. It was October 7 when they finally came into the Potala Palace of Lhasa. The coronation was held in the Buddha Temple on February 22 (January 14 by the Tibetan Calendar).

Since then, Dalai Lama was set in the throne as the symbol of highest authority of Tibet. Millions of adults bowed before this young child. He became a visual enthymeme through a long march of natural selection and emotional abstraction. His body did not belong to himself but was an ideological apparatus.

Therefore, Dalai Lama's first contribution to the discussion of Mao Zedong's images is that the historical needs can be met through unquestioned habits. In a respectful culture, people need a leader to guide. They never question an authority. This habit helps to strengthen new leadership.

The fifth Regent Reting Rinpoche, only twenty-four years old when Lhamo Dongrub was born, was the actual leader of Tibet, and the ninth Banchan was the second powerful person. Tibetans believed that the selection became easier because of their oracular guidance. But when the fifth Regent was replaced in 1941, one year after Dalai was crowned, and was put in jail until he was poisoned in 1947, people may begin to doubt the selective process. It may not be purely superstitious interpretations but political interests. In 1915, the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai had put the ninth Banchan in jail. The Banchan left Tibet and had just returned to Tengtser in 1935 when Lhamo Dongrub was born. He was dying, and might have wanted to let his wishes pass to the future Dalai. In a way, the fifth

Reting and the ninth Banchan had some common political intentions to balance the religious power in Tibet. Tibetan Buddhism was brought from inland China not India. The two schools—the Dalai and Banchan systems—had close ties. They had been helping each other. It had almost been a tradition for them to cooperate harmoniously; the living Dalai or Banchan was old enough to be the teacher. The first Banchan was a teacher of the first Dalai. The fifth Dalai was a teacher to the fifth Banchan. The eighth Banchan was the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai's teacher. The 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai was the teacher of the seven years younger ninth Banchan. When the ninth Banchan came to Tibet at the time when a new Dalai was needed, and he was dying, he probably had a strong desire to restore the good relationship between the two systems.

But the chosen Lhamo was too young to inherit the good wishes (the ninth Banchan died on December 1, 1937.) The Tibetans regarded him as the most powerful because the most powerful emperor of the Qing Dynasty—Qianlong—offered the seventh Dalai the administrative power of Tibet in 1751. The Dalai system, then, became superior to the Banchan system. The political aspect of the Dalai system made the religious life in Tibet social and political. So when the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai could manage his own authority without regency, he was worshiped in the temples and in the ordinary households as well. In many Tibetans' mind, the political power for the Dalai system was an honor and the Banchan system should not enjoy the same status. This emotional tendency became a habit that intensified the iconic message in which a single visual enthymeme represented the whole religion and society.

The second point for Dalai to join the discussion of Mao Zedong images is that Dalai played an important role in mystifying and visualizing the praise of Mao Zedong.

When the second National Day of the People's Republic was coming, the portraits of Mao Zedong and Zhu De were put on the façade of the rostrum in front of Potala Palace where the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai lived during the winters. Since it was still autumn, he was living in his Summer Palace—Loburinka. On September 28 1950, Zhang Jingwu, representative of Mao Zedong, led a procession of gift-presenting personnel through the main street of Lhasa. When they reached the hall of Loburinka, Dalai was standing near a chair below his throne. A giant portrait of Mao Zedong, based on the one hanged on the façade of Tiananmen for 1949, was brought in and placed beside the throne (Cao). With an excited expression, the fifteen-year-old leader looked up at Mao Zedong's face. Dalai touched the gold frame and posed for the photographers. A few days later, he wrote a Tibetan ode that compares Mao Zedong to a kind-hearted mother. In the Tibetan culture, the character “Mao Zedong” stands for the most powerful natural living forces—the sun, light, the rain, the sea, and the land. Dalai also asked Tsangba, a Tibetan painter, to make him a portrait of Mao Zedong. Together with the ode, he presented all the gifts to Mao Zedong when he came to Beijing for the First People's Congress in 1954. When he shouted at Mao Zedong—“Long live Chairman Mao Zedong!” Mao Zedong shouted back—“Long live Dalai Lama!” It may be a shocking experience for a Mao Zedong's follower that Mao Zedong, a sixty-one-year-old helmsman, would behave so lowly before a nineteen-year-old. Mao Zedong who was well-educated in Buddhism knew that the Tibetans worshiped the Dalai as the incarnation of Avalokitesvara—the most powerful Bodhisattva that had been portrayed in stone or brass sculptures in most Asian cultures. Out of the respect for the Tibetan religious emotions, Mao Zedong yielded his political ideals. In return, Dalai was increasingly eulogistic about Mao Zedong, in the way his subjects paid obeisance to

him. His religious vocabulary helped a lot of musicians to find the rhetorical forces that sustained the fervor of Mao Zedong. The popular songs Chedan Dolma sang during the Cultural Revolution—*The Halo of Chairman Mao Zedong*, *The Gold Hill of Beijing*, etc.—may be considered as the developed versions of Dalai's *Ode to Chairman Mao Zedong*. It is so unlikely that Buddhist fanaticism for next life could be used to promote Communist ideals for the material life of this world. But many Tibetans believed him when he described Mao Zedong as Jampelyang in Tibetan, the Bodhisattva that can rule this world with wisdom and peaceful measures (Huang Weizhong 4). What Dalai had preached about Mao Zedong did inspire the personality cult of Mao Zedong in the majority of the Tibetan populations, and did influence many revolutionary musicians and singers in Tibet or any other region in China.

The third reason is that Dalai later became the first prominent dissident of the new state. In 1959, he went to India and set up an exile government. Though he seldom attacked Mao Zedong as a person or leader openly, Dalai's appearance has been an oppositional presence for Mao Zedong's ideals. According to Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, Dalai's admiration of Mao Zedong was sincere and heart-felt (1). People may wonder why a devoted follower could change into a most fierce opponent. Dalai was actually followed by other comrades-in-arms of Mao Zedong —especially Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Lin Biao. These three were appointed as the successors of Mao Zedong at certain points of the new nation, but all turned out to be Mao Zedong's political recreants. Lin Biao even tried to assassinate Mao Zedong. Does it mean that these fanatic supporters lied? It is because their emotional ties changed. On the one hand, the once inspired vision of happiness disappeared or became blurry. For Dalai, the covered

differences in worldview eventually surfaced and could not be compromised. Before him, the view of harmony and unity was replaced with boisterous struggles for equality. On the other hand, the attempts to sacrifice one's own merits in order to sustain an established authority would only encourage rebellious emotions. When the portrait of Mao Zedong was placed beside Dalai's throne, Dalai felt his eloquence was threatened, even though it was just temporary. Another political change that probably made the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai unhappy was that the tenth Banchan was also appointed by the new Chinese government. In 1954, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai, 19 years old, was appointed as the vice-chairman of the first National People's Congress, and the tenth Banchan, 16 years old, the vice-chairman of the second Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. There were two emotional messages for Dalai. First, the political prestige the Dalai system enjoyed since 1751 would have to be shared with the Banchan system. Second, as mentioned above, in 1915, the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai put the ninth Banchan in jail in order to please the British Colonial Government in India. Because of that, the new Communist government actually favored the Banchan system. As years went by, these two political emotions disturbed the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai to a limit that he had to leave.

This section draws a conclusion that eventually it is political emotions that change a person's view of a leader's authority. Whether it is out of religious rituals or political agendas, the selection of leadership usually relies heavily on the participants' emotional motives. There are both religious and political beliefs, but these beliefs will gather under political interests. Dalai, out of his own political emotions, has both promoted and destructed Mao Zedong's authority. In this sense, Mao Zedong's images can lead viewers to opposing points depending on their political emotions. It is, then, not difficult to see

why oppositional arguments are built through Mao Zedong's images into the same political realities of today's China and the world.

### **Tiananmen: the Heart and Eyes of Political Conscience**

Portrait of Mao Zedong looks like a projection window that sends out political messages onto the Tiananmen Square. The picture has almost kept all the political events that have been initiated from the rostrum. Anyone who comes to the Square can pick up a few episodes. Then from the position of the post of the National Flag, the portrait is a large screen where the spectators project their own emotions and wishes. But how they look and what they see is a habitual process that has direct connection with the spectator's past experience and ability of visual rhetoric as Marguerite Helmers puts it (10). Before Deng Xiaoping led the country, almost everyone who came to Tiananmen Square wore green uniforms. Like their own clothes, their steps of viewing the portrait were simple—they looked and saw a noble and honorable man. Then they would carry a strong sense of loyalty and devote themselves to the glorious political causes. Now because Mao Zedong as a person passed away, the background becomes ambiguous. People have to rely on certain memories to make meaning onto the screen. As Marita Sturken defines, a screen reflects or hides details through memories (357). Accompanying this new spectatorship is a process of fitting the leaders of the country into the image of Mao Zedong. When a visitor comes back from the Memorial Hall of Chairman Mao Zedong where his senile body is preserved and looks at the Buddha-like head at the national gate, the viewer is offered to rhetorically interpret the country's leadership.

The portrait has become the living national emblem, and the actual national emblem above the giant portrait looks like a cap insignia for Mao Zedong's head. This giant spectacle shadows even Mao Zedong's own actual appearances. Mao Zedong stood above the yearly changed portrait for 45 times from October 1, 1949 to May 1, 1971 (Shu Jun). The appearance of the portrait has changed four times—Mao Zedong with a gray uniform and octagonal cap (1949), cap-less Mao Zedong with sharply cut hair and in a sky blue jacket, cap-less Mao Zedong showing his left ear in a grey jacket, cap-less Mao Zedong showing both ears in a dark blue jacket. In a sense, each time Mao Zedong stood at the Gate could be interpreted as a posing effort for the artist to modify the painting. Meanwhile, each posing manifests different political modifications. When the new China was established through military actions, Mao Zedong turned his attention to his economic construction and his militant cap was taken off in 1950. His sharply cut hair and his upturned eyes became inappropriate in 1953—comparatively the antagonistic tension between the revolutionary and anti-revolutionary forces smoothed down. Peaceful solutions became the major way of winning over the unoccupied territories—Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia. On the other hand, any separatism would not be tolerated. That year, a Mao Zedong with a look of a primary school teacher appeared. But incidentally only his left ear was shown. Many leftist movements—*Big Forward Leap*, *People's Commune*, and *Cultural Revolution*—did take place while the Portrait of Mao Zedong showed his left ear. Interestingly, Mao Zedong also waved his left hand very often at the Gate. But shortly after the Cultural Revolution broke out, Mao Zedong himself realized the harm of extremist actions. The giant head of Mao Zedong at the Gate appeared with both ears in 1969. Though the boisterous internal struggles within the

Chinese Communist Party continued, many of the measures the Central Committee had taken were not as leftist as people think about today.

Definitely the Portrait of Mao Zedong was not meant to record the political realities. But it does constitute a certain political conscience at a certain political moment. It displays rhetorical meanings—in Lawrence Prelli’s words—“before situated audiences ... and ... constitute[s] partial perspectives with political... implications” (11). From 1949 to 1969, for twenty years, China experienced major political shifts in the socialist construction. In the first two or three years, unification of the whole country was still not complete. The portrait of Mao Zedong of 1949 was often seen with a portrait of Zhu De—the Commander-in-chief at other locations throughout the country. They were used to promote land reform, encourage soldiers to fight against bandits and saboteurs, or negotiate with the local authorities of minority nationality regions. Then the country focused on theoretical study of socialism. The works of Marx, Engels and Lenin were the guiding principles of socialist practices. So the portrait of Mao Zedong was the visual representative of the basic Communist ideals. Many major political campaigns were launched with the portraits of all these Communist heads together—Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and Mao Zedong. On May Day or National Day—usually two days for political parades—at the eastern side of Tiananmen were giant portraits of Marx and Engels, at the western side Lenin and Stalin. The Mao Zedong Portrait looked like a local host of the ceremonies. At the rostrum, Mao Zedong was often seen with other founding members, usually all of them. The different understandings of socialist production and internationalist cooperation between Soviet Union and China led to external and internal contradictions. The Chinese Communist Party gradually turned to building Mao

Zedong's authority. The portraits of other Communist heads disappeared from Tiananmen Square. The Portrait of Mao Zedong was singled out to cover the internal political struggles with the theoretical adjustment—class struggle. The ego to emulate capitalist prosperity gave way to the moral duty of unselfish devotion. Cultural Revolution came—Mao Zedong images were the spiritual inspirations: simple life style but advanced ways to protect such a life style. All the doorways of Tiananmen had a portrait of Mao Zedong (X). Mao Zedong statues, badges and pictures took most buildings, clothes and schoolbags. Ironically, such fanaticism was based on the fear that Mao Zedong would be excluded from the center of power and that capitalism would be practiced if that happened. From today's rhetoric of disaster about those social movements, it was a political confrontation of a powerful leader against his weak followers. But when looking at what China is practicing today, the political conscience of Mao Zedong and his red guards may have been really threatened.

The hiding of Mao Zedong's right ear and showing of his left one was probably artistic considerations. But it did correspond to the political displays above the portrait. The artistic selective processes reflected the political selective processes. As a central stage of Chinese politics, the portrait called for the particular political passion in the artist. Like the Communist's Five-year Plan, most political agendas appeared on Mao Zedong's faces ahead of time. The original photo for Wang Guodong, the fourth painter of the Portrait of Mao Zedong, to paint in 1964 was taken in 1959 (Chen Shilin). 1959 was a troublesome year for Mao Zedong. In March 10, Gonbozashi and five other Tibetans, who had returned to Tibet after systematic training by CIA at Saipan Island of United States Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, led an armed resurgence

against the People's Liberation Army. In March 17, the 14th Dalai escaped to India under the help of CIA paramilitary officer Anthony Poshepny, known as Tony Poe, and several well-trained insurgents (Cui Xiyi). Mao Zedong was heart-broken because his appeasement for Dalai was returned with topmost treason. On July 14, Peng Dehuai wrote Mao Zedong a letter saying that "Big Leap Forward" was a serious Leftist mistake (Peng). Mao Zedong felt his good intentions were misinterpreted. But as the first leader of the country, he had to yield to others that were more talented than he was. He retired to the second line of the Central Committee. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were elected to the first line. By the time when Wang Guodong began to paint his first Portrait of Mao Zedong in 1964, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping focused only on economic development and forgot about political conscience. Many people felt they were pushing the social system backward. Obviously, Wang Guodong was guided by some upper level leaders in the Government to signal some of the "opinions of the Masses" through Mao Zedong's ear. Though many interpreted this posture as "one-sidedness," Mao Zedong was actually formulating a social movement that would take place in two years.

In 1966, the left ear exhibited for two years now came into the political reality. Cultural Revolution broke out above the "one-sided" portrait. The actual Mao Zedong, who was seven years older than the painted Mao Zedong, looked much older. The seventy-three-year-old leader could not speak much but waved his cap vigorously with his hand. People from the two Mao Zedongs selected the most powerful political messages—from the painted one, the decent revolutionary dignity, from the actual one, deep hatred for the reactionary forces that had made their great helmsman white-haired.

The political significance of the Mao Zedong Portrait of 1964 to 1966 is that it created the largest social movement in human history in terms of population. It is the large scale that scared not only the populace but Mao Zedong himself. In less than half a month after Mao Zedong received the first assembly of Red Guards, gunfights took place in Beijing. On September 5, 1966, the editorial of *People's Daily* had to publish Mao Zedong's words—"We want verbal struggle not military struggle!" What he wanted was the political conscience that could resist the "reactionary" rhetorics of the ideological enemies, including the landlords, rich landowners, anti-revolutionaries, sociopaths, and the rightists, and that could reform the corrupted thoughts in people's mind.

In response to this, in 1967, Wang Guodong was using one of Mao Zedong's photos taken in 1964 as a model for the Gate portrait. It showed Mao Zedong's both ears. This portrait showed Mao Zedong's final effort in compromising the political struggles, and it has become his will twelve years before his actual death.

Though the current portraits have been Mao Zedong's actual image in 1964, as a state political symbol, it is a simulacrum that tries to re-play the past and formulate the future. After his actual death in 1976, the displayed rhetoric has diverged into two channels—the public and individualized politics. Roughly we can call these displaying and viewing processes as top-down political promotion and bottom-up identification or contradiction. Both processes have developed into and evolved with each of the new leaderships. What to reveal or conceal largely depends on one's habituated political emotion. Today, more and more people have habituated the rhetoric of Deng Xiaoping's opening and reform, so what they see in the portrait of Mao Zedong is what was concealed—the priority of productive forces. Deng Xiaoping's image almost takes over

Mao Zedong in many of these people's eyes. Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao have also modified themselves into the sight, though their glasses may have shown some distance.

The diplomatic activities above the Portrait have demonstrated many powerful political messages. Mao Zedong often presented his political modifications by inviting important figures to stand beside him at the rostrum on the National Day: with Kim Il Sung of Korea in 1954, with Bung Sukarno of Indonesia in 1956, with Khrushchev of Soviet Union in 1959, with King-Father Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia in 1965, with Edgar Snow of United States in 1970. All these image displays helped Mao Zedong to make his political arguments above his own Portrait. For Kim, Sukarno and Sihanouk, it was Mao Zedong's open identification with the "Third World." Khrushchev was never welcome in China after he spent some time at the Tiananmen Rostrum with Mao Zedong. That was actually Mao Zedong's beginning of open denouncement about revisionism. Snow was Mao Zedong's friend for a long time, and he visited Mao Zedong in Beijing several times. But Mao Zedong and the CCP could not easily drive away the shadow of America's attempt to bomb Tiananmen in 1950. It was the National Day of 1970 that Snow had a chance to be shown with Mao Zedong at Tiananmen. It signaled Mao Zedong's deliberated wish to end the political feud between China and the United states. Snow was the only American that was invited to stand at the rostrum. Since him, no other Americans have been invited to stand beside the head of the country. For the Chinese government, America had been and would be the worst political enemy; for the American government, Tiananmen assembled almost all the undemocratic symbols.

Sihanouk has been frequently invited to stand in the rostrum of the Gate. One of the many reasons was that his Cambodia had worked hard, with Albania, to promote the

membership of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations (Kim 302). Through him, we can see the superficial consistency of the CCP's international politics. Cambodia was the real hot spot of international political struggles. Unlike Vietnam that was invaded because of her socialist locus, Cambodia was invaded by both the socialist and capitalist sides. On the national day of 1970, Sihanouk was also at the rostrum when Snow and Mao Zedong posed for the photographers. Sihanouk told Snow, "Nixon is the best agent of Mao Zedong. The harder he bombed Cambodia, the more people change to Communists. He [Nixon] is their best transporter of ammunitions" (Ding Xiaoping). This reminds many Chinese of what Mao Zedong and many other Chinese Communists said about Jiang Jieshi and Americans—"They are chief transporters of the People's Liberation Army." Without the advanced weapons the PLA took from its enemies, China could never have become a military power so soon. Mao Zedong arranged Sihanouk and Snow together to show the CCP's changes in international relations. The main point was that China might cooperate with the old ideological enemies in order to solve the problems in Cambodia. On the same day, a Vietnamese woman officer was also seen at the rostrum. Mao Zedong seemed reluctant to talk to her because the Soviet and Vietnamese Communists showed great interest in establishing a Communist government in Cambodia through violence. Mao Zedong found Cambodia could be a good place for him to check Soviet Chauvinism and initiate the cooperation between China and America. On December 18, 1970, Mao Zedong said to Snow, "Today I do not want to make a difference between Chinese and American. I have great confidence in the people of these two countries. I see great hope in the American people. The American people will become a great potential force to make a better world." On December 25 of the same

year, one day before Mao Zedong's birthday, *People's Daily* published the photo of Snow, Helen and Mao Zedong at the front page with a headline. Obviously, after that, the hostility between the two countries began to decrease.

Mao Zedong's successors also used the spacious veranda to display or defend their political ambitions above Portrait of Mao Zedong. On the National Day of 1984, when the Agriculture flatcar in the parade passed by Portrait of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping turned to Norodom Sihanouk and said, "It is our Agriculture Formation." Sihanouk commented—"Chinese agriculture is good because of your good leadership and good policies" (Li Shanzhi). Deng replied, "It is clearly stated in the slogan—it is the good policies." He was confident above the Portrait of Mao Zedong because Sihanouk was still well treated in China. Deng Xiaoping wanted to convince the country that Soviet support of the rebel government was the direct cause of Sihanouk's exile life in China. Then, under Deng Xiaoping's direct orders, China's invasions to Vietnam—a country that had undertaken for Soviet Union the actual military actions to have overthrown King Sihanouk—would look legitimate. The public message was that China would not tolerate Soviet hegemony in Asia. For that purpose, China could fight against a socialist brother like Vietnam. So Deng Xiaoping was still carrying on Mao Zedong's independent principles, though, he knew too well that Mao Zedong would not agree to invade a country that had been bullied by imperialist powers one after another.

On the national day of 1989, Jiang Zemin also brought Sihanouk to the rostrum. It was at night. But several lights lit up for the photographers. Jiang Zemin also brought Chen Yun and Li Peng, two of Deng Xiaoping's favorites. The political symbolism was that Jiang Zemin would not change Deng Xiaoping's promise—to the effect that if the

problems in Cambodia have not been settled completely, China will always support Sihanouk. On October 23, 1991, the Paris Peace Agreement on Cambodia was signed. On November 15, China and Vietnam resumed official economic and trade relations. Since then, Sihanouk was seldom seen at the rostrum of the Gate. China wants to give the Vietnamese some visual balance. Now President Hu Jintao only meet Sihanouk at the Hall of People's Congress, the usual place to receive foreign political leaders. It means Sihanouk should not be specially placed at the prestigious position like the rostrum on a formal occasion.

Since Mao Zedong is absent as a person, his portrait serves the political surveillance. It functions as a rhetorical body and the material of rhetoric as Sharon Crowley formulates, and will continue to influence people's political conscience because Tiananmen is a "public realm" (363). Though personal emotions may deviate from public identities, when facing such a giant image, one has to seek ideological choices to forget or remember it. Since January 1 1988, the Tiananmen rostrum was open to the public, up to now more than four million people visited this visual forum. Undoubtedly, people think about their political conscience and have actually made an argument when they stand and look down at the Square.

## **POLITICAL EMOTIONS**

For the concept of political consciousness, there is probably a large gap between the West and East societies. Though the gap has been narrowed through intercultural activities, and exceptions exist absolutely, many Chinese, under the influence of traditional or Communist education, understand political consciousness as the sense of

personal distribution in and contribution to the public systems. The Western Republican tradition is more concerned about the personal development in the public systems, or in other words, social progress depends on individualistic ability and achievement. Our discussion is further complicated by the systematic antagonisms between socialism, capitalism, and religious beliefs. Because Portrait of Mao Zedong is about such political issues, it is unavoidable to bring the competing or fighting arguments to the same table. The purpose of doing such bilateral analyses is not to take side but to see the troubles of our social being.

### **Paradigm Scenarios of the Political Mao Zedong**

Barbara Koziak believes that emotional style and political involvement are culturally or socially constructed. After discussing cultural emotional styles, she goes on to define political emotion as the “the influence of political culture on the experience of some emotions in relatively nonpolitical spheres” (29). The definition merges the two parts—“politics,” the public systems, and “emotion,” the personal reactions. Understandably, emotions come out of single hearts. But it does not mean, Koziak reminds us, that personal emotions only respond to political activities. Some of them also “carry repercussions for people’s lives in terms of freedom, opportunity, equality, and participation in public institutions” (X). They visualize or facialize how political regimes work—“generate loyalty,” “create images of the relationship between citizens,” “manage what goods [members] expect from political community”—and what individuals can contribute to the community and other members.

Different political regimes use different paradigm scenarios to strengthen the institutional ties to individual members. Many state scenarios are visualized. Jesus Christ on the cross constantly reminds believers of the hardships God's only son has taken for human sins, and is actually a state scenario in the eyes of true Christians. The Goddess of Liberty has harbored most exiles from Europe and Asia, and many regard her as a state scenario of a free country. Although the Chinese has a national emblem, the paradigm scenario of the Communist Government is the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen.

A paradigm scenario usually connects one's personal emotions to a public political stance, which is—to borrow Liu Yaming's wisdom—"stable, clear-cut, consistent, and morally unambiguous," "better served by a rhetoric restricted by, or liberated from, the dominant political cartography of the time," and shows the "ethicality of rhetorical practices" that remain committed to one particular articulation and that sustain the "coherence between one's private and professional ideology" (324). On most occasions, Mao Zedong's images remind most Chinese citizens a sense of moral code. Their emotional circumstances have sustained the admiration of Mao Zedong's personality because many people connect their own happiness or misfortune to the honor of a collective identity.

When I was a child, I often saw a lady stand alone before the portrait of Mao Zedong on the wall of the stage where she was constantly brutally ashamed. It was probably 1974. One day, the lady Jiang Aiqin and her family—four sons and one daughter were caught by the local militia leaders and were ashamed on the stage by the villagers at the People's Auditorium of Xiadong Production Brigade. With their hands tied to the carrying poles, each of them carried two baskets of rice. Even the youngest

son, about six years old, had about twenty-five kilograms of rice on his back. The public punishment lasted for two or three hours. The crazy villagers went up to the stage and beat each of them as hard as they could to show their hatred for the “people’s enemies.” Zhangju, a woman from the same production unit, took off one of her shoes and went to the stage. She beat everyone with the shoe. But she focused the beating on the second son Yougu, one of the most handsome young men in the local area. The reason was that many villagers suspected that she, a married woman, had an affair with Yougu. She did not stop slapping his face until he bled terribly. For three years, the family was treated in this way every three or four days. By the time they were told that they were wronged by a political mistake, all the family members were victims of mental disorder. Only the mother and daughter could behave normally. The truth is that Director Wang, a resident political leader, wanted to sleep with Qinju, Zhangju’s sister who wanted to marry Yougu. Yougu was the accountant of the production unit. It was late autumn that some villagers wanted to get some rice from the public barn. Yougu agreed. The trouble was that Director Wang was away for a political meeting. When Wang came back, he had his great chance. He found extra rice in the household of Aiqin, and ordered the arrest.

After the first public punishment, Qinju was married to another young man under the arrangement of Director Wang. Up to now, only Aiqin’s daughter and the second youngest son, not Yougu, were married. Aiqin has a grandson and a granddaughter.

Aiqin had a habit of murmuring to the portrait of Mao Zedong below which she and her family were abused. She visited the Portrait of Mao Zedong regularly until it was torn away by someone some time in 1981. I was told that she kept a portrait of Mao Zedong and prayed to it regularly till now. I was a student of the primary school near the

People's Auditorium. One day after school I came to her side and she told me that only Mao Zedong could protect her honor but he was dead. I did not pay attention to her. But when I recall now, I cannot help being tangled by a lot of emotions. The hatred for Director Wang. Sorrow for Ai Qin and her family. Regret for myself—I could have helped them; but my parents and brothers did not allow me to go to them. And most of all, gratitude and admiration for Ai Qin. She could have hated Mao Zedong—at least, it was Mao Zedong's idea of sending urban political leaders to the rural areas. But she could only connect her personal sorrow to the honor of Mao Zedong—a man, according to the propaganda, that could always stand up for the weak and under-trodden, that could mercilessly punish the wicked and corrupt, and that could unconditionally reward any deed that is good for the public.

The Chinese mass media are full of such paradigm scenarios of political involvement through Mao Zedong images. Rhetorically, many people take such simulacrums to look at the political interests for the largest extent and for the future. In the movie *Mao Zedong Zedong and His Son*, Mao Zedong does not shed any tear when he gets the news that his son was killed by a US bombing in Korea. Not long afterwards, Mao Zedong goes to visit a lady who has lost a son in Korea, too. When he comes to the village, he sees the dilapidated state of her house. Tears come to Mao Zedong's eyes when he looks at the photo of her son. Above the photo is large paper portrait of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong moves to take it off and wants to replace it with her son's photo. The lady turns to stop him. Suddenly she beams up and tears come to her eyes, too. "I have no qualifications for such a honor," Mao Zedong says, "my guilt to ruin people like you." A confrontational interpretation would be that it is purely political propaganda. But

for a lady as helpless as Aiqin or the lady in the movie, the historical truth does not matter. It is the visual sensation of seeing a political reward or re-wording that appeals to the identical spectators.

The “dominant political cartography” of the Chinese Communist government has had different focuses. The rhetorical display of such an “emphasis of the Party’s tasks”—a phrase Mao Zedong often used—in a certain period of time has a chronological reflection of the changes in Mao Zedong’s head and clothes. When the Red Army arrived in Yan’an, Mao Zedong soon became the head of the Party. Snow took a photo of him in 1936—Mao Zedong, showing the left ear, in a blue uniform that has two red collar insignias, with a blue octagonal cap that has a red star—was painted and was once in a while put on a cloth screen at the stage of Yan’an’s Auditorium. His left ear shows the importance of theoretical study of Marxism. On formal occasions, only the images of Marx and Engels were on the screen. At the usual meetings or lectures, Mao Zedong’s picture was accompanied by Zhu De’s laughing head. Zhu De was nominally the commander-in-chief of the Army. The symbolic message was Mao Zedong’s famous saying—using “gun barrels” to get “state power.” This visual partnership did not end until 1959 when Mao Zedong retreated from the first line of work at the central government. The country had to suppress insurrections, and undergo wars led by America.

After that year, the portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen was based on random selections of Mao Zedong’s photos. Sometimes it was a scholarly head, sometimes one of an ordinary citizen. Mao Zedong seldom appeared at the rostrum of Tiananmen. He went to the rural areas, and tried to get first hand information of the country’s agriculture. If

things went on well, Mao Zedong could have been only a powerful advisor. But mysteriously the successors he pushed forward—Liu and Deng—focused on interest-oriented, and most often individualistic, economic development. Through the red guards, Mao Zedong came back to power as the leader of rebellion. Interestingly, though his authority was never challenged, he placed himself as a dissident to argue against Liu and Deng’s “revisionism”—which should be more appropriately addressed as functionalism or pragmatic materialism. His political success in 1966 was most likely his authority within the Party, but was interpreted by many as his second time of getting the “state power” with “gun barrels.” The Mao Zedong image events in the Cultural Revolution promoted such rhetorical functions. A lot of badges were produced. Most of them have a military Mao Zedong at the center with halo-like sunlight above. Because Mao Zedong himself was shocked by the violence he had incurred, the “gun barrels” were rhetorically modified as “mental weapon.” In Mao Zedong’s mindset, the physical enemies were easy to find and can be defeated with “gun barrels.” But the ideological enemies were hard to find and cannot be defeated with “gun barrels” but with Marxist and Leninist theories. Mao Zedong was the Chinese representative and spokesman of Marxism and Leninism, so Mao Zedong thought were the summary and development and should be focused. Through these theoretical inspirations, people then would have material creative power. These badges always have a newly made product—a car, a ship, a plane, a tractor, or a harvester—as Mao Zedong’s props.

Wearing a badge of Mao Zedong was a sign of positive attitude and political conscience. These badges represented mental reward and thus could not be bought. It was an honor for those who were awarded and shame for those who were excluded. Mao

Zedong usually wrote a few slogans—“Serve the People,” “Prepare the People for Wars and Famines,” “Go up the Mountains and down to the villages (to be educated by those who actually know how to plant crops),” “Daqin is the Industrial Model,” “Dazhai is the Agricultural Model,” etc. When these badges were distributed, it was always a separation of being “red”—good political consciousness—or being “white” or “black”—capitalistic life style or bad criminals. People often fought for such occasions. Ding Yumian, a high school graduate who went to Wensheng Forestry Farm, Shaxi District, Tongjiang County, Sichuan Province in 1965, has a paradigm scenario of such political struggle. Yumian later joined the local fifth production team, first production brigade of Wensheng People’s Commune. She lived with four other city girls. In a morning, a local peasant told them that the Brigade had given the Team some Chairman Mao Zedong badges and that they were only for the local peasants. At eleven a.m., the director asked for a meeting. Yumian and another city girl sat at the table on the two sides of the director (57). The director was surprised, for usually the two of them would sit with other women. But still he welcomed them before he addressed all the team members—“Chairman Mao Zedong cares about us peasants. The Central Government has especially made for the agricultural villages Chairman Mao Zedong badges of ‘Dazhai is the Agricultural Model.’ The Brigade has sent them to our Team. Our distribution scheme is one for one household of one or two, two for one household of three, three for one household of five or six. Chairman Mao Zedong badges are meant for true peasants that are poor, lower or middle. Therefore—[he turned to Yumian]-you intellectual youths should not have any.” Yumian asked permission to speak, and recited Chairman Mao Zedong’s saying—“who are our enemies and who are our friends are the first important issue for revolution.” Then

Yumian made a long speech to defend the honor of the city girls—

We are educated youths. Chairman Mao Zedong said that young city graduates who go up the mountains and down to the villages will make a lot of achievements. In response to the call of Chairman Mao Zedong, we five left our birthplaces, parents and family members, and came here. Therefore, we came for a righteous cause. You, the director, often gives credit to our performances in the production team. Our uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters-in-law of here have all said kind things about us. Even the District Party secretary praised us. Therefore, all should agree that we acted properly. As for our family origins: two go with teacher, two small businessman, and one doctor. The worst class status in us is still with the lower or middle peasant. Lower and middle peasants are the reliable partners, the main forces of revolution. Therefore, we are also true peasants that are poor, lower or middle. So, according to the distribution scheme you director published, and we five are five households, therefore we should have five Chairman Mao Zedong badges.

Through Yumian's discursive efforts to get the visual honor, we feel the indoctrinated emotion has become a public paradigm even though the purpose of the rhetorical demonstration was to push for personal gains. Eventually Yumian and the city girls got the badges. They began to enjoy their farming life.

Today's young people may laugh at such vanity. But they may be labeled the same way when they look at the Mao Zedong image in the money bills—100 Yuan, 50 Yuan, 20 Yuan, 10 Yuan, and 1 Yuan. The same Mao Zedong covers all the money bills.

Mao Zedong is now used in the dominant political rhetoric of economic development. The Mao Zedong image is the ingrained paradigm for a money-loving culture that the Chairman Mao Zedong badges have denounced.

### **Identity Politics in the Spectacle of Mao Zedong**

Because Mao Zedong was the chosen one from the many, his images, then, have stood for the inclusion of literal and symbolic messages of the represented groups. After decades of propaganda and rhetorical modifications, Mao Zedong images are identified by many as the symbols of a good person who has the angelic virtues and abilities to help the oppressed and has undergone unusual hardships and personal sacrifices for the public interests. Meanwhile, he was the leader of millions of such good persons, and is often associated with the group identity of the Army, the Party, the Chinese race and the Chinese nation. These emotional and rhetorical selections were based on people's identifications, his own contributions, and the Party's deliberate promotions. The excluded groups in the process of selections, on the other hand, often find relevant literal messages in Mao Zedong images to promote or defend their own political interests.

The Cultural Revolution may give people the wrong impression that Mao Zedong images have always been the omnipotent representation. Before Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party usually did not encourage hanging portrait of Mao Zedong alone, especially on formal occasions. The usual order was Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong at the Hall of People's Congress for a long time. When the May Day of 1953 was coming, Mao Zedong actually signed a notification from the Central Committee of CCP. The official document requires that the portraits of Marx, Engels,

Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong be placed at two rows with Mao Zedong in the lower row (Xiao Xianzhu 374). It is also required that, in the parade, the first row of Portraits be Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, second row Mao Zedong and Sun Zhongshan, third row Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De, and then the heads of other Communist nations.

Mao Zedong once complained that the Chinese artists made him less appealing. On March 10, 1958, when he analyzed the issue of personality cult during the Chengdu Meeting of the Chinese Communist Party, his opinion of Stalin images was—

The Bodhisattva images are several times bigger than human beings. That is only for scaring people. A hero at the theatre is always extraordinary. Stalin is such a person. The Chinese are used to slavery, and seem to be still willing to be slaves. The Chinese artists always made me shorter than Stalin when we were placed in the same portrait. They subjugate themselves to Soviet ideological pressure. Everyone is equal in Marxism and Leninism, and we should treat people equally. But with one stroke, Khrushchev struck Stalin dead. That we cannot accept. They do not hang Stalin's image, but we will. ...Some people are quite interested in doing away with personality cult. Personality cult has two kinds: one is correct, for example, we must worship the correct things in Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. It will not do if we do not worship the truths in their hands. We believe in truth because truth is the reflection of objective existence. Just as a squad must follow a squad leader, we must follow them. The other kind is not correct: blind obedience without any analysis. It is not correct. There are also two purposes for fighting against personality cult: one is

against incorrect cult, the other is for worshipping oneself while fighting against others' personality cult. The point is not personality cult but is about truth. If it is truth, we should follow. If it is not truth, we should not follow even if it is followed by a collective leadership. Our Party has always emphasized the unification of individual contribution and collective leadership. To shoot Stalin, some people find common interests. The individual goal is to make others worship himself. It is just like those who were against Lenin saying that Lenin was a dictator. Lenin replied explicitly: I'd rather be a dictator myself than letting you be a dictator.

(Xiao Xianshe 438-439)

This excerpt has many interesting points that will be addressed in the following chapters. But here we have to look at those that are connected to the Chinese Communist Party's efforts to contain personality cult. First, the CCP did not want to break up with the Soviet Brother and the international allies. At this point in 1958, China still focused on socialist construction and did not want to show too much Chinese characteristics. Mao Zedong's complaint that he was painted shorter than Stalin was a reflection of the CCP's collective respect for the Soviet leadership. But after Mao Zedong began to feel the need of political independence, the CCP propaganda officials stopped placing the two heads together. Second, the CCP did not approve of Khrushchev's intention of building his own personality cult while criticizing Stalin's personality cult. Mao Zedong's sarcasm pointed only at Khrushchev, though if we consider the later history, there are a number of things that can be applied to the CCP leadership.

Up to 1964, Mao Zedong was a clear-minded statesman who really wanted the best for his country. In 1953, after all those years of brutal wars and unprecedented social movements, Mao Zedong proposed that he retreat from the first line of political work in the Central Committee of CCP, and that Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping replace him (Xiao 378). But corruption in the Party became a serious problem and only Mao Zedong could sort it through. The Party's dependence on Mao Zedong did not release much until 1959 when he asked Liu Shaoqi to be the head of the state, and Deng Xiaoping to the General Secretary of the Party. After the procedure was done, the propaganda officials immediately sent out an order that on the national day of 1959 and on all future national days, newspapers should have Mao Zedong and Liu's photos of equal size side-by-side on the front page (News Front 32).

By 1961, Mao Zedong was still one of the representative images. He was the fifth ideological icon of socialism, and the first Chinese leader when the portraits were hung to reveal the political identities in national nature. The *Bulletin of Activities* of People's Liberation Army reiterated the old rules the Party prescribed before—

Regarding the question of hanging the portraits of our leaders, the Central Authorities made a clear ruling as early as 29 March 1960.... "In the organizations for the Party, the People's Liberation Army and the people's associations of various kinds, it is permitted to hang the portrait of Mao Zedong alone; it is also permitted to hang the portrait of Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Chen Yun, Lin Biao, and Deng Xiaoping. The manner of hanging these portraits is: if it is desirable to

hang the seven portraits Mao Zedong, Liu, Zhou, Zhu, Chen, Lin and Deng together, the portrait of Mao Zedong can be placed in the center and the others on the two sides. It is also suitable to put the portrait of Mao Zedong in the first place and the others in order as indicated, and from left to right. According to our understanding, there are not a few units, especially the primary level units, which have not hung the portraits as described above. We are asking these units to inspect carefully the way in which these instructions have been carried out so that we may have a unified system according to the regulations of the Central Authorities.

*General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army*

*On March 14, 1961*

From this quote, we can see that Mao Zedong images were ceremonial political decorations. They did not mean to provoke those emotional outbursts the later Mao Zedong images would produce.

It was when the internal and international political environments became dangerous that Mao Zedong was singled out to symbolize the emotional charges the Party needed to promote its social agendas. China felt increasingly threatened by the Soviet Chauvinism. Khrushchev's attempts to democratize the socialist camp only belied his international political ambitions. Many of Mao Zedong's old comrades in China admired Khrushchev's materialistic campaigns. Also, US threatened to invade China with atomic bombs. Mao Zedong became a target of different ideologies and different schools within the same ideology. Instead of retreating from the political cause, he had to assert himself once more as the only source that could save an ideology that can live through these

external and internal political struggles. Mao Zedong images, then, became the “material forms of existence of [the] functioning” of that ideology as Louis Althusser might say. It is quite relevant to consider the unique situation Mao Zedong put himself in—an East subject (a Native Chinese) that was constitutive of a West ideology (Marxism) seeing that ideology is losing the “function...of ‘constituting’ concrete individuals as subjects” (139). The threatening forces came from all directions—from a hostile Western super power—America, from a competitive Western super brother—Soviet Union, and then from his Eastern nationalist and revisionist comrades-in-arms—the second generation of the CCP leadership. Uniquely, in his usual way, Mao Zedong began to seek political help from working classes and young people within China and Third World, a term he made for a new political territory. It was under such political anxieties and hopes that Mao Zedong images were implanted with the identities of oppressed classes, incorruptible Communists, and unselfish social workers.

The CCP soon projected Mao Zedong as a spectacle of a Communist society that was different from the Soviet model. The spectacle is a synecdoche that makes access to the sector of a society—to quote Guy Debord—“where all attention, all consciousness, converges” (142). These political emotions of identifying with a endangered leader gradually built up the eruption of a unique historical phenomenon—Cultural Revolution in which image events dominated the political stages with such confrontational passions that we need focused examination for them in Chapter 2.

**Dominance: Nationalism**

Mao Zedong's images can be seen as the continuous political activism of Mao Zedong's era. Mao Zedong's ambitious ideals of Marxism and internationalism gradually yield to the development of national strength. With the shift of political focus, China has become increasingly sensitive to the national identity. Mao Zedong's images, though open to discussion now, have taken more national weight in the materialistic competition of today's capitalism. The focus of viewing Mao Zedong, or in a term of visual communication, the dominance of the Portrait of Mao Zedong, is the visual rhetoric of national dignity.

The Cultural Revolution promoted Mao Zedong as the representative image of the contemporary Marxism. But Mao Zedong's negotiations with President Nixon disappointed many young revolutionaries throughout the world, especially those in Latin Americas. Soon the sphere of Mao Zedong's influence shrank. After tumultuous internal and external political struggles, the Chinese turned to economic development. The political role of Mao Zedong images was greatly reduced especially after Deng took the actual power. This had a lot to do with the personal and political emotions of Deng and his followers. Mao Zedong was only used as political defense against international denigrations. Because the rhetorical abuses of China—China threat from the industrial countries for instance—become escalated as China's economic development has created more and more materialistic concerns, the Chinese nationalist sentiments, ironically, are strengthened to a new level. Another paradoxical reason is that today's China almost has no political ambitions, which makes more and more people turn to miss Mao Zedong's era. When issues of Tibet, Taiwan, Xijiang, and other territories are addressed, even those

who focus on making money will join the Government's political rhetoric and present Mao Zedong as the powerful story.

Blakesley interprets Burke's identification as an "assertion of a margin of overlap—an identity of values, beliefs, and even bodies and bodily processes—in cases where we are also clearly divided where common values or beliefs are arguments or propositions as much as they are a pre-existing basis for acting together" (116). China faces such a rhetorical need. Nationalism has been and is a unifying force. Yet one end of this rhetorical spectrum is devotion: many people identify Mao Zedong as their accessible judge for equality and justice. The other is economic development: many people argue for or against Mao Zedong's economic ability. Some think Mao Zedong was a master of political economy and macroeconomics while others insist that Mao Zedong's peasantry was and is a setback for material and technological competition. These identifications and contradictions unite, instead of separate, people's sense of national identity.

When Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin were in power, they purposely balance people's different sentiments about Mao Zedong. They put Mao Zedong onto money bills. The top-down rhetoric is that Mao Zedong was also good at economic development, though most Chinese know that Mao Zedong would not approve the pragmatist and materialist approach. Or in an ultimatum manner—"even Mao Zedong is in money, who dares not make money?" This subtly displays the CCP government's political ambition to "bring moderate prosperity to China in a well-rounded way." The bottom-up interpretation would be—"Mao Zedong will bring us luck; every business will be successful because we are using him." In this way, the Government sends out the message that Mao Zedong will always be a national symbol. Anthea Callen compares

such a representational transfer as an unnoticeable process of assembling a “product of ideas that are culturally and historically specific, and in which the social formation of the producer determines the appearance and meanings of the body; its meanings are then further modified” (603). Though Deng’s economic reform caused tremendous confusion among the people, his strategic maneuver gradually united the country with the Mao Zedong image. Therefore, no matter how different his political conscience is from Mao Zedong’s “determined principles,” people can still feel his devotion to Mao Zedong and he will still be remembered as a faithful follower of Mao Zedong.

The CCP government has maintained its political constancy and stability through such rhetorical adjustments. There have always been slogans near Tiananmen to promote the government’s political agendas. On the national day of 1949, two slogans were hung on the two sides of the Portrait of Mao Zedong: “Long Live the People’s Republic of China!” and “Long Live the Central People’s Government!” They reflected people’s nationalistic sentiments—national honor and dignity. The design was done by two Japanese who joined the Eighth Route when they were sent to China to carry on anti-China propaganda. They were captured, and became active “Chinese” soldiers. This gives people a connection with the slogan the Japanese hung over Tiananmen—“Build the New Order of Great East Asia.”

On the national day of 1950, “Long Live the Central People’s Government!” was changed to “Long Live the Big Unification of the People of the World!” Seemingly, China had a political ambition to unite the world. This was actually a Chinese polite way to celebrate the establishment of the new China—“celebrate with all those below the sky.” Also, it is a proud way of presenting Chinese way respect for other nations—“we

will not forget other people.” Generally speaking, the nationalistic sentiments have been visually implanted near the Gate.

In 1956, China underwent an extensive movement to simplify the Chinese characters. But considering the political effect on the people of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao who used traditional characters, the two slogans were not changed to simplified characters until May 1, Labor’s Day, 1964 (He Fan).

These political or complimentary slogans served the function of encouraging national pride. On the national day of 1959, the slogan on the two sides of the Portrait of Mao Zedong was—“Well Prepare Morale, Try to be the Best, and Construct Socialism Plentifully, Quickly, Optimally and Efficiently.” About one million and fifty thousand people from China and other countries gathered in Tiananmen Square. The nationalist and socialist sentiments reached an unprecedented level.

On the national day of 1984, the slogan Deng Xiao pointed out for Sihanouk at the rostrum was—“the Number one Document of the Central Committee is Good.” That was the slogan in which the peasants praised the Party’s brilliant policies. Soon the students from Beijing University raised a slogan—“Hello, Xiaoping.” The literal translation is “Xiaoping you good.” This makes a good line to that of peasants as a couplet—the government is good, the leader is good, and then the country is hopeful. Also, the slogan amazingly displayed the transition of a strict leadership to an amiable or adorable one. For the first time, someone called the first name of the head of the country on such a formal occasion.

National Day is usual the big occasion for the Government to promote patriotism and nationalism. Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao often made important speech at the rostrum

above the Portrait of Mao Zedong. Compared with Cultural Revolution, people's emotional ties to the nation are actually stronger since the emphases of Cultural Revolution were political emotion and internationalism. In 1980, the CCP Central Committee proposed that individuals should not be focus of political propaganda. Only the Portrait of Mao Zedong can remain at Tiananmen Square all the time. As for the portraits of Marx, Engles, Lenin and Stalin, they can be displayed only at necessary circumstances. In April 1989, the Central Committee officially declared that portraits of Marx, Engles, Lenin and Stalin would no longer show up in Tiananmen Square. The reason was, as the leaders explain, that most countries in the world only hung their own national heroes during the national holidays.

Undoubtedly, it only created more space for the nation's emotional affiliation with Mao Zedong. These rhetorical and practical simplifications, in an increasingly competitive or antagonistic international environment, will only make nationalist emotion more intense, rather than weakened.

## Chapter 2. Image Events of Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution

Using images to launch social movements is more like a Western idea. For this, Mao Zedong, a believer of “revolutionary realism,” never denied that most Western thoughts and arts were more advanced than the traditional Chinese counterparts because the former has focused more on real life while the latter served the unnatural superstitious needs of the Chinese ruling classes. His preference of photo and oil painting was a convincing example. Mao Zedong wrote a number of important works about the particularities of the Chinese and foreign arts. His major concern about the Chinese arts was the superstitious nature that moves ordinary people from real problems and solutions. This, surprisingly, led to his support of Xu Beihong’s nude painting and his distaste for Qi Baishi’s abstract landscape. This is fully described by Wang Xianming in his *Fine Arts Movement of Red Guards* (21<sup>st</sup> Century August 1995).

Here we see the contradictory sides of Mao Zedong’s personality. Contrary to the interpretation of Mao Zedong’s images as autocratic dictatorship—an interpretation based on Chinese traditional imperial values or Western democratic and liberal emotions—Mao Zedong actually tried hard to present himself as a democratic and scientific figure that has internalized Western Marxist ideals. Mao Zedong himself embraced such paradoxes. One of Mao Zedong’s theoretical contributions to Marxism was his concept of contradiction derived from materialist dialectics. This chapter will explore the dialectic nature of the internal image events of Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution—how his visual authority encouraged young people to criticize gerontocracy, how he established the emotional ties with the masses to fulfill the

selection of younger leadership, and how eventually the traditional Chinese value systems came to neutralize the antagonistic Western ideologies that have played active roles in China.

While describing the image displays of some radical environmental groups, Kevin Michael DeLuca frequently uses the term of image event in his *Image Politics*. He defines image event as an abstraction from Daniel Boorstin's pseudo-event, Kaz and Dayan's media event, and Guy Debord's concept of spectacle (DeLuca 165n.1). He thinks these thinkers present the visual emotions as sideline rhetoric while he wants to treat imagistic discourses as qualitative forces. It is in this sense that I also want to use the concept of image events of Mao Zedong to review the social movements Mao Zedong's images prompted during his last ten years.

The ancient Chinese used flags to instigate a rebellion. A typical phrase for such bottom-up struggle is: jie gan er qi, literally meaning "put out the bamboo post and rise (rebel)." On the other hand, the rulers often projected a VIP, usually an emperor's actual appearance to suppress an insurgence. This top-down process is often described as "long yan da nu," "dragon appearance big anger"—"the dignified authority shows indignation." This phrase was originally used in the mythology about prehistoric China, but is now associated with the dignity of angered authority because the Chinese used to compare the rulers to dragons, in the positive sense. The former phrase comes from history—the Uprising of Chen Sheng and Wu Guang that eventually led to the downfall of Qin Dynasty in which Ren Zhen proclaimed himself to be the Beginning Emperor (Shi Huang). Chen Sheng and Wu Guang tied some rough cloth to one end of a bamboo post and raised it to the air (Zhou Gucheng et al. I: 353). Thus began the first large-scale

Peasant Uprising in China. For the next two thousand years, China had two major historical engagements: for every two or three hundred years, a peasant uprising would have to initiate an overthrow of the old dynasty and the establishment of a new one; for every one hundred years or so, a “foreign” or “savage” people would invade the Middle Plains and the emperor or empress or their Qin Chai Da Chen, an envoy that represented the sovereign, would have to present their solemn or insolent faces to deter the enemies. In 1690, 1696 and 1697, for three times Emperor Kangxi led his royal troops into Siberian steppes and defeated the Mongolian invasions (Zhou Gucheng et al. III: 307). His presence in the battlefield and his visual display of “dragon power”—yellow tents and banners—undoubtedly encouraged the morale of his troops to reclaim the lands from the Uigur rebels.

But to use one’s own images to launch such campaigns was impossible in China. On the one hand, the spread of these images to the hands of the enemies meant bad luck. On the other, to display one’s image to the public was regarded as selling oneself, and selling was a dishonorable job in traditional China. Also, because of technological problems—thin paper, soft writing brush, and expensive printing, images were reserved at appropriate private places in ancient China. An emperor or empress’s image could only be revealed to extremely distinguished persons. The emperor or empress, because of his or her supreme power, was happy to display the paintings of distinguished officers and officials in the Ziguangge, literally meaning a Hall of Purple Light, where, like in an English Hall of Fame, the images of these officials and officers were numbered in a hierarchical order and shown as examples for other officials and officers (Wu Shougui et al. 24-32). But the ordinary people outside of the palace had no chance to view these

portraits. It would also be thought of as a disgrace to let these ordinary people to view these portraits.

Here, two points should be made clear about Mao Zedong's images. The first is that the idea of using a political leader's image to promote ideological ideals in China is a small example of the Chinese revolution. At least in the sense that anyone—especially those who had extremely humble family backgrounds—could see Mao Zedong, the first leader of the country. That would somewhat explain the quick and sweeping military victories of the Communists since 1942 when Mao Zedong badges began to spread from Yan'an to other cities (Liu Yinyan "Mao Zedong Badges"). Mao Zedong images had raised his soldiers' morale in both senses of rebellion and indignation—Mao Zedong was both a rebel and powerful authority. The second point is that Mao Zedong himself did not believe in the magic of his own images. But considering the social forces that could be motivated, Mao Zedong did those imagistic discourses for the public interests. This could be typically shown when, in November of 1966, he complained about the red guards who kept on coming to Beijing and almost refused to show up (Zhang Huican 23). It was under the Zhou Enlai's patient explanation that he agreed to see off the last delegates.

The purpose of the Cultural Revolution was to abolish all the corrupt social practices of Old China, and replace them with the advanced Western Marxist standards. During his last ten years, Mao Zedong frequently appeared in the forums of public discourse, especially at the Tiananmen rostrum, to initiate the mind-cleaning or brainwashing movements. By standing beside his emotional allies—workers, peasants, and soldiers, and their young representatives (Red Guards), Mao Zedong wanted to

accomplish two goals: to strengthen the social allies of Communism, and to select his most reliable successor.

For eight times from August 18 to November 26 1966, Mao Zedong met altogether twelve million Red Guards and young people at Tiananmen Square (Zhang Huican 17). The visual enthymeme of Mao Zedong, when accompanied by his actual presence, created most formidable devotion and passion in the youth generation. But the immature impulsivity of young students soon turned his attention to the place where he himself obtained experience and power—the rural areas. After the shootings happened in Qinghua University and Beijing University, Mao Zedong stopped the student movements on campuses and asked the young graduates to go to the countryside (Xingdao Daily “Four Leaders”). He hoped the educated students and the peasants could help each other by trading knowledge and experience.

Considering the rural population, Mao Zedong always put peasants in the first place. He often saw hard-working representatives from the people’s communes. Among them, most were women and poor peasants. His bodyguards were frequently sent to villages in order to gather reliable information for him (Rao Hesheng “Memoir of Mao Zedong’s Bodyguard”). His next attention was workers, most often peasants transferred to cities—and then soldiers. People often saw his sincere smiles when he posed with them for photographers.

The visual messages in the pictures or scenes—where he and certain individuals were put in an enthymemic situation, in which talking was insignificant but the very sight or spectacle displayed its meaning—sustained or guided the political agendas of these social movements. Tiananmen rostrum, as a prestigious forum of public sphere, captured

the most important personnel changes of the government. From 1949 to 1965, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping often stayed beside Mao Zedong during the May Day or National Day. In 1966, they were replaced by Lin Biao. In 1973, it was Wang Hongwen, a thirty-eight-year-old that later became the target of old accredited generals. In 1975, Hua Guofeng, fifty-four years old, began to stand next to Mao Zedong. After Mao Zedong's death, the old military leaders began to encroach the Tiananmen rostrum. First, Ye Jianying, one of the old marshals, stood next to Hua. Hua was gradually singled out and replaced in 1981 by Deng Xiaoping.

The most difficult part of this chapter is the complexity of Mao Zedong's dialectics in his image events. Definitely, the ideological emotion is obvious. No important political leaders from the Western capitalist countries were seen to stand beside Mao Zedong at the Tiananmen rostrum. Only one American was red enough to secure a comfortable standing there with Mao Zedong—Edgar Snow. Even that was a diplomatic courtesy—China would welcome America's peaceful solutions to international disputes. Snow visited Mao Zedong since 1936, and had been writing for Mao Zedong and China until his death in 1972. Snow deserved a far more honest public display in China, but because he was from America, Mao Zedong could not easily trust Snow's ethical stance. Here is the subtlest line that cannot be easily analyzed. That is, the emotion of most Chinese is actually backing up the separatist phenomenon of Mao Zedong's image events—their emotion is usually separate from rationality, though they still rely on logic or discursive discourses to carry on emotional rhetoric.

In addition, Mao Zedong's character cannot be defined by either the Chinese or Western standards. Influenced by the traditional Chinese philosophy of neutrality, co-

existence and adaptability, Mao Zedong modified the Marxist either-or perspective of development as shown in the law of the unity of the opposites, a basic concept of materialistic dialectics. It was not difficult to understand the guiding effects of this theory during the revolutionary war periods in which the antagonistic nature of class struggles split the population of the country into two groups—the rulers and the rebels. In this sense, Mao Zedong’s theory did not require more understanding than the actual practices of Chinese feudalism. The dynastic change had occurred for an average of two to three hundreds years—the old royal family and its associates, regardless of age, were killed when the leading rebel took the throne. The Chinese saying goes—“rip the roots when cutting a grass.” The Chinese trusted blood relationships. When the rebels got the rivers and lands of the country, they could not bear to see any of the old royal family live on. There were usually merciless killings—even babies, and especially babies, were killed to “rip the roots.”

However, when the new China came into being and obviously the old ruling class escaped to a small island, the communists did not heave the butchering axes. Indeed, Mao Zedong’s revolutionary consciousness did not allow him to “rip the roots.” Many Nationalist officials and officers were asked to take offices in the government. Many of the landlords who handed in their property were not executed. Mao Zedong’s *On Contradiction* in 1937 was still not far away in his own mind—

... Contradiction and struggle are universal and absolute, but the methods of resolving contradictions, that is, the forms of struggle, differ according to the differences in the nature of the contradictions. Some contradictions are characterized by open antagonism, others are not. In accordance with the

concrete development of things, some contradictions which were originally non-antagonistic develop into antagonistic ones, while others which were originally antagonistic develop into non-antagonistic ones. (344)

The idea that an antagonistic contradiction can develop into a non-antagonistic one accelerated the Chinese Revolution. When the Nationalist generals surrendered their troops to the People's Liberation Army, the ideological contradiction between capitalism and communism became non-antagonistic. Many of capitalist and communist concepts were merged into the social practices of the early years. As a result, the People's Congress and Political Consultative Conference, both based on the Soviet and Western parliamentary models, helped to radically improve Chinese politics. Unlike what many people may think about, the first few years after China was liberated were not as violent as the days of Cultural Revolution. Here, the good elements of the Chinese philosophy of neutrality, co-existence and adaptability was still working on the head of this complex country.

Then, in 1966, things turned to another direction of complication. Mao Zedong became outraged when he learned that the advanced capitalist countries aimed at subverting the Chinese socialism within the third or fourth generations of the Communist revolution. Soviet emulation of US materialism and life style made Mao Zedong feel that China should bear the sole responsibility of protecting Marxism and Leninism. His ideological ambition, therefore, changed to the establishment of high political consciousness and ethical stance among the young people. So that neither US nor USSR could corrupt Marxism in China or other Third World regions.

Many Chinese political leaders in the Central Committee put the priority of economic development over political consciousness. This made Mao Zedong more determined to launch a new social movement to “do away with the old ideologies, old cultures, old styles, and old customs of the exploiting classes in the past thousands of years, and create and develop the completely new ideologies, new cultures, new styles, and new customs of the proletariat classes” (Zhang Guangqin 448-49). Mao Zedong’s intention was to create honest brains before feeding the taste to the mouths. His cultural revolution was to move people’s ethical standards toward Marxism. Because it was a matter of education, it was not meant to involve physical violence. Yet his provocative metaphors in *On Contradiction* (1937) and his latest speeches moved his followers into open antagonism with those in power—

As already mentioned, so long as classes exist, contradictions between correct and incorrect ideas in the Communist Party are reflections within the Party of class contradictions. At first, with regard to certain issues, such contradictions may not manifest themselves as antagonistic. But with the development of the class struggle, they may grow and become antagonistic. The history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union shows us that the contradictions between the correct thinking of Lenin and Stalin and the fallacious thinking of Trotsky, Bukharin and others did not at first manifest themselves in an antagonistic form, but that later they did develop into antagonism. There are similar cases in the history of the Chinese Communist Party. At first the contradictions between the correct thinking of many of our Party comrades and the fallacious thinking of Chen Duxiu, Zhang Guotao and

others also did not manifest themselves in an antagonistic form, but later they did develop into antagonism. (344)

This passage was written in 1937. It typically illustrates Mao Zedong's role as the Party's representative. The Party, according to Mao Zedong, is not a homogeneous entity. Instead, it is multifarious. Therefore, it needs constant adjustments, and constant struggle, to keep its health. When "incorrect ideas" develop into antagonism, the Party has to eliminate the sources of these ideas. Trotsky, Bukharin, Chen Duxiu, and Zhang Guotao were criticized, and the Communist Party of Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China went onto the "victorious road," as the Communists often said. For Mao Zedong, such internal struggles are more important than any other problems. They should be solved in priority.

So, in 1966, Mao Zedong, in his usual unique way, located—among all these national and international, systematic and ideological confrontations—a focus on the internal antagonism within the Communist Party of China. Simply put, it was a struggle between those who believed that China should be rich at all costs and those who put equality and morality in priority. Mao Zedong and his old comrades could not get along well. But Mao Zedong's description of the incorrect ideas in the Communist Party developing into antagonism was blindly believed by most Chinese. Ironically, Mao Zedong was almost true when looking from today's perspective. Although the Chinese government is still correcting the "leftist mistakes," seeming to say that the antagonistic nature of the struggles within the Party was exaggerated during the Cultural Revolution, the gravity of national and international situations

could have been a good reason to explain Mao Zedong's frantic support of the leftist extreme—because the rightist extreme was obviously stronger.

Mao Zedong's implication of antagonistic form of contradiction within the Party was perhaps like a match. It ignited the “bomb” as he used to describe the development of antagonistic contradiction: “Before it explodes, a bomb is a single entity in which opposites coexist in given conditions. The explosion takes place only when a new condition, ignition, is present” (343). He sincerely believed that the Party was full of two ideologies—communism and capitalism. Because he nominally left the leadership since 1959, by the time of 1965 he found the “extreme of capitalism” was overtaking the whole Party. Reasonably and unreasonably, he found it was time to have the “explosion.” But his physical and mental health prevented him from formulating new theoretical discursive eloquence compatible with his *On Contradiction*. His image and public emotion became the effective means.

Mao Zedong's indiscretions in choosing emotional allegiances had a lot to do with his interpretations of Marxist dialectics. His understanding of the Marxist “absolute truth” that only the oppressed masses could undertake the overthrow of the capitalist system led to his neglect of the “relative truth.” It is a basic Marxist principle that the masses of the people are the creator of history. Theoretically, Mao Zedong believes that practice is the criterion of truth (Mao Zedong “On Practice” 305). He also says that a human being's knowledge of “a particular process at any given stage of development is only relative truth” (Mao Zedong “On Practice” 307). But when he put the Chinese into the practice of Cultural Revolution, his emotional reaction to the national and

international reactionary forces was separate from the rational consideration of the Chinese particularity and the relative truth about the masses of the people.

Mao Zedong's visual siding with the people he stereotyped into dependable groups gradually lost Mao Zedong's logic theorization of the "particularity and relativity of contradiction," the distinction between "the principal contradiction and the non-principal contradictions," the distinction between "the principal aspect and the non-principal aspect of a contradiction," and the distinction between "the different forms of struggle" (Mao Zedong *On Contradiction* 311-346).

Mao Zedong's visual enthymeme blurred these distinctions and created deep fear in his old comrades. The red guards fought against them and they fought against each other.

It was during the Cultural Revolution that Mao Zedong's separatist visual emotion played the most devastating roles. At least his blind belief of the masses that really tortured many harmless individuals should be analyzed to appease the wronged emotions. Unbelievably, the intention of Mao Zedong's identification with the masses was something he meant for democracy. But he forgot the "opposites" of the class status—many of the Party leaders were children of the rich peasants or landlords, and Jiang Jieshi, the actual representative of Chinese capitalists, was a son of a poor peasant. In addition, the basic problem is that Mao Zedong was promoting for the Chinese peasants a Western ideology of working classes, and a proletariat dictatorship against capitalist classes to eliminate Chinese landlords who were almost all deprived of any prestige in the self-sufficient economy. In this sense, Mao Zedong's oil paintings and

photos displayed his transition to the Western either-or rhetoric. This chapter will have to sort out the visual and emotional developments of this transition.

## **VISION OF COMMUNIST RENEWAL**

### **Red Guards**

On August 18, 1966, when Wang Guodong was still thinking about how to paint his second Mao Zedong portrait on Tiananmen, Mao Zedong himself, in a green uniform, appeared above Wang's first portrait, a smiling Mao Zedong, bare-head with hair neatly combed backward, and one ear on the left. The red star on the actual Mao Zedong's cap glittered in the sunlight (Zhang Huican 18). Below him was an assembly of about one million Red Guards, some in green uniform with red star on cap, red insignias on collars, and brown belt around the waist.

“Long live Chairman Mao Zedong!” shouted the passionate young crowds with their highest voices. Mao Zedong's images flourished. The badges glittered on their chests. The portraits, like an assembly of seriously competitive replicas of the one at the Gate, looked up at the living Mao Zedong on the rostrum.

That probably reminded him of one of his most eloquent moments. On November 17, 1957, he walked into an auditorium of the University of Moscow, and said to the Chinese international students—

The world belongs to you and belongs to us, but eventually belongs to you. You young ones, like the steaming vapors in the morning, are still in the prosperous ages the sun enjoys at eight or nine o'clock. Great hope is entrusted on you. The world belongs to you. The future of China belongs

to you. (Mao Zedong “Youth” 289)

He did not expect that he would have to put what had said into action in 1966 when his struggle with Khrushchev had actually extended to China. Many of his old followers, according to his emotional conscience, were Khrushchevs in heart.

Hopefully he raised his hand toward the young ones. The grave stake on his mind, however, made him speechless.

Lin Biao made a speech, calling the listeners to do what he had written at the front page of the second edition of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*—which was published on August 1 1965—“read Chairman Mao’s works, follow Chairman Mao’s advice, carry on Chairman Mao’s directives, and act as Chairman Mao’s good soldier.”

Then Zhou Enlai waved his hand to conduct a new song. The whole Tiananmen Square became a chorus: *To sail in the seas, a steersperson is needed. So are the living things that need the sun. The dews make the rice seedlings grow. Revolution is guided by Mao Zedong Zedong Thought.*

This is yet another song many Chinese would remember, and they see Mao Zedong’s hand when they look at the Mao Zedong’s Portrait on Tiananmen. The past revives—the sea of Mao Zedong images: portraits at the shrines, gates, and walls, marble or bronze statues at every square of every city, pictures in printed materials, badges on most citizens’ jackets, and on trains, planes or machines, paintings of every style. Mao Zedong images became the most conspicuous and popular signs of the country.

## **Mao Zedong Images and Personality Cult**

Mao Zedong's images were not a big problem before Cultural Revolution. Most often, Mao Zedong was not singled out—his picture was placed with other leaders'. On formal national occasions, Mao Zedong's head was always shown behind the images of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. At other circumstances of domestic affairs, Mao Zedong shared the visual attention with Zhu De or Liu Shaoqi. The earliest Mao Zedong badge was made in 1937 by the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Forces (Liu Yinyan "Mao Zedong Badges"). It was silver and used only as reward for brave soldiers. It was not until 1942 that Yan'an, the headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party, had its first Mao Zedong badge. In October 1946, a large badge of Mao Zedong—one and a half meters high and wide—was placed at the head of a train taken from the Japanese (China Railway Museum). It was renamed as *Mao Zedong Model*. But it was not extraordinarily ostentatious. Beside it was another train taken from the Japanese that had a badge of Zhu De of the same size and was renamed as *Zhu De Model*. When Tibet was liberated peacefully in October 1951, Mao Zedong and Zhu De's portraits were pinned to a cloth screen on the rostrum built in front of Potala Palace (*Tibet Ceremony 2001*). Mao Zedong was only posted alone at the ceremonies of land reform or local election.

Honestly, Mao Zedong's loyalty to Marxism did not allow him to think about his personal fame. Sometimes he even thought people looked down upon him when they suggested his images be displayed. On October 27 1950, two days after People's Volunteers (the 38<sup>th</sup> Army) drove the UN forces to the south of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel in Korea, Mao Zedong commented on the proposal of building a large brass statue of Mao Zedong's whole body on Tiananmen Square that was approved by the People's Congress

of Beijing City—"Do not do that." After supper of that day, when Mao Zedong took a walk with Li Yinqiao, his orderly and body guard, he asked, "Yinqiao, is it right to build a brass statue of me on Tiananmen Square?" (Di Yansheng 381). Li Yinqiao thought for a while, and replied, "But doesn't that make you a sentry at the Tiananmen Square?" "What a good reply!" Mao Zedong laughed. "Only our Yinqiao has new ideas. Your insight is peculiar! I want to tell those who think of making me a brass statue that I will not be a gate deity to any household." Li Yinqiao laughed, too. "Chairman, it is kind of them to build you a brass statue. It's for the purpose of admiring you." "I don't like people to do that," Mao Zedong said as he moved on, "Such things happened several times. In Xibaipo, when Ye Rongzhen [a general] wanted to put my portrait on the paper money of the Liberation Areas, I had to make them change their mind. Half a year ago, I approved of a New China Memorial in the downtown of Shenyang City. But they wanted to cast a brass statue of me on top of it. I regarded it as a satire, and felt very uncomfortable." "That's it!" exclaimed Li Yinqiao who stayed behind Mao Zedong, "Chairman you have to stand there alone day and night, enduring slicing winds and rains, and sweltering sun; when people see that, they will feel uncomfortable, too..." "And I have to bear the harsh cold in Northeast" was Mao Zedong's addition—"We Communists are seeking happiness for the people. What a bad influence would a brass statue bring to their mind!" (381).

Though narratives of Mao Zedong are always sentimental, many do not go far way from the historical accounts. Since 1936 when Mao Zedong finally led his army out of the Southern mountainous forests, Mao Zedong's military and political victories were incomparable. People in China found all the reasons to be crazy about him. But Mao

Zedong took their praises as honor and responsibility. Another example can show his sense of honor and responsibility for the country. Just about a month after Mao Zedong's talk with Li Yinqiao—On November 25, 1950, Mao Anying and another staff officer were brunt to death at the headquarters of Chinese Volunteers in Korea when US fighters made a surprise raid (Di 387). When Mao Zedong finally got the news of his son's death on November 28, he could not speak for a long while. The first words came from him was, "Aye, why should he be a son of Mao Zedong!" (394).

For quite a long time, the Chinese Communist Party did not openly promote Mao Zedong's reputation because of its consideration of Soviet leadership and the unification of the socialist camp (Shen Zhihua 6-7). At the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China (1945), Liu Shaoqi used the concept of Mao Zedong Thought in the constitution of the Communist Party of China. But when the Soviet leaders unfavorably responded, Mao Zedong Thought was never mentioned in public. Mao Zedong personally did not like the idea of Mao Zedong Thought. For the translated phrase of Maoism, he simply rejected it. This can be shown later in 1966 when a red guard tried to put on Mao Zedong's sleeve an insignia that had the characters of Mao Zedongism, Mao Zedong rudely pulled it off (Zhang huican 19).

Ironically, Mao Zedong allowed his images to be used as political tools after Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev made his "secret speech" at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on February 25, 1956.

In his speech, Khrushchev emphasized the Party's authority over the individual leaders and the masses. Stalin—he emotionally denounced—had shown

... in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality and his abuse of power.

Instead of proving his political correctness and mobilizing the masses, he often chose the path of repression and physical annihilation, not only against actual enemies, but also against individuals who had not committed any crimes against the Party and the Soviet Government. Here we see no wisdom but only a demonstration of the brutal force which had once so alarmed V. I. Lenin. ... Stalin, using his unlimited power, allowed himself many abuses, acting in the name of the Central Committee, not asking for the opinion of the Committee members nor even of the members of the Central Committee's Politburo; often he did not inform them about his personal decisions concerning very important Party and government matters.

In many ways, Mao Zedong would give credits to Khrushchev. Mao Zedong once said that Khrushchev had removed a bog stone and cleaned the furnace (Shen Zhihua 8-9). Khrushchev removed the big shadow of Stalin from the Soviet Union. Mao Zedong himself lived in the shadow of Stalin for quite long enough. First of all, Stalin thought of Mao Zedong as an uneducated peasant leader who could only do tricky guerrilla wars. Then, Stalin actually thought very high of Mao Zedong's political opponent Jiang Jieshi—the head of Guomindang whose son Jiang Jinguo was Stalin's consultant of Chinese affairs—and wanted Mao Zedong to cooperate with Jiang. Thirdly, Stalin's offense and defense tactics brought fatal damages to Mao Zedong's Red Army. Fourthly, Mao Zedong had to sacrifice much personal and national dignity for Stalin in order to get some help from Soviet Union, even for matters that were beneficial for both countries (Shen Zhihua 8-9).

However, Mao Zedong discerned something vicious about Khrushchev. As mentioned in Chapter One, during the Chengdu Meeting of March 10, 1958, Mao Zedong's comments about personality cult were pointed at Khrushchev's intention of building his own authority through criticizing Stalin. Also, Khrushchev's violent destruction of Stalin's fame—Khrushchev even removed Stalin's coffin from Lenin's tomb—irritated Mao Zedong (Shen 10). Basically, Mao Zedong still respected the Soviet leadership under Lenin and Stalin.

Things became more dramatic when Khrushchev's influence reached the Communist Party of China. Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and their allies, successfully promoted the principle of "collective leadership" at the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in September 15-27 1956 (Shen 8). One of the specific applications was that they had "the assembled delegates delete from the Party constitution the phrase that the Party was "guided by Mao Zedong Thought." In the Party constitution passed by the Seventh Congress on June 11, 1945, Chinese Communist Party is defined as being "guided by Mao Zedong Thought, an ideology that adapts Marxist and Leninist theories to specific Chinese praxis." There is no mention of Mao Zedong anywhere in the Party constitution passed by the Eight Congress on September 26 1956—"Chinese Communist Party regards Marxism and Leninism as the guidelines for all its work" ("CPC Constitution of the Eighth Congress"). On September 16, 1956, Deng Xiaoping said to the assembly that love "for the leader is essentially an expression of love for the interests of the Party, the class, and the people, and not the deification of an individual" (Shen 8). This was largely a reflection of Chinese Communist Party's collective strategies

of being rhetorically modest in order to strengthen the ties with the ideological allies and get necessary help from Soviet Union.

But Mao Zedong's emotional response to Soviet hegemony began to surface. The Communist Party of Soviet Union had become increasingly peremptory toward other socialist nations. Khrushchev harshly accused Stalin, but did not want other socialist nations to disrespect Stalin or disobey Soviet Union. After the Polish leader, Edward Ochab, attended the Eighth Congress of Chinese Communist Party, he exchanged the concerns of Soviet Chauvinism with Chinese leaders and won much sympathy. On October 19, the Party of United Workers of Poland agreed to yield him and resume the leadership of Wladyslaw Gomulka, the former general secretary that was driven out of the Central Committee under the directives of the Soviet leaders. Khrushchev immediately threatened that Soviet Union was "ready for active intervention" (Leitenberg 280). On the other hand, Khrushchev's loose speeches encouraged reactionary riots in a few socialist countries. Then, he used military forces to suppress these riots, which deeply wounded the international images of communism.

The ideological debates between the two socialist powers erupted on June 14, 1963 when Mao Zedong replied a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (Mao Zedong "A Letter to Soviet CP" 1963). He made three comments: 1) Soviet Union was sacrificing China in order to maintain strategic reduction of tension with United States; 2) The Communist Party of Soviet Union had gone onto the road of capitalism under the influence of Khrushchev's revisionism; 3) Revisionism also began to encroach the Chinese Communist Party.

As a first step of resistance, Mao Zedong stopped being modest before the Soviet leaders or tolerant toward his comrades. At a time of crisis, he even had to use his own reputation to launch another movement to save the communist cause from international and national corruptions. He thought the cult of his personality was correct because it was meant to save a justifiable cause.

### **Mao Zedong in Uniform: Green Activism of Anti-revisionism**

Mao Zedong's worries about the recession of international communism, the intrusion of capitalist ideology into the Party, the revisionism in Soviet Union, and the strategy of peaceful transformation used as an alternative by the Western capitalist societies—"new world order" as a strategic scheme—gave him no peace. At such a complex moment, he considered his military disciplines against the "booby traps" of easy life styles and material temptations. Though most Chinese lived in poverty, as long as they wore blue and green jackets and trousers that were similar to military uniforms, they still had a high morale. On the contrary, many high-rank officials in the Party began to accept Khrushchev's rhetoric of Western material civilization. They would only become the prisoners of those booby traps and spread them among the whole country. For Mao Zedong, that would be more disastrous than actual military actions. The spirit of the party and country was in danger. That should be revealed to the public.

As one way of revealing, Mao Zedong wrote a poem for Dipa Nusantara Aidit, an Indonesian, a close friend of Mao Zedong who had built the third largest Communist Party in the world—after Soviet Union and China—when he was

twenty-five years old (X). He was killed on November 22, 1965. His armed attempt to take over the state power was a disaster. The Indonesian government suppressed the socialist movement. About three hundred thousand Communists were killed (X). Chinese Indonesians were driven out of the country. This deeply hurt Mao Zedong as a Communist member and as a Chinese national. He wanted to express his deep sorrow on the one hand. On the other, he used this young model to shame the old “lords” in the Chinese Communist Party that had forgotten the poor and focused only on their own benefits. It was a Bosuanzi poem called *For the Memory of Comrade Aidit an International Fighter of Communism* written not long after Aidit’s death (Mao Zedong 1965):

...  
 a few twigs’ bloom  
 ahead of due time  
 in spring a withered view  
 from the cold window

such cruelty for their smiles  
 hurts from thousands of miles...  
 (free translation by Hanzhou Pang)

The poem expresses his deep sympathy for the forty-two-year-old Aidit—one of the few enthusiastic young Communists that “withered” “in spring.” Sad sentimentalism is rare in Mao Zedong’s poetry. But when it came out, it must be the real pain.

Such emotional historiography must have partially activated Mao Zedong’s affection for the younger generations. The gravity of the endangered communism made him all the more determined to call up the young ones because their mind was not contaminated yet, and would only be more tempered through social movements.

In order to back up his affection for the young people, Mao Zedong adopted his usual way—to obtain the support of the working classes. George Marcus in his *Sentimental Citizens* points out that “[anxiety]...has the ability to invoke a space, both private and public, in which politics can take place” (148). In order to call up the public attention, Mao Zedong had to let the Chinese know his worries. On May 17, 1966, *People’s Daily* published Mao Zedong’s comments on the *Notification of May 16* of the Central Committee of CCP:

Capitalist representatives are present in the Central Committee, the institutions of the Central Government, the Provinces, the Municipalities, and the Autonomous Regions.

Highly raise the Flag of Proletariat Cultural Revolution, thoroughly reveal the capitalist reactionary stance of the so-called academic authorities...

At midnight of that day, Deng Tuo, the director of cultural affairs of Beijing Municipality, who made hush criticism about the Great Leap, committed suicide (X). The suicide only made Mao Zedong believe that the “capitalist representatives” did not admit their mistakes. After Gao Gang who killed himself in 1954 when Mao Zedong took the side of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, Mao Zedong realized that there were a number of self-conceited die-hards in the Party. Such emotional input only made Mao Zedong switch to other emotional reliance. After some emotionalized reasoning, he was more determined to raise the scale of his cultural reforms.

Mao Zedong found this movement would not have any substantial progress without getting support from his masses of the people. Marcus’ statement that “unless

citizens are exposed to spectacle, little can be expected in the way of active citizenship” (140 n.9) is relevant here. Cultural revolution would still have to be a movement of the masses. Its goal, though, moved to the level of ideological confrontations, not just cultural reforms.

Mao Zedong did not sleep at the night of August 17 1966. Cheng Changjiang, the director of Chairman Mao’s bodyguards, told the others that the Chairman wanted a set of military uniform (Zhang Huican 17). It was quite unexpected. They had to search one from the leaders of the Central Body-guard Regiment. Liu Yuntang, an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, was a tall and well-built person. When his uniform was brought for Chairman Mao, it was perfectly fit.

Mao Zedong worked the whole night. At four in the early morning, he asked the bodyguards to start off. At five Mao Zedong was at the Tiananmen rostrum.

There, for eight times, he met the largest parades in the world.

The numbers of Red Guards and young people he greeted were: on August 18, one million; on August 31, half a million; on September 15, one million; on October 1, one and a half million; on October 18, one and a half million; on November 3, two million; on November 10, one and a half million; on November 11, half a million; on November 25, two and a half million; on November 26, one million. These included only those who stayed at or near Tiananmen Square, which is 440 thousand square meters that can hold roughly 1.5 million people (Zhang Huican 17-34). Actually the whole city of Beijing was full of the young people from all over the country. Since free lodging and food were provided, and at some provinces even travel expenses were covered, the

population of Beijing could have reached one hundred million.

These displays of identification and contradiction were like a shock treatment. The scale and style amazed the spectators. Through the visualization of the ideological struggle in the party, Mao Zedong had to boldly publicize the complex and urgent content of yet another crisis moment.

When the actual Mao Zedong moved around the Portrait of Mao Zedong, the visual enthymeme was doubled. The Buddha-like image brought up the magnificent feats of the past for the tired person who tried to almost implore the young spectators. This complementary relationship between an omnipotent image and an aging person helped the young see their roles in the scenario—to go all out to find out the source of Mao Zedong’s worry, and “revenge” the perpetrators. Facing such a “real” vision of anxiety, the audiences fully acknowledged the necessity of taking their beliefs and values seriously. Meanwhile, a sense of guilt crept into their hearts—how come such a great person was so worried?

They responded with actions. They first cheered up the great man with seas of red and massive demonstrations of loyalty. The slogans that were enlarged to the sizes of buildings manifested the weight of Mao Zedong’s discursive texts. The red books of the red guards and young people raised more argumentative power when, like waves, the fanatic hands put another layer of red above their heads. Then the thundering voices pushed the volume to a further dominating degree. At the raise or drop of Mao Zedong’s hand, the crowd chanted “long live Chairman Mao!” The air was activated, and the winds enlivened the giant red flags. Like flames, the revolution storms shook the city in awe. Through loudspeakers, the scenario reached every corner of the country. Almost all the

population was organized to participate in the shouting and viewing. The whole country was asserting a fighting cause.

This is a typical example of Marcus' idea of "joint responsibility of the activists, the media and politicians" in "creating spectacles capable of arousing public concern and public anxiety" (140). Here the red guards were the activists—many of the young people did not wear uniform on August 18, but later almost all the young ones managed to put on the green uniforms. The radio system, newspapers, magazines, and TV all contributed to amplify these spectacles. The politicians played different roles. Mao Zedong, the major center of attention, almost said nothing. The other leaders were divided into two groups. Those who "opposed" Mao Zedong lost their voices and were exposed as potential targets of criticism. Soon they were defined as an anti-revolutionary faction. Others who "supported" Mao Zedong shouted at their highest voices. Ironically, when Deng Xiaoping came to power, the latter group was labeled as an "anti-Party group." Most of them later died tragically or were on trial and heavily sentenced—18 years of jail for Chen Boda (host of the first inspection of Mao Zedong); Lin Biao (the speaker of each inspection), died in an air crash on September 13, 1971; death for Jiang Qing (host of the second inspection), Mao Zedong's wife, who committed suicide on May 14, 1991; Kang Sheng (the host of the third inspection) died on December 16, 1975. Except for Zhou Enlai, who could always discern Mao Zedong's dispositions, most veteran leaders were involved in the factional activities. From such merciless internal conflicts, we could see that some of Mao Zedong's fury against his old friends was still reasonable: They were jealous of each other at a time when unification was needed. Therefore, these image

events, in which Mao Zedong promoted his identification with the young people, were partially attempts to expose and punish these factional struggles.

Through the assembly of young people that was as large as other average big country's population, Mao Zedong fully demonstrated his political ambition of purging the country so that the subversion of socialism would not come true after he left this world. The seeing and looking exchanges between Mao Zedong and the red guards fully displayed the visual and emotional momentum in promoting the most abstract theories of socialism. On the one hand, the massive ideographs pronounced the social power of the proletariat ideologies. On the other, the threat of the ideologies, cultures, life styles, and customs of the exploiting classes was virtually revealed to the largest extent. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were also present at the Tiananmen rostrum to show their anxious faces. The side by side demonstration of the political leaders' faces amplified the two extremes of the confrontational enthymeme. Though Liu and Deng were first leaders of the nation and the party, people identified Mao Zedong as the first leader of the country. So it was quite an unfair game—the whole country against a few old marshals and two political leaders.

But the “reality” judged through Mao Zedong's value system and emotional responses made him look over and beyond such a seemingly bullying scene. For him, the side of Liu and Deng had the concealed potentials that could surface in the future if the “roots” were not ripped out of their mind. Such a possibility could be stopped through non-antagonistic forms. Mental reform was the only way to save his old friends. Otherwise, these roots could sprout and extend to the young people. The consequences could be unimaginable for Mao Zedong who had internalized Marxism as the only logic

and moral sources. Then, it was time for the People to see the “reality.”

The assembly of red guards was the visual rhetoric to point out the endangered situation and activate the preventive mechanisms. Through the visual demonstrations, Mao Zedong wanted the country to recognize what Michael Calvin McGee calls the “changes in the meanings of the world, redefinitions of reality,” and changes in the “social consciousness” and construct a new reality (243). Obviously the communist ideals were losing to other Western ideologies. During Mao Zedong’s nominal retirement, Liu and Deng tried to stimulate the productive ability of each worker by catering to personal and private interests. That would only bring back the state in which some are rich and some are poor. It meant that the efforts of thirty-year revolution ended in a return to the beginning. Mao Zedong could not tolerate such a reality, and needed a logic and emotional explanation.

In a sense, the large amount of red guards did not act as a demonstration of physical strength as much as a creation of public discourse that aimed at stopping a straying ideology and ensuring a state in which every one is treated equally. At the moment when Mao Zedong raised his hand and these millions of young persons responded with all kinds of assertions—waving their red books and red flags, or shouting slogans—every moving object or human being became an ideograph, a presentational symbol of social discourse. That is the essence of social movements that are “materially manifest not in groups but in such as ideographs” (DeLuca 36). McGee has an interpretive definition for ideograph:

An ideograph is... a high-order abstraction representing collective commitment to

a particular but equivocal and ill-defined normative goal. It warrants the use of power, excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or anti-social, and guides behavior and belief into channels easily recognizable by a community as acceptable and laudable. (15)

Mao Zedong, as a person, a persona, and a personality, undoubtedly became the super ideograph among this massive turbulence of red symbolism. The giant portrait at the Gate, the cardboard portraits of Mao Zedong raised in the hands of the crowds, the Mao Zedong badges on some of the jackets, and Mao Zedong himself presented a vague yet seemingly extremely important goal for the Chinese.

The “eccentricity” of the scenarios of Mao Zedong inspecting the red guards was that there was no eminent enemy at the scene. Liu and Deng were present at the Rostrum as one part of the leaders of the Central Committee. Though they knew Mao Zedong was not happy with them, they were also worried about the bad situations of international communism and communism in China. But with the escalation of the red guards’ war cries, Liu and Deng were not sure that they belonged to themselves (Zhang Huican). In a way they were merged into a collective entity that only the collective authority could dissect them out or cover them up.

It was Mao Zedong’s uniform that eventually reclaimed the collective authority. Since 1949, Mao Zedong seldom wore uniform. Most often, he usually dressed himself as an ordinary citizen who was doing his own work in a peaceful era. Even during the Korean War, he wore his “standard” suit—a jacket with five buttons, two chest pockets and two waist pockets, and a pair of trousers. The suit had different sets of dark blue, light gray, light green or dark brown. Mao Zedong usually did not care about shoes;

sometimes they did not match the suit at all. Then, occasionally he also put a cap on his head. During his second trip to Moscow, he put on a high hat and long coat, trying to imitate the ordinary Soviet worker but looking like a Chinese businessman (*People's Daily* 11/20 1957).

Mao Zedong was the only one in the Red Army that did not carry any hand arm on the uniform. This actually singled him out in two ways: first, he was the head, not the hand, of fighting; second, he stood for the Party that commanded the guns. Never good at shooting, Mao Zedong focused on the writing brush or the pen. Through his theoretical formulations, he gradually took the podium of the Party. It was the Party where he made his reputation. It was the Party that successfully controlled the Army so that he came to power in the country. The immediate collective identity of Mao Zedong is the Party. On Mao Zedong's exhibited body in the mausoleum is a red flag of the Party. Therefore, even during the wartime, Mao Zedong never looked like a soldier.

But on August 18, 1966, when he neatly put on a uniform and appeared at the Tiananmen rostrum, it demonstrated an emergent situation of the Party. Mao Zedong even actually waved like a soldier. The consequences of his costume change and his aggressive gestures were both suggestive and misleading.

A naïve interpretation of Mao Zedong's intention of seeing the red guards is: 1) he did not trust his old friends; 2) he was hoping for younger leadership; 3) one of the young people that would go through political storms would be a better successor of Mao Zedong's ideals; 4) he was ready to guide the young people into such political storms.

For most students, there was probably one response, and that is, Mao Zedong was summoning them and Mao Zedong was in trouble. The fanatic students immediately went

to action. Because Mao Zedong was not an executive leader of the country, and his struggle with “the Capitalist walkers in power” was not as successful as expected, the devotion of the students erupted as a formidable force of anger. Their pens became spears, and although Mao Zedong, in an editorial of *People’s Daily*, reminded them of “civilized argumentation” instead of “armed struggle” as early as September 5, 1966.

The young people’s passion, however, eventually led them to physical violence. Shortly after the reception of red guards at Tiananmen Square, the students began to take actions. Many professors who did not approve of the priority of political consciousness were ashamed in public. Later, some killed themselves. In 1967 a popular caricature, “A Swarm of Uglies,” drawn by a student at the Affiliated Middle School of Central Fine Arts Academy, depicts the veteran cadres who did not support Mao Zedong’s theory of class struggle (Weng Rulan). They were accused of taking the capitalist road. They are: Liu Shaoqi, Peng Dehuai, Deng Xiaoping, Luo Ruiqian, He Long, Peng Zhen, Wang Guangmei, and 29 other old heroes whose names are written in the drawing. The red guards shamed them in public, and though some of them died from broken heart, the Red Guards initiated the “real” violence in the coming years.

1967 was probably the most violent year of the whole Cultural Revolution. Many so-called revolution or rebellion organizations were set up and were able to get support from the armed forces. Although Mao Zedong repeated his stance of non-violent movement on many other occasions, his constant wearing of a green uniform in 1967 and his slogan of “take over the political power” led to gunfights and bloodshed among the young “revolution” factions. It was not until the early morning of July 28, 1968 that Mao Zedong summoned the five leaders of Capital Red Guards—Nie Yuanxin (a girl), Ji

Dafu, Han Aijing, Tan Houlan (a girl), and Wang Dabao—and stopped the violent rebellions (Xingdao B3). These inexperienced rebels would only be troublemakers in the cities; the rural areas, however, could give them real problems to mature and spread knowledge to the peasants.

## **CLASS STRUGGLE: MAO ZEDONG'S EMOTIONAL AND RATIONAL TIES**

### **Mao Zedong Beside Sentimental Citizens**

As an effective way of strengthening his emotional ties to the masses, Mao Zedong often received visitors from the working classes. They either came to him as members of delegations or as Mao Zedong's personal friends. Mao Zedong would always try his best to meet these honest people and take photos with them. In this way, Mao Zedong's images also moved into the close contact zones of ordinary families. With other direct or indirect avenues, such multiple connections to Mao Zedong built close relations and bound the majority of Chinese together because Mao Zedong was everywhere and was real according to the visitors.

These visitors are—as Marcus would call—the sentimental citizens. These somewhat naïve people can help to “determine the proper course of action” because they are usually able to engage reason with emotion and thus are able to enact their abilities that “reason brings—introspection, critical and explicit consideration, weighing of the benefits and costs of alternative courses of action, and application of general principles such as impartiality, equality, and reciprocity” (Marcus 141). The working people, who knew the hardships of human life, often tried their best to cooperate with others and design the best courses for the public. Even though their individual intelligence was not

high, their collective experience and intuition usually followed high reasoning.

Many of the red guards, because of their rational education, were not able to cooperate their emotion with reason. They tend to be singularly rational citizens who argued that Mao Zedong Thought was the most practical development of Marxism. If the professors—equally singularly rational—did not agree, they were the enemies of the country. But when Mao Zedong came out and said that he did not like the idea of Mao Zedongism or Mao Zedong Thought, the red guards were puzzled—they only thought that the great man was modest. Therefore, ironically, Mao Zedong lost his interest in the young students, just as he never liked scholars (*Xingdao Daily* B3).

By standing beside the excellent workers, peasants, and soldiers, Mao Zedong presented both himself and the visitors as model citizens. Such photos undoubtedly inspired many members in a certain community. For example, the first standard Mao Zedong image was selected from a photo he took with the working models during the first National Assembly of Working Models from September 25 to October 2 1950 (Chen Shilin). In the photo, among the seven people, there are a woman soldier from the Korean battlefield, a woman tractor driver who was later the head of RMB One-yuan bill (which was issued in 1960), and a woman teacher that stand with Mao Zedong at the front row. This is of special interest because that accounts for the popular support of Mao Zedong by women (Mao Zedong's concern about their low social status greatly encouraged them), and it shows the typical way of Mao Zedong's willingness to use his image as a promotion of his ideological beliefs.

Mao Zedong made every possible way to keep himself close to these loyal and hard-working citizens. For purposes of political and diplomatic negotiations, Mao

Zedong had to see important persons almost every day. However, whenever a visitor from the lower classes was introduced to him, he would always be willing to shake hands, sign his autograph, and take photos. These visits were usually arranged by the propaganda departments: the officials would select these visitors according to their representative values—a poor peasant who came from the revolutionary base, a Tibetan serf who was blinded by a slave-owner, a student who saved public properties, and other particular persons that would help Mao Zedong to identify his political emotions. Thousands of ordinary citizens received Mao Zedong's attention in this way. Each of them had a most important episode to tell about. Such emotional ties were the most effective of promoting his political stances.

Among these visitors, Mao Zedong showed special attention to peasants and women. It is usually the photos of Mao Zedong staying with peasants and women that we see his sincere smiles. Mao Zedong deeply understood the sufferings of these two social groups in old China. His unconditional allegiance with them is also the reason that the cult of Mao Zedong has almost become a habit for most Chinese—peasants took almost 97% of the population and women 50% in 1960s (X).

There are many moving stories about women or peasants going to see Mao Zedong in Beijing. Fit for both categories was a strong-minded, kind-hearted, and diligent woman called Long Donghua (Lu Houmin). She lost her father when she was 15 and was sold to a man as his wife. In 1952, she led the peasants to form a dam with their bodies to divert the flooded river. She saved seven people in the flood but lost her own daughter. After that, she also made several other challenging feats. Mao Zedong met her thirteen times in Beijing. In 1958, there was a painting titled *Chairman Mao Zedong Seeing Long*

*Donghua* that was developed into a spring festival picture, meaning almost every household had the picture in that year.

Another example was Yang Buhao, an illiterate peasant who tells a story of seeing Mao Zedong (146-47). He helped Mao Zedong to plant vegetables in Yan'an. In 1952, when Yang came to Beijing, he requested a visit to Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong immediately invited Yang to his own home and talked to Yang for a long time. 1961 was a difficult year, so Mao Zedong sent Yang some cane sugar and wine. Again Yang requested the authority for a visit to Mao Zedong. On the national Day of 1961, Mao Zedong met Yang at the Tiananmen Rostrum and introduced him to the foreign political leaders. Mao Zedong also brought him home and ate the dinner together, though it was Mao Zedong's busiest day of the year. In 1975, Mao Zedong was sick in bed. Yang came to see him. Mao Zedong could not talk too much, so he asked Zhu De, the commander-in-chief to send his regard to Yang and take care of him.

Kurbon Trum was a poor Uyghur peasant. When his life became much better, he rode a donkey several times and tried to go to Beijing to see Mao Zedong. But Xinjiang was thousands of miles away from Beijing, so he had to give up each time after a few day's travail. Finally on June 28 1958, he arrived in Beijing as a national working model. Mao Zedong asked for the seventy-five-year-old. They met at Mao Zedong's residence. A photographer took a photo of them. On December 25, 2003, one day before Mao Zedong's birthday, a huge brass statue based on th photo—21 meters high—was erected at the Unification Square of Hetian Municipality of Xiangjiang Autonomous Region (*People's Daily*).



Fig. 1. Mao Zedong and Kurbon Trum

Ye Honghai was a pig raiser of a tank division in the Beijing Military Command. His invention of yeast fodder made him a frequent visitor of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong saw him thirteen times (Meng Qingyu 36-38). When Mao Zedong died in 1976, he was asked to be one of the sentries for Mao Zedong's crystal coffin.

Through these sights of Mao Zedong and ordinary citizens, the emotional ties were secured. An important aspect of his ideological ambition was to establish his friendship among the oppressed people. For him, only those who were sympathetic with the poor people could become the reliable support of the Chinese revolutionary cause.

Almost without exception, these citizens had an agricultural background. The country's backbone was peasants. Mao Zedong never shifted his attention from this large population, though the focus of the Party's mission was on the cities since the Liberation. As a son of a rich peasant, Mao Zedong knew both sides of the story of poverty in rural areas, and thus had the best communication skills when he talked to peasants. China was basically an agricultural country so he did not meet serious resistance when he spoke in a thick rural accent, which, on the contrary, brought credit for him.

Rural areas and rural population had been his rational and emotional attention for almost his entire life. The Chinese revolution was mainly achieved through the peasants at the rural and mountainous areas before the urban regions were eventually encroached. In Mao Zedong's words, "[the Chinese Soviet] relies on the villages to besiege and finally occupy the cities" (Mao Zedong "A Single Spark can Start a Prairie Fire" 117). The farming classes—the poor, lower, and middle peasants—were the major support of Mao Zedong's social construction. They were also the strong force of urbanization and industrialization that would eventually eliminate the class of peasants. Mao Zedong hoped all the peasants could join the people's communes and collective farms. In this way, the villages could evolve into towns and cities.

### **Peasants and Students in the Farms: Re-viewing Mao Zedong**

In addition to seeing frequently his political allies, Mao Zedong also changed his attitude toward placing his images at public spaces. On August 10, 1966, Mao Zedong did not say anything when he saw badges of his head on some people's representatives (Schrift 66). On October 18, 1966, when Mao Zedong had his fifth meeting with the red guards, Lin Biao and Zhou Enlai also wore Mao Zedong badges (Schrift 66). Mao Zedong, desperate to hold on to his ideals of equality and common prosperity, decided to sacrifice his virtue of modesty and use his images as tools for a social movement that would transfer his hope to the younger generations.

In 1967, according to Zhou Jihou, about twenty thousand organizations produced Mao Zedong badges. The number of Mao Zedong badges produced in the these three years—1967, 1968 and 1969—was between three and eight billion of five thousand

different kinds (Schrift X). In February 1969, the Ministry of Materials approved a supply of 5000 tons of aluminum to make Mao Zedong badges (Fang Houshu 11). Mao Zedong was angry and said to the effect that more aircrafts were needed not Mao Zedong's images. The dispatched aluminum was returned to the departments of materials (Fang Houshu 11).

In May 1967, the first Mao Zedong statue was erected at the second gate of Qinghua University. It was eight meters tall. Other universities followed suit. Most of the Mao Zedong statues were 12.26 meters tall (Mao Zedong's birthday was December 26) (Wu Jijin 34). Then almost every major city had a red square where a Mao Zedong statue raised his right hand.

Many universities, newspapers and magazines requested Mao Zedong to write their names. Mao Zedong almost accepted all the requests. As an addition to Mao Zedong's physical appearance, Mao Zedong's unique calligraphy offered another source of admiration. The songs that praised Mao Zedong could be heard all the spare times from the loudspeakers. Almost every night there were performances at the theaters or simple stages that described the glorious stories of Mao Zedong, his communists and soldiers, and the happy life of new China.

Mao Zedong's images began to take every center of attention in China. Almost all households have a portrait of Mao Zedong at the most important place of the family. A portrait of Mao Zedong was at the center of each meeting place—be it a hall of People's Congress or a hut. Every moving machine has a Mao Zedong's head: at the very front of each train, Mao Zedong's brass badge or photo seemed to lead the colossal cars to different corners of the country; Mao Zedong was literally the heads of tractors, trucks,

and cars. In factories, statues of Mao Zedong waved his hand in the steams and flames. When the Commune members did their labor together, a portrait of Mao Zedong was always stationed nearby to activate their energy. Almost each citizen has a badge of Mao Zedong. All these image events were meant for seeing, memorizing, internalizing and duplicating Mao Zedong's ideals.

According to Fang Houshu's study, the number of Mao Zedong's portraits that were published formally during the years from 1951 to 2000 is 4.4 billion (4). About 4.2 billion portraits of Mao Zedong were printed during the Cultural Revolution (13).

The glorification and mystification of Mao Zedong reached its highest level. Accompanying Mao Zedong's images, most often slogans—another effective ideographic tools in the Chinese language—helped to complement the visual interpretations. Lu Xing writes in *An Ideological Cultural Analysis of Political Slogans in Communist China* that “the slogans used during the Cultural Revolution promoted the myth of Mao Zedong's absolute power” (498). For example, in 5<sup>th</sup> issue of 1967, *Red Flag*—a magazine sponsored by the Communist Party of China—describes Mao Zedong as “the red sun in our heart”, and “the greatest teacher, the greatest leader, the greatest commander, and the greatest helmsman” (Lu Xing 497). This displays Lin Biao's loyalty to Mao Zedong and ambition in political power. His handwriting, very identical to that of Mao Zedong, promoted the eulogy of Mao Zedong top-down from the position of a second leader of the country. (Yet when Lin died on September 13 1971 as a traitor, the slogan stank. On November 29, as described by Fang Houshu, Zhou Enlai wrote on a report made by the department of cultural affairs of the State Council that “The Politburo approved: Lin Biao's four greatest's should not be printed on the portraits of Chairman;

the “four greatest’s” should not be mentioned any more” (13).

In Lu Xing’s analysis, other very common slogans in *Red Flag* include “Mao Zedong Thought illuminates the victorious path of our party” (v.11 1967); “Establish with greatest efforts the absolute authority of the great leader Chairman Mao Zedong; establish with utmost effort the absolute authority of the great Mao Zedong Thought” (v. 16 1967); “Let Mao Zedong Thought control everything” (v. 1 1969) (498). In the years of 1966 to 1971, every Chinese heard or shouted such slogans as “long live Chairman Mao Zedong”; “Wish Chairman Mao Zedong a long life”; and “loyal to the party, loyal to the people, loyal to Chairman Mao Zedong, and loyal to Mao Zedong Thought.” After 1971, because some of these slogans came directly from Lin Biao’s mouth, people began to be selective. But the fervor of shouting praising slogans of Mao Zedong went on until Mao Zedong’s death in 1976.

In 1966, 1967, and 1968, about sixteen million young students in the cities—one-tenth of the urban population at that time—went to the countryside. They followed the “highest directives”:

It is quite necessary that the educated youth be once more educated in the countryside by the peasants of poor, lower, and middle classes. We should have a campaign to encourage the cadres and others in the cities to send their children who have graduated from junior middle school, senior middle school or college to the villages. The comrades in different rural areas should welcome them. (Wang Lingfu 420)

It was these so-called educated youth that provided the cultural methods to strengthen the peasant’s devotion to Mao Zedong. They wrote slogans on the walls and sometimes on

the hills or mountains. In the evenings, these young people also had the performance talents to vividly display Mao Zedong's ideals, to a degree of religious piety:

When performing on the stage, we, like all other educated youth, paid special attention to the important part: hanging a portrait of Mao Zedong at the center of the rear screen and letting someone stand sentry to it. The guard held on the chest with the right hand a red book of *Chairman Mao Zedong's Selected Sayings*, and stood straight. Those who were not performing took shift. On occasions when everyone needed to participate, someone from the band would have to stop playing and stand below the sacred altar. In this way the loyalty to helmsman would be sustained.

...The rebellion dance was loud with slogans—*Head can be broken, blood can be shed, but Mao Zedong Thought cannot be neglected. (We) can bear beating and pillorying, but never bow our revolutionary heads. Those who want revolution follow the Party, those who do not go to hell.* These performances were massively assertive: people howled and twisted forcefully. They jerked necks, slapped chests, waved fists, propped waists, their feet lunged, and they stomped their feet. All fighting acts were displayed. (Xia Xianzheng 255)

In the socialist new villages, these young people offered the learned knowledge to the illiterate peasants at night schools. They learned the survival skills from the peasants. The emotional ties built during one's hard times were the strongest. Many of these educated youth became passionate supporters of peasants or experienced leaders for agricultural affairs. Though some of them have become rebels of Mao Zedong's ideals

now, the majority of today's passionate spectators are the educated youth and peasants that were habituated in the visual rhetorics of Mao Zedong.

## **MAO ZEDONG'S IMAGE CAMPAIGNS FOR HIS SUCCESSORS**

### **Mao Zedong's Left and Right: Placement of Successorship**

The Communist Party of China has been conscious of the rightist and leftist mistakes since Mao Zedong became the leader. These mistakes—according to the *In Relation to the Party's Resolution on Certain Historical Issues since the Founding of the People's Republic of China* (Resolution passed by the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China at the 6th Plenum on June 27 1981)—could have destroyed the Party if Mao Zedong did not stand up and struggle against the wrong opinions. Although this document meant to discredit Mao Zedong's social movements during the Cultural Revolution and to pave the way for Deng Xiaoping to be the head of the country, it does point out that some of the rightist and leftist crises within the Party were saved by Mao Zedong as the leader of a group or single-handedly. The Communist Party of China saw Chen Duxiu's right-wing surrenderism in 1927, Wang Ming's left-wing adventurism in 1930s, and Zhang Guotao's right-wing separatism in 1935. Undoubtedly without Mao Zedong, no one else could have led the Party and the Red Army out of the destructive disasters. Since then, Mao Zedong was regarded as the center that could balance rightist or leftist views or unite the leaders of these two wings. These two groups, incidentally, were divided according to the two areas in which they conducted their early revolutionary activities—the red area, mainly of the Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base, and the white area of the Nationalists. Among the leaders who stood at the Tiananmen Rostrum, Mao

Zedong, Zhu De, Lin Biao, Peng Dehuai, and Gao Gan were the red leaders, while Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Chen Yun were the white revolutionaries. Zhou Enlai was an intelligence agent before he went to Jingganshan, but since he became the adamant supporter of Mao Zedong in 1935, he was also regarded as a red leader.

At the formal meetings of the Party, the seats of Mao Zedong and the two persons who sat on his two sides usually portrayed the internal political agreements and conflicts in the leadership. The person who sat on Mao Zedong's left was usually the second leader of the country. Or at least, a person he intended to present to the public for an important message. This usually happened when the leaders were posing for the mass media. From the memoirs of Mao Zedong's bodyguards and some of his photos, we can see that Mao Zedong became left-handed when he was emotional. Rao Hesheng was a body guard from Hubei. Mao Zedong asked him to write a report about the peasants during his home visit from May 21 to 31, 1955 (Rao Hesheng). On July 20, Mao Zedong asked for the report. Mao Zedong raised his left hand, and caught the middle and third fingers with his right hand. "You have seen the peasants," Mao Zedong said. Then he caught together the index finger and the other two—"When I see you, I see the peasants. Though they are far away from me, you have witnessed the social reality, I have learned about the real situations and obtained good knowledge. It is really a practical method."

Mao Zedong, a heavy smoker, usually used his left hand to hold cigarettes. But when he could free left hand, he meant business and would act emotionally. The point is that Mao Zedong was conscious of who was on his left that could take care of the person who sat on his right.

The two groups of the red and white areas had been vying for the left position beside Mao Zedong. Zhu De had sat on Mao Zedong's left for long time. Zhou Enlai took the closest right. Since 1950, however, Mao Zedong showed increasing interest in another red leader, Gao Gang, from Shaanbei Revolutionary Base (Ma Wei'an 127). Although most images of Gao were later removed, Gao did sit or stand on Mao Zedong's left on several occasions. In 1953, Mao Zedong had asked for retirement from the first line of administrative work, hoping Gao would be the ideal first leader with the help of his other brothers. Gao, however, became arrogant soon, and did not behave well. On the other hand, Mao Zedong's favoritism aroused jealousy in most leaders, red or white, who had taken the Long March. They tried to find faults with Gao, and presented a report to Mao Zedong. Gao's corrupt life—arrogance, sexual indulgence—was severely criticized, and Gao committed suicide in 1954 (Ma Wei'an 254). Gao's suicide angered Mao Zedong, but also awakened him to the competitions among his followers. He postponed his retirement.

Since then, Mao Zedong was focusing on formulating a secure pattern of leadership so that he could retire from the administrative tasks. He did retire in 1959, but nominally because he wanted to secure a faithful successor. In order to do so, he also looked for someone who could act as the first leader and also help the supposed successor.

The visual rhetoric of formal meeting room seating reflected Mao Zedong's efforts to undertake the two processes of selection for one regent-like senior leader and a really young leader. Just like Mao Zedong whose personality became a public display, the candidates' personal images surface to the public eye as certain signs of the national

politics. The pattern of the central leaders, who had definitely internalized certain principles and functions of their shared communist ideology, was a reflection of the status of political arrangement. A good place to look at such patterns is the Plenums of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China. According to the photographs Roderick MacFarquhar collects in his article *On Photographs*, on most occasions, Mao Zedong would always sit at the center or at the first left-hand seat. If he is at the center, then on his left were usually those that joined the revolution and worked at the revolutionary bases, and on his right were those who worked mostly in the white areas, i.e. the areas that were controlled by Guomindang (294). Also, it is almost a fixed pattern, in terms of my own observation, that the person on Mao Zedong's left is a leader that can represent Mao Zedong when Mao Zedong is still alive while the person on Mao Zedong's right is the one that will take the place of Mao Zedong when Mao Zedong passes away. For a long time, only Zhu De and Zhou Enlai had sat on Mao Zedong's nearest left, meaning only these two could represent Mao Zedong. Liu Shaoqi sat on Mao Zedong's right since 1955 when Gao Gang was expelled from the Party.

MacFarquhar traces the subtle changes in the 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Plenums of the Eighth National Conference of Communist Party of China that was held from April X 1959 to X. Fig 1 shows big changes in seating that roughly reflected the political orientations at that period. Unusually, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, two white-area or right-wing leaders were on Mao Zedong's left, and on the left and right sides of Zhu De, a red-area or left-wing leader. On Mao Zedong's right were Zhou Enlai and Lin Biao, two red-area or left-wing leaders who sat the left and right sides of Chen Yun, a white-area or right-wing leader. The political message was that the country wanted to focus on economic

construction—in which Liu and Deng were experienced—under strong national defense of which Zhu De, the commander-in-chief, was in charge. The leadership pattern was that the military and economic leaders should help and learn from each other. The presentation pattern at the meeting also complemented the leaders' roles in the Party and the country. Usually the first leader would give the political report. The assistant gave the situational report. The potential successor would address the amendments to the constitution of the Communist Party. Liu made a speech for the political affairs in the country. Zhou analyzed the national and international situations. Deng presented to the conference the amendments to the constitution of the Party. Therefore, Liu became the first leader, Zhou the assistant, Deng the potential successor.

Mao Zedong wanted to retire. Fig 2 confirms Mao Zedong's wishes. Liu sat at the center of the presidium of the state conference. Zhou Enlai, the premier and one of the founders of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Red Army, was on his left. On his right was Song Qingling, the widow of Sun Zhongshan, the founder of the Nationalist Party of China. The equivalent textual rhetoric would be that all Parties should unite under the Communist Party to speed up the country's economic development.

Yet three years later, Liu's economic ability was proved to be less effective than Mao Zedong's. Though today most people blame Mao Zedong for the economic difficulties of that period, Liu's household policies actually moved the economy into the old self-sufficient model (Song Yongyi). Zhou, once the assistant, resumed the nominal first leader of the country. The seating at 10<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China demonstrated the adjustment of the leadership pattern. Fig

3 shows Zhou sitting on Mao Zedong's left and Deng on his right. But Liu was at the right end of the podium row. The political message was that Deng would still be the potential successor but under the guidance of Zhou and Zhu, the red-area people.

By 1966, Mao Zedong was almost certain that Liu Shaoqi could not be faithful of his ideal of "Believe in the masses." Since Mao Zedong resigned from office in 1959, Liu Shaoqi, as an executive leader, moved the socialist system backward. As soon as Liu took office, he dissolved the People's communes, and established a rural household responsibility system. By December 1964, Liu listed 20% of the working masses as land owners, rich farmers, new anti-revolutionaries, and the peacefully transformed while Mao Zedong hoped the focus of reform was bureaucracy (Song Yongyi). Since June 4, 1966 when Mao Zedong assigned

Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping to take care of the rebellious posters in the universities and colleges, of Beijing, by July 18, their investigation groups labeled 10,211 students as "rightists," and 2,591 professors as "anti-revolutionaries" (Song Yongyi). Obviously, Liu and Deng were contradicting Mao Zedong's real intentions. During the years in which Mao Zedong was nominally away from administrative power, most of his younger brothers "rebelled" for their own sphere of influence, or in the old fashion, "land by feudal tenure." Mao Zedong was already seventy-three in 1966, and among his younger brothers, dependable candidates were hard to find.

The possible first choice, that is, Liu as the leader and Deng as an associate that would smoothly take over the leadership, would not work. Mao Zedong shifted his attention to the youngest of his outstanding brothers—Lin Biao. In chapter 1, it is mentioned that Mao Zedong's fame was increased greatly with the Victory of

Pingxingguang on September 25, 1937, the first victory on the Chinese side since Japan invaded China. Lin Biao was the commander of Division 115 of the Eighth Route. He was thirty. Before that, Lin was already a famous young military leader. In 1930, he was twenty-three and was the commander of the Fourth Red Army. In 1932, he was the commander of the First Army Group of Red Forces. Unfortunately, on March 1, 1938, shortly after another small victory over the Japanese, Lin Biao was riding a horse to pass through a Nationalist area, wearing a Japanese uniform, when a sentinel mistook him and opened fire (Shao Hua and You Hu 44-54). Lin's spinal nervous system was damaged. From then on, his physical health was not compatible with his age. In 1966, when he was fifty-nine, Lin Biao lost almost all his hair and looked even older than Mao Zedong himself.

Mao Zedong still believed the age gap would allow Lin to survive himself and faithfully carry on his ideological legacy as the first leader and mentor a young successor. Mao Zedong's relationship with Lin Biao was a complex one. On the one hand, Lin had been Mao Zedong's most loyal military follower, and many of Mao Zedong's difficult battles were carried out by Lin.



Lin

Mao

Fig 2. Lin on Mao Zedong's right at the 2nd<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Ninth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China that lasted from August 23 to September 6, 1970. Picture from <[http://bbs.jzrb.com/post\\_4\\_56718\\_1.html](http://bbs.jzrb.com/post_4_56718_1.html)>



Wang

Mao

Zhou

Fig 3. Mao Zedong looks relieved at the 10<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of Communist Party of China. Zhou was eventually the only reliable on his left, and on his right was the young man who resembled Mao Zedong.

On the other, Lin disobeyed Mao Zedong on several important occasions—for example, first, Lin did not follow Mao Zedong’s Strategy of Large Enclosure and left a large portion of the Nationalists out to Taiwan; second, Lin did not want to go to the Korean War, and things could be much better if Lin were the commander-in-chief of the Chinese Volunteers (Mao Zedong lost his only healthy son in the Korean War.) But compared with Mao Zedong’s other young brothers, Lin was the most politically naïve and reliable person. At the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China that went from April 1 to 24, 1969, Mao Zedong, Lin and Zhou were sitting at the central table of the presidium. Lin gave the political report, the task of the first leader, and also read the amended draft of the Charter of the Communist Party. The Constitution, passed by the Ninth People’s Congress of the Communist Part of China on April 16, 1969, states in its General Principle that “Comrade Lin Biao has consistently raised the great flag of Mao Zedong Zedong Thought, and most faithfully and determinedly carried out and protected Comrade Mao Zedong’s proletariat revolutionary line. Comrade Lin Biao is the comrade-in-arms and successor of Comrade Mao Zedong.” Fig 4 presents Mao Zedong’s second attempt of choosing a reliable leadership pattern to secure his ideological legacy. Lin sits

on his right, a position signaling the successor of Mao Zedong when Mao Zedong passes away.

At the same time, Mao Zedong was eager to find a young person to be trained when he was still alive. There were many other considerations for the Cultural Revolution, but to let young people be trained as the successors of the communist cause would be one of the important reasons. Just as shown in his alliance with young people for the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong's favoritism for younger leadership also took up most of his remaining years. This was both ideological and practical: he believed in new, "advanced," things, and young people, for him, were the active agents of these new things; a faithful young leader would guarantee a longer period of continuation of his ideals. Though his authority was never challenged by his old comrades, they were reminiscent of their old merits and thus became hostile toward each other. Among the representatives of the Ninth Congress at the presidium, three were conspicuous—Wang Hongwen, Hua Guofeng, and Chen Yonggui. Wang, only 34 years old, and Hua, 48 years old, obviously showed Mao Zedong's long-term plan for the two. Chen, an illiterate peasant leader, was an example of faithful support to Mao Zedong's choices. Mao Zedong's idea was probably that under the leadership of Lin and the support of those naïve leaders from the working classes, like Chen, the two young leaders, Wang and Hua would become experienced and successfully carry on his ideological legacy.

However, Lin's fanatic praise of Mao Zedong and his openly display as Mao Zedong's successor disarmed his discretion. As a disciplined strategist, Mao Zedong could not bear any public disgrace on the role model he had chosen. Lin lost Mao Zedong's trust by the time of 1970. Fig 2 shows such a moment in which Lin neglected

his visual rhetoric and Mao Zedong expressed his disappointment. In 1971, after a desperate attempt to kill Mao Zedong, Lin took an escape flight and died on the way to Soviet Union.

After his old friends broke his heart one after another, the devastated Mao Zedong had to hastily replace Lin with the youngest candidate. In fig 6, Mao Zedong seems to say to his only reliable brother Zhou Enlai—“all the other old fools are not trustworthy; from now on I entrust to you the good young man on my right.” At the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of China that went from August 24 to 28 1973, Zhou Enlai managed the report of politics. Wang Hongwen, 36, made the report about amendment to the Charter of the Party, the public display at the podium of the next Party leader.

Unfortunately, the sick Zhou could offer no more mentoring than Mao Zedong himself. Wang impulsively joined the side of Mao Zedong’s wife Jiang Qing, an act Mao Zedong would never approve—partly because of the factional activities within the Party that had made him both heart-broken and regretful. It was Wang’s immaturity of presenting himself as a member of the gang of four instead of standing to his own feet as the only one leader that made Mao Zedong change his mind again. The replacement became more urgent when, on January 8, 1976, Zhou Enlai, five years younger than Mao Zedong, died ahead of Mao Zedong. Afraid and deprived of his other brothers’ support, Mao Zedong handed in all his stakes to Hua Guofeng, a middle-point figure, not too old or young, not left-wing or right wing. Mao Zedong almost implores Hua to be careful in fig 4.



Hua

Mao

Fig 4. The loss of Zhou on January 8, 1976, and his disappointment at Wang Hongwen is evident on Mao Zedong's look. He wished Hua could understand. Yet obviously, Hua is only sheepish. Collected by Cheng Jinjiao.

Hua Guofeng upheld Mao Zedong's wishes and his own authority by placing his own portrait on the left of Mao Zedong's. He also approved the huge project of building Chairman Mao Zedong Memorial Hall that takes one-fifteenth of the Tiananmen Square. But Mao Zedong would have been very disappointed when Hua, encouraged by the old marshals, put Wang Hongwen and Jiang Qing on trial and sentenced them to death. By doing this, his own left and right were gradually encroached by the old marshals. He kept his position of the first leader for only five years.

### **Peace: Visual Inference**

Mao Zedong's death on September 9, 1976 was the saddest moment for almost every Chinese. Not only the whole China, a large part of the world was silent. His friends or enemies all felt a great loss of ideological vision. It was such an overwhelming transition that Tiananmen, again, could only select the very closest to view the disappearance of the host of its rostrum. All foreign guests' request was declined. King Sihanouk, who also witnessed Mao Zedong's gesture of unification with the left hand,

pleaded his Khmer Rouge jailers to let him attend the funeral (Shi Ji 2003). He was refused, and burst into tears when he apologized at a press conference in 1979.

The funeral was held at the Tiananmen rostrum. The problem was that the Portrait of Mao Zedong was too big to be placed at portico and the condolers would not stand above it. So on September 17, the workers worked the whole night and built a lower platform in the front of the Gate (Wang Aiguo 54). The portrait could be seen from the whole square.

The Chinese dependence on this man was obvious. According to the trombonist of the elegy orchestra Wang Aiguo, the emotional bursts fainted many (54). Mao Zedong's physical appearance moved into a rhetorical process. The actual body was preserved but it was near the portrait at the Gate. People would have to go through an emotional abstraction, though naïve viewers may get more spontaneous stimuli at the actual body. At the Congress Hall, where Mao Zedong's body was open for mourning, many were rushed to hospital after the funeral. The whole country was crying.

### **The Intrinsic Rationality of Mao Zedong Enthymeme**

Many Chinese would cry at the Portrait of Mao Zedong years after his death. The Mao Zedong enthymeme is probably difficult to understand for Westerners who promptly looked at the other side of the image—the unnatural deaths and harsh disciplines. For most Chinese, Mao Zedong is often associated with the restoration of national dignity and justice of the oppressed. For them, he is Christ-like figure. Even those who were criticized or physically abused during Mao Zedong's last ten years cried whole-heartedly for this man who initiated these psychologically and physically turbulent social

movements. It is the ideological thing that cannot be easily changed by the forces of other ideologies.

Luo Ruiqian was the Minister of Public Security, the Procuratorate Director, Vice-Minister of State Security, and other eight titles of the Party, the Politburo, and the Army in the first few years of the 1960s. At first Mao Zedong believed in him. But under the slander of Lin Biao's group, Mao Zedong—who was determined that Lin was his reliable successor—asked Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping to summarize Luo's problems. Soon Luo was accused of opposing Lin Biao and his emphasis of political consciousness, and separating the Party. He was severely ashamed in public by the red guards during the Cultural Revolution (*Xingdao Daily* B5). After several pillories, he jumped off a building and got crippled. He left Qincheng Prison in 1977. As the car passed by Tiananmen Gate, he asked to stop and limped toward the portrait of Mao Zedong. He bowed at it three times. Back at home, he, with a black insignia, also arranged a funeral setting and paid his respect. In the editorial of the Chinese newspaper in America, he is described as a spineless coward. The deep thing is, however, that he could not get out of his ideological belief and say that Mao Zedong was his torturer.

Liang Shuming and Mao Zedong were both born in 1893. They met each other at the house of Mao Zedong's father-in-law and became good friends. On September 11 1953, Liang criticized Mao Zedong's neglect of peasants at a formal meeting and Mao Zedong labeled him as a reactionary intellectual. They never talked to each other since then. In 1983, Liang was ninety years old, and a reporter asked for his recollection of that dispute (Wei Jingmin and Xu Lin 26). Liang replied, "It was my bad attitude. My remarks did not match the requirements of a formal meeting. They embarrassed him. It

was even worse that I hurt his feelings. Some of what he said was not true just as some of my speech was not true. Such things cannot be avoided and are easy to understand. But now he has passed away. I deeply feel lonely.” Although many scholars were physically abused, Mao Zedong reminded his followers many times that the Cultural Revolution was an ideological struggle that should be carried out through peaceful debates. Liang, an obstinate Nationalist thinker who openly opposed Mao Zedong several times at the formal meetings, received no punishment other than written criticism (Wei Jingmin and Xu Lin 23). This, of course, had some connection with Liang’s fame in the academic circles. On the other hand, Mao Zedong was definitely not an ideological bigot that simply put away anyone who did not listen to him as what most dissidents describe in the Western countries. He was the head, the brains, of many intellectuals.

Michael Ann Holly discerns such a connection between the head of the state and the development of historical consciousness in *Past Looking: Historical Imagination and the Rhetoric of the Image*:

...certain rhetorical features of a period’s consciousness, as visually embodied in its works of art, not only determine the array of things that can be said about it in the predictable ways, but also formally or perhaps semiologically legislate how these things are organized in the first place—the way they assume their relationships in the historian’s composition. It is a case of a later ideology reinstantiating an earlier formulation of its principles. (81)

Mao Zedong, as a powerful historical figure, has become a most important ideological icon of the modern China. When his images are the projected access to the personal and

collective memories of the past, and when today's ideological and political inconveniences and estrangements make many people reminiscent of the past, the visual works of Mao Zedong actually help more people to resist the capitalist rhetoric and formulate mystical ways to assuage the pains of the capitalist practices.

### **Pragmatism: Deng Xiaoping's Semiology of Mao Zedong**

Many Chinese people's rhetorical resistance of capitalism while engaging adamantly in capitalist materialism is typical of a traditional Chinese value—neutrality. This quality is usually maintained chronologically, just like in the traditional China where corruption and rebellion always evolved towards each other. But within a timeframe in which old ideas are passing and new ideals have not settled, the Chinese have experienced peaceful times of ideological identifications and contradictions. Chinese Daoism coexisted with Indian Buddhism for a long time. It is now a time that communism and capitalism identify and contradict each other in China. This process is evident when Deng Xiaoping became the de facto leader of the country in 1981. On the one hand, since his death in 1997, the Chinese developed a new theoretical term—the Theory of Deng Xiaoping—so that the Thought of Mao Zedong, a Chinese development of Marxism, can be followed. Deng also mandated the Four Cardinal Principles—Marxism, leadership of the Communist Party, socialism, and the democratic dictatorship of the people—into the constitution of the People's Republic of China (*Constitution of the People's Republic of China X*). On the other hand, his opening and reform was almost a direct influence of the peaceful transformation strategy of the Western world.

Many Chinese people's feeling about him is also greatly influenced by this mentality of neutrality: Deng made mistakes, but was a good Chinese.

Perhaps the general Chinese spectatorship of Mao Zedong's images typically reflects such an equivocal modification: Portrait of Mao Zedong is necessary, at least at the Gate of Sky Peace, but is not a sacred sight. This modification, or rather neutralization, is a direct result of the argument that, to quote Michael Ann Holly, "circles around a specific aspect of spectatorial exchange" (151)—between hardliners and reformists of Mao Zedong's ideals, between the reformists who favored a economic reform without changing the political system and the reformists who wanted political, economic, and even cultural reforms that would please the Western world. Holly's idea of an argument between "the visual rhetoric of the image and the rhetorical and textual strategies of its historical interpreters" is also applicable here (151). Deng Xiaoping's openly interpretation of Mao Zedong's images shows both rhetorical identification and contradiction, a historical transition that lasts until today.

On August 21 and 23, 1980, Deng Xiaoping, for two times, talked to the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci (Deng "Mao Zedong" 85 n). Oriana Fallaci asked Deng Xiaoping: "Will Chairman Mao Zedong's portrait above Tiananmen Gate be kept there?" Deng Xiaoping answered:

It will, forever. In the past there were too many portraits of Chairman Mao Zedong. They were hung everywhere. That was not proper and it didn't really show respect for Chairman Mao Zedong. It's true that he made mistakes in a certain period, but he was after all a principal founder of the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China. In

evaluating his merits and mistakes, we hold that his mistakes were only secondary. What he did for the Chinese people can never be erased. In our hearts we Chinese will always cherish him as a founder of our Party and our state. (90)

Deng Xiaoping also mentioned during their second talk that the construction of the Chairman Mao Zedong Memorial Hall was against “Chairman Mao Zedong’s wishes. He had proposed in the 1950s that we should all be cremated when we died and that only our ashes be kept, that no remains should be preserved and no tombs built. Chairman Mao Zedong was the first to sign his name, and we all followed suit.” But Deng insisted that Chairman Mao Zedong Memorial Hall be not demolished because to remove it would “give rise to all kinds of talk” (Deng *Selected Works* v. 2). What he implied was that people would think that he was not Mao Zedong’s follower. Therefore he emphasized that the Chinese should “forever keep Chairman Mao Zedong’s portrait on Tiananmen Gate as a symbol of our country” (Deng “Mao Zedong” 93).

Obviously, Deng was a good rhetorician and strategist. By pointing out that Chairman Mao Zedong Memorial Hall was built against Mao Zedong’s will, Hua Guofeng who made the proposal of the construction became a disloyal successor in terms of logic reasoning. Then, Deng’s appeal of keeping Mao Zedong’s portrait forever made him closer to the national emotion. Mao Zedong, then, becomes a visual rhetoric for Deng to justify and cover his political disloyalty. Just as Mao Zedong tried to select a younger successor, Deng also proposed that “[the leaders of] the older generation [give up] their concurrent posts” (Deng *Selected Works* v. 2). He said that he would give up the

post of Vice-Premier and Chairman Hua Guofeng would no longer serve as Premier of the State Council. Deng was seventy-seven and Hua was only fifty-nine. But Deng's eloquence that he was Mao Zedong's faithful follower made him the Chairman of Central Military Commission on June 28, 1981 at the sixth Plenum of the 11<sup>th</sup> National Congress of Communist Party of China. Hu Yaobang, six years older than Hua, replaced Hua as the Chairman of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China. Zhao Ziyang, one year older than Hua, replaced Hua as the premier of the State Council.

Thus Deng eventually became Mao Zedong's successor, just like Mao Zedong's original plan. His slogan of "White or black, a cat that catches mice is a good one," and his stance of "Any capitalism is superior to feudalism" as he mentioned to Oriana Fallaci won him great support from the people who were tired of moral studies and wanted to improve their living standards. Then it was the turn of corruption. Corruption that needs rebellion to cleanse, a task that summon people to the Portrait of Mao Zedong on Tiananmen Gate.

### **Chapter 3. Mao Zedong's Visage and the New World Order**

Images are highly ideological devices. By analyzing the ideological signals and symptoms in several important international diplomatic occasions, this chapter wants to present an analytic account of the political roles the visual Mao Zedong played in the international image events that have led to today's new world order, in which the diplomacy of sovereignty won unprecedented hegemony. What Mao Zedong meant to show was often shown by the spectators to mean what they projected. Mao Zedong's outward frowns at Stalin and Khrushchev's Chauvinism were used to split the revolutionary pattern of internationalism. The other pattern, the peaceful way, was ensured when Mao Zedong met Nixon in 1972. The diplomatic appearances of the two world leaders were widely interpreted or diagnosed as a shift from ideological conflicts to national benefits. It was a turning point from international communism to the Western top leaders' concept of world order. The period of Tiananmen Movement 1989 saw such transitional experiments. Bush and Gorbachev visited Deng Xiaoping who adopted capitalism in the name of socialism. These international activisms produced the rhetorical success of the Western laissez-faire economies. In 1991, Soviet Union was dissolved. The rhetoric of the collapse of communism was celebrating the new world order. However, the 1989 student movement has also left the most effective drawback. The defacement of the Portrait of Mao Zedong proved the opposites of the activists' ideological intentions. China's foreign policies began to change from the rapprochement to a new neutrality where Mao Zedong became the center again. Unlike Russia and

Eastern Europe where Stalin and Lenin's images were almost all removed, China has kept almost all of Mao Zedong's images.

### **Red Flag**

It was the morning of May 16, 1989. When Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev was walking to the Great Hall of People's Congress, the students of Beijing University of Science and Technology paraded onto the Tiananmen Square under Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen. Their red flags billowed in the breezes (Turnley 66). The scene can be easily mistaken for a return of Cultural Revolution. At such a moment, Mao Zedong became alive out of the Portrait. The great wonder of the Portrait is that it is politically, historically, and culturally artistic, and is artistically political, historical, and cultural. On that day, the sight and vision between the painting and the spectators at the Square easily evolved into historical dramas—the activisms were theatrically placed, yet every act was real. Obviously the pictorial presence of Mao Zedong was on the side of the students just as he had been during the Cultural Revolution. The deep memories most participants had for this unmistakable head made the painting alive. His eyes and brow were projecting a gaze and glare at the same time. That the two socialist countries were still concerned with the future of each other was some comfort to him. On the other hand, he was indignant with the new Chinese leadership's recalcitrance on the Capitalist Road. When Gorbachev, who was intoxicated in the praises of Ronald Reagan and other Western leaders, came to his eyes, his warning was soundless but loud, just as his nervous blinks at Stalin in 1950 and

his shrills at Khrushchev in 1963.

This is a live drama. In Kenneth Burke's pentad—act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose, this rhetorical moment should be a most important event of modern global politics. The act presents a most significant episode of the struggle between socialism and capitalism. The scene is double-folded. The foreground is Mao Zedong's young people gathered under him to protest against the corrupt officials. At the background is the hidden group of Human Rights in China, newly established on April 12 with the direct support of United States. Coincidentally, Gorbachev, the biggest target of the Western mission of subverting communism worldwide, becomes the focus of the stage. These agents, and the agencies—red flags, portraits of Mao Zedong, slogans of democracy—all gathered here for different purposes—corruption in China, socialist reform worldwide, and an experiment site of peaceful evolution for the Western capitalist allies. In the sunlight and its shadows, the roles of agents are not settled but are developing. The students are Mao Zedong's "red guards," but also the dissidents' shields. Gorbachev plays the role of a messenger of socialist justice but is also "bribed"—rhetorically and monetarily—to be the guard of the New World Order the Western capitalist front had long formulated. Waiting for his judgment in the meeting room, the hardliners and reformists of the Chinese government glare at each other. Red flags and revolutionary songs are pushing for the answers. At the other ends of the various lines, the representatives of the "United Nations" of West Europe and North America are printing "freedom" and "democracy" on white cloth and supplying loudspeakers.

Before the students moved onto Tiananmen Square on April 16, 1989, the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's works of new thinking and reconstruction were widely read

among the Chinese scholars. Compared with the economic success of Deng Xiaoping's policy of opening and reform, Gorbachev's theoretical depth was favored at a time when corruption was already a big problem in China. On May 13, after the students heard about Gorbachev's visit, about two hundred students went back to the Square and launched a hunger strike. Two days later, the Soviet leader arrived in Beijing with a state welcome ceremony at the airport. The streets were full of red banners that praised him as "the true reformer" (Liu 31). Students requested to meet him. Considering the diplomacy, he did not accept their petition. It was probably not until his leaving for Russia in Shanghai Airport that he shook a teenager's hand as shown in a Bettman photo.

The central question for both sides of the international confrontations has been—Should the Red Flag be carried on at a time when the antagonistic leaderships all seek peaceful measures to defend their own ideological territories? It is the consummation of the so-called Cold War, a major rhetorical device the West used to outspoke the East. Also, while the communist countries were engaged in learning the "advanced" Western technology, the West successfully promoted the subversive activisms to "collapse" the "Cold" barriers—the red images.

Deng Xiaoping changed the name of the Party's leading journal from *Red Flag* to *Seeking Truth* a year ago in 1988 (Lu 501). Since then, the journal has lost its political influence, and the readership has declined even among Communist Party members. But at this moment, the red flags in the students' hands were unmistakably full of the old energy of Chinese revolutions—straightforward and uncompromising.

On May 15, Deng Xiaoping's close hold to the hands of Gorbachev and his wife Raisa can be seen as a sign of socialist friendship. Deng Xiaoping's hesitant smile

shielded between the two Russian shoulders, however, betrayed his uneasiness. “The good thing is,” he seemed to stammer at Mao Zedong, “our Russian friends still care about our opinion. They still listen to you.” Deng Xiaoping understood what Mao Zedong would say. Each time a communist leader visited America, the Communist Party went through a crisis of revisionism. So Mao Zedong would wish the young students to go away from Deng Xiaoping and Gorbachev. Deng Xiaoping looked as if he were saying to his own conscience—“The Chinese of the mainland begin to be rich; is it not the purpose of our revolution—to make the poor rich?”

However, Deng Xiaoping was convinced and concerned that the Russian leader was deeply infected with the flu of peaceful evolution dispersed by the Western political machines. Most likely, it was during Gorbachev’s visit that Deng Xiaoping decided to turn the red flags that had aimed at the bad consequences of his opening and reform to support his call of protecting the socialist cause, though his red flag was nationalistic instead of communistic. It is in this sense that 1989 saw the real separation of China from Soviet Union.

### **Mao Zedong on the international Stage: Political Sign or Ideological Symbol?**

Ideology is an abstraction of physical realities. As most important carriers of ideology, images are often the media between physical appearances and ideological identities. Because of this connection, people often associate a certain ideology with a certain physical reality. Marxism has been habitually associated with industrial societies, so when the Communist Party of China came into being, the Russians welcomed it with much doubt because of the Chinese feudal characteristics. When the Soviets came to help

the Chinese Party, they also behaved rather peremptorily. Stalin and Khrushchev never paid special attention to Mao Zedong because Mao Zedong was portrayed as a peasant leader.

When physical realities override ideological identities, the political ambitions would only damage the common goals. This was certainly true in the Chinese civil wars between the Nationalist Party and Communist Party. The Soviets wanted the Chinese Red Army to fight as if they were in Russia, and many soldiers' lives were lost to the good equipments of the Nationalist Party and rigid Soviet dogmas. On the other hand, Americans thought only good weapons win wars, and forgot that the Chinese soldiers were using them. The weapons Americans supplied for the Chinese Nationalist Party were eventually used by the Chinese Communist soldiers to have not only defeated the Nationalist Party but also baffled the Americans in the Korean War. There are complicated reasons for the Communist Party to lose the revolutionary base or to win the nation-wide military success, but the dogmatic association of ideology and physical reality played significant roles in either case.

In either case, the visual Mao Zedong was an active interpretant, and would continue to challenge such dogmatic strategies in later global politics.

According to Ernst Cassirer, a sign is "a part of the physical world, a symbol is a part of the human world of meaning" (qt. in Sebeok 11). Mao Zedong's unique appearance, or unfamiliar to the West, complicated or provided additional thoughts to the usual systematic or pragmatic foreign policies of the dominant West. In most cases, the visual Mao Zedong was treated in the international forums as a political sign, not as an ideological symbol. That is, when Mao Zedong's ideological concerns were presented,

the world leaders tended to regard them as racial, cultural or national issues. That was shown typically in the relations between US, USSR, and China.

### **Mao Zedong's Frowns in 1949-1969: US-USSR Détente**

Two ways to achieve world peace were proposed by the two ideological camps: one, for most socialists, is to topple all the ruling classes through violent revolutions; the other, for most capitalists, is to peacefully improve the political and economic status of the working classes through top-down transformation. At first, Mao Zedong stood for an ideology of the oppressed that was pursuing the revolutionary measures to establish justice in the international community. That does not just include the proletariat, the urban workers, but also the peasants, the manual laborers, and other work forces that did not exploit others in a systematic sense. For these people and those from the Non-White races and nations to join the White Soviet leadership, a new system was needed to ensure equality.

Mao Zedong went to Moscow in 1949. When Stalin's prejudice against the rural characteristics of the Chinese Communist Party surfaced, Mao Zedong was immediately seen to be puzzled about Stalin during the formal occasions. In 1959, when Khrushchev visited Beijing, and talked about peaceful co-existence with United States, a shadow could be discerned on Mao Zedong's face whenever he had to stand with Khrushchev in public. Mao Zedong's unhappy faces with the Soviet leaders told the deep complications between nationalism, internationalism, communism, and world order.

Mao Zedong's ideas of uniting all the oppressed were meant to be a contribution to communism. But Stalin and his Soviet regime took it as a challenge to orthodox

Marxism or Leninism. Mao Zedong wanted Khrushchev to give up the illusions of peacefully convincing the capitalist societies. Khrushchev immediately thought of the territories the Russian Empire had seized from the Qing Dynasty, which Mao Zedong's Administration had long decided to not consider taking back. These unhappy faces of Mao Zedong was nothing but physical signs of ideological disagreements but were interpreted by Soviet leaders as political symbols of racial or national benefits, and by Western capitalist societies as chances to divide the communist union.

As Mao Zedong worried, the differences between the two socialist powers became increasingly ideological in 1960s. Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev tended to think that USSR and US could not afford to take any military action against each other. The simple logic was that, whoever used one nuclear weapon, it would be the end of the Earth. Therefore, they proposed the concept of peaceful co-existence (Shen Zhihua). According to this principle, Soviet Union never dared to oppose United States directly, just as they had never sent any armed forces to Korean War. When Vietnam War came, Soviet Union again sent no soldiers to help the Vietnamese. The Cuban Missile Crisis ended with a secret deal between Kennedy and Khrushchev on October 28, 1962 (Faria 103). USSR and US have been avoiding each other in military conflicts. This certainly did not mean Soviet Union and United States would not wage wars. Just like United States began to bomb unruly "little bullies," Soviet Union also invaded several small countries. On November 4, 1956, Khrushchev ordered Soviet military intervention in Hungary. On August 20, 1968, Soviet and Warsaw troops entered Czechoslovakia to suppress Prague Spring. Meanwhile, more and more Soviet troops were sent to the borders of China and USSR, and China and Mongolia.

The point is that USSR went truly on a road of what Mao Zedong called revisionism, hegemonism and imperialism. This was directly against Mao Zedong's ideological interests. He openly resisted and criticized the Soviet opportunism and Chauvinism. For quite some time, Mao Zedong was the major leader of the oppressed that argued for the public welfares, and Mao Zedong's image quickly became the symbol of international communism.

### **Mao Zedong Image Events in the Foreign Countries**

The decades of 1950s to 1970s saw the awakening of the oppressed human beings worldwide. The laboring classes began to rebel against economic exploitation. Women were awakening to political power and social status. Humiliated nations and races argued for equal opportunities and human rights. At a time when China was replacing Soviet Union as the strongest supporter of such social agendas, Mao Zedong's social theories and practices of rebellion became attractive models. As a powerful symbol of communism, Mao Zedong's images with their visual arguments swiftly spread to the open or underground gatherings.

At the time of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, other places of the "Third World" in Asia, Africa and Latin America were also turbulent with revolutionary agendas to root up colonialism and imperialism, and to activate socialist mechanisms. According to Mao Zedong's analysis, Soviet Union had joined United States to be the "First World," bullying other countries. Many "Third World" leaders believed that Mao Zedong's enthusiasm in supporting all the oppressed nationalities and people was the light for the poor people in the dark (Alexander 4). Mao Zedong's ideals inspired those

revolutionaries. As a most powerful symbol, the visage of Mao Zedong was used for confrontational movements. Many stories were told about how Mao Zedong's images enhanced the morale of the uprising soldiers. In the public forums of the First and Second Worlds—according to Mao Zedong's category—left-wing activists, mostly young students that were greatly encouraged by the idea of Red Guards, began to argue for human rights for the lower classes that were further impoverished by the disadvantages of race or gender. Like in the Cultural Revolution, the international display of Mao Zedong's images was a hope of immediate success of communism worldwide.

After Soviet Union was labeled as a “revisionist and imperialist” power in the communist camp, Mao Zedong's images have been used to carry out or continue the revolutions of the oppressed in the “Third World”—a concept Mao Zedong successfully empowered but did not have time to articulate theoretically.

Eric Manson interprets Kevin DeLuca's concept of image event as “the visually based rhetorical efforts of those attempting to move people to action” (iv). In 1960s, the revolutionary struggles worldwide needed a visual modification to motivate the masses. Mao Zedong's visage was a convenient eye-catcher. Mao Zedong was a strong-willed political leader of a third-world country, a successful military leader who defeated large regiments of well-equipped regular forces with only small groups of poorly equipped irregular guerrilla forces, a gentle-looking figure who had enough personal charms to challenge the White supremacy, and many other personalities that were needed for social revolutions of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism and other social movements that were liberating the disadvantaged. Mao Zedong's speeches complemented his visual qualities, such as—*People of the world, Unite and Defeat the U.*

*S. Aggressors and All their Lackeys: Statements Supporting the Afro-Americans and the Peoples of Southern Vietnam, Panama, Japan, Congo and the Dominican Republic in Their Just Struggle Against U.S. Imperialism* (1967).

On January 1, 1967, the Chinese *People's Daily* published “The Revolutionary People Worldwide Cheer for the Great Era of Mao Zedong Zedong”—

...Before the portraits of Mao Zedong, many revolutionary devotees in West Europe and North America vowed for the cause of revolution.

Countless Greek, Spanish, and Yugoslavian revolutionary exiles cried at the sight of a beaming portrait of Chairman Mao, and were encouraged to fight the enemies. ...In the whole world, we do not know how many honest people are looking forward to the precious gifts—Chairman Mao portraits or Chairman Mao badges, because one of these gifts “means Chairman Mao is with us,” and “to stand before a Chairman Mao portrait means to receive indomitable power.” An old worker in Soviet Union, when given a Chairman Mao badge, patted his own chest and said proudly—“I’ll put the Chairman Mao badge at the highest spot on my chest so that everyone can see it!” A Yemeni driver put a Chairman Mao portrait at a prominent place of his home, saying, “My friends and family can all see Chairman Mao every day.” A Laos young soldier carried a Chairman Mao portrait that has “We love you, Chairman Mao” written on the over side, and rushed into the battlefield to fight the enemies [US troops]. The young people in Africa and Japan carried the portraits of Chairman Mao and held powerful anti-US demonstrations.



Fig. 5. A crowd of students protest at the Sorbonne, University of Paris. Many carry posters of Mao Zedong and communist banners. In May of 1968, Paris was shaken by student demonstrations, later joined by workers. Photograph by Jonathan Blair (May 1, 1968).

Meanwhile, left-wing activists in the Western capitalist countries began to follow the passion of the Red Guards and promoted radical social movements with Mao Zedong's portraits and words. In the public forums of the industrial countries, left-wing activists, mostly young students that were greatly encouraged by the idea of Red Guards, began to argue for human rights for the lower classes that were further impoverished by the disadvantages of race or gender.

May Storm took Paris in 1968. Eighty thousand Students of thirty universities went onto the streets, raising Mao Zedong's portraits and red books (Huang Zhangjin "Heyday of Mao Zedongism"). Three hundred factories were involved and ten million workers went on strike. France trembled. President de Gaulle disappeared. Huang Zhangjin also mentions that from 1966 to 1968, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was published four times in France, totaling four to five million copies.

A large number of American youths claimed themselves to be Maoists. Many of Mao Zedong's slogans appeared in universities and colleges. The Students for a Democratic Society gathered its members on the campuses of UC Berkeley, UCLA, Michigan University and other famous institutions (Hu Fen "Red East Under the Star-spangled Banner"). Under the directions of Mao Zedong's "class struggle against class oppression," Black Panther Party was founded, and the leaders, Huey Newton, Fred Hampton, and other African American activists openly separated themselves from Martin Luther King's non-violent movement. Racism, for the first time, saw its ugliest consequences approaching.

Japanese students shouted the slogan of "adjust the universal truth of Marxism to the particular praxis of Japanese revolution" (Huang Zhangjin "Heyday Of Mao Zedongism"). A Red Army of the radical students was built and sent to all over the world. "International Red Guards" from West Europe, Americas, and Africa crowded into China and joined the local students. These young people of different colors seized the chance to behave against the social injustices under the capitalist machines.

We can see, during the most contentious years of the Cold War, it was Mao Zedong's China that carried on the red flag of social movements while Soviet Union and United States were avoiding each other in order to keep their national hegemony. On several occasions, Mao Zedong asked "people of the world" to "unite together against the wars of aggression by the imperialist and social imperialist powers, especially the wars of aggression that use the atomic bombs as the major weapons." It meant that Mao Zedong had always identified or had tried to identify himself with the lower classes in the world.

### **Visual Vandalism against Mao Zedong**

Against those lines of open identification has been an anti-Mao Zedong continuum of visual demonization or alienation in the Western capitalist countries. It is necessary to explore the ideological contentions that have led to the contrastive uses of Mao Zedong's visage, and the ideological compromises made in the shadow of Mao Zedong to modify the order of global politics.

Understandably, our physical differences are often used to associate with or defend our own ideological interests. As Anthea Callen reminds us that visual images give "ways of conceptualizing and describing the bodily" (603), the physical description of Mao Zedong in the West media has been connected to the denouncement of communism or the defense of individualism, liberalism and capitalism. Through these negative portrayals, the citizens are "reinforced" to "other" the ideological symbol of Mao Zedong who was actually arguing for the social identities of most of them, and are "culturally and historically" specified in an ideology that they have to live up with (603).

The anti-Mao Zedong visual displays started as early as the promotion of Mao Zedong's images. Here, the binary of the East and the West has to be used to construct the contrastive frame. Anti-Mao Zedong image events in the Western capitalist countries have been as persistent as the above-mentioned identification efforts, and seem to have been increasingly successful in spreading their anti-Mao Zedong influence to Mao Zedong's Third World. In the sense that no military forces are put in the foreground, these peaceful and civilized schemes of "othering" Mao Zedong can be directly linked to the mysterious line of peaceful evolution that has led to the "collapse of communism," a much celebrated rhetorical success of the West. It is necessary to look for visual clues. Using direct vandalism or "artistic" distortions of Mao Zedong, the Western supporters of

private property faithfully deployed their ideological interests. I will try to follow those visual assaults on Mao Zedong in terms of Western strategic planning.

When Mao Zedong challenged all the ruling classes, he was the open target for all of those who supported private properties. The propaganda against Mao Zedong has never stopped from the frontline of Western mass media. Mao Zedong emerged into the political attention in the 1930s, and the Chinese who could introduce him to the West were Mao Zedong's opponents.

When Mao Zedong became an increasingly successful leader of communism, the Western political leaders tried the most extreme ways of exterminating Mao Zedong's head. One of the reported assassinations was a plan designated by United States and Taiwan leaders in December 1949. The incident is recorded in the memoir of Wang Zhongfang, the secretary of Luo Ruiqing, the minister of public security who was later crippled by the Red Guards and saluted to the portrait of Mao Zedong when he was set free. Mao Zedong was in Moscow. CIA sent a plane to the Northeast of China, and dropped two Nationalist agents (15-18). They hoped to gather the remaining Guomindang forces and destroy Mao Zedong's train when he entered China. Luo sent out a troop of scouts, and arrested the assassins.

Besides such extremist actions, CIA also had other means that would damage Mao Zedong's visual pride and bring psychological fear to his followers. On September 27, 1950, an envelope sent from Dongdan, Beijing to Tokyo was taken to a police station. It contained a drawing of Tiananmen Square with a trajectory from a fire extinguisher to the portrait of Mao Zedong. Two days later, a Stokes mortar, a number of shells, and a large number of other ammunitions were found in Antonio Riva's residence and Tarcisio

Martina's catholic church (Verdict 19510818). They were two Italians. Five more were arrested: Riuchi Yamaguchi (Japanese), Henri Vetch (French), Quirino Victor Lucy Gerli (Italian), Walter Genthner (German), and Ma Xinqing (Chinese). The verdict describes the foreigners as mercenary spies bought by US Strategic Intelligence Agency. Antonio and Riuchi were sentenced to death on August 18, 1951.

These are the direct political agendas that would have brought immediate propaganda effects. But the terrorist actions became increasingly difficult. The focus, then, turned to the enduring, peaceful channels—the mass media. Through the printing machines, the Western intelligence institutions produced a large amount of text that aimed to defame and deface Mao Zedong, and the parodic Western versions of Mao Zedong's images that would accommodate their immediate political agendas.

Portrait of Mao Zedong the Japanese painted during the early years of Anti-Japanese War. The picture was posted at [www.xytown.com/viewthread.php?tid=87834](http://www.xytown.com/viewthread.php?tid=87834)

The Japanese did not have much information about Mao Zedong at the time when Mao Zedong's Eighth Route won the first victory for China in 1938. In their Eastern colonialist mindset, a military leader that could defeat the well-trained Japanese soldiers must be someone who has received some training in Western cultures and military tactics. Here, Mao Zedong was presented like a "decent" Japanese prime minister. That did not mean that the Japanese had the least respect for the leader of the peoples they were conquering, but showed the usual self-assumption of invaders who imposed their own will on a respectable opponent.



The Japanese painter may have held some respect for their successful opponent. But Mao Zedong seldom met such "decent" treatments in the Western mass media. For example, Mao Zedong's images appeared on the covers of *Time* newsmagazine seven times—that is, February 7, 1949, December 11, 1950, December 1, 1958, January 13,

1967, June 13, 1969, September 20, 1976, and March 21, 1977. Mao Zedong knitted his brow on all these occasions.

There were always some other visual slurs to increase the mysterious fear on the figure of the cover. In the issue of February 7, 1949, a red slogan was behind Mao Zedong's stern eyes—"Democratic Unification." That definitely would puzzle the reader to go into the cover story, which revealed all the facts that would solve the visual doubts: "...Last week, the farm lad was redrawing that map with an iron pen dipped in blood. ... Mao Zedong was a man of feeling, all right, but as tough and tyrannical as any emperor who had preceded him in the rule of his great and long-suffering land." The endnote ensured any suspicious reader that would soon join the activisms against Mao Zedong, either in the Ivory Tower or in the Church. It reads—"The best and virtually only source on Mao Zedong's early life is Edgar Snow's *Red Star Over China* (Modern Library Series, Random House). Snow spent many nights listening to Mao Zedong's life story. TIME bases its account of Mao Zedong's childhood largely on Snow's interview."



Fig 7. This is the first color photo of Mao Zedong Edgar Snow took in 1936. If a reader had a chance to see this photo before reading the cover story of *Time*, the feeling may be different if some critical thinking is involved.

A swarm of locusts swirled around Mao Zedong's neck on the cover of December 11, 1950. On December 1, 1958, the background was a peasant couple under a pair of backbreaking baskets of dirt. The Great Wall, a much misinterpreted architecture by the

West to be a fence of separation, became a mystic dragon encircling the worried Mao Zedong. For June 13, 1969, a broken red star was at the center, with Mao Zedong, Brezhnev, Tito, Ceausescu, and Castro at the five corners. Mao Zedong was on the upper hand. Eleven days after Mao Zedong's death, on September 20, 1976, *Time* readers did not see any comments about Mao Zedong, but a face and a large white caption—"After Mao Zedong," seeming too eager to celebrate the visual success of the covers of *Time*.

The ideological antagonism was always the goal of these visual displays. The political, cultural, racial, and physical details were used to promote the Western ideological interests. This is a consistent theme of *Time*. But let us look at two political occasions that were used to demean Mao Zedong, then China, and finally communism: 1958 and 1969.

The *Time* magazine has a frowning Mao Zedong on its cover on December 1, 1958. Mao Zedong leans into the frame and stays at the right-hand lower corner. Behind him, two reddish peasants, one a half naked man, the other a fully-clothed woman, are gasping under a log-like carrying pole with two large water buckets. An orange slip of caption of Napoleon's famous saying lies at the right-hand upper corner—"Let China sleep. When she awakens the world will be sorry."

"The Glowing Image," the cover story snaps—

More than any other government in the world today, Red China is the long shadow of one man. At 65, Chairman-Mao Zedong Tse-tung is ...  
quoted as the ultimate authority on ideology, military science, steel production, poetry, art, and the uses of fertilizer. Every proclaimed achievement begins with the phrase "Thanks to Chairman Mao Zedong."

His public appearances ... evoke near tearful tributes to his “affectionate and kindly gaze.” Nor are foreigners immune to his spell: Brazilian Sculptor Maria Martins recalls him as “a glowing image—a genius in terms of 20th century politics and a sage out of ancient China.”

By that day, Mao Zedong’s “Great Leap Forward” had gone for eight months. The West capitalist countries had done everything possible to contain China. According to Liang Hanbin and Wei Hongyuan, on May 12, 1949, American Government declared the cancellation of the Japanese Provisional Amnesty Plan that was published in April 1947 (Liang 411). The reason was that Japan should recover. That meant China would not get any compensation for the assaults and damages Japan had done on China. Moreover, it happened when Jiang Jieshi was withdrawing all the gold deposits and other financial resources of the country—worth roughly one billion US dollars—to Taiwan. McArthur, on the same day, informed the Far East Committee of Eleven Nations that America did not allow any motion about Japan’s compensation.

But the Chinese were ambitious to improve their material conditions for the great life of communism—not just for China, but other poor countries as well. China, for the first time, witnessed the creative power and inspiring spirit of the Masses. With her own limited resources, China was also helping Korea, Vietnam, Kampuchea, Pakistan, Angora, Zambia, Egypt, Turkey, Venezuela, Albania, and other countries for free. Such unselfish efforts, however, were immediately taken as political ambition. According to the *Time* cover story, British Socialist M.P. Richard Grossman reports in London’s *New Statesman* that “Chinese Communism is far the biggest and far the most formidable mass movement in human history.”

Obviously this explication did not mean to praise.

The issue of June 13 1969 was published at the time when military conflicts had just broken out between China and Soviet Union. A golden chance for *Time* to celebrate the broken red star. Communism, instead of imperialism, was dying, quite an irony to Lenin's remark that "imperialism is monopoly... parasitic or decaying... [and] moribund capitalism" (105). On the basis of such a big spiritual satisfaction, the cover also did not let go other chances—personal attacks on the communist leaders, and racial slurs. Mao Zedong was put at the top on the cover. And the Russians, the cover story gloated—"have been trying to enlist the sympathy of foreign parties and the world by saying that Russia is not only defending its Far Eastern borders but also holding back the Mao Zedongist yellow peril that threatens humanity." As a Western reader, such textual utterance exactly echoed their visual emotion.

Such consistency was not just unique with *Time*. If you go to the website of *New York Times*, and search with the word of "Mao Zedong," it was 96,400 Results at 9:14 pm September 23, 2008. So that is about 96, 400 articles that have mentioned Mao Zedong. When you get the "Highlights from the Archives," you see titles—"Chameleon Mao Zedong, the Face of Tiananmen Square," "China's Monster, Second to None," "Witness To Mao Zedong's Crimes," "Legacy of Mao Zedong Called 'Great Disaster'," "Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping: Competition for History's Judgment," "China on the Move: Will the Change Last?," etc. We could hardly see any neutrality or sincerity, let alone any understanding of Mao Zedong as a human being or a political leader. If this is hasty generalization, use the words of "Mao Zedong's contribution," and it is 4,660 articles or pages that have placed "Mao Zedong" with "contribution." But almost none of

the “Mao Zedong’s contributions” came out of a non-Chinese hand. Most of them were quotes from Chinese mouths, and others were notes or commentaries from the “contributions” of the “contributors.”

The books written by the leftists—which are relatively neutral or insightful—have been unpopular because of the highly sensitive ideological state apparatuses. The fear can be summarized in a movie—*Satan Never Sleeps* (1962). It was based on Pearl Buck’s novel *The China Story*. Filmed in England and Wales, almost all the Chinese characters speak good English. In the middle way, Ho San, who is once educated at the local church, comes back home with a giant portrait of Mao Zedong, and erect it in the place of Jesus Christ’s statue. That typically shows the *Western story* of brainwashing—rhetorical parodies to dispel differences.

### **Mao Zedong’s Shaking Hands in 1972-1976: Sino-US Rapprochement**

The specter of full-scale war hovered over Soviet Union and China while the West powers were still bullying China’s neighbors. The tensions were bilateral, but it formed a triangle. Kissinger saw a great chance of peaceful evolution. That is, shifting ideological contentions to the conflicts of national and cultural values, and then moving to negotiation tables, proposing projects of mutual benefits, and lastly, because of the initiative roles, penetrating the opponent’s ideological territories through soft exchanges (Gong 24-29). He took his initial steps to put a lever between Soviet Union and China, and successfully approached the biggest peace tables in the twentieth century.

1972 witnessed the global politics of peace. It took place suddenly, though unnoticeably when Mao Zedong received Nixon. Mao Zedong’s intention to stop the

socialist imperialism became unexpectedly the first step of the comparatively secret plan of peaceful evolution or new world order.

On the other hand, Nixon's visit to Mao Zedong could not simply be interpreted as China's allegiance to US ideological beliefs. Shortly after Nixon's stay in Beijing, he also visited USSR for nine days from May 22 to 29, 1972 (*Public Papers of the Presidents: 1972, #162A*). Nixon's visits only showed the strategic assuagement between the two ideological camps. He visited Mao Zedong first only because Nixon, as a vice-president of US, had already visited Soviet Union in 1959. On July 24 of that year, he and Khrushchev had their famous "Kitchen Debate."

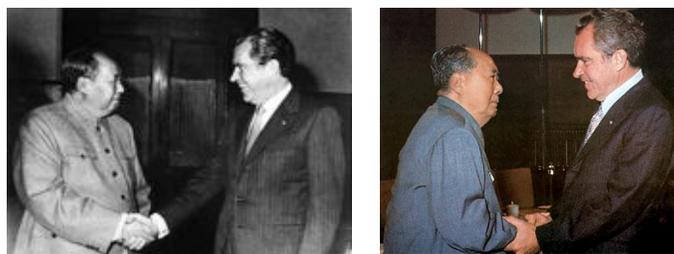


Fig. 8. Compare the two photos published in the Western media. The left one shows one hand from Nixon in 1972. The right one has both his hands in 1976 shortly after Watergate.

Nixon's visit of February 21 1972 was only a diplomatic courtesy. For China, too, it was nothing but a "showcase," as Mao Zedong called himself during his second talk with Kissinger (*Kissinger Transcripts* 393). As a Chinese saying goes, it would be Mao Zedong's moral flaw if he refused anyone who comes to visit as a guest. Just as he went to his worst enemy Jiang Jieshi's residence in 1949, he received Nixon as a guest. The slogans conspicuously shown in the background to Nixon's inspection of the Chinese honor guard of three services were the proof that China was persistent with the cultural revolution of the proletariat.

However, the immediate visual interpretation was that universal justice was giving way to national and racial benefits. From the perspective of Western concepts of nation and culture, Mao Zedong's appearance with Nixon was portrayed as the separation of China from Soviet Union to the United States. The US Progressive Labor Party, according to Robert Alexander, immediately turned from their eulogies of "Mao Zedong Thought" to open denouncement (Alexander 20-21). In an article entitled "Progressive Labor Party says: Nixon-Mao Zedong Plot Hurts Us & Chinese Workers," Mao Zedong is not only labeled as one of "the Chinese opportunists," but also one of the "red bosses" "making a deal with US bosses" (21).

Sakaguchi Hiroshi, one of the major leaders of the Red Army of Japan, writes in his memoir *Villa of Shallow Waterfalls*—"The news over the radio that our greatest mentor Chairman Mao Zedong shook hands with Nixon the head of American imperialism was like a bomb exploding in the air."

Most third-world countries received the news several months later. Nevertheless, it was these social activists—who understood the suffering of the lower classes and shared Mao Zedong's idealist passion for social justice—that slowly recovered from the shock and began to take the revolutions into their own hands. In the jungles of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Venezuela, Peru, and other developing countries, these Maoist hardliners began to launch a series of revolutionary movements—land reform, guerrilla warfare, and communist education, which are some of the Maoist quintessence (Huang Zhangjin and Hu Fen). With little help from the socialist powers, they persisted on the road of building social welfare through collective devotion and wisdom instead of catering to personal and individual interests.

## Visual Analysis

In the ideological sign of late-year Mao Zedong, the aspects of his physical and ideological symptoms began to dominate the spectatorship. These symptoms were strategically studied in the Western media as weakening ideological signals to promote the political agenda of peaceful evolution. The scholarship in both China and America has also paid special attention to the signaling effects of the visual Mao Zedong in the China-America talks. Recently, some Chinese scholars, like Xu Jiamei and Gong Honglie, have shifted from that tradition, but generally Mao Zedong's physical and ideological symptoms were not consistently examined, either for the sake of protecting Deng Xiaoping's opening and reform policies or because of the secret nature of the American missions. After Watergate, Nixon's ideological symptoms in the Mao Zedong meetings—the Nixon Syndrome—actually further blocked the discussion of Mao Zedong's physical and ideological symptoms in these crucial moments of contemporary world politics.

How do we fully interpret the visual rhetoric in this widely circulated picture in which Mao Zedong holds the hand of Nixon? It is definitely a very complicated process. Many Western scholars have overemphasized the national and cultural factors in the Sino-Soviet conflicts, but neglected the ideological differences. Obviously, Kissinger's model of nation-culture in foreign policy making played an important role in these Western scholars' analyses (Gong Honglie 24-29). For them, the Soviet expansionism was the decisive factor that made Mao Zedong turn to the US. Some Chinese researchers followed this line of study without any critical thinking, and proposed the three stages of

Mao Zedong's foreign policy—"Lean to one side," "Two lines," and "One line" (Chen Zaisheng 2006). The conclusion that Mao Zedong wanted to unite America, Japan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Europe—the countries of the same latitudes, "one line"—to isolate Soviet Union was not based on Mao Zedong's consistent stance, but on the commentaries of the US media. According to the declassified Nixon-Zhou talk, China wanted Soviet Union—"one, to maintain the status quo on the border; two, to refrain from military threats; and third, to disengage from disputed areas" (Document 5, Memorandum of Conversation, Friday, February 25, 1972 - 5:45 p.m.-6:45 p.m.) Here we do not see any emergency that would require the help of US in any sense.

From today's point of view, Mao Zedong's image was used to serve the soft line of peaceful penetration, instead of the hard line of peaceful evolution. In other words, the threat of mind control through capitalist propaganda, which Mao Zedong had prevented the Party from approaching, did not happen in open forms. Instead, it penetrated into the decision-making brains through political, cultural, academic, diplomatic communications. Mao Zedong's original intentions were lost in the visual interpretations for those who only had the Westernized visual literacy—especially many leftists and revolutionaries in South, Central and North Americas. They immediately responded with pessimistic comments about international communism. Only some revolutionaries in Venezuela, Peru analyzed the situation from the perspective of Mao Zedong's whole theoretical system.

Here, we can also see the ideological backgrounds that led to the different views about Mao Zedong's meeting with Nixon. Educated in the liberal tank of "rationalizing" individual freedom and free speech, left-wing activists in Europe and North America

tended to be easily carried away by their simplistic ideological emotions. Just like their numerous parties based on Mao Zedong Thought—almost every major “developed” country had a Mao Zedongist Party, and most had several as listed in Robert Alexander’s *Maoism in the Developed World*—they fought over their own political agendas and could never unite for the purpose of “organizational disciplines,” a very important quality of becoming a member of the Communist Party of China that was mostly formulated by Mao Zedong himself. When they were amazed the Red Guards’ idealist passion, they put Mao Zedong’s images everywhere. When Mao Zedong shook hands with Nixon, they immediately thought of surrender and betrayal, and took off Mao Zedong’s images as if they were old fashion.

In 1972, Mao Zedong’s China was almost empty of material resources. By 1960, Nikita Khrushchev withdrew 1,400 Soviet scientists and industrial specialists who were working in about 250 Chinese enterprises (Meisner 248). Meanwhile, China was asked to pay off her debts to Soviet Union. Mao Zedong, a typical audacious leader, ordered the country to pay what Soviet Union wanted—apples of certain sizes, all other kinds of food sources, train after train to be pulled out of China which was undergoing unprecedented natural disasters: severe typhoon floods in South China and Liaoning; drought in the Yellow River Basin; pests in the countryside. In addition, China was supporting a number of socialist brothers—Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Angora, Albania, and other countries. The free aide to Albania was about one billion dollars (Huang Zhangjin And Hu Fen). Unlike Brother Soviet Union, China never cared much about the things the socialist countries borrowed from her. As a result, the courageous and unselfish Chinese bore hunger and death to themselves.

Soviet Union had caused incurable trauma to Mao Zedong. In 1969, Soviet Union even made trouble at the border of the two countries. It was about a small island in Usuli River, a border river. The soviet soldiers protested that some Chinese peasants went to plant vegetables on the Soviet side. They used tanks against the poorly-clod Chinese soldiers. Such things would make every Chinese boil. When Soviet Union was established, Lenin said that all the treaties signed by the Czar with other countries should be abolished, and that included those signed by the Czar and Qing Dynasty that had given large territories to Russia—thousands of Chinese were forced to leave and thousands were killed; and in 1950s when the issue of territory and sovereignty was brought to the table, the Chinese government decided to use the international custom that admits an established treaty (Li Danhui). The Zhen Bao Dao (Treasure Island) Incident meant that Soviet Union paid hatred in return to the tolerance China had shown in the land talks. Then in 1970, Soviet Union began to bug the Chinese in Southeast Asia. In 1971, Mao Zedong's appointed successor Lin Biao who tried to assassinate Mao Zedong died on his way to Soviet Union. This incident further ulcerated Mao Zedong's feeling about Soviet Union. In addition, the bad memories of the Soviet Union leaderships were always in Mao Zedong's mind. From 1930s to 1950s, Soviet Union kept doing horrible wrongs on the Communist Party of China and Mao Zedong himself: a lot of Mao Zedong's soldiers died because of poor tactics and extremism brought in by the leaders who were trained in Soviet Union; Stalin favored Jiang Jieshi over Mao Zedong; Soviet Union supplied secondary weapons to the Chinese Volunteers during the Korean War (Shen Zhihua). All these bad events and memories greatly shook Mao Zedong's faith in Soviet Union.

Since the ideological powers, mainly USSR and US, were overwhelmingly stronger than China, a normal relation with US would at least stop US from aggravating the battered China. On the other hand, Nixon's visit to Mao Zedong could not simply be interpreted as China's allegiance to US ideological beliefs. Shortly after Nixon's stay in Beijing, he also visited USSR for nine days from May 22 to 29, 1972 (White House #162A). Nixon's visits only showed the strategic assuagement between the two ideological camps. He visited Mao Zedong first only because Nixon, as a vice-president of US, had already visited Soviet Union and had already had the famous "kitchen debate" with Nikita Khrushchev on July 24, 1959. They had talked about the merits of capitalism versus communism. Then on September 15 to 27, for two weeks, Nikita Khrushchev stayed in US bragging about the USSR "splitnik" (*sputnik*, satellite) and praising the US sausage-making. In other words, Nixon's visit was only a diplomatic courtesy; as a Chinese saying goes, it would be Mao Zedong's moral flaw if he refused anyone who comes to visit as a guest. He appeared to Nixon only as a host to a guest. The slogans conspicuously shown in the background to Nixon's inspection of the Chinese honor guard of three services were the proof that China was persistent with the cultural revolution of the proletariat.

As a unique leader who often caught the attention by contrast, Mao Zedong himself could not rationalize his own visual demonstrations. When he was widely shown shaking hands with US president Richard Nixon in 1972. All of a sudden, most of his followers in the "Third World" and the Western countries replaced his images with those of Marx, Lenin, and their own leaders. Seventy-eight years old, Mao Zedong did not expect his gesture of compromise with the United States to be simply interpreted as

surrender or compromise. He most likely meant a new beginning of revolutionary planning. Most people, especially Mao Zedong's allies in the "developed" countries, could not get into such subtlety. They split themselves in order to get over such a puzzle.

Most of the Maoists in the capitalist countries did not patiently analyze the rhetorical situation in the visual symptoms. Just as some Red organizations recruited gangsters or even frequently took terrorist actions, their impulsive passion for Mao Zedong impulsively passed. The Red groups in the capitalist countries raised the portraits of Mao Zedong, but some of their individualist or liberalist actions—including terror and vandalism—definitely damaged the visual Mao Zedong.

### **Iconography against Mao Zedong**

After the Maoist passion passed, another way of opposing Mao Zedong emerged in the capitalist countries. It has been to promote icons of Mao Zedong's "own kind" to even out the halo. From the inside of the Communist Party, Deng Xiaoping and Gorbachev were wheedled to show up in the blaze the Western capitalists were building to override Mao Zedong's brilliance. Dalai Lama, an exile, was successfully established as a religious icon in the West. Because of the special protection, his religious iconography will be a permanent opposition to Mao Zedong's ideographs. A figure of a Chinese woman has also joined this front of opposing Mao Zedong's visual power: A Goddess of Democracy Statue was stationed in foam to confront the portrait of Mao Zedong on the wall of Tiananmen in 1989, and, in 2007, was cast in bronze to celebrate the Victims of Communism Memorial Hall at the Capitol Hill of the United States. Just like the Statue of the Goddess of Liberty that was made up of patriarchal plates and was

used to promote the liberal empire of America, the Statue of the Goddess of Democracy is meant not to promote women's rights but to thwart any communist or socialist attempt to confiscate private property. The third maneuver of the West is to recruit Chinese dissidents to defame or deface Mao Zedong. A few biographies about Mao Zedong's private life were published and were written "authentically" by those that were close to Mao Zedong. Through academic and religious avenues, many Chinese are educated to recognize Mao Zedong's "blasphemy and crimes." Since Mao Zedong's three county fellows were made heroes by the West for defacing the Tiananmen portrait of Mao Zedong in 1989, the attempt to do it again has been irresistible for some Chinese—"some" from China is a large amount. The Western rhetorical and confrontational efforts should be examined in order to understand the visual activisms that are offensive enough, yet difficult to translate into reason or words.

Mao Zedong's decision of sending Deng Xiaoping to UN in 1974 actually reactivated the Western estrangement toward Mao Zedong: Deng Xiaoping was attracted to the Western materialism, and won the favor of the West. Deng Xiaoping was willing to sacrifice ideological standards for national and cultural benefits. That was an easy foothold for either peaceful evolution or new world order. As long as Deng Xiaoping could open the communication channels, through economic, technological, cultural or academic exchanges, ideological matters can take root in much more unnoticeable and non-combative ways. It was also such a good timing—Soviet Union and China, the two biggest ideological enemies of the Western laissez-faire economies, were ranting about national and racial benefits. In a way, that exactly fell into the trap of Kissinger and many other Western strategists' propaganda for the concepts of nation and culture. As long as

the world is still “segregated” with highly charged ideals—patriotism, racial dignity, or cultural inheritance, the bases of private property are always secured, capitalism would always be the de facto productive methods, and the few patriarchs who possess the wealth of the world can always direct the living and life goals of the rest of the populations.

Deng Xiaoping’s differences from Mao Zedong almost corresponded to a hierarchical order—especially considering the top and bottom tiers: ideological and physical. For Mao Zedong, capitalism, though better than feudalism, could only lead to social injustice. Simply put, the poor whom Mao Zedong strongly identified with would become poorer because they would eventually work for those who had means to hire. Deng Xiaoping, however, believed that those who were capable and skillful should be rewarded and encouraged to be rich. Even that was for the purpose of improving the material base of socialism, it opened the doors of adopting Western “advanced” production patterns and technology. Undoubtedly, that pleased all social members of the capitalist societies. In addition, Deng Xiaoping’s smaller build made the Westerners who were in heart paranoid of yellow peril less fearful.

Unfortunately, Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong’s careful assistant who was never favored by the Soviet leaders, convinced Mao Zedong that Deng Xiaoping should come back to the central government. In 1973, Deng Xiaoping was restored to his post as Vice-premier of the State Council. In 1974, Deng Xiaoping came to New York for the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations. There, he met Kissinger for the first time. The visual rhetoric of Mao Zedong meeting Nixon dramatically developed into a rapprochement that promoted China to the membership of a new world order in the

general sense, though it was possible to look at it even in the sense of today's conspiracy theory.

In the place of Mao Zedong emerged Deng Xiaoping. Nixon's big smile disappeared, and the heavy glasses of Kissinger took over the attention. As history has shown, Deng Xiaoping and Kissinger changed the ideological patterns of the world.

On April 9, 1974, Deng Xiaoping made a speech. Ironically, it was the Three World theory that Mao Zedong formulated during a talk with a Third World leader in February of that year (Herbert S. Yee 239). Deng Xiaoping was basically repeating Mao Zedong's words—

A big socialist country [like China] will easily turn into a superpower, if capitalism is restored. The Big Proletariat Cultural Revolution that was carried out in China in the past few years, and the current movement of criticizing Lin [Biao] and Confucius have aimed at preventing the restoration of capitalism, ensuring the socialist color of China's lands and waters, and ensuring that China should always take the side of the oppressed people and peoples. If China...in a future time...also bullies other countries, invades other countries, and exploits other countries, then the people of world should put on China a cap of socialist imperialism ...and pull it down with the people of China...

From Deng Xiaoping's speech, it is hard to see any deviation from Mao Zedong's ideological lines. However, Deng Xiaoping's anti-Soviet sentiment probably found inspirations when he met Henry Kissinger at Waldorf-Astoria of New York on April 14, 1974. They had a dinner together. Kissinger toasted Deng Xiaoping in the Chinese

manner repeatedly (Tim Weiner 1999). They liked the liquor of mao tai, and would become good friends soon—Deng Xiaoping wanted to increase the production of mao tai, and Kissinger was about to articulate his ambition of new world order. On the next day, Kissinger delivered his famous speech to the UN general assembly. He moved from “world economy” to “global agenda,” and proposed the share of “benefits” to promote peace so that the “concept of world community” can be “transformed” “from a slogan into an attitude” (“Address” 573-583).

It is not an exaggeration that the friendship of these two men created the so-called collapse of communism. Kissinger and Deng Xiaoping had a lot of dinner parties in both China and America. Through Kissinger, Deng Xiaoping, who was once relegated from the central committee for taking the “capitalist road,” found dependable allies in the United Nations to fight against Soviet Union. It was Deng Xiaoping that eventually changed China’s ideological and theoretical insecurity about Soviet Union into national enmity against Soviet Union and economic cooperation with the capitalist countries. Soviet Union was encircled, and gradually “reformed” and “transformed” to a degree that it collapsed peacefully.

According to Kissinger, Deng Xiaoping’s fear of the Russians was almost paranoid. On October 20, 1975, Kissinger—who had attended the Helsinki Summit in which US and USSR signed the final act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)—came to meet Deng Xiaoping in Beijing. The peace between United States and Soviet Union irritated Deng Xiaoping. He even compared CSCE with Munich Agreement in which France, Britain, and Italy sacrificed Czechoslovakia to appease Germany (“Transcript” 384). Because he believed that CSCE would “direct the peril

Eastward”—the “polar bear” would turn away from Europe and invade Asia. Such a consideration of territorial sovereignty only belied Deng Xiaoping’s exaggeration of low morality of the Soviet Union.

Mao Zedong soon realized that Deng Xiaoping and Kissinger’s relationship would bring the “sugar-coated bullets” to the Communist Party of China. On the next day, October 21, Kissinger met Mao Zedong for the last time. During the talk, Mao Zedong expressed what Deng Xiaoping had worried—United States was not interested in deterring Soviet Union from Europe (“Transcript” 397). However, Mao Zedong’s questioning about the ownership of *New York Times* and *Washington Post* still implied his sensitivity to the consciousness of class, and political conscience. When Mao Zedong pointed out the fact that these two important US newspapers were owned by Jews, he meant Kissinger was a Jewish intellectual that would only care about economic benefits (“Transcript” 397). At such a moment, though his health was declining rapidly, Mao Zedong began to rationalize or politicize his prejudice against Soviet Union.

In his last days, Mao Zedong was probably determined to let Deng Xiaoping go down completely. He was sure Deng Xiaoping would be struck down by the “sugar-coated bullets.” In January 1976, shortly after Zhou Enlai’s funeral, Deng Xiaoping was removed from all the important posts inside and outside the Party.

1976 was a Dragon Year in the Chinese lunar calendar. Zhou Enlai died on January 8. On July 6, Zhu De, the commander-in-chief passed away. Then, on July 28, it was a disastrous earthquake in Tangshan, Hebei Province, about 200 km from Beijing. 242,000 people were killed. On September 9, Mao Zedong had his last breath. The country was left over to political struggles and more natural disasters.

For Deng Xiaoping, it was quite another dragon year. Deng Xiaoping's image appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine on January 19, 1976. Deng Xiaoping was captioned as Zhou Enlai's successor, meaning he would most likely be the next premier of China. Kissinger probably did not have time to tell the public about his favor for Deng Xiaoping, so the question was still—"China: Friend or Foe?" That did not bring Deng Xiaoping much luck. Instead, it only aroused Mao Zedong's suspicion of Deng Xiaoping's capitalist intentions. Deng Xiaoping was fired in April and held incommunicado. For a time, the Western media was silent; it would be very difficult for Deng Xiaoping to climb up to a position that would be useful enough to build the new image of a Chinese leader to oppose the Giant Mao Zedong.

Surprisingly, the newly appointed successor Hua Guofeng arrested the Gang of four in October. That meant the hardest opponents of Deng Xiaoping were gone. Deng Xiaoping was soon released and restored to his lost power. By 1978, he was the de facto leader of the country.

But it was not clear enough until 1979 that Deng Xiaoping would become the most active agent of the new world order Kissinger has been promoting. On January 29, Deng Xiaoping met Kissinger in Washington. This visit gave Deng Xiaoping a chance to prove the opposites of what he had said in New York five years ago: he put on a 10-gallon cowboy hat, seeming to contradict himself for criticizing the "cap of socialist imperialism" at the sixth UN Special Session. John Roderick, a journalist with Associate Press who wrote a lot about Mao Zedong, told the correspondents of *China Daily* that "the photograph of Deng Xiaoping wearing a cowboy hat at a barbeque in Texas in 1979

left many Americans with a favorable impression” (Fang Yanming 20). Indeed, Deng Xiaoping attracted a lot of American investors to open businesses in China.

Also, thirteen days after Deng Xiaoping returned to Beijing, on February 17, 1979, China invaded Vietnam, and launched nationwide campaigns against a small country that was relentlessly shattered by colonialist and imperialist powers—France, Japan, and United States.

The silence from the United States betrayed the “peaceful” cooperation between China and America, or between Deng Xiaoping and Kissinger per se. The casualty on the Chinese side was high. Here, we have numerous documents to back up our reasoning. In those days, *China Daily* was full of words like *yan cheng*—“punish relentlessly” and “display the high morale of our Army.” The Chinese almost let loose all their bombs to the mountain ranges in Vietnam near the border. When the canons stopped shooting, waves of young Chinese soldiers who were rhetorically instigated rushed into the Red River. There, they met the counter-fire from the pounded slopes. Many shed their blood to the river without knowing that they were fighting against mainly Vietnamese women and children.

These treasons were forgiven for the sake of thousands of Chinese Vietnamese that were driven out of Vietnam that received arms worth billions of dollars from Soviet Union (*Time* June 13 1969). Many were killed by native Vietnamese or got drowned while escaping by sea. Deng Xiaoping’s nationalism and patriotism easily covered the brutal crimes in the sense of international communism. The US government almost responded too eagerly on the next day, February 18, that US wanted both China and Vietnam to withdraw their armies from their invaded territories, that is, China should stop

going further into Vietnam, and Vietnam should stop helping the revolution in Kampuchea. Through Kissinger's constant talks with Deng Xiaoping, China gradually moved from the ideological priority and international justice to national pragmatism and cultural Chauvinism. In this sense, Mao Zedong's picture with Nixon became a rhetorical tool to have discredited the very beliefs Mao Zedong strongly believed in, the very things he wanted to accomplish in his last ten years—steadfast faith in communism and high-level ideological conscience.

The Western media praised Deng Xiaoping as the reformer who had a small build but was capable of doing big things. He became the *Time* man of the year on January 1, 1979. A big deal for a man from the Communist China. He was on the *Time* cover on February 5, 1979, September 29, 1983, September 23, 1985, January 6, 1986, March 3, 1997. And he was again the man of the year 1986.

Through such spread of Deng Xiaoping's images, Deng Xiaoping was gradually raised to a height that would soon shadow Mao Zedong's visage. In China, Deng Xiaoping's works and words got the turn. The newly imported technology also made it possible to put Deng Xiaoping's images on TV and large billboards. At the international level, Deng Xiaoping was frequently seen rubbing shoulders with the Western leaders—Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, Francois Mitterand, and Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Western media was so eager to stage Deng Xiaoping in front of Mao Zedong that even Deng Xiaoping himself felt uncomfortable. *New York Times* reported on September 23, 1983 that “China Bans Time Magazine Issue.” Because the latest issue had a cover picture that put Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong together for the sake of “banishing” Mao Zedong. The purpose of the kind-hearted correspondent was to praise

Deng Xiaoping on the basis of demeaning Mao Zedong. But that would be taken as blatant adulation in China. So Deng Xiaoping had to stop the circulation of such comments within his political territories.

Kissinger renewed his visits to Deng Xiaoping. He became one of Deng Xiaoping's most frequent visitors. They went to knock on each other's doors, and ate hot pot at casual restaurants (Duan 38). Deng Xiaoping's children were always welcome in America. On October 5, 1987 Sam Howe Verhovek wrote in *New York Times* that "Chinese Visitor Admires Home Built for Disabled." Verhovek describes that Deng Xiaoping Pufang, Deng Xiaoping Xiaoping's son, has "vigorous hand motions," and that his "square deep jaw seemed to reflect the same determination as his father." About a year later, on October 10, 1988, Grace Glueck turned to Deng Xiaoping Xiaoping's daughter Deng Xiaoping Lin for *New York Times*—"Deng Xiaoping's Daughter Peruses the Art of Manhattan." When asked whether being the daughter of Deng Xiaoping Xiaoping helped or hindered her, Deng Xiaoping Lin answered, "We're in two different areas. He runs the country and I'm an artist." It would not be difficult to see that Deng Xiaoping had many good friends in America, and his family were treated like family in a country that had been extremely cautious of receiving communist leaders' children.

It does not mean that the American political leaders really liked Deng Xiaoping. But in the 1980s, at the most crucial moments of Western peaceful evolution, Deng Xiaoping was a most decisive chess piece. Through Deng Xiaoping, China could deter Russians from encroaching on other Asian nations. America could also take Deng Xiaoping's capitalist ride to China.

Fox Butterfield's article—"Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping: Competition for

History's Judgment" was a reflection of such a historical mission of subversion. It was published in *New York Times* on November 15, 1987—

Since the West first encroached on China in the Opium War of 1840, awakening the Chinese to their backwardness, Chinese patriots have searched for the elusive secret of modernization. Many tried, and failed, leaving China only farther behind. But in the view of an increasing number of Western specialists, one leader has finally succeeded: Deng Xiaoping Xiaoping.

Mr. Deng Xiaoping's triumphant orchestration of the 13th Chinese Communist Party Congress earlier this month only confirmed the widely held view that it is he, rather than Mao Zedong Zedong, who may prove to be the more significant historical figure.

...A. Doak Barnett, a professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, [said—]"Deng Xiaoping will have the longer lasting impact, and he's doing it through peaceful means."

Several points are worth noting. First Deng Xiaoping, instead of Mao Zedong should be the most prominent "historical figure" of China. Second, Deng Xiaoping is a "peaceful" intelligent reformer that will cooperate with the rest of the world. Superficially, it only praises Deng Xiaoping for his pragmatic achievements. In the deep structure, it aims to: 1) topple Mao Zedong's visual authority; 2) rhetorically disarm the ideological apparatuses in Mao Zedong's images; 3) effectively cover Mao Zedong's unruly spectacle with Deng Xiaoping's entrepreneur-like mannerism, and set an model for other socialist countries.

Of course, it does not mean that Deng Xiaoping would always enjoy the special favors. Americans seemed to have been capable of changing the minds of the communist leaders that paid visits to their country. It was indeed quite successful peaceful changes. In 1959, Nikita Khrushchev stayed in America for thirteen days. After that, he quarreled with Mao Zedong about the peaceful coexistence with America. After Chinese president Liu Shaoqi visited Khrushchev, Liu changed Mao Zedong's communes into household units. In 1984 and 1987, Premier Zhao Ziyang visited US. Zhao would be the major supporter of the dissidents in 1989. On March 25, 1985, Kissinger's strategy of peaceful theorization and promotion of national and cultural benefits attracted another giant to the cover of *Time*—Mikhail Gorbachev. Therefore, in 1987, when a group of American congressmen wanted to visit Tibet, Deng Xiaoping accused them of "ignorance and arrogance" (Gargan), Americans rendered all the hope of peaceful evolution to Gorbachev and Zhao Ziyang. Before Soviet Union was dissolved on December 25, 1991, Gorbachev appeared on the *Time* cover 14 times. Even his wife Raisa got an exclusive chance on June 6, 1988. Gorbachev was the man of the year on January 4, 1988. But Deng Xiaoping would not appear again on *Time* until he died in 1997.

### **New World Order**

Mao Zedong's visage in the meetings with the American leaders was conveniently interpreted as signals of acquiescence to the emerging peace solution that was based on national benefits. This, in a way, looked like a situation of "new world order" described by the conspiracy theorists: Several powerful political leaders joined to form a world dictatorship.

New world order is a very interesting concept proposed by conspiracy theorists. New World Order theories “claim that both the past and present events must be understood as the outcome of efforts by an immensely powerful but secret group to seize control of the world” (Barkun 39). George H. W. Bush “popularized the phrase *new world order* at the time of the Gulf War. ... Bush’s past associations with Skull and Bones, the United Nations, and the CIA.... A reassuring entry into a post-Cold War world...” (40). But generally speaking, the conspiracy theorists are defending liberal benefits, instead of considering the political facts. For example, Bush would probably not care much about “the confiscation of privately owned guns,” or “the replacement of Christianity with a New Age world religion” (39).

From the perspective of individualism and liberalism, conspiracy theories split two opposing ideologies—public ownership and private ownership—and combined them together in order to set up an antagonistic block against freedom. For them, freedom is the highest standard of social order. That runs against our social reality, and ideological contention is far more complicated than respect for private rights. Therefore, although I will cherish some of the conspiracy theorists’ inquiries, the new world order discussed in this chapter is a historical account rather than a theoretical concept. It will refer to the experimental practices of peaceful evolution to world order under the political strategies of Kissinger, Bush, Gorbachev and other Western white or Jewish politicians.

Indeed, Mao Zedong’s visual display of compromise with the United States gave the impression to many that Mao Zedong wanted to balance the

political antagonism between China, USSR and US. While it was partially true, the possible conspiracy of a new world order among the western allies (and possibly even including USSR), though not in the sense of the conspiracy theory, could explain many historical events that have happened up to today after Mao Zedong shook hands with Nixon.

Peaceful evolution is evolved from the consistent policies of United States against Soviet Union. In the classified documents of National Security Council, the American leaders frequently used the idea of defaming Soviet Union to break up the socialist allies. Through peaceful methods, such as economic and academic cooperation, US have successfully separated Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and East Germany from Soviet Union. In NSC5505/1, NSC5607, NSC 5608/1, NSC5805/1, NSC5808/1, and NSC5811/1, the US foreign policies toward the socialist countries in East Europe are consistently modified into a theoretical schema—peaceful evolution—and eventually become the guidelines to annex all socialist nations to US hegemony (Xu Jiamei 87-91). From today's point of view, the United States' policies of peaceful evolution have been extremely effective and successful: all socialist nations now look up at America, and the idea of communism is deadly unwelcome.

Undoubtedly, Mao Zedong was fully aware of the Western strategy of peaceful evolution. On March 5, 1949, he pointed out in his “Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China”—“There may be some Communists, who were not conquered by enemies with guns and were worthy of the name of heroes for standing up to these enemies, but who cannot withstand sugar-

coated bullets; they will be defeated by sugar-coated bullets” (*Selected Writings* 374). Mao Zedong was also one of the few communist leaders who realized the potential penetration of peaceful evolution into Hungary and Poland (Shen Zhihua). On the one hand, Mao Zedong fully supported the two countries in opposing the hegemony of Soviet Union. On the other, Mao Zedong also convinced many socialist countries that Soviet Union’s revisionist policies were opening doors for Western peaceful evolution, and that the rebellion of small socialist powers, such as Hungary and Poland, was a result of Soviet Chauvinism that paved the way for both the rebellion and penetration of peaceful evolution.

However, Mao Zedong was not fully prepared, if not at all, to deal with the deeply embedded motivations behind such a Western strategy. Peaceful evolution has been an extemporary official concept out of the open antagonism between the capitalist and socialist camps. Because of the open nature, and because Mao Zedong was used to open confrontations, the well developed Western tactics may have disarmed Mao Zedong when Kissinger came twice in 1971 with charming smiles and a tall beautiful wife for whom Mao Zedong asked Kissinger—“ How do you feel when you stand beside your wife who is taller than you?” (*Mao Zedong Documentary*).

Zhou Enlai who met Kissinger first was misguided by Kissinger’s smile, and did not question the purpose of Kissinger’s carefully chosen phrasing of “peace” and “new world.” Then, Zhou Enlai’s smile misguided Mao Zedong.

The concept of establishing world order through peaceful co-operations would not interest Mao Zedong who believed that the ruling classes would never give up their state apparatuses. However, the offer of peace from United States greatly comforted Mao

Zedong. The ideological and military conflicts between Soviet Union and China made Mao Zedong think of a rapprochement foreign policy that would balance the power structure of the world (Su Jianguo 2003). That obviously betrayed his own proclamation to the world that “[i]nternationally, [China] belong[s] to the side of the anti-imperialist front headed by the Soviet Union, and so [China] can turn only to this side for genuine and friendly help, not to the side of the imperialist front” (*Selected Writings* 374). Henry Kissinger, who had theorized his prejudices against Russia, was happy to impress Mao Zedong through theoretical conversations. He predicted that Russian idealism would only encourage Soviet expansionism and nationalism (Gong 24-29). Because, in Kissinger’s reasoning, expansion serves the national security of Russians. Expansion leads to new insecure factors that lead to a new round of expansion. Undoubtedly, the result of Kissinger and Mao Zedong’s talks was Mao Zedong’s change of his “lean to one side”—pro-Soviet—to the “rapprochement” foreign policy.

Apparently, Kissinger fully made use of the rhetorical nuances of “new world order.” According to the conspiracy theorists, “new world order” is a concept that has been formulated among the white populations since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Several scholars have termed such a confidential concept as an on-going plot to rule the world primarily through a combination of political finance, social engineering, mind control, and fear-based propaganda (Barkun 39). It is not sure whether such a concept could explain most motives behind the major events of global politics, but many West intellectuals and political leaders did use it to promote political agendas. Because the idea of establishing a world government through peaceful and intelligent ways would appeal to most

intellectuals, it would not be difficult to find abundant references in the literature of social sciences.

Here, let us briefly focus our attention on their political agendas during the ending decades of the Cold War. We can see the consistent efforts of new world order if Kissinger and Mao Zedong's talks are fit into the following events:

Nixon wrote in "Asia after Vietnam," in the October issue of *Foreign Affairs* 1967 to call for different nations to "evolve regional approaches to development needs and to the evolution of a 'new world order.'" In 1972, the US president said in his toast to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in the Great Hall of the People—"...each of us has to build a new world order."

In April 15 1974—six days after Deng Xiaoping spoke at UN, Henry Kissinger addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations—"So we say to all peoples and governments: Let us fashion together a new world order."

On October 21, 1975. Interestingly, when Kissinger visited Mao Zedong of the last time, the ambassador, George Herbert Walker Bush, was present at the meeting. Mao predicted that Bush would be the president of United States (*Kissinger Transcripts* 398). Quite against his will, the world order Mao Zedong did not want to see came true. When Bush became the President in January 20, 1989, the new world order was seriously and successfully on its way. On May 12, 1989, speaking to the graduating class at Texas A&M University, Mr. Bush emphasized that the United States was ready to welcome the Soviet Union "back into the world order."

Fig. 9. After Mao predicted that George W. Bush would be the US president, Bush's "Mao Syndrome" was probably the most complex factor for China-US relations in the coming years. It seemed that Bush would often take a picture with Mao when he was in China. This photo was probably taken shortly after the meeting in October 1975.



On December 7, 1988, in an address to the U.N., Mikhail Gorbachev calls for mutual consensus: “World progress is only possible through a search for universal human consensus as we move forward to a new world order.”

On September 11, 1990, President George Bush spoke to U.S. Congress, Joint Session—“The Persian Gulf crisis is a rare opportunity to forge new bonds with old enemies (the Soviet Union)...Out of these troubled times a New World Order can emerge under a United Nations that performs as envisioned by its founders.”

On October 30, 1991, President Gorbachev at the Middle East Peace Talks in Madrid announced: “We are beginning to see practical support. And this is a very significant sign of the movement towards a new era, a new age...We see both in our country and elsewhere...ghosts of the old thinking...When we rid ourselves of their presence, we will be better able to move toward a new world order...relying on the relevant mechanisms of the United Nations.”

Those are only a tiny part of the large amount of “new world order” used in these important political leaders’ speeches and writings. The purpose of presenting these quotes

is to show that, indeed, there has been a consistent ideology to unite the world through peaceful methods in the West.

The major obstacle to achieve this goal has been the orthodox Marxism that emphasizes the “heaven on earth”—which denies the place of religion in the happiness of the worldly life—through violent class struggle as Karl Marx and Frederick Engels explicitly explain in “On the History of Early Christianity.” Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, and Mao Zedong followed this basic principle, and exhorted the members of the Communist Party that any compromise with the ruling capitalists would abort a proletariat revolution. This, of course, scared a lot of people who wanted peaceful solutions, especially those who had religious faith. It is the violent nature in these three Communists that have made their images repulsive in the minds of those who want to achieve global social justice through peaceful measures.

## **1989**

In a way, the Chinese student movement of 1989 would have been a great hope of interpreting Mao Zedong’s last glances—his glances at Nixon and Hua Guofeng. It could have been a new beginning of Mao Zedong’s ideals but it turned out to be an end of international communism or at least the beginning of a sweeping victory of Western peaceful evolution. Therefore, 1989 deserves a specific analysis in this chapter because, in this student movement, Tiananmen Square and Portrait of Mao Zedong at the Tiananmen Rostrum became not only the political forum for the Chinese citizenship, but also a stage to experiment the rhetorical approaches to disarm the communist regimes for the Western intelligence agents, and, for the Communist Party of China, to adapt itself to

an era in which Western technology and productive forces are needed but Western life styles would be disastrous for a country that has such a high population density. It was a bad experiment for both sides. Just like in Korean War and Vietnam War, once more the Chinese baffled the Western “United Nations.” On the other hand, the Chinese government suffered severe political losses—“innocent students were killed,” which was widely spread by the Western propaganda machines. Though it has been proved by the dissidents that no student was killed at Tiananmen Square during the movement, the Chinese Government has found it difficult to express itself eloquently whenever the loud voices of “human rights” and “democracy” were in the air.

After all these efforts of strategic encroachment, the international communism was dissected into equivocal spheres of influence with strong sentiments of nationalism. This coincidentally corresponded to Kissinger’s promotion of his nation-culture model. By 1988, he had successfully opened the communication channels to the two biggest politburos of communism. Under the grip of nationalism, both Soviet Union and China had to abandon the ideological conscience in order to get a fair share of the appeasement of United States. 1989 saw the great moment of Western peaceful evolution or new world order.

It started with the portrait of Mao Zedong.

On February 26, 1989, President George W. Bush who had been a liaison officer present at the Kissinger-Mao Zedong talks waved his encouraging hand and effervescent smile before the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen. He asked Fang Lizhi, the famous dissident, the ex-president of Beijing University of Science and Technology, to join the Chinese national banquet.



US President George Bush arrived in Beijing by a special plane on February 25, 1989 for a working visit to China. The picture shows President Bush waving his greetings to the crowd at the Tiananmen Square—"Let's do it."  
—from *30 Years Of China-US Relations*, a pictorial

On March 5, riots broke out in Lhasa, Tibet Province. Some of the demonstrators burnt red flags and Mao Zedong's pictures.

On March 12, 1989, *New York Times* published Nicholas Kristof's special article—"Mao Zedong's Portrait in the Plaza: Is It Next to Go?" According to Kristof, Mr. Zhang Kaiji—one of three chief architects in Beijing and the designer of some of the capital's revolutionary landmarks—suggests that "Tian An Men should be treated as a historical site and restored to its original condition."

On April 12, Human Rights in China, an organization founded by Chinese scientists and scholars in March 1989, initiated the commotions among the schools in Beijing.

On April 15, the first group of students paraded underneath Mao Zedong's portrait and placed the portrait of Hu Yaobang, the newly dead ex-secretary of the Party, onto the Monument of People's Heroes. They were from Beijing University of Science and Technology.

On April 16, a scene like Cultural Revolution appeared at Tiananmen Square. Almost all the university students in Beijing were activated.

On May 23, 1989, when the Chinese Student Movement was in full swing, Yu Dongyue, Yu Zhijian, and Tan Decheng—three young men from Liuyang, a county not far from Mao Zedong's birthplace—smashed eggshells filled with paint onto the portrait of Mao Zedong.

On May 30, a crudely made Goddess of Democracy, ten meters high, was erected in front of the Portrait of Mao Zedong (Turnleys 118-123, 172).

When the paint ran down the face of the portrait of Mao Zedong on May 23, some Chinese student demonstrators promptly held Yu Dongyue, Yu Zhijian, and Tan Decheng in captivity, and later on the same day turned them over to public security officials. On July 11, Beijing intermediate municipal court sentenced Yu Dongyue to a prison term of 20 years, with five years deprivation of civil rights. Tan Decheng received a term of 16 years and Yu Zhijian a life sentence. Human Rights groups in China said these were among the harshest sentences given to 1989 democracy activists. The reason—as Ren Wanding tells Paul Mooney who wrote an article “Stain that Remains” from Beijing for *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper in Hong Kong that acclaims its devotion to democracy in China—is that “Mao Zedong's portrait is very important...[the] highest symbol of prestige of the Communist Party, the government, and the political system, so

they were punished the hardest.” Shaking his head, Ren who served 11-year prison continues—“The students did a very foolish thing. ...It showed their immaturity. They didn’t understand” (“Stain”).

Understanding is actually not an issue. The real thing is that at the deep hearts of these students, like those of most Chinese, the mystified Mao Zedong was one part of their ideological life.

Mao Zedong’s portrait witnessed the whole process of 1989 movement, and acted as a major resistant force of ideology against domestic and international contradictions. The students held it high to start a political antagonism against corruption of officials. When the pro-democracy activists changed the goal to an equivocal slogan of democracy and liberty, Mao Zedong’s portrait was a reminder to the students who went hunger strike, seeming to hope that they would wake up and formulate their political agenda independently. Even when most students mixed with the crowds who waged the Western ideological campaigns against Mao Zedongism, Mao Zedong’s portrait still emitted the lingering hope of their original plan.

Roughly the projection of Mao Zedong’s portrait had three stages. First it was used as an internal antagonism against corruption: Mao Zedongism against Deng Xiaoping’s pragmatism that caused the unacceptable problems for those who had internalized socialism. The portrait of Hu Yaobang, the recently deceased ex-secretary of the Party was placed on Tiananmen Square as an ally on April 15. For one reason or another, in the next twenty days, especially on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of May Fourth Movement, many student leaders who were attracted by the western suit of Hu Yaobang placed hope on Zhao Ziyang, the Party Secretary of that time who stood with Hu in

Tiananmen Rostrum two years ago on the National Day to show the conspicuous radical views of political reform. Mao Zedong's portrait was neglected, and on May 23, it was defaced. The second stage passed. On May 30, the students erected a statue of Goddess of Democracy. Deng Xiaoping realized that the student movement was used to promote western ideology, meaning to subvert the socialist system. He reconciled to Mao Zedong's ideological authority for the fourth time in his life, and the crackdown as a third stage happened without solving any systematic problem.

This movement has also created a continuum of the opposition of Portrait of Mao Zedong: A tank man that has been widely broadcasted in Western media; On June 12, 2007, a brass replica of the Goddess of Democracy was erected in front of the Capitol Hill—at the Victims of Communism Memorial. President Bush, Jr. opened the ceremony.

## **Conclusion**

Images often carry strong ideological identities. Peter Du Preez thinks that a political image provides consistent “identity frame in the elements of social reality” (113). When Mao Zedong's images joined the row of Jewish and White communist leaders, additional ideological elements were framed—the relationships between internationalism and nationalism, between peasants and workers. Mao Zedong, as a leader of Asian face, singled out in the row. Because of that, Mao Zedong faced extremely challenging situations to fit into the order of global politics. Also because of that, Mao Zedong attracted the attention of both the communist and capitalist camps.

Unlike Marx and Lenin who were portrayed as theorists and who did not participate in actual military campaigns, or Stalin who was portrayed as a military leader

that did not care about theorizing, Mao Zedong's images represented many lines of experience for his foreign followers and opponents. These many lines almost embrace all the different aspects of the ideological sign in the visual Mao Zedong—the issues of race, class, gender, and nation. When applying the Mao Zedong interpretants to a specific category, both his followers and opponents found points of identification and contradiction, and got tangled in the complications.

Because of Mao Zedong's strong-accented visual and textual messages, many revolutionaries in the foreign countries found themselves lost to some of Mao Zedong's extremes. Some focused on Mao Zedong's guerrilla tactics. Others, following Mao Zedong's line of the masses, tried to build alliance. Usually these leaders could not grasp the whole picture of Mao Zedong's ideals. Eventually most of them would have to join the left-wing activists in the First or Second Worlds for the theoretical favoritism in orthodox Western Marxism. Today, Mao Zedong and China are excluded from the discussions of communism. Even the rhetoric of the "fall of communism" obviously neglects Mao Zedong's portrait at Tiananmen Square and his influence among the largest masses in the world. The sudden disappearance of Mao Zedong from open display in the foreign countries revealed the ideological factors behind class, race or gender motivations that led to the complex spectatorship of Mao Zedong's images, that first made Mao Zedong's visage appeal to these international revolutionaries, and then, puzzled or estranged them to replace him with Marx, Lenin, or their own national icons.

The US strategy toward Maoism, on the other hand, was to find the possible opponents of its established opponents. When Mao Zedong's international communism was in upper hand, Americans found Khrushchev. When Soviet nationalism and racism

became unbearable, Kissinger sent American backup to Mao Zedong's China. But after all, Mao Zedong was still the hardcore Marxist, and American media began to promote Deng Xiaoping. When Deng Xiaoping's nationalism became unmanageable, they shifted their attention to Gorbachev. He was the *Time* man of the decade on January 1, 1990, and was awarded with the Nobel peace prize on October 15, 1990.

It is in the network of those identifications and contradictions that we consider the student movement of 1989. It was near the portrait of Mao Zedong. It was also really about Mao Zedong's ideals. Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen Square became the first target of worldwide peaceful evolution. It was defaced for the first time in history. Through the student movement, the Western propaganda machines destroyed almost all the ideals of international communism that Mao Zedong's images could stand for. Also, rhetorically, Mao Zedong's Marxist authority was shattered. Deng Xiaoping, as Mao Zedong's successor, traded a large of part of Mao Zedong's ideological beliefs for the national economic development. After Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, new world order—not in the sense of conspiracy theories, but in the strategic planning of Western political leaders—has become the de facto practice of global politics.

But then, it is also a historical mystery that Portrait of Mao Zedong has become one of the last resorts of the Red Flag. We do not know whether it was because the Chinese remembered or internalized Mao Zedong's exhortations about peaceful evolution, or because the Western allies treated such vandalism on Mao Zedong only as an experiment of subversion for other major campaigns in the White communist areas, or because the Western politicians and the Chinese Communist reformers had arranged a neutral point of mutual benefits. The fact is that Portrait of Mao Zedong and other Mao

Zedong images remained intact in china, much to the puzzlement of those who had successfully removed Lenin and Stalin's images. In the end, Kissinger's concepts of nation and culture only strengthened the nationalistic sentiments of the Chinese that, in return, have formed the most resistant force to new world order.

## **Chapter 4. Remodeling Mao Zedong**

This chapter focuses on the symbolic activism of the images of Mao Zedong after the 1989 Tiananmen Square Movement. The indexical messages in the ideological sign of Mao Zedong become less popular in the foreign countries, and less assertive with the Chinese government, but more and more reminiscent to the emerging class of the proletariat in China, the real one as a result of the rampant Chinese primitive capitalism for almost three decades. Although the open worldwide ideological contentions are less intense, the visual, thus rhetorical, oppositions of different ideologies are still active with their old energy, especially when the spectacle of Mao Zedong is presented. Recently, more, taller and larger marble and metal statues of him are produced in China. In the Western industrial countries, the art form of burlesque that has been used to discredit Mao Zedong is being replaced by realistic portrayal of him and realistic visual arts against China. Most of these image events in China or abroad carry strong sentiments of nationalism which the West has promoted to maintain its hegemony in its self-claimed “new world order.” The attention of this chapter, however, is still the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, the most forceful and loyal model of Lenin and Mao Zedong’s ideas of public arts. It is based on the materialist ideology of impermanence, and is sustained by the constant ideological enthusiasm of the working classes.

## Reddism

The 4.2-meter-tall bronze statue of the Goddess of Democracy appeared near the U.S. Capitol on June 12, 2007. It is a replica of the one erected in front of the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen Square on May 30, 1989. Her plaster and Styrofoam figure—shattered on June 4, 1989—was pieced back with a more durable media, and transfused back to life with foreign blood. Like Goddess of Liberty, she also held a torch above President Bush's head while he warned that, “given the chance, men commanded by harsh and hateful ideologies will commit unspeakable crimes and take the lives of millions” (“Office of the Press”). “Men” are the perpetrators, but women can always bring justice and hope for the men who can find and challenge opponents. The mission of the Goddess of Democracy was to label the horrible crimes on Communism—and all other one-sided terms: terrorism, Islamic radicalism and so on. The statue is structurally devoted to visualize her exile functionalism for a hope that every man will get to the top of the world by his own efforts, and a warning that any one against that doctrine is against humanity.

The Chinese Government responded almost at the same time. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Qin Gang blasted the U.S. side for “provoking confrontation between ideologies and social systems” and “interfering other countries’ domestic affairs” (Reuters). Before Soviet Union was separated, China was not a big deal. But when communism was declared to be defeated, and China still claims it, the antagonism surfaces at the tiniest chances. US used its usual social Darwinist strategy of “do what you can do to your rival,” and has never cared to give any feedback to the Chinese side.

Silence is the best despise for the biggest threat, especially when US is backed up with such formidable military power.

Although both sides are burdened by economic formulations, their ideological feuds show up in their respective best symbolisms. The visual display from US provoked a new round of ideological confrontation, and shadowed the whole stage of bilateral relations. The battlefield is still Tiananmen Square. Portrait of Mao Zedong is always regarded as a threat for some, and a shield for others. Now that Goddess of Democracy is secured in Washington, the contention is all the more pointed. Backed up by the Goddess of Liberty, a historic sight, the Goddess of Democracy serves the rhetorical function of finalizing the “collapse” of Communism. Peaceful Evolution will not have its final victory if group solidarity is still favored by any government. Portrait of Mao Zedong, on the other hand, becomes vigilant and gathers all its old and new energies to protect one of the last resorts of public ownership. On July 1, 2007, another “ordinary” Chinese man, carrying a bag of firecrackers and fireworks, rushed out at the portrait. It was the Party’s Day, and the security guards stopped him before he could throw out the smoking bag. This was only a month and a half away from the previous attempt on May 12, 2007 when the portrait was partially burnt and replaced (ABCNews).

Ideological struggle is almost religious. In China, where Mao Zedong used to be seen as a “Great Person,” or a “Human Wonder,” some people begin to treat him as a religious personification. Surrounded by religions—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and other religions, these people who have strong emotional ties to Mao Zedong are provoked to take a religious road to save Mao Zedong Thought. In 2005, a new “religion,” Reddism, was suggested by Yan Bin in Canada. He had a strange dream (“Reddism”).

Chairman Mao asks him, “Why do you come to me?” Yan replies, “People got a lot to tell you, but they don’t know how to hear you.” Mao Zedong answers: “You tell the people—whenever they have any difficulty that needs me to overcome, whenever they have any wish that needs me to realize, ask them to come to my portrait, and, there, to put a hand over their eyes and say, ‘Chairman Mao, I have to tell you something.’ Then say it silently and conclude with ‘Chairman Mao loves people.’ In this way, I will know everything.” Yan Bin has another question—“Shall we stand or kneel when talking to you? How about those who do not have hands?” Mao Zedong looks sympathetic and sincere. “It doesn’t matter whether you stand or sit. It works the same for the sick who lie in bed. Never kneel. For those who have no hands, imagine they do.”

Truly, dreams are fictional, and the idea of creating a religion out of a dream is emotional. But the context is the overwhelming “humiliation” of Mao Zedong’s ideals. The individualistic and liberal Western influence in today’s China has made some people like Yan Bin recall the strictly controlled virtues of honesty, equality and justice in the era of Mao Zedong. When sympathy is hard to find, they resort to the quick but extreme way of argumentation. Another coincidence is that, in 2005, the Canadian government launched a full-scale campaign to rescue one of the defacers of the portrait of Mao Zedong in 1989 who had escaped to Thailand. For those who were educated in the Chinese sense of justice and righteousness, Lu Decheng is actually a traitor that has no moral sensibilities. Yin Bin who lived in Canada and was sensitive to the activities of the Chinese dissidents there must have developed a strong desire to resist the rhetoric of freedom and anarchy. Yan’s idea of setting up a religion with Mao Zedong, though

difficult to convince, can be seen as an indicator of psychological resistance against the Western denigration of Mao Zedong.

When the emotional support in name of religion reveals its ideological identities, names and boundaries are often set, and most often, to make distinctions. That explains some uncompromising moments in the ideological sign of Mao Zedong. Unlike the eulogistic texts about him, his images have boundaries and distinctions that—in Sharon Crowley’s words—“are never disinterested” (363). For some Chinese—the number is increasing—those images are names of God or Savior. That definitely hurts those who want to make profits through talent or manipulation. For them, those images are nothing but names of hard labor and narrow mind. Therefore, the ideological sign of Mao Zedong cannot avoid making someone loose visual profits while letting others—who do not earn profits—stay spiritually high.

### **Mao Zedong as National Emblem in the New World Order**

On November 25, 2008, a correspondent of the Japanese *Everyday News* climbed up *Washington*, the nuclear-powered US warship. The American and Japanese navies were performing a united military exercise at the sea on the east of Taiwan. A large portrait of Mao Zedong was hanging on the white wall of the war room (Qiu Yongzheng). Below it was a slogan in Chinese characters—“The Chinese have Stood up!” Obviously, that did not mean to please the Chinese. It meant that the real military opponent of the United States was China. Mao Zedong was used as a symbol of military goal.

Although the heat of China Threat has been cooling down, the psychological

impact is still effective. The US media has long publishing the idea of China's challenge to American hegemony. 2005 was the year in which China had another serious image crisis since 1989. On June 4, 2005—a date memorizing the image events at Tiananmen on June 4, 1989, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld depicted China as a new Soviet Union. In Singapore, he said in a speech—“Although the Cold War is over, this region, unfortunately, is still burdened by some old rivalries, and military budgets are escalating in some quarters, China's emergence is an important new reality in this era” (Rumsfeld). Robert Kaplan's article—“How We Would Fight China”—typically shows the mindset of the Pentagon militarists: “Pulsing with consumer and martial energy, and boasting a peasantry that, unlike others in history, is overwhelmingly literate, China constitutes the principal conventional threat to America's liberal imperium” (49). It was published in June 2005. Earlier in April, *China: the Gathering Threat* was published. On the cover is a huge Mao Zedong Statue. The book secured the determination of many conservative Americans to prepare for “the worst.” On June 27, Sebastian Mallaby reported a “China's Latest ‘Threat’” in *The Washington Post*. (As if hurt by such severe accusations, Gu Yue, the most successful actor who acted as Mao Zedong in 84 movies, died on July 2, 2005 (Zhang Jie). Then on December 22, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso delivers a speech at a meeting of Federation of Economic Organizations, the Keidanren, in Tokyo, saying that “having a neighbor with one billion people equipped with nuclear bombs fans anxiety in Japan” (Herman). Most often, these comments also pulled in the images of Mao Zedong to engage the American readership.

Also, the activities to rescue the defacers of the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen have been an important agenda to the Chinese dissidents for the Western

mass media. It is really difficult for any one from the “free world” to imagine a punishment for spoiling a recoverable picture. Tan Decheng stayed in prison for nine years until 1998 and came out on a parole. He escaped and changed his name to Lu Decheng. In Thailand, he was detained. It took eight years for the Canadian Government to get a chance to bring him to Canada. He arrived in Canada on April 14, 2006. Since then, he has been active in accusing Mao Zedong’s autocracy and brutality.

Yu Zhijian who received a life sentence was set free in 2001. Yu Dongyue was not free until February 22, 2006, and served a sentence of 17 years.

Here, besides the reasons of political bargains between the Chinese and Western governments, obviously emotion seemed to be the judging rubrics rather than the law. “A great emotional damage to the Chinese people,” would be the lingering voice. And most likely, Tan Decheng and Yu Zhijian apologized most sincerely while Yu Dongyue did not apologize in a serious manner.

But when looking at the chaos they have helped to create for the Chinese, it would not be difficult to the reasons to put them in the pillory of the law. Many students and unarmed soldiers died in the riots, which was used by Western media to push for their ideological needs. The number of the dead students was exaggerated. The vicious part was that whenever that number was announced to the public, the place was Tiananmen Square, though now even the dissidents in America admit that no one was killed there. Definitely, these bad effects were also counted into the prison terms of three defacers.

When the situation in Moscow in 1991 came to the scene, these vandals were also huge symbolism of ideological damage. Gorbachev’s visit to Ronald Reagan’s funeral shows the consequences of hasty identification with the rhetorically defined democracy.

On June 11, 2004, while he gazed at Reagan's casket, he may have reflected on Reagan's constant praises of his new thinking and new ideas. The gloomy air was overwhelming in the farewell room. That was ideological contention. Invisible when the visibles meet. Gorbachev could not understand his intention to change the rigid disciplines of Marxism would actually freeze his own eloquence. The Leninists growled at his hasty revision. Reformists glowered at him after they visited America. He was quiet in America this time. Russians were silent. But his talking head narrated the most embarrassing date of his life: He resigned on December 25, 1991 when the USSR was officially dissolved.

The Chinese government meditated for a solution from Gorbachev since he came to Beijing during the student movement in 1989. The Chinese leaders have often used the emotional calls from American and Canadian mass media to trade the defacers' terms with some national benefits, just as Deng Xiaoping did with Fang Lizhi in 1989—to let Fang go to America, in return, for America to extend China's status of most favorable nation (Zhang Yijun). It was also under such political and economic bargains that a number of Chinese dissidents reached the “free world.”

Reading the past offers the naïve viewers emotional choices. They usually build a meaning around the evidence presented on or hidden in the canvas, following their narrative instincts. For these dissidents who have bad memory of “the riotous decades” as used first by Deng Xiaoping, Mao Zedong's portrait is simply a sight of autocracy, and a national index for them to prove the opposites. Many of them present emotional stories. In *Mao Zedong Tse Tung: China's peasant emperor*, a video made by A&E Home Video in 2005. Several Chinese narrate their sufferings. They have made the connections between their sufferings and Mao Zedong and his ideas. Their rhetoric, as a popular

Western logic, is to prove that Mao Zedong himself made them unhappy. A woman even slanders that Mao Zedong seldom washed his body, never brushed his teeth, and often slept with young girls. Obviously, it does not just mean personal attack; its target is the ideology behind the personal image.

The accusations of Mao Zedong and China often bring up emotional satisfactions for many who proclaim themselves to be living in the “free world.” This has some connections with the Western tradition of “forgetting about China.” China was even depicted as the biggest threat of the world in 1932 when Japanese troops had landed on China and no Western powers ever tried to intervene. The racial discrimination based on skin interpretation made the Chinese even more appalling than other non-White races. Because yellow has been associated with diseases—and many Chinese were sick and drowsy creatures since the British successfully trapped them with opium—the Chinese images were either cowardly disgraceful or unreasonably monstrous. For that, we do not have to go into details; they are everywhere. The point is that, from a country that had been a tiny peninsula at the “Far East” in the Western imagination, and that had actually proclaimed “those below the Sky” as her boundaries, a China man being one of the most celebrated idols of communism—a Western ideology that is most feared in the West—is, on the one hand, ludicrous, on the other, evident for a point of attack.

Interestingly, those who held the other end of the rope simultaneously made their own visual assertions. They held to the Chinese tradition of valuing great personalities. The Mao Zedong Statue on *China: the Gathering Threat* seemed to have inspired Yan Bin’s religious ambition. It was around the heated days around June 4 that he posted the call of “Reddism” from Regina, Canada. To this day, the number of those who are joining

him has been increasing as shown in the many “lefty” websites both in Chinese and English.

These confrontational activisms based on the images of Mao Zedong, however, actually helped to maintain the “new world order” in which nationalism has become dominant and Western big powers have sustained their hegemony. Those who defame Mao Zedong are doing so because their national benefits are shared and thus threatened by China. For those who stand on the side of China, China needs a strong personality like Mao Zedong to protect its own national dignity. In either case, Mao Zedong’s ideological ideals have not been considered seriously but are used pragmatically.

It is a mystery that Henry Kissinger and his theory of new world order have long been associated with good will by most Chinese because his talks with Mao Zedong have changed the “world.” China and America are just two large nations in the world. Many things in the world remain the same or worse after China and America established normal diplomatic relations—the increasing injustice in politics and rhetoric between the rich and the poor, especially in China. But many Chinese only look at the good side—Mao Zedong was good, Deng Xiaoping was good, Kissinger was good or at least did not have a bad intention on China. The irony of the so-called new world order is that Kissinger’s foreign policy is basically to promote American hegemony by catering to separate nations. As long as other nations are separate—and America will do its best to make all other nations as separate and small as possible—American rhetoric of good life and democracy will always cover its capitalist injustices and manipulate the individuals who look up to the liberal and individual ambitions.

In fact, most political leaders of the world acquiesce with such a peaceful model

of global politics. On January 12, 2009, Henry Kissinger brought his call of “new world order” to the People’s Hall of Congress in China, seeming to mystify his talent of diplomacy again—his telephone conversations with Richard Nixon from January 12 through July X 1973 have not been declassified by the National Archives and Records Administration (Moss and Nichter). China and United States established normal diplomatic relation on January 1, 1979. How come both Chinese and American leaders agreed on or chose January 12? This time, it is not a secret—a time to review the great deeds of Mao Zedong and Kissinger. At the memorial conference, Kissinger openly said—“The role of China in a new world order is equally crucial. A relationship that started on both sides as essentially a strategic design to constrain a common adversary has evolved over the decades into a pillar of the international system” (Wong). New world order is nothing but a nationalist hat that is used to salute each other on occasions such as—“China made possible the American consumption splurge by buying American debt; America helped the modernization and reform of the Chinese economy by opening its markets to Chinese goods.” In such an order, the old order, the Westphalian model, is secured for mutual benefits. As Edward Wong points out, “cross-border capitalism was well represented at the conference: Mary Kay, the American cosmetics maker, is a co-sponsor of the event, and some attendees on Monday received a pink cosmetics bag with bottles of samples” (Wong).

The portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen and the large painting at the entrance to the auditorium—a painting in the Chinese national style that depicts Mao Zedong’s famous poem—may have made Kissinger stammer, just as in his last meeting with Mao Zedong who pointed out that Kissinger was a shrew Jewish

merchant (*Kissinger Transcripts* 393). So, unlike George Walker Bush who would always took a photo with the portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, Kissinger always shunned the sights that would incur the image of Mao Zedong. Was it because Mao Zedong realized Henry Kissinger's maneuvers but never had a chance to correct the reports by the mass media both in China and abroad?

On October 30, 1950, in Guangzhou—not far from the sea where *Washington* posed a portrait of Mao Zedong as a signal of China threat in 2008—most of the thirteen Nationalist ships had huge portraits of Mao Zedong at their bows (CCTV-5 October 30, 2007). They came from Hong Kong with 600 sailors. These Nationalist ships and sailors became the major basis of the Chinese navy under the Communist leadership. Ironically, the portraits of Mao Zedong seemed to have transcended the ideological differences between the two oppositional parties, and have inspired the real nationalist sentiments among these Nationalist officers and soldiers. They would soon defend the Chinese sea territories as dignifiedly as no Chinese could imagine one hundred years ago. It is a historical wonder, then, that the symbolism of Mao Zedong has played such an unprecedented uniting role in China—as a people that includes almost all human races, as a political state that embraces so many contradictory doctrines, and as a developing country that has had a center but has never been able to clearly define its own identity—for thousands of years. As long as the ideological feuds are put aside, the nationalist implications in the visual Mao Zedong can always bring most Chinese together.

The paints used by Ge Xiaoguang to paint the yearly Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen were imported from Europe for a long time. Two years before 1999, the

fiftieth anniversary of the People's Republic of China, a company of painting materials—Mali in Shanghai was determined to change the practice of using foreign paints on a Chinese icon (Chen Wen 18-19). In May, 1999, the new paints invented by Mali were put to test against those German and Dutch products. Two months later, Mali paints shone out of others after winds, rains and suns. On September 21, Ge Xiaoguang put his twenty-fourth Portrait of Mao Zedong on Tiananmen. Since then, the national paints have been used to make the most prominent spectacle of national symbolism of China.

C. David Mortensen defines emblems as “those nonverbal acts:”

(a) which have a direct verbal translation usually consisting of a word or two, or a phrase, (b) for which this precise meaning is known by all members of a group, class, subculture, or culture, (c) which are often deliberately used with the conscious intent to send a particular message to the other person(s), (d) for which the person(s) who sees the emblem usually not only knows the emblem's message but also knows that it was deliberately sent to him, and (e) for which the sender usually takes responsibility for having made that communication. (277).

The images of Mao Zedong are exactly the emblems as defined above: (a) Mao Zedong is usually taken as the personality of equality while the “free world” often associate him with dictatorship and autocracy; (b) Most people of the working classes approve the ideals of Mao Zedong while those who believe in individual ability and private property often balk at the images of Mao Zedong; (c) Recently the Chinese build a lot of Mao Zedong statues to commemorate the idealism of Mao Zedong against the

side effects of Deng Xiaoping's pragmatism and to impose the needs of national unification in those autonomous regions; (d) The deliberate messages in the images of Mao Zedong, whether they are on the covers of *Time* magazine, in the exhibition halls, or on the bills of Chinese money, show the ideological contentions in the veils of economic or art activities; (e) In different political sovereignties, creators of the images of Mao Zedong often boldly uphold the ideological responsibilities such as the distortions of Mao Zedong on the covers of *Time* magazine that celebrate liberalism and individualism, though they are offensive to most Chinese, and were banned in China.

Guy Debord thinks that a spectacle is society itself, "as a part of society and as a means of unification" (144). The images of Mao Zedong are a consistent spectacle that often unites most Chinese and their opinions, just as Lincoln could always get most Americans together. The spectacle of Mao Zedong contains—as Debord would put it—a "social relationship between people that are mediated by [his] images." Because the majority of the Chinese identify themselves with Mao Zedong, as if in voting, his images are always an ace propaganda device. Also, in China, where unification has long been a dominant value, the spectacle of Mao Zedong is viewed as a symbol of unification at different levels. Although there are different or opposite views on any specific occasion, the Chinese would typically turn to the association of Mao Zedong with national interests. The foreign concepts of China threat or the distortions of the images of Mao Zedong have made such a connection more immediate.

Mao Zedong as the shared symbol of equality has been a convenient sight to unite different peoples in China. To cope with the separatist rhetoric in the West, the Chinese have used the images of Mao Zedong to "speak with facts." In 1969, a statue of Mao

Zedong was built at the Central Square of Kashgar, the center of today's Uyghur culture (Kashgar Annuals). The figure of Mao Zedong is 12.26 meters high— alluding to the birthday of Mao Zedong, December 26. The height of the pedestal is 11.74 meters, to commemorate the date—November 26 to December 1, 1949 when the PLA came into the city. This was one of the two highest statues of Mao Zedong before 2008. The reason was that Kashgar is the right spot to use Mao Zedong as the symbol of unification. Since the 1989 Tiananmen movement, a series of terrorist activities happened in Xinjiang. A rich Uyghur businessperson Rabiya Kadir's husband was put in jail. She tried to supply information to her husband, and was also put in jail on March 10, 2001. US Congress seemed to find another clue of China Threat, and launched a campaign to rescue her (Congressional Record—House, H1373, April 3, 2001). Soon US granted the status of asylum to her. On December 25, 2003, a bronze statue of Mao Zedong and Kulban Tulmu was erected in the central square of Hetian, an important center of the Uighur civilization. The reference was a photo taken on June 28, 1958 when Mao Zedong received KT as a working model. It weighs six tons, and the whole structure is 20.76 meters high. The story of K T's determination to see Mao Zedong becomes a living spectacle to argue against the separatist war cries home and abroad. With the confidence of Mao Zedong built again, the Chinese government used its usual strategy of releasing political prisoners to trade political priorities at the diplomatic meetings. Rabiya Kadir was set free before US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit to Beijing in early 2004.

Tibet is another hotspot of separatist activities. Most of the big rivers of China originate from the Tibet plateau, and culturally the Chinese and the Tibetans have many

ethnic ties, so the Chinese government is adamant in maintaining the union. Although Dalai Lama himself has never said that Tibet should be an independent country, his frequent appearances in the “free world” have become a religious signal to many Tibetans. On April 17, 2006, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama was seventy-one years and forty? days old. Mao Zedong, as a huge statue, arrived in Tibet. It was not to celebrate Dalai Lama’s birthday but to recollect Mao Zedong’s presence in Tibet after seventy-one years. Mao Zedong was climbing a snowy mountain when Dentsin Zuchu was born on March 5, 1935. The statue of Mao Zedong stands ? meters tall at the central square of Gongga, a city near the border between China and India. It went from Wangcheng, Hunan Province through five other provinces for X days, and arrived almost three months before the Tibet Railway ran to Lhasa. It does show the determination of unification and social development under the presence of Mao Zedong’s images.

In 1951, the portraits of Mao Zedong and Zhu De were put on a large cloth screen in front of the Potala Palace, the winter residence of Dalai Lama. Mao Zedong appointed Dalai Lama as a Vice-Chair of the National Committee of the People’s Representatives. For some time, the religious and political icons worked well together in Tibet. But in 1959, Dalai Lama went to India and formed an exile government. Since then, some upper class Tibetans had two religious icons—Dalai Lama in their mind, and Mao Zedong in their homes (*Big Occasion on the Snow Land*). After long years of political and religious reforms, however, most Tibetans, the serfs, shifted their religious attention to social life. Undoubtedly, the portraits of Mao Zedong promoted such a change, and many Tibetans worshiped Mao Zedong with religious fervor for their political and economic achievements. Since July 30, 1980, when a portrait of Mao Zedong was taken down from

the façade of the Hall of People's Congress (Yu Wei and Wu Zhifei), most households of the Han have no portraits of Mao Zedong up to today. But for most Tibetans, the passion of Cultural Revolution has just begun to take roots in Tibet. That is more so when no political restraints are put in use nowadays. In the yearly harvest festival of many Tibetan villages, portraits of Mao Zedong are carried to the fields, and the villagers danced around (Labaciren).

Mao Zedong's policies toward the minority nationalities are also partially the reason for such religious worship. On March 16, 1953, Mao Zedong spoke to "Criticize Han Chauvinism":

Judging from the mass of information on hand, the Central Committee holds that wherever there are minority nationalities the general rule is that there are problems calling for solution, and in some cases very serious ones. On the surface all is quiet, but actually there are some very serious problems. What has come to light in various places in the last two or three years shows that Han chauvinism exists almost everywhere. It will be very dangerous if we fail now to give timely education and resolutely overcome Han chauvinism in the Party and among the people. The problem in the relations between nationalities which reveals itself in the Party and among the people in many places is the existence of Han chauvinism to a serious degree and not just a matter of its vestiges...

Therefore, education must be assiduously carried out so that this problem can be solved step by step. Moreover, the newspapers should publish more articles based on specific facts to criticize Han chauvinism openly and educate the Party members and the people. (Mao Zedong V 87-88).

Mao Zedong's criticism is in favor of the minority nationalities. Many prejudices against them were changed to promote their confidence in the early years of the Mao Zedong administration. The derogatory place names given by the rulers of the country were changed in the local minority languages. In 1953, eight county names in Xinjiang Autonomous Region were changed to those used by the local minority people (Yu Weicheng 23). For example, the capital of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, 迪化, Dihua—meaning enlighten the ignorant—were renamed in Uigur as Urumuqi. Mao Zedong and these changes are often cited to refute nationality separatists. When President Bush

received Rabiya Kadir in the White House in June 2006, and she was nominated for Nobel Peace Prize candidate on September 11 2006, the Chinese immediately united under the confidence of Mao Zedong. On September 28, 2006, Huachen, an auction company dedicated the original model of Zhang Zhenshi's Portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen (1954-1964) to China National Museum. The original copy was bought by the company from a Chinese American, and was planned to be sold at the auction in Jingguang Shopping Center that would run from May 31 to June 4, 2006. But the news of Rabiya Kadir's activities in America stimulated the Chinese nationalism. Many ordinary citizens had protested, and the government had sent effective warnings to Huachen. On May 25, however, the sponsor announced that item 139, *Mao Zedong Zedong's Portrait*, would not make it to the auction, and that Huachen agreed to put the painting in the National Museum. In this way, Mao Zedong became again an emblem of national unification.

His image is also a good sign to take the edge off the inflating emotions among the working or jobless individuals. Economic inequality is becoming large between the workers and the parvenus who have the power to move others around them. Mao Zedong provides good reasons to point out the income differences. Such sentiments do not just exist with ordinary citizens but also hold firmly to many political leaders. It is more so when the political conscience comes to the scene. Since the 1989 Student Movement, and after the rhetoric of the collapse of communism is high in volume, the personality cult of Mao Zedong has actually taken roots in the conventional or more permanent ways.

Mao Zedong, when he was alive, did not approve these methods. In this sense, he was more adamant in the Leninist impermanence ideals than Lenin and Stalin. In Soviet Union, two cities were named after them—Leningrad and Stalingrad. But Mao Zedong

successfully prevented any attempt to name a place or anything with his name. For three times, Mao Zedong declined the requests to use his images for the money bills. The Chinese currency, RMB [Renminbi (People's bill)] used to have the beautiful designs for the working classes that fully took into consideration the issues of class, gender, and nationality. The first three sets were paper bills, and included two or three designs for each category of one *fen*, five *fen*, one *jiao*, two *jiao*, five *jiao*, one *yuan*, two *yuan*, five *yuan*, and ten *yuan*.

On April 1987, the Chinese government issued the fourth set of RMB, in which Mao Zedong's head appears in the one-hundred-bill with those of three other leaders. On October 1, 1999, all those beautiful designs were replaced with Mao Zedong's single head, from each bill of one *yuan*, five *yuan*, ten *yuan*, twenty *yuan*, fifty *yuan*, to that of one hundred *yuan*.

Besides the above-mentioned statues, many cities in the regular provinces and municipalities, instead of removing the remaining statues as required by the Deng Xiaoping Administration, have competed to build new conspicuous statues of Mao Zedong for all kinds of Westernized reasons. So far, the tallest statue of Mao Zedong has reached the height of 37.40 meters at Chongqing Medical University (Wu Xiaochuan). It was complete on October 25, 2008. It looks both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, which has angered some Chinese, and may be rebuilt. In Changsha, the capital of Hunan province where Mao Zedong was born, the municipal government approved a project of building a Mao Zedong Park, in an islet of Xiang River. The height of the thirty-two-year-old Mao Zedong would be twenty meters, and the whole structure would be thirty-two

meters high (Si Maogen). Some local leaders even suggested a height of 183 meters—one hundred times the actual height of Mao Zedong—to surpass the US Goddess of Liberty.

These image demonstrations could be taken as emotional responses to the political and economic gaps between the cheap labor and the capital. Chongqing, originally the capital of Sichuan province, is where the biggest materialist project—the Three Gorges—mainly operates. For the government, it offers great potentials of development. It provides giant amount of electricity that will benefit city life and technology. The project has attracted capital investment from the “advanced” industrial countries. Whether or not the Chinese government believed in Stephen Cheung who proposed that rural population should be lower than 25% of total, a lot of rural villages were drowned in the dams and the urban population was indeed greatly increased. The 37.40-meter-high statue of Mao Zedong has equivocal viewpoints. It is supposed to be a statue of Mao Zedong, but looks like Deng Xiaoping. Does it mean Deng Xiaoping was as great as Mao Zedong? Or was it as an artistic coincidence that has created such a drama? Or was it purely a technical problem that should be corrected in order to let the people who were moved away from their birthplaces commemorate the lenient activities Mao Zedong did to the farming masses? When a statue of Mao Zedong is erected near the dams of the Three Gorges, it would open a forum for the local Sichuan people to talk about the Three Gorges Project. On the one hand, it did create giant economic effects that also benefit the removed residents in some way. On the other, the urban competition—which the government has purposely encouraged—put many of relocated peasants into awkward positions because usually they are poorly educated and naively idealistic, and feel difficult to fit in the city life.

Interestingly, most of these image events have crossed the lines Mao Zedong himself would not approve. As mentioned above, Mao Zedong did not like the idea of making statues of him to “bear the slicing winds and whipping rains” (Li ?). In 1970?, Mao Zedong urged the country to make more “airplanes instead of badges [of Mao Zedong].” On July 30, 1980, the Central Government of China issued an order to remove Mao Zedong’s images from most public and private places. The portraits of Mao Zedong soon disappeared from all the unimportant places. When the presses stopped printing Mao Zedong, the remaining paper Mao Zedongs pelt off the walls and screens. That exactly reflected the Leninist idea of impermanence—to let a political campaign reach the masses with the most popular arts in the most available media, and then let it go before another political campaign comes up.

Because Mao Zedong’s images have not been available as before, the needs for them are building up again. Perhaps because Mao Zedong insisted that his images could be used to promote political agendas in impermanent or cheapest art media, the Chinese find it all the more necessary to make Mao Zedong’s images permanently present.

In this sense, Deng Xiaoping could actually be a sophisticated supporter of Mao Zedong Thought. Deng Xiaoping’s remark to Ariana Falaci that the Portrait of Mao Zedong should be hung at Tiananmen “forever” was from his heart. His proposal to remove most of Mao Zedong’s images from the public was to promote Mao Zedong’s authority because too much exposure actually reduces the degree of respect. Most public statues of Mao Zedong at unnecessary spots were removed, but still enough images of Mao Zedong have been kept. As Deng told Oriana Fallaci in 1982, the famous Italian reporter, although Mao Zedong’s Memorial Hall was a mistake, to change it means a

burst of gossip. “The whole world is thinking,” Deng said, “that we are about to destroy the Memorial Hall. We do not have such an intention” (Yu Wei).

Mao Zedong’s images were first used to promote business on May 7 1996. Mao Xiaoping, the daughter of Mao Zedong’s cousin, opened a restaurant near Tiananmen Square to make money for the cuisine of the Mao family. Mao Zedong’s photos have been installed in the rooms (Xin Ruzhong). She did not mean to disregard Mao Zedong’s will that his fame could not be used for personal reasons. But Mao Zedong’s daughter Li Na changed her mind. Basically after the tragic suicide of Li Na’s mother Jiang Qing—Mao Zedong’s wife—on May 14, 1991, Li Na’s distaste for Deng Xiaoping and his successor became open. The restaurant could be taken as a small sign of Li Na’s defiance. For them, Mao Zedong’s will was used by the government to promote Deng Xiaoping, and the balance was to let Mao Zedong prevail again. Also, the prevalent disrespect for Mao Zedong’s ideals made Mao Xiaoping believe that, for practical reasons, Mao Zedong’s ideals could only be saved through the conventional ways, which are widely practiced in the Western industrial countries—memorials, statues, and place names after personal names. She built a number of associations, real estates, and companies that are promoted through Mao Zedong’s images, calligraphies, life style, and ideals. On January 13, 2008, at the 2nd session of the 10<sup>th</sup> plenary of Hunan Political Consultation Committee, she even proposed that a City of Mao Zedong should be built between the big cities of Changsha, Xiangtan and Zhuzhou in Hunan Province (YanYudong).

Mao Zedong never liked the idea of naming a place after him. Actually according to the report made by Mao Zedong at the 2nd Plenary Session of the 7th Central

Committee of the Communist Party of China (March 5-13, 1949), a six-point proposal of preventing arrogance and personality cult was passed. One point is that “never name a place after a person” (Shang Weifan). In 1950s, for several times, in Hunan Province, Mao Zedong’s folks wanted to merge the biggest cities in the province—Changsha, Xiangtan and Zhuzhou—into one administrative area that should called the City of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong never agreed on the naming.

The City of Mao Zedong in Mao Xiaoping’s “less hassle” proposal has not been materialized so far. The Chinese government is probably meditating for a suitable solution. But obviously, the official decision made by the first-generation leaders of the country—“Never name a place after a person”—is being breached. In 1993, a big bronze statue of Mao Zedong was erected at his birthplace—Shaoshan—to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birthday. A large square was formed and extended around it. People called it the Square of Comrade Mao Zedong’s Statue. In January 2004, the Chinese Government listed the birthplace of Mao Zedong as the No. 1 Project of Loving-the-Country Education. In September 2005, the Government approved the No. 1 Project—Shaoshan Renovation—which includes two museums, one square, two highways, four parking lots, one complete set of monitoring, electric and water facilities (Lin Jun). The naming of the square was open to the public since October 2006. 9000 names were gathered. About 650 participants presented the “Square of Mao Zedong,” and the Government accepted the name in January 2008. That was the first place name named after Mao Zedong in China (There was a Mao Zedong Peak in Kirghistan, and there is an Avenue Mao Tse Dung in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, a Mao Zedong Avenue in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia.) The total investment of the No. 1 Project was

RMB 900 million yuan, about 13 million US dollars. The project was complete by December 26, 2008—the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mao Zedong’s birthday. It is not purely political propaganda, though. The economic motivations are probably preferred over the political reasons. By the celebration day, December 26, 2008, about 40 business projects that involved RMB 200 million yuan were signed between the local government and businesspersons home and abroad. Therefore, no matter how Mao Zedong’s ideals were neglected, Mao Zedong’s authority was once more shown through economic numbers. Meanwhile, it also showed the Chinese spirit of tolerance for opposites—these economic projects were the continuance of Deng Xiaoping’s opening and reform. Here, the two contradictory leaders were legitimately celebrated in the West way—pragmatism. These conventional ways of promoting Mao Zedong’s image were in accordance with the western traditions of naming—Capital Washington, Washington State, John Kennedy Airport, Lincoln University, etc. That is why the Western media did not make a big scene for the Square of Mao Zedong, but continued attacking the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen because there was no equivalent counterpart in the West.

Guy Debord says, “what the spectacle expresses is the total practice of one particular economic and social formation” (144). The image events of the virtual Mao Zedong have been pushing and pushed for economic achievements. Regardless of Mao Zedong’s personal wishes, his right hand is now waved at big construction projects—greeting for the national strength and pointing at the unfair wealth distribution. So in the virtual Mao Zedong these two messages are assembled, the economic status is recorded, and the economic agenda is modified.

The virtual Mao Zedong is now capital. When Liu Luanxiong bought the portrait of Mao Zedong by Andy Warhol at a price of \$17 million in a New York auction on November 16, 2006, the Chinese, in mainland or overseas, applauded (Chang Ping). It is a typical reaction—they are proud that a Chinese showed his economic power and that a Chinese bought back a Chinese legend. When Mao Zedong's image is ingrained into the cash, many Chinese think Mao Zedong is lucky charm that will bring wealth or benefits. It is almost a professional custom for the Chinese drivers, especially taxi drivers, to hang a card of Mao Zedong's portrait near steering wheels. The sports stars wear the badges of Mao Zedong to smoothen their playing. The cuisine of Mao Family is a most lucrative item in most restaurants.

According to Article 100 of the General Principles of the Civil Law of the People's Republic of China, each citizen has the right to their own images; without the permission of the persons who have been made into the images, no one can use these images for profit, neither can the portraits of national leaders be used in such a way. Item 1, Article 10 of Brand Laws of the People's Republic of China also states that the signs that do harm to the socialist ethical standards or cause other immoral consequences cannot be used as brands. Based on these laws, the National Bureau of Industrial and Commercial Administration has made into a specific regulation that, in business places, no national leaders' personal items are allowed to display because such practices will lead to unfair competition. But the business owners could always fight back: Who could stop the people's admiration of these honest and clean leaders? Is it wrong for the working classes to commemorate the great achievements of Mao Zedong? After all, Mao Zedong's niece has answered such questions. Of course, there are some official

interventions, but most often who would dare to argue about an ordinary person's admiration for Mao Zedong? In Taiwan, there is not a big issue since America has "deserted" Taiwan for mainland benefits. It is reported that Wang Mingzong's Mao Zedong Tea and Red Guard Juice brought him a large fortune (Zhicheng). The Chinese government would only be pleased to hear that. And when a mainland citizen, especially someone like Mao Zedong's niece, challenges a police officer, things go like a surprise banquet—the officer gets a treat, and more customers come to the restaurant. So such governmental interventions are often not effective, just like the decision made by the Central committee of the CCP—that most images of Mao Zedong should be removed.

For most Chinese, their reliance on Mao Zedong is deeply connected with their confusion about the national economic inequality and international hegemonism. Such confusion is also the direct consequences of Deng Xiaoping's pragmatism with a Chinese characteristic. Many Chinese have learned to argue for their best interests based on the Western *laissez-faire* models. In a way, Mao Zedong's images are used to serve the fragmental or private, regional instead of universal, temporary instead of historical considerations. Such ways could elongate the paradoxical phenomena of the visual Mao Zedong—most Chinese push for the conventional ways of worship, the religious, aristocratic, or commercial value systems, to promote their own economic agendas while many of Mao Zedong's quintessential ideas about universal equality, unity, and polity are often neglected. In the name of raising Mao Zedong's banners, these people are doing what Mao Zedong would not like to see: unilateral liberalism in the segregated sections of race, gender, and nation.

### **Mao Zedong as a Cultural Prism**

Although the images of Mao Zedong were meant in every way to promote the cultural revolution—the agenda that evolved for many years into the historical Cultural Revolution—many Chinese cultural elements are settled into the main covers of Western arts that were used to present the images of Mao Zedong. In all forms of public arts, the images of Mao Zedong, as public commemoration, is, in Marita Sturken’s words—“a contested form of remembrance in which cultural memories slide through and into each other, merging and then disengaging in a narrative tangle” (357). Indeed, Mao Zedong’s influence in the popular arts of China and the popularization of his images involved the complex, dialectic, or even contradictory process of renovating and adapting Chinese and Western traditions.

Kenneth Burke pairs the elements in his pentad to make ratios. When this applies to the interpretation of Mao Zedong’s portrait at Tiananmen, we could posit different ratios on the East and West fronts. The Chinese government would regard the picture as a rhetorical power of the scene-act ratio to boast of a successful story of socialist career while the West agencies may summon the scene-agent ratio to discard the extrinsic factor and focus on personal traits either to condemn the cult of a single Mao Zedong that resulted in the “deaths of millions” or to proffer a bribe of conservativeness, like the security of constitutional monarchy in Japan, that is, to expose Mao Zedong’s greatness in terms of cultural traits before the Revolution. The selective pairing based on grammatical motives points to a different goal from the same scenic matter—substance in an unmelted state.

The seeing and looking have never been balanced between the West and East. The geographical concepts can always lead to their ideological conflicts. Now it is popularly accepted or widely taught that the Western civilizations are the norms of the world, no matter how diverse the Western academic world sounds like. In a way, the idea of splitting our Earth into West and East hemispheres, or North and South halves, was the result of the unbalanced interactions between basically two worldviews—one holding to the natural world and natural order, revering the universal over the particular while the other resorting to the human society and human ration, wrestling with the personal and the spiritual, the private and the public, the body and the mind. The flood of economic development has, like the glaciers of ice age, drowned the possibility of talking about the West or East. It is the West we refer to in the “civilized” text. But within this West, we have an East that has practiced communism, and a true West that has not.

Neither can cultural traditions be simply put into national boundaries. In this sense, the images of Mao Zedong were created through both Chinese and Western art traditions, or as Mao Zedong’s mode of thinking, the Chinese adaption of Western art and the renovation of Chinese art tradition to express Western “advanced” ideas—especially those that popularize human images to serve the working people. This is basically a Leninist legacy. But Mao Zedong made a further step to popularize arts—instead of the popularization of arts through the education of the working people by the artists as in the Soviet model, the Chinese model moved increasingly toward the popular arts that can be appreciated and created by the ordinary working people.

Since Edgar Snow took a first color photo of Mao Zedong in 1936, Mao Zedong’s images began to circulate all over China. Many painters have tried to portray him in

various styles. On February 25, 1940, a painter named Shen Yiqian made a charcoal sketch of Mao Zedong while Mao Zedong was at a banquet in Yan'an (Si Fu 39). In 1945 when Mao Zedong was in Chongqing, on October 5, Yin Shoushi made a portrait of Mao Zedong in the traditional Chinese style (Si Fu 39). It took forty minutes. Mao Zedong probably did not like it. He mentioned how he dreaded the class of traditional Chinese painting when he was a young student. But he asked whether it looked like him or not. The answer was positive, and he agreed to put it on exhibition. After all, it was a great chance for him and his Communist party to shine in a Nationalist-controlled area.

The moment when Mao Zedong looked at his images in the two styles was probably the beginning of the second largest interaction or clash between the Mediterranean and Chinese portrait painting styles. The first one was more than two hundred years ago when Giuseppe Castiglione—the first important Italian to serve as a court painter for the three Chinese emperors from 1715 to 1766 (Cecile and Michel Beurdeley 101-102). Castiglione brought the Renaissance style—basically the three-dimension realism. Yet, the Chinese emperors showed strong distaste for such a “flashing” style. They insisted the two-dimension Chinese tradition, which Castiglione had to learn.

N. Hari Narayanan and Roland Hubscher believe that “sentences of the visual language represent states of an application domain” (100). For them, the meaning of a painting is situated for certain pragmatic reasons in a historical context. Once an application domain is presented to the public, the visual composition will also represent the historical messages for certain viewers while excluding others. When Mao Zedong's

leadership began to extend to the whole country, Mao Zedong's visual presentations underwent a series of historical modifications.

Mao Zedong did not like the Chinese painting style because of personal and ideological reasons. Strictly speaking, it was the concurrent Chinese national painting style that ran against Mao Zedong's ideals because the objective realism in ancient Chinese painting was not influenced by the mainstream of Chinese abstract expressionism until the Eastern Jin Dynasty (Shao Dajian et al). Since then, the vivid depictions of human figures were overtaken by the abstract impressionism that indulges in natural configurations in which humans have little or no presence.

Mao Zedong was more concerned with the human societies rather than the natural world. Even in his most romantic poems, the natural world is only the prompt or background for the poet to present great human passions. Also, for Mao Zedong, natural images of the real human world are more effective than human abstractions. According to Liu Bo, thinking by means of images is an important method for Mao Zedong (38-41). Being a speaker who had a strong accent but had to make large audiences understood, Mao Zedong often used vivid metaphors and visualized details in his lectures. The quotable examples are "A little spark can burn out a whole wilderness," "Out of the gun barrel comes out the state power," "An unselfish death is as heavy as Mount Tai," "[Young people are] the morning sun at eight or nine o'clock," "Just like the birds would caw if their nests are removed, it was natural for peasants to fume when their houses were removed by force [so that an airport could be built]," "Imperialist powers are paper tigers," etc. Indeed, as Liu Bo summarizes, "Mao Zedong often used the thinking method by means of images to instruct the cadres and Party members" (38-41).

The later Chinese national painting style pays special attention to the ink and the strokes of the writing brushes, and has many white spaces and abstractions. These need some special training in painting as well as appreciating. Also, the Chinese rice paper—Xuan Zhi, paper from Xuan, so called because the city of Xuan has been producing the choice kind of painting and calligraphy paper—is thin and vulnerable for most public places. When thinking from a perspective of class, it is only a special treat to elite intellectuals. In ancient China, only emperors and eminent officials could have their own portraits. Special and separate pavilions were built for displaying or storing portraits of the emperors and the royal families and those of the meritorious officials. Famous examples would be the *lingyange* (pavilion of flickering vapors) of Tang Taizhong, second emperor of Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE), and *zigungge* (pavilion of violet rays) of Qianlong, fifth emperor of Qing Dynasty (1636-1911 CE). In 643 CE, Tang Taizhong gave orders that the twenty-four meritorious officials and officers be painted and displayed in the pavilion of flickering vapors (Yang Muzhi 158). Qianlong's pavilion of purple ray was used to display the merits of his faithful officials. Hailancha, an Ewengki officer, was painted four times to the pavilion (Haher and Niu Hua 21-32). His portraits were placed at the forty-sixth in 1758, the eighth in 1776, the fifth in 1787, and the sixth in 1792. The portraits of Qianlong and his family were hidden in the Palace of Celestial Purity, the Palace for Cultivating Hearts, the Imperial Library, and other places only the royal family could visit (Cecile and Michel Beurdeley 192-93). Viewing an emperor's portrait was forbidden unless the emperor gave permission. It was regarded as a privilege to either be painted in a portrait or view others' portraits, and to view an emperor's portrait required prostration.

These customs and connotations to the Chinese national portraiture ran against Mao Zedong's ideas of public arts. Basically, he thought arts should serve the working people, and—instead of educating or popularizing the ideological propaganda as in the Soviet model—should be popular in the hands of the working people (Gao Minglu X). The working masses were not only the sources for creation but also the judges of creation. The idea of putting Mao Zedong's portrait on the wall of Tiananmen, to the exposure of rain, wind, snow, and sun, is to let any ordinary citizen to view the head of their country. By doing this, the citizen was honored and could directly give suggestions to the creation of the images of their leader. Six different models of the portraits of Mao Zedong have been used at Tiananmen. Most often, a new model was made on basis of ordinary viewers' comments—such as “Chairman has only one ear? Why would Chairman look at the sky and not us?”

It is also this Chinese characteristic of popular arts that made Mao Zedong's favor for realism and oil painting complicated. It was exactly the same kind of adaptability Giuseppe Castiglione experienced. Many of the portraits of Qianlong and his family were made by Giuseppe Castiglione. Most often, he had to apply his oil skills to water colors because Qianlong and most Chinese had their “wishes” and whims: Qianlong did not like the glossy appearance of the oil paintings; every portrait had to be painted full face, not at an angle; the eyes had to be looking at the spectator; shadows had to be avoided; and the most important thing was “likeness” (Cecile and Michel Beurdeley 101-102).

The painters of the portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen had to accept many of the same kind of amateurish impulsive comments. Even though they were oil paintings, portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen did not have obvious shadows. His faces were

always round, and his eyes were looking directly to the viewers. Both of his ears have been shown since 1977. Like Giuseppe Castiglione, the painters of Mao Zedong have not enjoyed high esteem for their artistic value, but are respected only because they have provided service to the working people who are educated to view the images of Mao Zedong as basic spiritual needs.

Before the Nation's Day in 1950, Xin Mang found a group of painters and decided to paint a Mao Zedong of social construction. When the second Mao Zedong's Portrait was on Tiananmen, some of the masses commented—"Why just show one ear? Does it mean that Chairman Mao Zedong only listen to the elite? Also, why let him turn his eyes at the sky? He does not want to look at us poor, lower, and middle peasants?" Xin Mang immediately led the group to revise, and painted a front view and two eyes looking at the viewers (Chen Shilin). In this way, the Chinese way of putting the service of the artists over their artistic value is incidentally channeled to visual rhetoric of the images of Mao Zedong.

But generally speaking, the Western realism was broadly used in the public paintings. The Chinese traditional style was almost exclusively used to demonstrate the beauty of Chinese lands and waters, especially the places Mao Zedong visited. The typical example is Fu Baoshi's "The Waters and Lands are so Beautiful," as mentioned above. Fu Baoshi was an adamant supporter of Chinese traditional style, but was also the first person who translated Giuseppe Castiglione from Japanese in 1936 and seriously introduced him to the Chinese painters. Mao Zedong's portraits seemed to have made in the reverse procedure of Giuseppe Castiglione—the Chinese painters applied their water-colored perspectives to oil skills.

An important aspect of Mao Zedong's portraits that enhances the Western realism is that they have been based on real photos and have looked like real photos. Olu Oguibe points out that most people assume that "photography, unlike all the other techniques of representation, [has] through its supposed substitution of the machine for the human hand, finally and thankfully elided subjectivity and the fallibility of human agency" (571). This make-believe assumption has been actually effective to move the large working masses.

The portraits of Mao Zedong were based on the photos that fully show Mao Zedong's ideological sentiments, that is, "to educate and reform the working people through socialist spirit, and to love and care about humanity as largely as our conscience can reach" (Ma Xiaohua 118). For these purposes, the photos that were used for the standard portraits of Mao Zedong all had moving stories.

The photo that was selected to be the model for the first Portrait of Mao Zedong was one in which Mao Zedong talked side by side to Zhu Rui, another possible successor of Mao Zedong who died on October 1, 1948, exactly one year before the Mao Zedong standing beside him in the photo went up Tiananmen (Dou Yingtai 40-41). Zhu Rui was well educated in Soviet Union, and showed political and military talents during the Anti-Japanese War. His fame was as high as that of Lin Biao who was appointed by Mao Zedong in 1970 to be his successor but almost assassinated him in 1971. Zhu Rui's wife, who was also well educated in Soviet Union, and their son were both killed in a Japanese sabotage. For Mao Zedong, the photo represented the most praiseworthy devotion to the human liberation he believed in. This story was all the more inspiring when the memory was called up while watching the portrait.

The second portrait of Mao Zedong that was put on the wall of Tiananmen is usually called the first standard portrait of Mao Zedong. It is a clip from a photo taken at the end of June 1950, in which Mao Zedong stands with a group of representatives who were the best in their respective occupations—workers, peasants, and soldiers. It replaced the military Mao Zedong and was seen at Tiananmen on October 1, 1950. This model was painted for Tiananmen for three years, and is now in the RMB bills. The third portrait of Mao Zedong was also made from a photo in which Mao Zedong is doing some construction work with others. Its copies stayed at Tiananmen from 1952 to 1958. The fourth (1959-1963, September 18, 1976) and fifth (1964 to now) portraits of Mao Zedong were specially taken, but were carefully modified by Chen Shilin who also did the embellishing work for the previous photos that were used for portraits of Tiananmen.

The painters who undertook the portraits of Tiananmen were also exclusively trained in oil painting and photography of the West styles.

Ge Xiaoguang usually puts a timetable at the studio, listing the work for each day from late August to the end of September. When a job is done, he marks a circle. Two elevators are helping him to apply pigments to the huge canvas of 6.4 meters high and 5.04 meters wide. Modern technology comes to his every act. He also has chances to visit Europe and America frequently.

The political function of Ge's painting is now shared with the aesthetic and rhetorical formulations. Although he is often asked for his own opinion about Mao Zedong, his answers set up spaces for his artistic passion and rhetorical maturity. He still thinks that Mao Zedong, as a great mind that has shaped and is shaping the nation of China, has a unique personality that he is trying to place into the paints (Liu Hui and Xie

Jing). The image is not a copy of a specific photo but a combination of semiotic abstractions. From considerations of its light, color and touch in relation to its surroundings—the spacious square, golden ceramic tiles, red lanterns, red walls, and the changing sky—to different viewing perspectives, Ge is fully engaged in the creation of a secondary order of Maoist Chinese reality. Addressing his subject as Mao Zedong, he processes his experiences with pigments into ethical articulation—“Painting Mao Zedong is a constant purifying process for my aesthetic consciousness and professional ethics. Every year I paint this portrait, every year I acquire new lights and thoughts. If the artist is not self-conceited, the artistic energy will not run off. I am still a middle-aged man at the best period of artistic creation, and will go out for my ideals” (Liu Hui and Xie Jing).

Certainly the looser political environment accounts for his open commentary. His predecessors were or are much more taciturn and solitary. After Zhou Lingzhao, who created the military Mao Zedong, and Xin Mang, who presented the theorist Mao Zedong, Zhang Zhenshi took the position in 1954 (Liu Hui and Xie Jing). He was mostly left alone in a narrow courtyard of Tiananmen. Probably because the underground forces from Taiwan and its allies were still rampant, and Mao Zedong did not want personality cult to be an open practice, Zhang’s activities were kept as a secret. For eleven years, he climbed up and down the wooden ladder, carrying a heavy brush and a pail full of paints. The Buddhist Mao Zedong he displayed played a soothing role for the country after so many wars. After Korean War ended in 1953, big domestic riots did not come out until 1967. Therefore, Zhang’s Mao Zedongs reflected or probably promoted a relatively peaceful period of construction and production. In 1965, Wang Guodong took over the lonely work from the tired Zhang. Again for political reasons, Wang’s most

demonstrative work required his oblivion to the public. He was treated slightly better in the sense that he was arranged to sit in a front row in the Hall of People's Congress, and saw Mao Zedong in person for the only time in his life.

Ge Xiaoguang became Wang's apprentice in 1971, and for the purpose of insurance, in 1975, Wang also recruited ten middle school students from Beijing. In 1976, when Wang was still painting the year's Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong died. Wang mixed all his devotion and sorrow into paints, and it became his last Mao Zedong's Portrait on Tiananmen. Ge presented his first Mao Zedong's Portrait in 1977. In 1978, the other ten apprentices were tested by experts to get practitionership. Liu Yang won the first award. So in 1979, Tiananmen saw his first Mao Zedong's Portrait. In the next year, probably because of professional and cultural ethics, Liu Yang retreated into other avenues of portrait painting so that Ge could focus on Mao Zedong's Portrait for Tiananmen.

Since Ge is the latest of the relay, Mao Zedong's Portrait, as a signifier, carries new conditions for viewers to imagine and interpret more analytically than emotionally. Careful viewers may notice that Mao Zedong's mole in Ge's portraits has always been the vertical middle point.

James Heffernan argues that the most "suggestive moment" of a painting is the midpoint, "the point from which past and future action may be inferred as cause and consequence of the action portrayed" (qt in Hill and Helmers 83). This point can never deliver "more than a partial meaning." Mao Zedong's mole has been interpreted culturally as a sign of bliss. Psychologically, it symbolizes a unique leadership for a nation that has been dependent on guiding personalities. It is a stimulant lead that

encourages other interpretive and formative associations. Ge, after years of explorations, is the accumulating agent of these joining and dividing forces, and is trying to assemble them into an organic composition.

A noticeable addition is that the portrait's spatial implications begin to complement its temporal development. Ge mentioned that, except at the parallel directions to the plane of the frame, Mao Zedong's image always looked like a real rounded person. Also, Mao Zedong's international look is improving. The creative energy comes undoubtedly from Ge's intentional visits to the West and the changes in the slogans on the two sides of the portrait. The original slogans "Long Live the People's Republic of China!" and "Long Live the Central People's Government!" were constantly changed. The one on Mao Zedong's left side was once changed to "Long Live the Big Unification of the Chinese People" and is now "Long Live the Big Unification of the People of the World!" (Kang You).

Mao Zedong's Portrait, in this sense, is developing what Blakesley calls—an analogical self—an identity that is similar but somehow different (117). After Mao Zedong's physical death, Mao Zedong's wish of ideological unification of the world is gradually stretching to the cultural and socio-economic levels.

On December 26, 2003, Ge Xiaoguang was invited to a talk show for the first time in his life. Chen Dahui, the anchor of CCTV-12, asked him what was the feeling when left alone in the studio, an iron scaffold of 90 square meters and eight meters high at the northwestern corner of the Gate of Sky Peace.

"It is a large space," Ge Xiaoguang answered, "for only one intense communication with Mao Zedong."

Except for 1979, Ge Xiaoguang has been painting Mao Zedong's Portrait for the Gate of Heavenly Peace one or two times a year since 1977. The police members near the flag post often care about the expression of Mao Zedong's face in the portrait. They come up with a comment that the Chairman looks happy for one day, and for another one, serious.

Chen Dahui turned to Ge Xiaoguang. "How come people feel differently toward the same portrait on a different day? And how come different people have different feelings toward the same portrait?"

"It is the nuances of perspective." Ge Xiaoguang looked puzzled. "When people meet this portrait, they carry strong emotional responses and will exchange thoughts with Mao Zedong for a settled feeling."

After a while, Chen posed another question—"Do your Mao Zedong's Portraits based on the same model look like the same to you?"

"It is impossible," was the reply. "Any two art works will be different."

From the interview, we can see that the artist was much respected for his artistic achievements, not just because of his service to the public. Generally speaking, Mao Zedong's idealism of constantly using impermanent media to promote steady faith in the socialist construction is adapted to the strong pragmatic atmosphere. In other words, artists are allowed to demonstrate their talents if it is not too far away from the taste of the ordinary citizenship. Wang Qizhi, who participated in designing the model for Zhang Zhenshi's portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, and painted a number of Mao Zedong and other leaders' large portraits for other purposes, is now enjoying a high fame, and is frequently received by the national leaders (Lei Zhengmin).

That the taste of the artist is placed at an important place, is, again, contradictory to Mao Zedong's guidelines of public arts, but is accepted by most Chinese. This is in accordance with the less orthodox ways of following Mao Zedong's ideas. So is the application of the Chinese national painting style. Recently portraits of Mao Zedong are also painted on traditional paper with writing brushes. In December, 2008, Wang Renhua, a Red Guard who saw Mao Zedong on November 3, 1966, displayed her sixth portraits of Mao Zedong in traditional Chinese style (Zhen Qihong B8). That was an anniversary of Mao Zedong's birthday. Many painters of the Chinese style would try to celebrate their reminiscence through the painted red suns. Fu Baoshi's skills are passed down and applied to directly show the head of Mao Zedong in color and water. It is not purely devotion but also pragmatic reasons. Under the rhetorical umbrella of Western "advanced" technology and life style, the Chinese traditional values are relocated on the shelves of free market and highly valued for their artistic or elite tastes.

Laura Desfor Edles in her *Cultural Sociology in Practice* defines culture in "the systems or patterns of shared symbols" (1). In these shared symbols, she further points out, the cultural frames will converge into a cultural prism. Through the cultural prism of the images of Mao Zedong, the Western and Chinese styles seem to have found the common grounds to merge or coexist. In this way, the de facto ideologies of pragmatism and "new world order" or globalism cover up the essential differences between public arts, which Mao Zedong adamantly promoted and formulated, and conventional arts.

### **Conclusion: the Ideological Spectatorship**

A visual artwork demonstrated so conspicuously as Mao Zedong's portrait at

Tiananmen carries conservative and radical messages at the same time. Mao Zedong Thought, a nationwide idea, is a historical abstraction of Marxist materialism to Chinese characteristics as a nation and a political state. When transferred to the image of Mao Zedong, it becomes a “sign of sign,” as Umberto Eco phrases it. First, Mao Zedong Thought is a sign of a difficult Chinese ideology born out of domestic and international conflicts and contradictions. It is a Western adoption of naming—just like *Confucius*, a personal name that represents a school of Chinese philosophy translated from 儒家, Rujia, Scholarly School, which emphasizes the *nature* of human relations. In the traditional Chinese naming, Kongzi, though a forerunner, is only thought to have found, not discovered, the initial thoughts of the Scholarly school, and thus his own name is not in the title of the school. Like *Confucius* which has unfavorable connotations to a Chinese who can speak English, *Mao Zedong Thought* may have been a uncomfortable Westernized term. However, Chinese have accepted such a Western practice—just like *China*, a word the *Chinese* have never used to address their country in their native languages. A quick answer is that the two-thousand-year Chinese feudalism was too corruptive to stir up any hope, and that *China*, a name sounding terribly in Japanese, was defeated by the West, and that, when Marxism brought hope, the rhetoric of Western thoughts being progressive than Chinese feudalism was taken as truth. The portrait, then, is a radical signal of change and hope to leave behind the Chinese tradition of putting most human lives at the mercy of a few feared rulers who never dared to show their faces to the general public. Mao Zedong becomes a bold sight that denies a corrupt Chinese tradition but preserves a radical Western ideology. It is radical because of his denial of the Chinese tradition. It is conservative because it sets up a new tradition that is now

renewed yearly to remind the public that Mao Zedong's ideals—the continuum of Western Marxism—are not realized in just a single or a few radical steps.

Meanwhile, the portrait faithfully preserves Mao Zedong's ideals about public arts. Made in comparatively impermanent and inexpensive materials, it is open to confrontational risks. In this sense, the virtual Mao Zedong, who believes in the working masses, becomes a forum for the people to judge the political state he has led. Just because of its impermanence, it creates a sense of crisis for the government he has left behind. It is a warning sign of ideological contentions.

Such abstractions are put into a single visual projection. Mao Zedong's ideas go back into Mao Zedong's persona. It definitely does not keep all of Mao Zedong's real intentions and wishes. But most of his ideas are still in the sign for those admirers who are motivated to protect them, now that they are greatly threatened by the oppositions of Marxism in the West. The danger is all the more increased because the relevance between Mao Zedong's persona, Mao Zedong's personality (Maoism), and Mao Zedong's person is not necessarily granted. Mao Zedong, as a rebellious person, may also actually encourage the real dissidents to take radical steps, including sacrificing his own images, to put the country back onto the road he wished to take as a young person. Such a devotion, though, would only enhance people's faith in his ideals.

Roelof Van Straten believes that art works “illustrate abstract ideas in definable contexts rather than represent the ideas in isolation” (25). As a national sign, Mao Zedong's Portrait personifies the wishes of most Chinese “ordinary people”—workers and peasants, especially peasants that took up about 95% of the population until Jiang Zemin became the president. It was materialistically straightforward: it is an oil painting

that portrayed a photo; Mao Zedong was a real person, not a religious icon. In order to strengthen such a text, its framework and all other materials are the amplification of any ordinary portrait any ordinary household can afford. Mao Zedong wears an ordinary, fading jacket. Nothing artificial is seen. Through numerous modifications by millions of ordinary citizens, the spectacle of Mao Zedong has assembled the representative articles of the constitutions of the Party and the People.

The biggest puzzle is that Mao Zedong's persona is used to personify his own abstract ideas borrowed from Marx and Lenin. Unlike Marx and Lenin whose images directly or almost directly prompted their ideas, Mao Zedong's portrait simply shows the complex or contradictory nature of Mao Zedong Thought. He represented the interests of peasants, yet proletariat dictatorship was the nature of the state. He wanted people's communes, yet state-owned factories enjoyed the prestige of socialist material and spiritual civilizations. For these reasons, Mao Zedong Thought was too shallow for many intellectuals. Yet, when looking at the deep structure of his theories and practices, most people would agree that he fought hysterically with everyone in the beginning and won them back in the end quietly. In order to fight against gerontocracy, he sided with young people and promoted Wang Hongwen, a thirty-four-year-old young man, to the position of first Vice-Chairman. Chen Yonggui, an illiterate peasant, was appointed to be the first premier. Many hardworking or young women were also promoted to high offices. Such was probably his idea of Cultural Revolution. But Mao Zedong was true to his idealism of equality—regardless of talent, an unselfish or young person can always bring hope. Now after all these years, the young people and people in the rural areas begin to visit Tiananmen Square—to look at his body and his portrait, tearfully. Although many

educated people, especially those who are favorably exposed to Western individualism, find his “backward” image repulsive, mysteriously, the ordinary spectatorship of Mao Zedong does involve the ideals of equality between men and women, workers and peasants, city and country.

As a sign, Mao Zedong’s portrait at Tiananmen lives on such different rhetorical sources. Unlike his body in the Memorial Hall or his statues, which needs a lot of financial support and encourages blind devotion, it has, rhetorically a paper nature in it. Although it is a canvas that holds the pigments, its artistic display is a person on a paper. Such a comparison reflects the essence of Mao Zedong’s concern for the working masses. It is a humble picture, almost artless, that looks at the People’s Congress day and night. If the government does not listen to the people’s voices, they can come to either easily tear him into pieces or cheaply make his portraits as shields to attack the corrupt officials.

It is probably such a nature that attracts the majority of people in this large country and other countries that are struggling for equal ownership of social and natural resources. Recently, a Chinese neighbor confirms that such a paper nature is effective for such a purpose. A devoted believer of Mao Zedong Thought, Prachanda became a new Nepali premier on August 15, 2008 (Zhang Jianhua 1). A week later, on August 23, he came to Beijing. On August 25, he saluted the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen and bowed at the body of his mentor in the Memorial of Chairman Mao. It was said that he wore a tie for the third time in his whole life—first on August 18 when he swore to take the office, second time on August 24 when met the Chinese leaders (Zhang Jianhua 2). But in his heart, he probably cherishes those inexpensive images of Mao Zedong that have accompanied him in the hardships of the last twelve years. Prachanda has a portrait

of Mao Zedong on his humble T-shirt. His military camps have all sorts of paper portraits of Mao Zedong to help explain the directives. In Venezuela and Peru, the organizations such as “Glorious Road,” figured out that it was Deng Xiaoping that surrendered China to the Western powers, not Mao Zedong (Hu Fen). They have readopted Mao Zedong Thought as the guidelines for their efforts to improve the status of democracy from the perspective of ownership.

Such a paper nature is a memory storage and a sun panel to absorb modifications.

Because it is symbolically paper, it requires constant memorization and renovation for its spectatorship. The portraits of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen witness what Marita Sturken terms as “acts of public commemoration,” in which, the “shifting discourse of history, personal memory, and cultural memory converge” (357). Like a projector, the person in the portraits presents a large part of the history of the people’s Republic of China. Meanwhile, like a wide screen, a temporary portrait of Mao Zedong receives all the spectators’ projections and shows the relevant parts of the history simultaneously. At a personal level, each spectator reviews what is remembered and seeks what is newly added. At a cultural—usually politically oriented—level, the portrait presents what Prelli Phrases as—“what is and is not remembered, whose interests become present in public memory and whose remain absent, who has authority to define public memory and who challenges and counters that authority, and what constitutes past transgressions and who is accountable for them” (11). Because of that, there are numerous invisible admission points at Tiananmen Square. Only those who are admitted can come to discuss those questions, and usually they send representatives to attend the meetings at the Hall of People’s Congress to the left side of the portrait.

The fact that Mao Zedong's Portrait on Tiananmen is renewed one or two times every year shows the nation's attempt to keep Mao Zedong Thought alive. It is a simple act; Ge Xiaoguang can redo it in ten to fifteen days. Yet the complicated spectatorship is overwhelming. Through seeing, the same past is reviewed and evolved according to the viewer's emotional impulses. Then in the superficially silent yet loud voices in the deep structures, different personalities confront each other and look analytically at an unknown future.

Seeing and looking are two extended dimensions of a visual art; each piece has its own living sources for these two dimensions.

Reading the past offers many viewers emotional choices. They usually build a meaning around the evidence presented on or hidden in the canvas, following their narrative instincts. Although they usually take the two extremes, they do influence the circumstances of creation of the work. These people would be the "naïve viewers," defined by Lynne Pearce as those "whose primary interest is in representational content" (qt. in Helmers 67). Pearce favors them because their "technical illiteracy" would more likely make them to focus on "the possibility of making for the picture a narrative" of their own choosing. These emotional "types" are actually good storytellers who can liberate the subjects of the painting and themselves from "controlling regimes of explanation" and "consensual symbolism." Mao Zedong's favoritism toward people of lower classes is quite relevant here. For about three decades, ordinary villagers and workers performed on the stages of opera houses that were usually also used as meeting halls where thousands, millions of people could watch, make speech or go to the stage to perform.

In *The Elements of Visual Analysis*, Marguerite Helmers suggests “an inquiry-based spectatorship,” which embraces Jeannie Grant Moore’s “inclination and/or capability of individual spectators to create mental pictures—as well as their beliefs, outlooks, and impressions—the particular historical moment, the prevailing ideology, the composition of the audience, the ambient and intentional conditions that surround looking (84). In other words, engaged spectators would always bring rhetorical relations to the sight. Mao Zedong’s Portrait is probably the most popular sight in China. People usually neglect it. But when they see it, they will look at it. Questions asked by “naïve viewers”—such as “How come human relations become so cold?” “Why do people do bad stuff when they are rich?” “Why does money become the daily, hourly topic of the Chinese people?”—often tangle personal and national conscience. This is a special era of economic globalism, social Darwinism, and political imperialism. Class, gender, and race inequalities grow fast in China, and are severer than the situations in the old capitalist societies. Such differences create different emotional and analytical responses to Mao Zedong’s gaze, and reflect different social looks from the spectators’ faces to Mao Zedong’s image.

For millions of the populace, they still see the past of their enthusiasm and anguish. The sight guided them to pull forward a heavy past that has embodied in their very existence. There is no chance for them to cut it off. They are living with the same interpretive process, as Marguerite Helmers puts it, “in which past experiences merge with the evidence of the canvas to construct a meaning” (84). “That meaning,” she goes on, “will change over time as the memory of the viewing event is recalled and the image is revisited in different settings.” However, for many Chinese viewers, any change in

meaning is rooted in that image. They may drag off their eyes for opposite distractions; their spiritual life depends on this visual source.

When they look at the Portrait of Mao Zedong at Tiananmen, almost every Chinese in their fifties will remember the song of *Red East* and Mao Zedong 's hand. The past revives. This past has been denounced by the Chinese Government and most Western governments. For many ordinary people, though, this part of their life is what they remember or what they have. The rhetoric of disastrous Cultural Revolution is so loud that they become more reminiscent these days. The rightist Chinese Government makes them yearn for the leftist past. As David Lowenthal notes that although the past could be said to exist in the present through memory, history, and relic, “the ultimate uncertainty of the past makes us all the more anxious to validate that things were as reputed” (qt. in Helmers, *Elements* 66). Relationships are usually strongholds in China. When Deng Xiaoping was in power, many of Mao Zedong's radical supporters were sentenced to death. For a long time, people who do not talk about money or economy are looked down upon. Emotionally, these people become increasingly nostalgic for Mao Zedong 's ideals because Mao Zedong stood for the lower classes when the economic interests between the government and the people were in conflict. In his late years, he advocated free strike and demonstration so that the problems of the people could reach the decision-making institutions. In the fifth volume of his selected works, which he agreed with the Central committee to not publish it, there are many passages that will appeal to the peasants, workers and students today:

### **On Relocation**

A few years ago, we needed to build an airport at somewhere in

Henan Province. Nothing was arranged for the local villagers, and no reasons were explained to them. They were forced to relocate their homes. A villager said, “if you poke the twig nest of sparrows at the treetop, they will caw when their home is gone?”

Now, Deng Xiaoping, if I shove your nest away, will you shout or not?

...We get some people who think now that we have taken the country, they can do whatever they want to. ...Such Communists will get us in big trouble.

### **On Petition**

Comrades, when students, workers take the streets, we should think these are great opportunities. ...students on another train were forced to go back at Luoyang station. ...My opinion, and that of Premier Zhou, too, is to let them come to Beijing and present their information to different departments....

### **On the Democracy of State Politics**

Free strike, free demonstration...These are written in our constitution. ...They are good for solving the problems between the government, directors of the factories, and the workers. ...We should not become a noble class of bureaucrats. (313-329)

In these writings, people can read these issues that are relevant to today. When those people who were relocated from the big dam areas—especially in Sichuan

Province, Deng Xiaoping's birthplace—read these words, the portrait of Mao Zedong becomes all the more a reminiscent resort. That probably explains the tallest statue of Mao Zedong in Chongqing, previously a city in Sichuan Province.

Yet, the past they review is not the same any more. Because, Helmers says “Through Rhetoric” that, “in trying to recover the past, [they] produce misreadings because [they] infuse the past with [their] desires” (66). Just like the Mao Zedong the Red Guards saw on Tiananmen was not the Mao Zedong who had defeated all kinds of people's enemies, the Mao Zedong's portrait on Tiananmen shows technical and rhetorical evolution and modifications. On most occasions, most people look at the picture for some clues to improve their psychology as if Mao Zedong could come down to relieve them from material competition, especially in the sense of making money. They do not realize that Mao Zedong wanted people to be rich together, and that for Mao Zedong, to be rich probably meant enough warmth and healthy food, and enough land for everyone. His materialism is different from Stalin and Khrushchev's material competition and deterrence against the West. Simply put, he wanted to have advanced forces and means for people to live a convenient and simple life, implicitly excluding any greed or luxury more than basic physical needs. Economic activities, especially marketing, because of their lack of productivity, do not interest him. It was probably for this reason that he adamantly disapproved the idea of putting his image onto the money bills. In a strict sense, naïve viewers' narrative hope for the picture is based on their emotional memories. Those who do not have any bad memory of Mao Zedong's administration passionately hope Mao Zedong's representative will come to distribute the money evenly.

Those who can look, on the other hand, ponder their future. Their viewing process takes longer because, in James Heffernan's words, "it involves scanning, remembering, anticipating, correcting, and confirming impressions" (qt. in Hill and Helmers 65). Also, they are the real opponents against each other: those, who are parts of the image they see, go all out to block the currents of corrosives; others who spit at it begin to look for any pigment that would color out the face or any method that would make it disappear. Ironically, both sides look Westward at two opposite extremes of the Western civilization.

The portrait as a screen is—what Althusser calls—an ideological state apparatus that not only chooses and preserves what is remembered but also projects assumptions about—in Perril's words—"what is worth remembering about the past and about whether the remembered is worthy of praise or condemnation, acknowledgement or disparagement, celebration or lamentation" (11)). It is a surface that "shield[s]," "is projected upon" (Sturken 357), and presents visions that can never be described in words, can never be allowed to describe in words, and can never be lost in words.

Mao Zedong's Portrait is a living reminder, a contradiction the Chinese cannot get over easily. Lu Decheng, one of three defacers, arrived at Vancouver International Airport on December 3, 2006. At the end of his speech, he said, "The worst thing was that it was not the Chinese police who caught us. It was the students who took us to the police. Of course, it was a very regretful incident."

The students were caught in a network of complicated relationships. These relationships consist of the major forces that move the brush in Ge Xiaoguang's hand. Obviously, he plays an executive role, though he has never been paid for painting Mao

Zedong's Portraits legitimately. Compared with the numbers of other relations in the painting, he represents very little for himself, though he is now famous for what he is doing. It is a collective authorship, and Mao Zedong's Portrait has its own living efforts and energy.

Every year, on December 26 and September 9, Hua Guofeng, the relatively young successor appointed by Mao Zedong, comes to Chairman Mao Zedong's Memorial Hall (Mi Ruirong). When his family and friends were around Mao Zedong's body, he leads the rituals of respect. "First bow!" his loud voice resonated through the imposing building—"Second bow! Third bow!" His piety to Mao Zedong shows his blind devotion that was taken advantage of by Deng Xiaoping.

Obviously, his neglect of Mao Zedong's errors as a human being led to the failure in his defense of Mao Zedong's ideals of equality and justice. Mao Zedong himself would never approve of Hua's uncouth plan to set an occupying edifice against his portrait on Tianamen.

But like what Deng Xiaoping told Oriana in 1982, what was done cannot be undone when the symbolical consequences can only benefit national and ideological opponents. That leads to a situation in which Mao Zedong's images are not capable of making Mao Zedong's arguments, though they are still invested with the ability to offer propositions to his opponents as well as supporters. Here, identification and division are two contemporaneous forces that shape the political state of Mao Zedong's legacy.

Listing has been a common practice among the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Numbers have the power to chain abstractions together so that they can be easily remembered. Shortly after Mao Zedong's death, Hua Guofeng proposed

*Two All's*—“All of Chairman Mao’s decisions, we should carry out; all of Chairman Mao’s directives, we should always abide by.” For several months in 1976, one of Mao Zedong’s real photos was amplified and placed on Tiananmen. China was plunged into a deep sorrow. People gazed at Mao Zedong’s portrait and Hua’s promise gradually conducted the loyalty to himself. His own portrait was raised throughout the country along with Mao Zedong’s.

Deng Xiaoping, as a wise politician, sought *all that is the real thing*—his famous “Seek truth from actual things”—to embarrass Hua. The most furious one for Hua was Deng Xiaoping’s two in one—“*two (political) systems in one nation.*” For a long time, Mao Zedong’s Portrait on Tiananmen did not attract the people from Deng Xiaoping’s actual and artistic images. A popular song would summarize people’s favor of Deng Xiaoping over Mao Zedong—“1979, that is a spring. An old man gently made a circle...” His portrait was giant on billboards.

When the fiftieth anniversary of the nation came near, in addition to Mao Zedong’s Portrait for Tiananmen, Ge Xiaoguang was asked to do a portrait of Jiang Zemin for the parade. It was ten years after he took over the power from Deng Xiaoping. On the Nation’s Day, he looked above the Mao Zedong’s Portrait down at his own image on the flat truck, and proclaimed his *Three Representations*—i.e., The Chinese Communist Party represents: 1) the requirements of Chinese advanced production forces; 2) the essence of the selected Chinese culture; and 3) the best interests of Chinese people.

Hu Jintao, the new president, also contributed his numbers to Tiananmen—*Eight Honors and Eight Shames* that rhetorically adjusts the ethical situation created by Deng Xiaoping’s policies.

These numerical presentations show the difficult evolution of Mao Zedong Thought, and add the rhetorical forces to guide Ge Xiaoguang.

The Burkean phraseology is instrumental for interpreting Mao Zedong's images, as portrayed in different media. It is especially fluent when Mao Zedong's portrait on Tiananmen is projected as dramatism. Burke's distinction of motive into the grammar, symbolic and rhetoric provides a framework to accommodate emotional and analytic responses to the head of Chinese Communism and, to emulate Burke's verbal craft, a sieve to separate structural elements in the vision. When the rhetoric of the capital sight is often usurped to increase the volume of its grammar and symbolic, Burke's idea of identification as actual practice of persuasion that is often hot in the fever of division sheds light on the numerous opposites in the picture that was easily made and is vulnerable to erasure yet seems increasingly beaming in the lights of modern technology. The network of consubstantiation embedded in the paints that are renewed every National Day of China is a masterpiece of "proving opposites." Understandably, Mao Zedong is worshiped yet deeply hated in his own nation. In the West, Mao Zedong is mysteriously admired yet sharply accused. The rhetoric of "advanced Western ideology and technology" is shining on his forehead to poke the most daring resistance against Western hegemony and injustice. His romantic, almost Western, life style that went harmoniously with his rigid military and political life is now applauded to argue against those who live an individualistic Western life. On an unmistakably Eastern red wall, Western socialism, as a name, rests neatly on his blue jacket to avoid the Western capitalism right below his nose. The picture opposes to and identifies with different social beings, home and abroad, at different communicative levels.

Blakesley interprets Burke's identification as an "assertion of a margin of overlap—an identity of values, beliefs, and even bodies and bodily processes—in cases where we are also clearly divided where common values or beliefs are arguments or propositions as much as they are a pre-existing basis for acting together" (116). China faces such a rhetorical need. Nationalism has been and is a unifying force. Yet one end of this rhetorical spectrum is devotion: many people identify Mao Zedong as their accessible judge for equality and justice. The other is economic development; Mao Zedong's peasantry was and is a setback for material and technological competition.

Pragmatism is the major mediator. Most Chinese, no matter how divided they are, accept both Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong, no matter how differently these two leaders contributed to the lives of ordinary citizens. The neutralizing force becomes active when one side goes to the extreme.

Many Chinese have emotional ties to Mao Zedong for ideological, political and practical reasons. Just because these analytical factors are increasingly rhetorical and antagonistic, the emotional weight becomes more intense, rather than weakened.

When a universal motive diffuses, it will have to be modified to a specific scene. And in Burke's words, "the greater the diffusion of a motive (be it the One God or the Gold Standard and its later variants) the greater its need to adopt modifications peculiar to specific local scenes" (*Grammar* 44). The reason, he goes on, is that when "a doctrine proclaims a universal scene that is the motivation common to all men," it will have to adapt to "more restricted purposes." This can be instrumental to generalize Marxism in Chinese praxis. When Marxism was proclaimed to be a "universal truth," it established a universal motive. A local scene like China—explicitly addressed in *Communist*

*Manifesto* as a most barbarian nation with her walls and “intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners”—obviously needed much more modifications than Russia, another “unsuitable” nation for civilization or revolution in the eyes of Western Marxists, or Karl Marx himself in the sense that he did not have full access to the Oriental situations. The Chinese paid high prices for both the diffusion and modifications, and the situated status is Mao Zedong Thought. It has been a Marxist act against a feudal and colonial state, but after the Revolution, has become a state apparatus, a state agency and agent of Marxism at the age of Lenin in ruins.

Chinese are baulking at the deterministic nature of Marxism, yet in what way can they move ahead? Can China continue the capitalist road when its large population has reached the point where individualist competitions can only blow up the remaining social and natural resources—just as the good Americans pointed out in 1940s that capitalism was for America and socialism for China, and that would not prevent their mutual help? What should be criticized to leave some real space of freedom for the Chinese characteristics—or is there such a thing as Marxism with Chinese characteristics? These questions are put before the Chinese as just they were put before them almost a hundred years ago. Theoretically, in the Chinese way, no one has answered better than Mao Zedong. So no matter how un-democratic it sounds like, just like how awkward it is to call China a socialist country, Mao Zedong’s images, at least the one on Tiananmen, will still hold to its post.

Most likely, it will still stay for a long time as an ideological state apparatus for the Chinese Government. Its visual rhetorical power is both reflective and projective—when looking up at it, many Chinese will remember a radical past with its ideals and

chaos, and read a revisionary future that is hopeful yet uncertain. It is an ingrained memory. Without it, most social relations become blurry in China and will take large holes in the lives of most populations. No matter how rebellious or respectful a spectator is, the spectacle sets a podium and asks for a stance—either to renew the faith which has come at high costs or to check the angles from which the vision can be avoided and cringe away to where one can live in private.

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