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Command and Leadership Series

Chairman Mao Tse Tung

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Chairman Mao Tse Tung (1893-1976)

Introduction

Mao Zedong (1893-1976), Chinese Communist leader, Chairman of the Communist party of China and the principal founder of the People's Republic of China. Born in Shaoshan, Hunan Province. The scholarly son of a poor peasant who had prospered by hard work, Mao graduated from the Changsha teachers' training school in 1918. He served briefly in the Nationalist army in the 1911-12 revolution against the Manchu government and was a library assistant at Beijing University when the anti-Japanese May Fourth Movement began. He helped to found the Chinese Communist party in Shanghai in 1921. In 1923, when the Communist party allied with the Nationalist party (Kuomintang) against feuding local warlords, Mao became a full-time party worker.

Mao evolved a Chinese Communist alternative that reflected China's different demography, his own experience with the peasants, and his hostility to bureaucracy. Economically he stressed self-reliance through labour-intensive rather than technologically advanced cooperative agriculture and through local community effort. Politically he created the concept of "mass-line" leadership, which integrated intellectuals with peasant guerrilla leaders as a fundamental economic and social strategy.

Widely known through posters and his "little red book," *The Thoughts of Chairman Mao*, Mao was revered in China and studied in the Third World. Made supreme commander of China in 1970, he sought a balance between his own radical followers and the moderate, pragmatic establishment, but their relationship remained uneasy. Mao died in Beijing September 9, 1976.

This bibliography has been designed to provide a guide as to where to find information on Chairman Mao. Please note that the list of references below is a selection of the more relevant titles and information on the subject. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive but is an introductory guide to some of the resources available.

Biography

There are many good books that provide biographical details of Chairman Mao, his life, and rise to political power. **CH'EN, TERRILL** and others offer comprehensive biographies that investigate his life and contribution to the development of China. **TERRILL** is a very readable biography, full of anecdotes, quotations, and factual detail. The use of extensive interviews and documentary evidence adopted by **SHORT** helps create a complete portrait of Mao. This includes his childhood life and development, in addition to key moves within the Cultural Revolution. This is a detailed and very good background that addresses many features and aspects of Mao's life and his Cultural Revolution in China. Two very different ideas of Mao's rule are offered in the biographies of **SCHRAM** and **SPENCE**. **SCHRAM** suggests that Mao Tse-Tung must be regarded as one of the greatest and most remarkable statesmen of modern times. It is argued that Mao devoted his life to China and Chinese peasants to free the greatness of China and give a new meaning to Marxism. However, **SPENCE** presents Mao as a lord of misrule who deliberately turned the traditional hierarchies of Chinese society upside down, and emphasizes how radical the transformation was. A more personal account of Chairman Mao is given in the memoirs of his physician, **LI**. These recollections are at the very heart of the dictator's private world and are a deeply personal and frank account of his private life. The phenomenon and culture of Mao are outlined by **FITZGERALD** who argues that such a cult of following has rarely been matched.

Party

To gain a view of Mao's political beliefs it is useful to refer to his own writings and manifestos. **MAO'S Select Military Writings and Political Thought** illustrate his own view of power, ideology, strategy and the war against Japan. **MAO'S Cultural Revolution** gives a primary source of opinion, beliefs and the party. The **ASIA RESEARCH CENTRE** provides a good detailed background text,

which traces the origins and spread of Mao's communism in China. **COHEN** adds further detail on the communism of Mao, whilst **LAZZERINI** provides a comprehensive reference guide and series of essays to enable understanding of the Chinese revolution, with Mao's thoughts placed in context along with those of Deng Xiaoping. This is particularly useful for placing the Cultural Revolution in context with events to 1998. With regard to the cult of Mao and propaganda, **URBAN** talks of how communist China enforced a state religion and the cult of Mao and his philosophy. Discussing Mao's philosophy and propaganda, this book mainly consists of press cuttings and official broadcasts about the miracles of Mao; including, faith healing and worship. A note about the possible future after Mao is addressed by **PING**, who asks what will happen to China when Mao dies? Who will take over, and what will be the impact of a new leader on China?

War

ELLIOTT-BATEMAN argues that a failure to understand the military philosophy of Mao was at the root of French defeat in Indo-China and US failure in Vietnam. He refers extensively to the writings of Mao and General Giap and examines how their theories have fared in China, Malaya, and Vietnam.

Periodical Articles

There appear to be few articles relating to Mao's life. However, **WALDRON** and **SPENCE** both profile Mao, the evolution of the Cultural Revolution in China and highlight his political career. A profile of revolutionary characteristics is provided by **REJAI** who includes a profile of Mao. **PYE** on the other hand, whilst looking at personality, also addresses his leadership style and decision making. In considering military and foreign policy there are a number of articles that detail China's foreign affairs and interests, including **CLUTTERBUCK**, who looks at China's strengths and weaknesses. Further foreign policy discussion is found in articles by **CANDLIN** and **MALYAVIN**. Alternatively, **RYLANDER** discusses the philosophical teachings of Mao with regard to military policy.

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