



# China and the United States Comparing our Histories and Current Mindset

Holland Professional Club Presentation

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## Introduction

History is taught in public schools across America. At the time of my education, late 1960s through early 1980s, history classes were of two basic categories: United States history and World History.

United States history classes comprised of largely celebrated stories. They started with the great European explorers, the pilgrims, the revolutionists, the framers of our constitution, the civil war, the horrors of WWI, the saving of the free world in WWII, the paranoia and confusion of Korea and Viet Nam, the hangover of the mediocre 1970s and concluded by anticlimactic vagaries about the modern world. Woven through these classes were some good lessons pertaining to civics, government, democracy, communism, also economics, distribution of wealth, capitalism, socialism, etc.

World history largely comprised of very brief references to the origin of our species. This was followed by coverage of ancient civilizations, Egypt, Greece, Rome. The Dark Ages and the Renaissance also got their due. Some rather dire coverage of Russia and vague reference to China was included. Side stories of Gandhi and pictures of the Taj Mahal were highlighted about India. The Middle East might have been considered to complex, dynamic or religiously controversial for deep coverage. Europe, however, was the overpowering dominant focus of the World History studies presented to me.

What impact does this have today?

*Many of us are witnessing globalization and specifically the emergence of Asia while lacking an understanding of the background so vital to the mindset of all involved.*

Today, China has visibly emerged as a prominent nation in our world society. For many of us, this is a sudden surprise. Some of our thinking is that China has come out of nowhere and is taking the world by storm. If you are in the manufacturing business, your thinking is justifiable. Certainly, our media, press, etc. reports China in this matter.

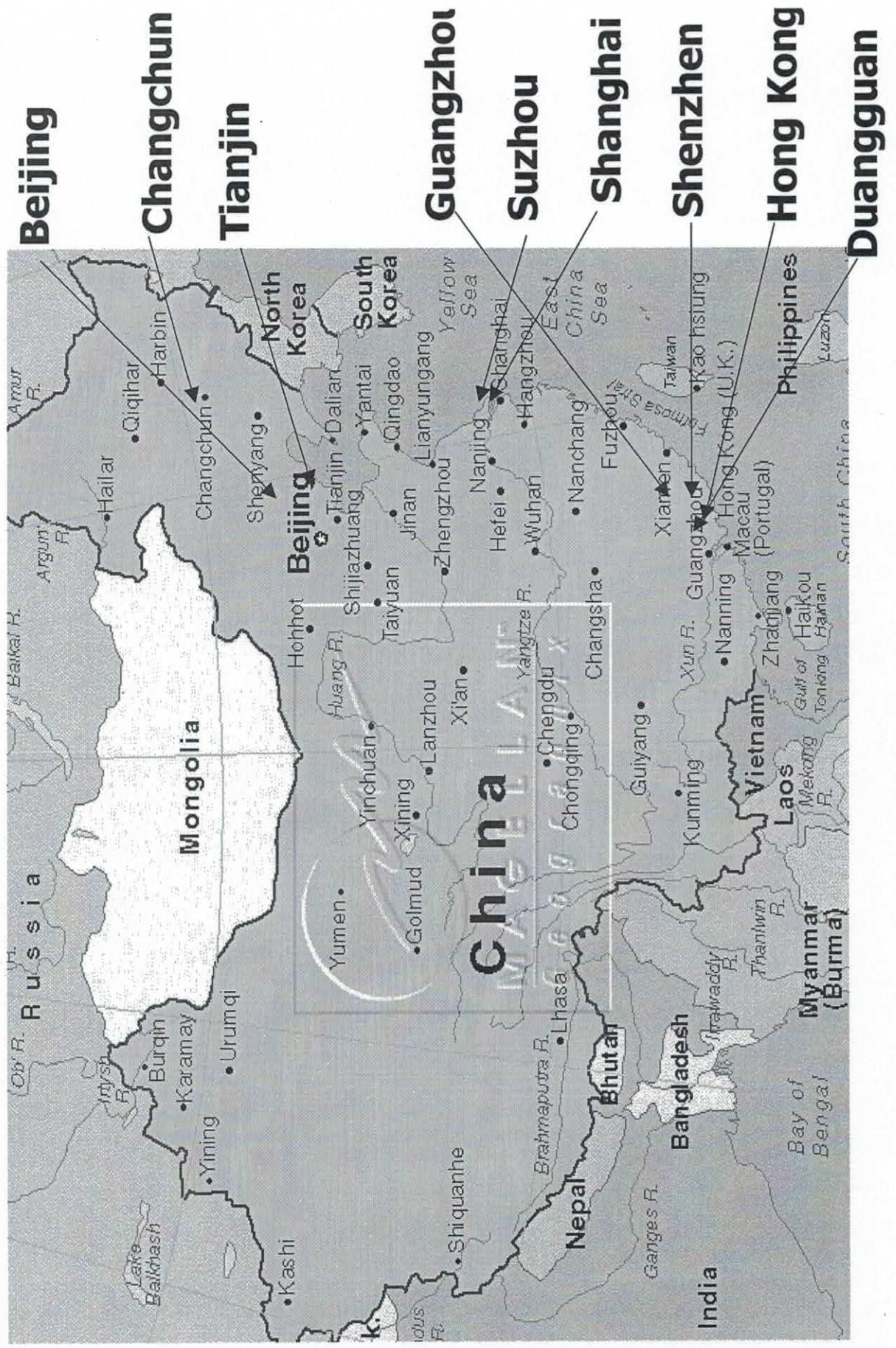
Another popular mindset is that China is a communist state run by a government whose legitimacy could be questioned. Finally, some popular mindsets depict China as a nation with ambitions to take over the world. These popular mindsets can be highly debatable.

What I would like to attempt here is to weave through the history of China while referencing that of the United States in a summary, story-like manner. I would like to tilt these stories in a way that we can speculate about the current mindsets that surround us.

Let's start out with geographic and demographic information:



# Map of China



# Facts About China

## CHINA

TOTAL LAND AREA

3,700,000 sq. mls.

POPULATION

1,275,000,000

Shanghai: 20,000,000

Beijing: 12,780,000

Tianjin 10,000,000

New York: 19,190,000

Los Angeles: 3,695,000

Chicago: 2,896,000

## UNITED STATES

3,700,000 sq. mls.

280,000,000

GOVERNMENT

Communist State

Federal Republic

GDP (trillion)

\$4,500,000,000,000

\$9,965,000,000,000

GDP/ PERSON

\$3,529

\$35,589

CURRENCY

Yuan Renminbi (RMB) = 8.27

Dollar = \$1.00

PREMIERS

Hu Jintao 2003 - Present

Jiang Zemin 1997 - 2003

Deng Xioping 1976 - 1997

Mao Zedong 1949-1976



## Beginning the Story

China often refers to itself as the "Middle Kingdom". Deep in the Chinese psyche is the notion that they are the center of the Universe. This is an important mindset for us to be aware of.

As commonly known, the Chinese civilization spans back to almost 2000 BC. From that point, we hear of a tremendously long succession of dynasties. Notable among the many are the Qin 221 BC and the Han 206 BC. These two dynasties greatly expanded the territory of China and established the bureaucratic imperial government that ran China life for centuries to follow. The succession of dynasties include somewhat familiar names of Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing.

What is important for us to try to understand is that China greatly flourished under the majority of these dynasties. China was a largely self-sufficient, self-satisfied world-class society of in-depth culture, ingrained norms and civic pride. It is this that is permanently ingrained in the Chinese mindset and it is this that China will fight the world to retain. We are about to currently witness the 2006 Winter Olympics. It was once explained to me that if an American were to get that tingly feeling when they hear the Star Spangled Banner, they should imagine multiplying that to understand the Chinese feeling toward their civilization.

China's great dynasties were not without their problems. With growth and burden of managing a huge populous came bureaucratic stagnation. A more critical problem came from external pressures namely their trading partners from the west.

China, from a businessman's standpoint, has had a history of being a difficult trading partner. China historically has been a very productive country. Goods such as silk, porcelain, linens have had great export success for China. However, China's people, ingrained in their culture, have historically shown little to no interest in the wide array of foreign goods available for import from eager trading countries. This has caused frustrating problems that have had tragic consequences. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the only foreign product that experienced import success into China was opium. This was exploited by Western countries, notably Great Britain. It had a very damaging impact on Chinese society, which would be obvious by our prospective today. It eventually led to military conflict between China and Great Britain resulting in an absolutely humiliating defeat for China.

Humiliation to a society is not very well understood by people of developed, prosperous nations. This lack of understanding may be considered a contributor to confusion over the Chinese mindset.

A further unfortunate consequence was the post opium war peace treaties, which established ports and foreign enclaves referred to as "concessions". The foreigners occupying these concessions did not possess the knowledge, skills and diplomatic understanding of "Ex-pats" today. "Foreign devils" are what the Chinese people called these seemingly selfish, exploitive, profit-hungry invaders to coveted Chinese society. Little did the Chinese at that time of the mid-1800s know that their would be more "foreign devils" in their future. Another profound mindset was established. At this time, few, if any, U.S. citizens knew or cared about any of this. The U.S. was a struggling nation about to erupt in a Civil War.



Civil uprisings also were a significant part of Chinese civilization. The Taipeng Rebellion and other large riotous events caused an estimated 20 million people to perish in the years 1850-1870. When a riot or any type of civil uprising occurs amongst an extremely dense populous, the results are magnified devastation. A modern American mindset nurtured in democracy and protected by law might view group-organized protests not only a basic right, but in certain circumstances a duty. A Chinese mindset of an equally intelligent, conscientious person would view the same thing with horror over the potential danger and irresponsibility of such an act. A Chinese mindset may go further to question the wisdom of such measures when weighing the consequences to what he or she might perceive as a temporary (a century or so) matter.

In 1894-1895 the century concluded with another Chinese military defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. Humiliation in the Chinese mindset multiplied.

### **China's Dynasties Come to an End**

The backdrop to these episodes of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries is the collapse of the imperial Qing Dynasty. The great Chinese society had been cursed by incompetent government unequipped to manage the size of the society, nor protect the country from terrible calamities caused by outsiders. This would impact the China mindset. In 1911, the Qing Dynasty ended and a dark period of warlord domination ensued.

The world outside China had major troubles as well. World War I is consuming much of the developed world. Upon the end of WWI was one of many tragic consequences of the Treaty of Versailles: the granting of Germany's former concessions in China to Japan. Although this has had little historic coverage, to the Chinese it was a significant contributor to major tragedies that came later caused by the outside world.

The warlords were a diverse group. They often fought each other. They had self-interests that they ruthlessly protected, frequently devastating the Chinese people's lives. The Chinese society and their people were in terrible trouble. They were appalled at the ruthless self-interest of the warlords. On the other hand, the Chinese people absolutely hated outsiders "the foreign devils only want to divide our country like a melon". Their future was bleak. We can only imagine the mindset of people both damaged internally by what they perceived to be "opportunists" and externally by violently exploitive foreign powers.

### **Nationalism is the Solution**

Along came a hero. Sun-Yat-Sen created the Nationalist Party. He recognized the problems, has answers and was blessed with enormous charisma.

*"For thousands of years China was a first-class world power. Why has China declined to such a degree? Because we, the Chinese people have been asleep. We, the Chinese people must find a way to save ourselves. So wake up everyone, wake up!"*

It is said, that to understand the impact this speech had on the Chinese mindset, Americans should think of the Kennedy inaugural.



Sun-Yat-Sen knew that for China to survive, they needed an army. He appealed to foreign governments. The Chinese attributed the absence of help from any western country to the mindset that the "imperialist devils" did not want the Chinese united. This was unfortunate. His only help came from the Soviet Union. Their only condition was that the communist party must participate.

In 1924, Sun-Yat-Sen set up a military academy in Canton. Chiang Kai-Shek was appointed the leader. Students included Zhou Enlai and eventually Mao Zedong. This military academy would be the schooling ground for the future of the Chinese nation.

Unfortunately, Sun-Yat-Sen contracted cancer and died in 1925. In death, Sun-Yat-Sen was revered as the father of a Republic. Of devastating consequence was the absence of anyone of stature to replace Sun-Yat-Sen.

Emerging from the Canton Military Academy were two leaders of very different mindsets. Chiang Kai-Shek was a military man who assumed leadership of the Nationalist Party. Mao Zedong was a leader with military training coupled with a powerful ability to enlist the common populous. Mao's political orientation was to communism and the thinking of Karl Marx.

The first order of business in the late 1920s was for China to secure their country from the warlords. Chiang Kai-Shek recognized that as Job 1 and set out to do so. A temporary, uneasy alliance with communist factions developing under Mao Zedong started. The warlords were defeated and a Chinese revolution was won. Chiang Kai-Shek became widely popular. His nationalist government took to running China. However, as leader, his primary objective was to purge China of the communist factions. This would lead to an internal confrontation in China with epic consequences. In 1927, his nationalist government initiated an attack on the communists. The communists felt betrayed and their leader Mao knew his destiny was going to be played out.

### **The Nationalist Nation Collapses**

These were tough times across the world. A major economic depression was occurring in the United States. Chiang Kai-Shek's nationalist government struggled badly to manage an economy and nation. Stark inequalities and suffering ensued. Working conditions were brutal. Child labor and abuses were rampant. In the mindset of the Chinese people, this was not the great society they longed for and believed was their destiny.

Underlying these troubles was the infancy of a communist movement. Mao Zedong organized a group of defeated communists and led a breakout of a Nationalist blockade in Southern China. Some 87,000 began what would famously be known as the Great March North. Between 1934 and 1935, this group traveled by foot averaging 17 miles per day until they reached a destination in the Northern part of China. A distance of 6000 miles was traveled with an attrition of 95%. Mao's famous words to the 5% who survived and the communists was: "Are we stronger or are we weaker? The people left are gold". Mao shared hardship and gained permanent unswerving loyalty, so would some other individuals who could be future leaders of China. It is said that this episode is etched into the Chinese mindset for eternity.



Shortly following this, the struggling nation of China under Chaing Kai-Shek was attacked in the north by the Empire of Japan. Chaing Kai-Shek knew he was in terrible trouble. Mao knew he was exhausted from the Great March North and realized that although he is popular, Chaing Kai-Shek could wipe him out instantly. Mao further knew that if Japan takes over China, he and his people would have marched for nothing.

Chaing Kai-Shek assessed the situation with Japan and decided not to fight back. He deployed a military strategy to sacrifice territory to buy time. The Chinese people did not realize this and were outraged. They were being humiliated. They wanted to attack Japan and they wanted to attack Chaing Kai-Shek!

Chaing Kai-Shek was actually kidnapped by a key underling hoping to force action against Japan. Chaing Kai-Shek was released. He agreed to join forces with Mao and China engaged Japan. World War II had begun in Asia. It was not going well for China. Chaing Kai-Shek was perceived to be in charge. The Nansing Massacre occurred. Chaing Kai-Shek panicked. He broke and released the dikes of the Yellow River thinking a flood will slow the Japanese down. The Chinese civilians were not adequately warned or prepared. An unspeakable disaster resulted. In the mindset of the Chinese, they would never, ever forgive Japan for this as long as the world exists.

In 1941, the Empire of Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor. The United States was now at war with Japan. The United States now knew that they must keep China fighting. For failure to do so would free up Japan to apply full force against the Western World.

The United States began helping China, specifically Chaing Kai-Shek. Unknown to the U.S. was that much financing aid was going to a politically inept corrupt government officials who worked for Chaing Kai-Shek. Further unknown was that Chaing Kai-Shek was holding back significant portions of his military to use later against the communists! The world was in peril. The U.S. realized it had to engage Mao and the communists. Infamously poor diplomatic performance by Patrick Hurley of the U.S. virtually destroyed any hope of Mao's communist acceptance of the U.S. Chaing Kai-Shek was perturbed that the U.S. had engaged the communists. In 1945, the United States dropped atomic bombs on Japan resulting the end of the war.

Who from China gets the honor of accepting the surrender of the Japanese? Mao's communists raced to the location. The United States airlifted Chaing Kai-Shek to the location. A short-lived peace ensued.

### **The Real End to China Nationalists**

In 1947, Chaing Kai-Shek and Mao Zedong engaged in a civil war of nationalists vs. communists. The United States was fearful of the communists ties to Russia. They backed Chaing Kai-Shek. A see-saw battle that could have gone either way turned to favor the communists. Corrupt, inept and unsupported by the masses (despite being associated with defeating Japan), Chaing Kai-Shek ran and took over the neighboring island of Taiwan. From there, Chaing Kai-Shek claimed to retain governing power over all of China. He was supported politically and financially by the United States.

The communists won the Civil War. On October 1, 1949, Mao declared the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China.



What were the Chinese thinking? They had stood up and had protected their sovereign land. They had established a legitimate government that would provide for the people and protect them. Heaven had allowed them to reclaim the society that had been absconded from them by evil outside forces.

What was the U.S. thinking? We had been through a major war and had secured world safety for the time being. We needed to rebuild, help our allies to the extent we could and protect ourselves from the evils of the Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, it would be even more complicated than that. In 1950, United Nations troops approached the Sino-Korean border and China troops entered the Korean War. This was a direct confrontation between the U.S. and China from which no diplomatic relations would be allowed for a long time.

### **Communist China Begins**

It is 1949 and Mao Zedong was in full-legitimate power. He had delivered to Chinese society what they had desperately craved for decades. He was in complete, unquestionable power. Mao was energetic, accomplished and ambitious. He started out playing world events to his advantage. The eventual stalemate of the Korean conflict was perceived by China as a much needed victory. China could hold its own against world powers.

Mao began a well-thought out, well-organized development of what he envisioned as industrialized socialism. The main stages were: Work Units and Cooperatives. People across China were being provided for early success was enjoyed. Mao moved to the more comprehensive stage of collectivism. Brutal and ruthless tactics were required. The needs of a growing populous multiplied. Strains to the system occurred.

Mao, being an intelligent, ambitious leader, could sense problems. He desired input from the people. He launched what would be the first of many public campaigns. "Let 100 Flowers Bloom". Mao purposely invited and encouraged criticism of his government in order to expose and define problems so they could be solved. The large critical response of the populous was not something Mao was not prepared to receive. Exhaustive studies have been conducted on the way Mao thought and operated. It is likely true that he sought constructive criticism to solve problems. Also likely, however, was a deep-seated outrage over anything he perceived to be ungrateful criticisms of the government that delivered the Chinese society so much at such a cost. Mao reversed himself and executed a major crackdown on participants of "Let 100 Flowers Bloom".

During the 1950s, Mao further established and used China's military strength. In 1950, his party, the CCP, took over Tibet. In 1959, they militarily crushed a Tibet rebellion. Mao was not on speaking terms with the U.S. His relations with Russia were becoming strained. Taiwan remained a lingering problem. In 1958, China missile attacked Taiwan. Russia, recognizing this for the danger it presented, was furious. The U.S. denounced the actions. In the face of outside criticism, Mao and his primary generated a response that continues to be used to this day "This is a Domestic Matter". This is a key Chinese mindset. Shortly after the Soviet Union refused to share nuclear weapons technology with China, Mao cut off relations with the Soviets and China became isolated to the world.



## **An Incomprehensible Tragedy Occurs**

Domestically, Mao's ambitions were for a modern industrialized society to rival the Soviet Union and the United States. In 1958, Mao initiated "The Great Leap Forward". This was to be a massive nationwide effort to industrialize beyond any rival nation through the use of super hard work. Enthusiasm, dedication and sacrifice of the people under the superior collectivist communist economy, which would serve them. Propaganda was rampant. The populous roared in response and the initiative took off! Initial outputs of the Great Leap Forward were positive and very visible. This inflamed enthusiasm. It veiled an underlying disaster of world epic proportion. The government set objectives and goals, what to produce and to what quantity. There was a popular fervor to meet and exceed these targets. Unfortunately, this led to mass production of excessive useless goods. But more tragic was the miscalculations, misreporting and mishandling of food production. The people and government would jointly assess a practical capacity, say 100 bushels per acre. This was often far exceeded true capacity of say 60 bushels per acre. The government would set a collective quota of 40% of practical capacity, in our example 40 bushels per acre thinking this would leave 60 bushels for the people to live on. The reality of 60 bushels or less of actual production coupled with the government quota of 40 led to only 20 or less left for a people needing 60 to survive. Further complicating this was the people's innate fear to report to the government an output below target. The result was the greatest famine of mankind's history. 30 million people died from 1959 through 1961. The world still cannot mentally assess this tragedy.

What was Mao thinking? What was his mindset? Mao was a man who thought that his long March, defeat of the Japanese and the defeat of the Nationalists were the most difficult challenges anyone could face. He and the people faced these challenges and succeeded. Therefore, any other challenge presented could be met and conquered. It was simply a matter of dedication and effort. This was a tragic mindset, which allowed and directly caused one of mankind's most destructive disasters.

What was the U.S. thinking? Did we even really know this was happening? The U.S. was entrenched in the Cold War against communism. Our interests in Asia were south of China in Viet Nam.

Somehow deep down, Mao knew the obvious. A terrible mistake had occurred. Publicly, propaganda declared droughts and floods as the cause of this disaster. Mao went on a self-directed sabbatical like retreat. Three leaders emerged:

- Liu Shao Qi
- Zhou Enlai
- Deng Xioping

These three took on the mammoth task of rebuilding.

## **Rebuilding is Interrupted by Another Tragedy**

Mao studied quietly for about three years then became restless. Eager to seek input for solutions, he re-emerged and posed a slogan to the people: "Remember the bitter past and think about the sweet present".



The bitter past was Mao's reference to the revolution, which brought China the great society of the present. The Chinese people misinterpreted this. They thought the bitter past is the recent disaster of the Great Leap Forward. They began again criticizing the government. Mao did not expect this response and was unprepared for it. He was shocked and mortified by what he thought were ungrateful, "Rightists". Mao recoiled then unleashed his final public initiative that would have further terrible consequences.

It was 1965 and Mao was distraught. He and his close group of advisors, including his wife, launched a double-crossing attack on the very party Mao controls, the CCP. This had devastating consequences for the three leaders listed above. Liu Shao Qi and Deng Xioping were sent into exile. Liu would never recover. Mao inflamed radical student groups and people across China to rebel in revolutionary style. An undeclared civil war erupted. This was the great proletariat Cultural Revolution. Over 500,000 people, largely responsible prosperous professionals, academics, clergy and others, were killed. The nation of China began incinerating. Mao ordered it all to stop. He tried to rebuild some of his exiled leadership namely Deng Xioping. A very rigid conformity ensued.

What was Mao thinking? He was a revolutionist. He professed that it is only through revolution that true progress could be made. He wanted to bestow on others the opportunity, exhilaration and ultimate success he had as a revolutionist. He had double-crossed his leadership. He had decimated his country multiple times, yet he was of a revered stature in the mindset of the people. God like and infallible. What a mindset!

### **An Opening for the United States**

What is happening outside China at this time? In 1969, the Soviet Union invaded Cheklosvakia. This scared the hell out of Mao and he decided to make overtures to the United States. Richard Nixon would use any means to deflect attention away from problems of Viet Nam. Soviet-U.S. relations were not good. Opportunity presented itself. In February 1972, Nixon visited China and the door opened between China and the United States.

### **The End of Mao**

Internally in China, things were being rebuilt while the dictator Mao went into decline. Who would succeed him the people wondered? The answer presented was Lin Biao. A Mao picked successor. But problems occurred with Lin Biao. He and Mao had a major conflict that became public knowledge. He challenged Mao then attempted to flee China, his plane crashed. The people wondered is Mao really infallible? Zhou Enlai was a logical successor to Mao. He was a much-loved public figure, however, he contracted cancer and began a severe decline.

It was the year 1976. Zhou Enlai had passed away. A public mourning for Zhou Enlai at the Annual Spring Festival honoring the dead turned into an uprising. Student groups began a protest. They took their cause to Tiananmen Square. In the evening, the protests turned into rioting. The CCP dispatched the military. The number of casualties was not known. This event would play out again in 1989 with a much different world response. In July 1976, China was devastated by an earthquake. Chinese folktales depict natural disasters as precursors to change. In August 1976, Mao Zedong died. The Chinese people asked "Who can hold up the sky now?"



## **Rebuilding China**

China in the mid 1970s was a nation reeling from the idealistic failures of Mao. The leadership of China is skillfully attained by Deng Xioping. Deng was pragmatic and had economic development ideas that would turn China around. Deng's first move was to exonerate all people indicted much like he was during the Cultural Revolution. In 1979, Deng became the first Chinese leader to visit the United States. This trip was a huge success and China and the U.S. establish diplomatic relations. Deng began his economic programs by establishing four economic zones. He disbanded the communes and curtailed collectivism. He encouraged foreign investment. China began to flourish and the people's lives experienced sharp improvement.

In the early 1980s, Hong Kong enjoyed status as the hub of international business. A growing concern amongst international investors was what would become of Hong Kong in 1997. That would be the year that the 99 year lease between China and Great Britain would elapse. 1982, Margaret Thatcher and Deng began negotiations. The world characterized this as "Iron Lady" meeting "Iron Man". Thatcher desired to preserve a vitally functioning internationally business hub and maybe even keep a valuable British Holding. Deng could not and would not allow China to forfeit territory taken from their in such a humiliating manner even if it was a century ago. The two worked out an amicable arrangement. "One Nation 2 Systems". This phrase is now applied by the Chinese government to other territories such as Taiwan. In 1984, they signed a joint accord. For China this meant conclusion of the last remnant of humiliating colonial activity of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the Chinese mindset, this was huge. Deng was widely popular. Later in 1984, China celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in power.

## **The Turbulent 1980s**

Deng's popularity did not influence him to the point of political tolerance. This was sadly played out under dangerous misunderstandings that grew in the later 1980s. This was a time of hangover from the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese people, predominately on the East Coast, were coming to a sad realization of the previous decades of government control. Greater Western influence just fanned the flames. In 1986, a top leader, Hu Yaobang suggested that the feeble old guard of the CCP be replaced with newer talent. He also touted limited democratic measures and was able to reach out to the populous, namely students. This measure was ill-received by the government and Hu Yaobang was ousted. Citizens and students aware of the situation were outraged. The late 1980s generated a political pressure cooker in China with no valve for relief!

In 1987, student uprisings occurred in Shanghai and Beijing. In Shanghai, Almost 30,000 people assembled expressing rage at the government. In Beijing, students found Tiananmen Square as an ideal place to express themselves to the world. It is critical to understand that Deng regarded these student uprisings as dangerous unacceptable threats. He publicly banned these demonstrations. The red guards were sent to Tiananmen Square and the students were clubbed into submission.

This politically charged situation had no means of relief. The new influx of information from the outside world made things worse. In April 1989, Hu Yaobang suddenly died. His official memorial celebration in Beijing prompted movements of the students. Thousands appeared outside the service. They organized a small group to present a communiqué to



the CCP. The CCP refused to respond. The students were outraged and organized hunger strikes in Tiananmen Square. On April 26, Deng published an editorial condemning the students' expressions as unacceptable "turmoil". A terrible misunderstanding between the students and Deng had occurred. Greater numbers of students went to Tiananmen. Of terrible consequence was the attention and support they received from other civilians and workers. On May 14, Michael Gorbachev of the Soviet Union was scheduled to visit China and Deng for a historic summit that would open relations between the Soviet Union and China for the first time in decades. Because of student unrest in Tiananmen Square, this summit was severely curtailed. Deng Xioping had just been absolutely humiliated on the world stage pertaining to a critical matter of state. The extremely pragmatic Deng was outraged and furious. Chinese troops were sent to intervene. A dangerous combination of students, civilians and workers led to the violent incident at Tiananmen Square on June 3. The world was outraged. Deng was unrepentant and on June 26 publicly congratulated government troops for a job well done.

International scorn of China was met by the now well used refrain, "This is a domestic matter!"

### **Comparing our Mindsets Today**

Throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, China's development and political intrigue has played out to a more attentive and much better informed world stage. China's economic development has been visibly spectacular. Many of us from outside China are actually participating. Deng Xioping died in 1997. Since then, two successful transitions of power have occurred by Jiang Zemin and Currently Hu Jintao. In 2001, China was admitted to the WTO. In 2002, they established the 20 year Friendship Treaty with Russia. They are staged to host the 2008 Olympics.

Today China faces a multitude of economic and social challenges. A unique situation China finds itself in today is that they aspire to tackle all of those issues at once. They debate that their political challenges for now are to be considered off the table. This leaves us with some profound questions pertaining to China.

It is the hope expressed here that better understanding China's history and that of our own will enable us to understand their mindset. From there we are better equipped to ponder the questions.



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