The Third World’s Maoist Revolution:
Maoism, African-American Activism, and Naxalism during China’s Cultural Revolution
(1966-1976)

A thesis presented
by
James Gethyn Evans
To
The Committee on Regional Studies—East Asia
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of
Master of Arts
In Regional Studies—East Asia
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May 2020
Abstract

Mao Zedong’s articulation of his Theory of Three Worlds served as a Cold War alternative to U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionism during China’s Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). This Maoist-styled Third World forged an ideological justification for establishing relations between the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and Maoist-sympathizing states, Marxist-Leninist parties, and individuals that were previously unaligned. This thesis argues that Mao Zedong Thought, or Maoism, became decoupled from the CCP’s own interpretations, and should instead be understood as a vocabulary for global Third World solidarity during the 1960s and 1970s. On the one hand, Maoism’s global appeal allowed the CCP to project the PRC as a leader for newly-independent states and organizations fighting against colonialization and imperialism. At the same time, Maoism was actively adapted by local actors outside the PRC to promote their own domestic political ambitions and to indicate their participation in a global movement that was facilitated through the language of Maoism. This thesis examines two examples of how Maoism served as an ideological framework for the global Third World. First it explores how the CCP and the Black Panther Party leveraged their interpretations of each other’s struggles to advance their respective domestic goals within a global Third World context. Second, it considers the contrasting case of the Naxalite movement in India. While the Naxalites used Maoism to advance their local revolutionary agenda, the CCP initially encouraged the Naxalites as a means to support the CCP’s claims to lead the Third World, but then abandoned the Naxalites when those same ambitions could be realized by instead supporting the Indian state. Through these examples, this thesis indicates that although the CCP had a specific agenda for promoting Maoism internationally, Maoist discourse circulated beyond the CCP’s control, where it was adapted to local conditions and became a foundational grammar for a global Third World.
Acknowledgments

This thesis quite simply would not have been possible without the support of my advisors, co-workers, friends, and my husband. Academically, I am entirely grateful for the encouragement of my advisors, Arunabh Ghosh and Nara Dillon, who have both steered my academic journey and allowed me the flexibility to experiment across disciplines. Susan Pharr, Grzegorz Ekiert, Yawen Lei, Alastair Iain Johnston, Zhang Mo, Wang Dan, Cai Jing, and Fu Chao all gave me the opportunity to enroll in their classes while I still worked full-time as an administrator. Sunil Amrith, Ben Wilson, Carter Eckert, Tony Saich, Arne Westad, Daniel Koss, and Elizabeth Perry helped me talk through and clarify parts of my research. Sarah Bramao-Ramos, Keisha A. Brown, and Kyle Shernuk also provided invaluable feedback on early drafts of the thesis.

At the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies—for which, along with the Harvard University Asia Center, I am grateful for supporting my research, language training, and professional growth—I am eternally indebted to my co-workers for their encouragement. In particular, Dan Murphy, Julia Cai, Mark Grady, Nick Drake, Caitlin Keliher, Marian Lee, Jennifer Rudolf, Karen Thornber, Mark Elliott, and Michael Szonyi, as well as Holly Angell, Rosie Cortese, Harriet Wong, and Cris Martin for providing a supportive network over the past five years. Roderick MacFarquhar (whose advice to “go for it!” will forever stick with me), Rudolf Wagner, and Steven Goldstein acted as my academic guardians and sources of unwavering humor in the corridors of CGIS South Building. Nancy Hearst gave me the honor of my own carrel in the Fung Library, and provided me with archival resources that were fundamental in writing this thesis. Lastly, to Kurt and Pam, for welcoming me to the U.S. with such open arms, and to my family back home in the UK, who are not quite sure what it is exactly that I have been doing for the last few years, but have encouraged me, nonetheless. I thank them all.

Lastly, to Kyle, without whom I would be neither at Harvard, nor on this side of the Atlantic, I owe a gratitude that can never be repaid.

This thesis was completed during COVID-19. Please excuse incomplete citations or references, which I have noted with “COVID-19.”
# Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
  “We are the Third World”: Maoism and the Grammar for Global Revolution

- **Chapter 1**
  Maoism and Black Power: Mutual Manipulations of Mao Zedong Thought and African American Activism

- **Chapter 2**
  “Indian Revolutionaries with A Chinese Accent”? Interpretations of Maoism in India’s Naxalite Movement

- **Conclusion**
  New Directions in Global Maoism
Introduction

“We are the Third World”: Maoism as Global Revolution

“[Mao’s] declaration pulls together into clear focus the revolutionary struggles and the liberation struggles of the people of the whole world, including the revolutionary struggle of the American people themselves.”1

– Eldridge Cleaver, Minister of Information for the Black Panther Party, September 1970

“We are confident revolutionaries and the revolutionary people of India, guided by the thought of Mao Tse-tung will perform this world revolutionary task and, together with a great Chinese people and other revolutionary peoples of the world will overthrow the U.S. imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists and reactionaries of all kinds.”2

- Charu Mazumdar, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), November 1968

This thesis argues that Mao Zedong Thought, or Maoism, was a foundational grammar for global Third World solidarity in the 1960s and 1970s. On the one hand, Maoism served as a Sino-centric discourse leveraged by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to project its chairman, Mao Zedong, as a leader for states, organizations, and individuals fighting against colonialization and imperialism around the world. On the other hand, Maoism was actively adapted by local radical actors outside the People’s Republic of China (PRC) both to promote their own domestic political ambitions and to indicate their participation in a global revolutionary movement. As a result, while the CCP promoted Mao Zedong Thought among overseas revolutionary groups as a framework for replicating Maoist-style revolution beyond the PRC’s borders, these groups actively interpreted and adapted Mao’s writings in a manner that decoupled Maoism from the


CCP’s own interpretations. Maoism therefore evolved outside the PRC not as a prescription for replicating revolution, but rather as a loose vocabulary for global Third World solidarity during the 1960s and 1970s.

Mao’s “theory of three worlds” reframed existing discourses about the Third World with the PRC at its center and divided the globe into three “worlds” or “spheres” during the Cold War according to their relationship to colonialism and imperialism. Mao imagined the “three worlds” as an imperialist First World (the United States and the Soviet Union); an intermediate Second World (Western Europe, Canada, and Japan); and an anti-imperialist Third World, which was comprised of formerly colonized peoples. The CCP positioned the PRC as part of this Third World, with Mao declaring in 1974 that “We [the PRC] are the Third World.” In contrast to the Third World as commonly understood during the Cold War, in capitalist terms of relative economic development (with the First World comprising of the developed “West,” the Second World of the Communist bloc, and the Third World comprising of the underdeveloped states of Africa, Latin America, and Asia), Mao’s Third World not only moved the PRC from the Second World to the Third World, but also recalculated the Cold War divide from capitalist-socialist to imperialist-anti-imperialist. In the context of the PRC’s worsening relations with the Soviet Union from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, Mao’s three worlds theory also recast the Soviet Union as an imperialist power akin to the United States. Maoism was therefore promoted by the

---

3 Mao Zedong stated that “[t]he United States and the Soviet Union form the first world. Japan, Europe, and Canada, the middle section, belong to the second world. We are the third world” (Editorial Department of People’s Daily, “Chairman Mao’s Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism,” People’s Daily, 1 Nov 1977).

4 Ibid.

CCP among the Third World as both a realpolitik and ideological mechanism by which to ensure support from the Third World and serve as a balance against the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Mao’s emphasis on China’s experience as a non-white, former (semi-)colonized nation served as justification for the PRC’s realignment with former colonies and newly independent states; Maoist-sympathizing anti-revisionists and Marxist-Leninist parties; and organizations and individuals who considered themselves part of a global, anti-imperialist Third World during the Long Sixties. These actors employed the language of Mao Zedong Thought, refracted through their own local interpretations and national contexts, as a vocabulary through which to signal their participation in a transnational revolutionary network within the context of the Third World. The binding of the PRC to an imagined Third World also established “unanticipated reconfigurations” between revolutions of the Third World and radicals and activists in the First World, who saw a natural link between their own causes and anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles across the world. The malleability of Mao Zedong Thought provided an elastic

6 Frederick Jameson refers to the mid-point of the Cold War as “the long sixties” to refer to “a moment in which the enlargement of capitalism on a global scale simultaneously produced an immense freeing or unbinding of social energies, a prodigious release of untheorized new forces… Yet this sense of freedom and possibility… may perhaps be best explained in terms of the superstructural movement and play enabled by the transition from one infrastructural or systemic stage of capitalism to another. The 60s were in that sense an immense and inflationary issuing of superstructural credit.” Frederick Jameson, “Periodizing the 60s,” in Sonya Sayres, Anders Stephenson, Stanley Aronowitz, Fredric Jameson, eds., Social Text, No. 9/10, “The 60's without Apology” (Spring - Summer, 1984) pp. 178-209. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984): 185.

7 Mao argued for a “third world” (San ge shijie de lilun) as a challenge to first world imperialism, a replacement for second world, Soviet-supported revisionism, and a cornerstone of PRC foreign policy. Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett, “Introduction,” in Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett, eds., The Third World in the Global Sixties (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), viii.


framework capable of accommodating the diverse range of political goals represented by an array disadvantaged groups. In doing so, it also became a shared grammar for revolutionary struggle that both permitted these groups to articulate their goals and positioned the PRC—and Mao in particular—as a figurehead for global revolution. This global grammar of revolution did not therefore employ Maoism as the CCP might have understood it, but rather leveraged a heteroglossic mixture of Maoist-inspired voices in multiple languages to construct a common Third World identity in the 1960s and 1970s.

This thesis traces the examples of two radical organizations that participated in the production of such a global revolution: the Black Panther Party (known colloquially as the Panthers) in the United States and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), also known as the Naxalite movement in India. Through these examples, this thesis indicates that although the CCP had a specific agenda for promoting Maoism internationally, Maoist discourse circulated beyond the CCP’s control, where it was adapted to local conditions and became a foundational grammar for a global Third World. In comparison to studies of China-India and U.S.-China relations that prioritize state-state relations, these two examples highlight the role of sub-state interactions between the CCP and individuals in the U.S. and India. It also provides an alternate perspective on a period of diplomatic isolation and tensions between the PRC and the U.S. and India in the late 1960s. By emphasizing the role of individuals, non-state groups and organizations, and political parties, this thesis emphasizes an approach to the study of international affairs that goes beyond formal diplomatic relations at the level of the nation state and argues for the inclusion of diverse sources—such as archives from the U.S. and India—in the study of China’s history. Through examining how Maoism was interpreted by organizations outside the PRC, as well as how these organizations were themselves interpreted by the CCP,
this thesis posits that a mutual interaction occurred in which each actor actively adapted their depiction of the other in order to promote their own domestic and international aims. This mechanism is examined through a close reading of debates about Maoism in party newspapers, namely the CCP’s *People’s Daily, Red Flag,* and *Peking Review* (which was aimed at a foreign readership); the Panthers’ *The Black Panther;* and the Naxalites’ *Liberation.* These party newspapers were produced by the equivalent of each party’s propaganda department to promote the party’s messaging, which means that each paper plays a similar role in presenting the party leaderships’ opinions on topics like Maoism and global revolution. Consequently, party newspapers allow for a cross-national comparison of how Maoism was interpreted in three different political contexts.

Chapter One, entitled “Maoism and Black Power: Mutual Manipulations of Mao Zedong Thought and African American Activism between the Black Panther Party and the Chinese Communist Party,” explores how the multiple interactions between the CCP and the Panthers informed their mutual interpretations of Maoism, which they each used to advance their respective domestic goals within a global Third World context. This chapter argues that African-American activists in the Black Power movement fused Maoist ideological tenets—specifically Mao’s calls to adapt Marxism-Leninism for different times and locations, his emphasis on revolution as issuing from the masses, and his promotion of guerilla warfare tactics—with other international and domestic examples of Third World revolution. These activists leveraged the CCP’s opposition to the U.S. government to support their own goals of achieving racial equality and opposing white, Western constructs of class struggle. Likewise, the CCP similarly

---

manipulated their propaganda support for African-American activists’ racial struggle as a means to distinguish Maoism from Soviet-styled Marxism-Leninism, and thereby position the PRC as an icon for non-white revolutionaries. In particular, the inclusion of African-American activists specifically, rather than Africans or Black individuals from outside the US, allowed the CCP’s propaganda to highlight human injustice (racism), economic injustice (capitalism), and political injustice (imperialism) all occurring in the same society. From the CCP’s perspective, African Americans therefore presented a useful ideological symbol that the CCP could use to undermine the U.S. government and position the PRC as the vanguard for anti-imperial and anti-colonial struggles in the Third World.

Chapter Two, “‘Indian Revolutionaries with A Chinese Accent’? Interpretations of Maoism in India’s Naxalite Movement,” considers the contrasting case of the Naxalite movement, named after the site of an uprising in the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal in 1967. This chapter examines how the Naxalites leveraged Maoism as a mechanism by which to achieve their agenda of seizing power from the Indian state and to articulate their participation in the revolutionary movements of the global Third World. Unlike the case of African-American activists, however, the CCP were far less interested in the Naxalites, a fact that is reflected in the relatively few Chinese-language studies of the Naxalites as a Chinese-inspired but fundamentally Indian movement. While both the Naxalites and the CCP leveraged the other to further their own domestic goals, the CCP only considered the Naxalites as a useful example for their domestic propaganda for a brief time in the late 1960s. Compared to the Panthers, the Naxalites’ utility to CCP propaganda was limited to providing one example among many of Maoist organizations.

11 Although the Naxalite movement takes its name from the uprising in Naxabari, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) was not formally founded until 1969.
around the world, rather than as a key example of Third World revolution against the First World imperialist U.S. and Soviet Union.

This thesis calls for an understanding of Maoism as a global ideology that did not necessarily determine the formation and outcomes of individual anti-imperialist movements, but that was actively shaped and reshaped by these movements to suit their own needs. Maoism is therefore understood as simultaneously a China-centric ideology promoted by the CCP and as a vocabulary for Third World radical movements to articulate their participation in a global revolution. This approach sits at the nexus between histories of the nation-state and Maoism as a global history. For the CCP, Maoism was both inherently nationalist in its cementing of the party’s legitimacy as rulers of the PRC and transnational in that world revolution legitimized the CCP’s domestic activities as part of an international cause. Similarly, both the Panthers and the Naxalites claimed participation in a global revolutionary movement but operated within the national contexts that informed their activities: for the Panthers the goal was racial equality (or for some, superiority) in the U.S.; for the Naxalites it was a revolution to overthrow the Indian state. By examining these movements as part of a global network that used Maoism as a shared language for revolution, a more complicated transnational story emerges compared to explanations that frame these movements as primarily national in nature. While national contexts remain important, this global approach therefore shifts our focus away from individual

12 For more detail on the development of the field of international/global history, see Erez Manela, “International History as Historical Subject,” Diplomatic History 0, no. 0 (2020): 1-26.

13 Zachary Scarlett argues that the CCP promoted the collapse of national/transnational distinctions as a way to internationalize the Maoist state, particularly during the Cultural Revolution when the Red Guards were encouraged to consider themselves as part of the “world revolution.” They write, “Red guard units…constructed multiple identities and envisioned themselves both as the vanguard of revolutionary politics in China, as well as participants in the myriad Third World revolutionary movements of the 1960s…By incorporating the Third World into their movement, Chinese students made the Cultural Revolution both an ultranationalist and transnational event” (Zachary Scarlett, “China Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the Imagination of the Third World,” in Christiansen and Scarlett, 39).
movements and towards the connections between national and local actors. As Adam McKeown argues in his study of transnational and global Chinese migrant networks, “rather than seeing national and local histories as ends in themselves, a global approach will integrate localized research with knowledge of transnational activates and global patterns.”¹⁴ By viewing the Panthers and the Naxalites through a Maoist lens, as well as viewing the CCP from the Panthers and Naxalites’ perspective, this thesis posits that Maoism serves as a window onto global history, through which the connections between radical groups in the 1960s and 1970s come into view.

**Maoism and the Third World**

Maoism is an ideology of complex contradictions based on Mao Zedong’s writings about Marxism, Leninism, and the CCP’s revolutionary experience.¹⁵ After the official founding of the CCP in Shanghai at the first national congress in 1921,¹⁶ the CCP began to adapt Marxism for a Chinese context, and increasingly merged Marxism-Leninism with Mao Zedong’s writings about

---


¹⁵ Marxism first entered popular debates in China during the May Fourth Movement in 1919, when an increase in the printing and publishing of newspapers and magazines popularized Marxist and socialist texts. These texts were complimented by Bolshevik writings that flowed into China in the early 1920s, largely through English-language translations from the West as communication between China and Russia was intermittent and there were few Chinese socialists fluent in Russian at the time (Ishikawa Yoshihiro, *The Formation of the Chinese Communist Party*, tr. Joshua A. Fogel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 73-74). Arif Dirlik also points out that Marxism-Leninism was only one of several competing socialisms in China in the early twentieth century, and that the CCP’s ultimate victory in the civil war “has blurred in historical memory the important role of...other socialisms both in the origins of Chinese communism and later in the Chinese revolution...[Marxism-Leninism] was not merely one among the competing socialisms of the immediate May4th period...but the weakest one” (Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1989], 3-10).

¹⁶ Party-formation activities occurred earlier in November 1920, but 1921 is the date retroactively assigned to the formation of the party by the CCP as an attempt to heighten the importance of those present (namely Mao Zedong) at the 1921 meeting. For more, see Yoshihiro, 238.
the need for political violence to achieve the party’s revolutionary aims.\textsuperscript{17} For example, his essay “Introducing the Communist,” published in 1939, put forward “three magic weapons” for revolutionary success: the United Front, armed struggle, and party building.\textsuperscript{18} Mao’s essay, “On Democracy,” published in 1940, also applied Lenin’s idea identifying imperialism as the highest form of capitalism to China’s history of unequal treaties with foreign powers and semi-colonialism\textsuperscript{19} as a way to tie Marxism-Leninism to the CCP’s “anti-imperialist”\textsuperscript{20} position. Mao’s certification as supreme leader in Yan’an in April 1945\textsuperscript{21} ensured that Mao Zedong Thought, as a form of Sinicized Marxism, would become the CCP’s ruling ideology.\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{19} Anne Reinhardt defines “semi-colonialism” (\textit{ban zhimindi}) as: “a series of unequal treaties signed with several Western powers (and eventually Japan) [that] secured a framework of economic and legal privileges for foreign nationals in China while leaving Chinese governments in place.” Anne Reinhardt, \textit{Navigating Semi-Colonialism: Shipping, Sovereignty, and Nation Building in China, 1860-1937} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center Press, 2018), 2.

\textsuperscript{20} There is debate as to whether anti-imperialism was included in the CCP’s initial documents, with “opposition to imperialism” included in the first national congress’s party program (although the documents from the congress have all been lost; Yoshihiro, 243) and Edgar Snow noting the CCP’s central claim to fight “against imperialism” as core to the party’s mission in the 1920s and 1930s. Edgar Snow, \textit{Red Star Over China} (New York: Grove Press, 1938), 36.

\textsuperscript{21} In 1942 during the civil war between the CCP and the nationalist Guomindang (GMD), the CCP moved their base to Yan’an in Shaanxi province, where Mao strengthened his position as party leader and ensured his ideological dominance of the party. CCP member Liu Shaoqi declared in 1945 that, “our Comrade Mao Zedong is not only the greatest revolutionary and statesman in Chinese history but also the greatest theoretician and scientist” (Liu Shaoqi, "Guanyu xiugai dang de zhangcheng de baogao" (Report on the Revision of the Constitution), in \textit{Three Essays on Party Building}, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980), 163-300; originally published 14 May 1945); see also Antony Saich, "The Historical Origins of the Chinese Cultural Revolution," \textit{China Information} 11, no. 2-3 (1996): 21-34.

\textsuperscript{22} Cheek highlights that Mao Zedong Thought is both the “‘crystallization’ of the revolutionary experience of numerous other Chinese Marxists…[that] makes practice primary…If Lenin thought that only the Bolshevik Party could push forward the wheel of history, Mao held that Bolshevikization could be radically internalized in the individual (albeit under the dominating guidance of a charismatic leader)” (Cheek, “Mao Revolution, and Memory,” 13).
Although Mao suggested that his ideas were fundamentally orthodox Marxism-Leninism, Mao’s writings highlight a number of differences between Mao Zedong Thought and Marxism-Leninism. While a detailed discussion of Maoism and Marxism-Leninism could fill its own monograph, it is necessary to provide a brief introduction to the key differences between the two ideologies. First, where Marxism-Leninism argued that revolution should be centered in urban areas, Mao (himself a peasant by background) considered peasants as “the biggest motive force… and the main contingent of revolutionary forces.” The peasants would rise up in an insurgent “people’s war” against “imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local tyrants, and evil gentry” in the countryside. Second, as part of the “people’s war,” Mao emphasized the need for violent struggle through guerilla warfare and provided detailed guides and analyses of guerilla tactics that, along with Che Guevara’s writings, became a handbook for guerilla organizations across the world. This rural-based insurgency would then surround and eventually overwhelm the cities to achieve victory. Third, Mao emphasized personal experience, practice and pragmatism in revolution, and the necessity for adapting Marxism-Leninism to suit China’s own context. That is, Mao’s writings highlight the necessity for each revolution to adapt Marxism-Leninism (or Maoism) to its own domestic context, a feature that crafted Maoism as an


inherently flexible ideology that was not intended as a prescriptive set of rules to be followed, but rather a general guide for successful revolution that could be emulated by different revolutionary movements across the world. Fourth, the mass line and mass campaigns were promoted as a means to mobilize the masses in a manner that, as Timothy Cheek argues, “could be very responsive to local needs and that included the broadest actual popular consultation and participation in any communist movement.” These four differences between Maoism and Marxism-Leninism are by no means an exhaustive list (Cheek also mentions the United Front and bureaucratism as two additional notably differences) but provide a brief overview for how and why the two ideologies were distinct, and therefore how they might appeal to different groups beyond their respective borders.

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, these ideological differences meant that, although the PRC aligned with the Soviet Union, there remained distinct ideas in the two states as to how to oppose capitalism, achieve socialism and communism, and export revolution across the globe. In particular, unlike the Soviet Union, the PRC was a “non-white” nation that had both experienced (semi-)colonialism and had a proven track record of revolutionary success that it believed could (and should) be emulated among “national liberation struggles of all the oppressed peoples in the forefront of the revolutionary movements of the colonial and semi-colonial areas.” In an essay entitled “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War,” published in 1965, then-Vice Chairman of the CCP, Lin Biao, extended the idea of the rural overwhelming


28 Ibid.

the cities to a global scale, in which, “North America and Western Europe can be called the ‘cities of the world,’ …Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute the ‘rural areas of the world.”’ The CCP therefore saw itself as a potential model for anti-colonial movements, which often emphasized questions of race and poverty, in a way that the Soviet Union, which took Lenin’s interpretation of imperialism as primarily about working class struggle in industrialized countries, did not. Jeremy Freidman, for example, argues that “decolonization changed the terms of the anticipated world revolution…it put race and nation, rather than class, at the center of revolutionary discourse in many places.” The idea that the PRC could serve as a model for anti-colonial movements through the export of the Maoist revolutionary model originally developed in the mid-1950s but at that time was not prioritized by Mao or the CCP owing to their following of the Soviet Union. In the 1950s, the Soviet Union considered the PRC’s increasing support to national liberation movements and newly-independent states—both ideologically and in terms of material aid—as supportive of the Soviet-led socialist bloc’s competition with the U.S.-led capitalist blocs, rather than as a threat to Soviet hegemony.

The seeds of the PRC’s role as a model for and leader of anti-colonial movements and newly-independent states took root at the 1955 Afro–Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia.


32 Ibid: 5


34 The relationship between economic development and anti-colonialism in the construction of the Third World, while complex, also provides justification for the PRC’s participation as observer in the Bandung Conference as the “least [economically] developed” communist state, in comparison to the “developed” Soviet Union.
At the conference, the leaders of twenty-nine newly-independent states met to discuss their opposition to colonialism and solidarity across the “Third World,” a concept that grouped newly-independent states and anti-colonial movements that were not aligned with either the capitalist First World or socialist Second World and that demanded adherence to “moral justice and political solidarity against imperialism.” While the PRC was not a formal participant at the Bandung Conference owing to its formal alignment with the socialist bloc, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai’s presence as an active observer helped facilitate the formation of this loosely based political, cultural, and social group, and confirmed the PRC’s anti-imperialist and anti-colonial ideological position. The construction of a shared “Third World” identity therefore provided an ideological justification for relations between the Third World nations and movements that had previously lacked agency in the international system, with the PRC positioning itself as spiritual leader. As Vijay Prashad argues, “The Third World was not a place. It was a project…that the Chinese Communists resisted the idea that the darker nations should be divided into the spheres of influence of the two powers made it a principled ally of the Third World.”

---

35 Despite the Western origins of the term from French sociologist Alfred Sauvy, the Bandung Conference provided the necessary confluence of ideological alignments and political leanings among Third World political elites to realize the term beyond its theoretical origins (Alfred Sauvy, “Trois Mondes, Une Planete,” L’Observateur 14 (August 1952): 14). Chang Zheng and Chen Fengjun point out that although Sauvy formulates a new concept for a post-World War Two context, he relies on Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès’ previous notion of the “Third Estate” to refer to the “common people” of France during the French Revolution. For more, see Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, “What is the Third Estate?” 1789, referenced in Chang Zheng and Chen Fengjun (eds.), Disan shijie de gaige (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 1997): 1-10. It should also be noted that the term “Third World” was not used by participants at the Bandung Conference, rather the term became popularized during the 1950s during the Algerian War, and was then retroactively applied to the Bandung Conference. Christoph Kalter, “A Shared Space of Imagination, Communication, and Action: Perspectives in the History of the ‘Third World,’” in Christiansen and Scarlett, 27.


participation in the Bandung Conference as an observer, the PRC therefore encouraged global decolonization and anti-imperialist movements to join the socialist bloc under the Soviet Union’s leadership. As the PRC’s relations with the Soviet Union grew increasingly tense during the 1960s, however, the Third World became an increasingly attractive alternate source of international support, both because of the PRC’s natural inclination towards solidarity with other anti-colonial movements and as a counterweight against both the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

In comparison to the Third World as understood by participants at the Bandung Conference, however, Mao developed his own related “theory of three worlds” (Sange shijie de lilun). Mao defined his “three worlds” or “spheres” not in terms of relative levels of development or Cold War alignment, as was the case at Bandung, but rather in a manner that prioritized relationality to imperialism over economic development, although there is considerable overlap between the two definitions. Specifically, Mao conceived of the three.

38 While the PRC participated in the Bandung Conference only as an observer owing to its alignment to the socialist bloc, its inclusion was permitted because of China’s shared legacy of colonialism and similar status as an “underdeveloped” state. By contrast, the Soviet Union was considered ineligible for participation at the conference because it was both a superpower and “developed.” For more, see Worsley, 306.


40 There is controversy as to when Mao’s “Theory of Three Worlds” was first articulated. While most sources point to a 1974 conversation between Mao and the Zambian President, Zenneth Kaunda, Yang Shengyi points to a November 4, 1966, People’s Daily article as the origin of the term’s Chinese usage. Others such as Kuo Kang Shao, argue that the “Third World” was not mentioned in a formal document until Zhou Enlai’s political report to the CCP’s Tenth Congress on August 24, 1973, with others arguing that it was not until Deng Xiaoping’s 1974 speech to the United Nations General Assembly. For more, see Yan Shengyi, “Qian Mao Zedong guanyu di san shijie de lilun yu shijian,” in Chen Qida, Zhu Zhonggui, and Fu Qisong, eds., Zhongguo yu di sanshijie (lunwen ji) (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 1990), n.a. (COVID 19).

worlds as imperialist (United States, Soviet Union), intermediary, and anti-imperialist spheres.\textsuperscript{42} Comprising Asia (with the exception of Japan), Africa, and Latin America, \textit{Renmin Ribao}'s editorial board espoused this new interpretation of a Maoist Third World as providing “the international proletariat, the socialist countries and the oppressed nations with a powerful ideological weapon for forging unity and building the broadest united front against the two hegemonist [sic] powers and their war policies and for pushing the world revolution forward.”\textsuperscript{43}

Crucially, this redefinition of a China-centric Third World not only confirmed the PRC’s ideological detachment from the Soviet Union, it also recast the Soviet Union as no longer a Second World socialist state, but rather a First World imperialist enemy of the PRC and the entire Third World. In the context of worsening relations with the Soviet Union, Mao’s interpretation of the Third World therefore stood as a challenge to First World imperialism, a replacement for Second World (Soviet) socialism, and as a cornerstone of the PRC’s foreign policy.\textsuperscript{44}

\textbf{The Sino-Soviet Split and the PRC’s Realignment}

The worsening and eventual severing of relations between the PRC and the Soviet Union, between 1956 and 1966, dramatically shifted the PRC’s domestic and foreign policy in favor of radicalism and support for Maoist-style revolution around the globe. While the PRC was aligned with the Soviet Union (and therefore opposed to the U.S.) after its founding in 1949, the death of


\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 3.

\textsuperscript{44} Yan, 8; See also Christiansen and Scarlett, viii.
Stalin in 1953 and Khrushchev’s denouncement of Stalin’s cult of personality and subsequent shift to “de-Stalinize” and promote “peaceful cooperation” with the U.S. signaled a fundamental change in the Soviet Union’s relations with both the U.S. and the PRC.\(^{45}\) Mao decried Khrushchev’s policies as a “revisionist” threat to Marxism-Leninism, in particular the promotion of co-existence with the capitalist bloc.\(^{46}\) The worsening and eventual severing of Beijing’s relations with Moscow, known as the Sino-Soviet split (1955-1965), presented the PRC with a dilemma: Beijing’s closest ally and primary source of capital, machinery, and ideological leadership was now both a military and ideological threat to the PRC.\(^{47}\) At the same time, the United States remained a capitalist threat to the PRC, and Beijing had engaged militarily with states along its borders, notably India, in 1962, over control over their shared border regions in Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh. Alignment with the Third World provided an alternative for the PRC, both in terms of a source of potentially ideologically-sympathetic governments in newly independent states, and as an opportunity for the PRC to assume a global leadership role independent of the binary superpower-led blocs of the Cold War.

Li Danhui and Yafeng Xia outline four main approaches to understanding why the Sino-Soviet split occurred: through a conflict in national interest; the shifting power dynamics of a “strategic triangle” between the Soviet Union, the PRC, and the U.S.; the role of Soviet and


Chinese domestic politics; and the role of ideology. Li and Xia, for example, argue that the main cause for tension was an unwillingness by either side to compromise over who would lead the socialist bloc. This approach complements the “strategic triangle” framework, which emphasizes that the PRC not only wanted to determine the direction of the socialist camp, but also increasingly saw the Soviet Union as a direct military threat that required balancing through closer alignment with the U.S. From these perspectives, the Soviet Union’s unwillingness to cede its hegemonic role as leader of the socialist world, plus Mao’s increasing perception of the Soviets as a threat, suggest that the PRC opted to rely on the Third World as an alternative alignment option that was separate from the socialist bloc.

An alternate framework for understanding the PRC’s foreign relations with the Third World stems from scholars who consider questions of culture and ideology as motivating forces in the Cold War. While premised on Marxism-Leninism, Maoism was a distinct ideology that centered on the Chinese revolutionary experience, namely a revolution that prioritized a United Front, protracted war, guerilla tactics, and rural base areas that would gradually develop in


49 Ibid, 26. Shen Zhihua and Li Danhui similarly argue for a “theory of unbalanced structure,” in which Sino-Soviet relations broke down owing to competition for who would determine the direction of the socialist camp led to a breakdown in relations. Shen Zhihua and Li Danhui, “Jiegou shiheng: Zhongsu tongmeng polie de shenceng yuanyin,” *Tansuo yu zhengming*, Vol. 10, 3-11, 2012. Taking the example of the PRC’s competition with the Soviet Union over influence in India, Hemen Ray similarly argues that “the most important motive of China’s dispute with the Soviet Union over India is pursuit of its policy of becoming undisputed leader of Asia and the Soviet refusal to support Beijing’s ambition (Hemen Ray, *Sino-Soviet Conflict over India: An Analysis of the Causes of Conflict between Moscow and Beijing over India since 1949* (New Delhi, India: Abhinav Publications, 1986), ix). Ray further argues that “India became the testing ground of Sino-Soviet rivalry in Asia.” (Ray, 19).


51 Michael Szonyi highlights two broad trends in the literature on the Cold War that suggest this dynamic from one framework to another, namely from diplomatic and political history towards a “cultural turn in Cold War history” that examines how culture and society were shaped by the Cold War (Michael Szonyi, *Cold War Island: Quemoy on the Front Line* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008], 8).
strength until the countryside could encircle the cities.\textsuperscript{52} In an essay entitled “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War,” published in 1965, then-Vice Chairman of the CCP, Lin Biao, extended the idea of the countryside overwhelming the cities to a global scale, in which, “North America and Western Europe can be called the ‘cities of the world,’ … Asia, Africa and Latin American constitute the ‘rural areas of the world.’”\textsuperscript{53} From an ideological perspective, the grounds for a split between the Soviet Union and the PRC were therefore already in place. As Odd Arne Westad notes, “The fact that ideology was crucial to both sides, while there was never a \textit{common} ideology, is essential to understanding the rise and fall of the Sino-Soviet alliance.”\textsuperscript{54}

Lorenz Lüthi and Julia Lovell similarly argue that “it was above all ideology that pushed the two powers apart,” although it remains debatable as to how these ideological differences originated.\textsuperscript{55}

The protracted process of decolonization in the Third World, which centered on the anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggles of national liberation movements, therefore not only presented the CCP with an alternate alignment. The Third World also arguably found Maoism to be a naturally more appealing ideology than Marxism-Leninism.

Viewing the split from the vantage point of domestic politics presents a method by which to combine questions of competition for control of the socialist bloc, the “strategic triangle,” and ideology. Niu Jun, for example, argues that the economic recession that resulted from the Great

\textsuperscript{52} Lin Biao, “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War,” \textit{Foreign Languages Press}, 1965; See also Lovell, 25-59; and Chakrabarti, 1990: 48.

\textsuperscript{53} Lin Biao, 1965.


\textsuperscript{55} Lüthi, 100; Lovell, 130. One challenge for the ideology-centric explanation of the Sino-Soviet split, is that if differences in ideology between Marxism-Leninism and Maoism were inherent from before the founding of the PRC, then why did the split did not happen earlier?
Leap Forward (1958-1962) led to a “radical leftist turn in the first half of the 1960s,” in the PRC’s foreign affairs.\(^{56}\) Chen Jian considers Mao’s decision to label Khrushchev’s destalinization program as both revisionist and a restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union—and to replace “U.S. imperialism” with “Soviet social-imperialism” as the primary enemy of the PRC—as an attempt to enhance his weakened personal authority in the wake of the disaster of the Great Leap Forward.\(^ {57}\) Chen argues that Mao’s labelling of the Soviets as “imperialist” was not just a move to counter the Soviet’s increasing security threat to the PRC, but was also part of Mao’s reasoning for unleashing of the Cultural Revolution, insomuch as it could prevent a Khrushchev-style destalinization (and therefore “capitalist restoration”) from occurring in the PRC and threatening Mao’s authority over party and state.\(^ {58}\) Chen therefore understands the PRC’s role in balance-of-power terms, as a pivotal site between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and in ideological terms that forefront Maoist China’s “revolutionary features,” namely its role as a link between the PRC, the global Cold War, and the decolonization process in non-Western countries.\(^ {59}\) Such a link helps provide some explanation for not only why the Sino-Soviet split occurred, but also why Maoism found a receptive audience among certain actors, particularly national liberation movements, in the Third World. Mao’s broad call for a global revolution by oppressed groups—including by national liberation and anti-colonial movements—against their


\(^{58}\) Ibid: 243-244.

\(^{59}\) This Maoist emphasis on decolonization, Chen Jian argues, is what linked imperialist/anti-colonialist movements to the “proletarian world revolution” and shifted the Cold War discourse away from class-struggle as had previously been the case. Chen Jian, 5.
oppressors resonated with those who considered themselves to be fighting for their independence. In comparison, Moscow’s relative lack of attention to anti-colonial movements and continued calls for coexistence with capitalist “colonizers”—not to mention the fact that the Soviet Union was led by white men and lacked a claim to be of the non-white Third World—left space for the PRC to claim moral leadership in the Third World. Maoism and the PRC therefore presented a more attractive symbol for revolution among certain non-white revolutionaries than the Soviet Union.

By 1963, the CCP made clear that their support for national liberation movements and newly-independent states stood in opposition to the Soviet Union’s “revisionism.” Li Danhui argues that the CCP’s proposal of twenty-five points to the General Line of the International Communist Movement in June 1963 reframed the CCP’s revolutionary success as a model for Third World national liberation struggles.60 This reframing both detached the Third World from the Soviet-led socialist bloc—which the CCP argued was a defender of neo-colonialism—and repositioned the PRC as the leader of the Third World.61 By 1967, after the start of the Cultural Revolution, Peter Van Ness argues that the CCP increasingly supported national liberation movements. After the Sino-Soviet split and the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, a moment when proving one’s revolutionary zeal became necessary for cadres to survive, the PRC’s foreign relations shifted to promote overseas anti-imperialist revolutions based on the

60 Li Danhui points out that the 25 points, “detached the national liberation movements from the CPSU world socialist system; they defined the national liberation movements as the first step in the world revolution, that is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, whose task was to overthrow imperialism and capitalism; and they asserted that a bourgeois-democratic revolution had to be accomplished before proletarian dictatorship and a socialist system could be established” (Li Danhui, “The Schism in the International Communist Movement and the Collapse of the Alliance, 1965,” in Shen Zhihua, ed., A Short History of Sino-Soviet Relations, 1917-1991 [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020], 297).

Chinese revolutionary model.\textsuperscript{62} In parallel to the PRC’s support for other anti-revisionist states, like Albania, the CCP also supported anti-revisionist factions within overseas communist and socialist parties, as well as in “minor factions with anti-Soviet revisionist orientations, though they might not even have had Marxist-Leninist programs or organizations.”\textsuperscript{63} Consequently, while there are competing ideas as to the main causes for the breakdown in relations between the Soviet Union and the PRC, the Sino-Soviet split provided the impetus for the CCP’s push by the latter half of the 1960s to support revolutionary struggles in the Third World and to promote Maoism as a global anti-imperialist ideology.

**Third World Maoism: Promotion and Reception**

After the Sino-Soviet split, Mao’s launching of the Cultural Revolution led to a radical turn in the CCP’s domestic and foreign policy.\textsuperscript{64} Mao’s call for continuous revolution and his promotion of radical factions within the CCP and across Chinese society led to an intense period of disruption and violence. During the early (and more violent) phase of the Cultural Revolution, Elizabeth Perry and Li Xun emphasize that “the intense struggles of the day afforded little opportunity for compromise or complexity. People were either friends or foes; thoughts were either correct or incorrect.”\textsuperscript{65} This division into “correct” (or red) radicals vs. “incorrect” (or


\textsuperscript{63}Li Danhui, 2020: 298.


black) reactionaries extended throughout the bureaucracy, including the foreign ministry. On May 13, 1967, for example, a group of radicals took over control of the foreign ministry and instilled a “militant phase” in the PRC’s foreign relations. Whereas prior to 1967 the foreign ministry had avoided endorsing national liberation movements so as to avoid undermining relations with foreign state governments, the takeover of the ministry by more radical voices led to a push to not only support overseas movements, but also to promote the replication of the CCP’s Maoist revolutionary model around the world. John Garver argues that, in the early phase of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1969, propagating revolutionary ideology became the CCP’s highest foreign policy goal, even taking priority over national security concerns. The PRC’s international isolation from both the capitalist and socialist blocs meant that Beijing needed to find new sources of international support not only to ensure the PRC’s status as a world power, but also to highlight international approval for the radicalism of the Cultural Revolution. The CCP’s support for overseas national liberation and guerilla movements therefore became a key component of the PRC’s foreign relations during the Cultural Revolution.

Mao’s coining of the phrase “Use the past to serve the present, make the foreign serve China” is oft-quoted to highlight the Chairman’s leveraging of foreign affairs to support domestic political goals. Delegation visits by foreign heads of state, diplomats, government and party officials, and cultural or scientific groups, all acted as a key mechanism by which the foreign might bring in external expertise or provide propaganda for the CCP. Delegation visits


68 Garver, 263.

by foreigners to the PRC occurred through the framework of Waishi (an abbreviation of waijiao shiwu, diplomatic matters), which Anne-Marie Brady argues,

“describes the full spectrum of the PRC’s external policies to influence and at times control foreigners, as well as Chinese citizens’ contact and perception of them and of foreign culture and technology within and outside China. It also includes China’s external relations, duiwai guanxi, meaning both official state-to-state and so-called unofficial or ‘people-to-people’ diplomacy.”70

These foreign interactions, controlled by bureaus and formal regulations (waishi jilü), persisted from their origins in the delegatsiya (delegation) system in the Soviet Union in the 1920s that was later adopted across the socialist world.71 The Area Handbook for the People’s Republic of China, published in 1972 for U.S. military and government personnel by The American University, situated these delegation visits within “three distinct, but sometimes overlapping channels” of the CCP’s foreign relations: formal government-to-government diplomacy (state visits, economic and technical aid, military assistance, and trade); people-to-people diplomacy (also referred to as “people’s diplomacy”); and party-to-party or party-to-leftist group diplomacy.72

70 Anne-Marie Brady, Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People’s Republic (Lanham, NY: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003), xi; For details on the mechanisms by which waishi operates, see Zhao Pitao, Waishi gaishuo (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995); see also Lu Ning, The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decision making in China (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).


Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for formal and people-to-
people diplomacy, the International Liaison Department took charge of relations with other
parties and leftist groups. This “third” channel of relations between the CCP and leftist
organizations, which predominantly engaged other parties or groups within states that had either
no or limited formal diplomatic relations with the PRC, highlights an area of the PRC’s foreign
relations that has received less attention from foreign relations scholars. By examining
diplomatic relations between states and non-state actors, rather than formal diplomatic exchanges
as scholarship on foreign affairs tends to prioritize, a more complex picture emerges of Chinese
diplomacy during the Cultural Revolution, a period when state-to-state relations between the
PRC and other states were more limited.  

This “third channel” diplomacy provided a
mechanism by which the CCP engaged with overseas non-state actors, including conducting
visits—both public and secret—by the leaders of various national liberation and guerilla
movements to the PRC.

The wooing of overseas revolutionaries served to promote the Maoist revolutionary
model as part of Mao’s vision for the export of people’s war across the globe. Inviting
revolutionaries to visit the PRC, however, was only part of the CCP’s efforts to achieve a “world
revolution.” This concept of revolution promoted radicalism both domestically and abroad, with
the Cultural Revolution aiming to promote Maoism and Mao’s image in what Zachary Scarlett
argues was a simultaneously ultra-nationalist and transnational event that collapsed distinctions
between revolution at home and abroad. Scarlett suggests that in the CCP’s propaganda “there

---

73 Lüthi, for example, notes that “China’s international self-isolation in the early Cultural Revolution years
paralleled the nadir of Sino-Soviet relations,” (Lorenz M. Lüthi, “Sino-Soviet Relations during the Mao Years,
1949-1969,” in Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-Yu Li, eds., China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present

was little difference between Mao as a national hero and Mao as a global symbol,” where Mao was positioned as the savior of the both the CCP and the Third World against revisionist and imperialist forces of the First World.\(^{75}\) The promise of revolution in the Third World was therefore vital for Mao and the CCP to internationalize the Cultural Revolution and use foreign interactions to legitimize radicalism at home. Support for overseas national liberation movements, guerilla insurgencies, and anti-revisionist states was therefore not just part of the PRC’s foreign policy, it became a fundamental component for the continuation of the Cultural Revolution in the name of extending people’s war across the globe.

Exporting revolution to a global audience was achieved through three main mechanisms: the translation, publishing, and propagation of Mao Zedong Thought (most notably *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong*, known colloquially as the *Little Red Book*, which was first compiled and edited by Lin Biao in 1964 for distribution to the People’s Liberation Army\(^{76}\)); the awarding of military, economic, and technical aid to sympathetic states and revolutionary forces; and the intervention and promotion of anti-imperialist and anti-state movements.\(^{77}\) Although these efforts were questionable in terms of achieving the desired effect to replicate Maoist-style revolution around the world—Julia Lovell notes that “not one lookalike Maoist regime took power”\(^{78}\)—they were highly successful in creating a cult-like figure in Mao among overseas leftists. Daniel Leese notes that by September 1971, “the Little Red Book was translated into thirty-six languages, including Braille script, and published around 10 million times abroad.


\(^{77}\) King, 56-57.

\(^{78}\) Lovell, 17.
Besides the official versions of the Quotations, up to 440 local editions have been noted.\textsuperscript{79} In the case of South Asia, Chakrabarti notes that the CCP printed leaflets and copies of Mao’s \textit{Quotations} in English, Hindi, Bengali, Sinhalese, Tamil, Malayalam, Urdu, and Nepali (with local non-official translations into other languages), many of which were either smuggled into India or dropped by the CCP via plane along the PRC-India border.\textsuperscript{80} These texts were then complemented with the CCP’s own English-language propaganda publications, such as the magazine \textit{Peking Review}, that was printed and distributed overseas and served as a major source of information about Maoism and the PRC for overseas readers; articles from the publication would often be reprinted in leftist magazines and newspapers across the world.\textsuperscript{81} Taken holistically, the CCP’s propaganda efforts promoted Maoism as both ideology and practical guide for a global anti-revisionist revolution.

The CCP’s promotion of Maoism as a revolutionary ideology for national liberation and anti-imperialist movements found a receptive audience of revolutionaries, anti-revisionists, and leftist activists throughout the Third World. Where the CCP’s production and promotion of Maoist abroad was a top-down and elite-driven process, the reception of Maoism across the globe was largely a bottom-up phenomenon among groups and individuals at the grassroots. While the CCP pushed its own interpretation of Mao Zedong Thought, Maoism took on an


\textsuperscript{81} Chakrabarti (2014), 124.
international image that was actively adapted by individuals and organizations across the world to suit their own local conditions. This “Third World Maoism”—that is Maoism as interpreted by groups across the Third World, rather than as interpreted by the CCP—positioned Mao as an icon for anti-imperial, anti-colonial and anti-capitalist movements worldwide, while at the same time local movements shaped Maoism to both suit their own domestic political agendas and to signal participation in a global anti-imperialist movement. By considering Mao Zedong Thought as, on the one hand, a tool in the CCP’s foreign relations apparatus and, on the other, as a vocabulary for transnational revolutionary struggles throughout the Third World, Maoism can be considered as not just a “Chinese” ideology, but rather a truly international ideology that served as a foundation for global revolutionary activities.

---

82 Liu Kang argues that it is during this period that Maoism became “a vision and ideology fully implemented as social praxis, which caused enormous violence and terror in China, and which inspired radical counter-hegemonic social movements from France to the United States, and guerrilla warfare from the Philippines to Indo-China.” Liu Kang, 17.
Chapter 1

Maoism and Black Power: Mutual Manipulations of Mao Zedong Thought and African American Activism

In September 1970, an “anti-imperialism” delegation of the Black Panther Party (BPP, or Panthers) visiting Vietnam received an invitation from the Chinese embassy in Hanoi to travel to the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Following the delegation’s return to the U.S. after accepting the PRC’s invitation, Elaine Brown, Deputy Minister of Information for the Southern California Chapter of the Panthers, remarked that China was:

“Very lively. Peking is a tremendous city. I believe there’s a population of about 6 or 7 million. That’s almost the population of New York, and yet, it’s not like New York because the people are not squashed into housing. The land space is enough for them to live comfortably...When you’re in China, everything is clear, everything is beautiful. People are lively and vital.”

Accompanied by the Panthers’ Minister of Information, Eldridge Cleaver, Elaine Brown’s 1970 visit to Beijing was one of several trips made by the Panthers to the PRC, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Algeria between 1969 and 1971. In September 1971, for example, Brown returned to Beijing with Huey P. Newton, a co-founder of the Panthers, where they met with Premier Zhou Enlai and Chairman Mao Zedong’s wife, Jiang Qing, to discuss the PRC’s support for African-American activists’ struggle in the U.S. Unlike previous African American visitors,

---

like W. E. B. Du Bois\textsuperscript{84} and Robert F. Williams, Newton was not granted the highest honor of an audience with Mao Zedong himself, but he was invited to participate in the PRC’s National Day celebrations on October 1, 1971, an honor shared by few Americans.\textsuperscript{85} Such visits were tightly-controlled tours of select sites and provided propaganda for both the Panthers and the CCP in their shared opposition to the U.S. government.\textsuperscript{86} For the Panthers, the CCP provided international support and legitimacy for their activities in the U.S. For the CCP, providing support for the Panthers and other African-American activists provided a means to affirm the PRC’s support for racial justice and emphasize the injustice of U.S. capitalism and imperialism.

At a time of severed official relations between the U.S. and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), African-American activists maintained exchanges of people, information, and mutual political support across the Pacific.\textsuperscript{87} While an examination of Sino-American relations at the state level would suggest that there were few relations between the U.S. and the PRC prior to President Richard Nixon’s visit in 1972, the case of African-American activists highlights the numerous interactions between the CCP and non-state organizations and individuals in the U.S., with these activists becoming “leading figures in the Cold War cultural interactions between the

\textsuperscript{84} W. E. B. Du Bois visited the PRC in 1959 and celebrated his 91\textsuperscript{st} birthday at Peking University in Beijing. He described his impression of the PRC as, “I have never seen a nation which so amazed and touched me as China in 1959…it is a sense of human nature free of its most hurtful and terrible meanness and of a people full of joy and faith” (W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Vast Miracle of China Today: A Report on a Ten-Week Visit to the People’s Republic of China,” in Bill V. Mullen and Cathryn Watson eds., \textit{W.E.B. Du Bois on Asia: Crossing the World Color Line} [Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2003], 187).

\textsuperscript{85} A notable exception is Edgar Snow, who was invited with his wife, Lois Wheeler Snow, to stand on the rostrum of Tiananmen for the National Day celebrations in 1970. Edgar Snow, letter to Lois Wheeler, 17 February 1971, Folder 80, Edgar Snow Papers, UA-UMKC, referenced in Brady, 178.

\textsuperscript{86} Brady, 2-4

\textsuperscript{87} The CCP’s interactions with organizations like the Panthers were part of Mao’s aim to combat imperialism, revisionism, and reactionaries after the Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s, known as the “three fights and one increase” (sandou yiduo) campaign. See Danhui Li and Yafeng Xia, “Jockeying for Leadership: Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, October 1961 - July 1964,” \textit{Journal of Cold War Studies} 16, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 24-60.
two countries.” Such interactions—dubbed “Sino-Black Relations” by Keisha A. Brown and a trans-Pacific “Black bridge” by Hongshan Li—emphasize the role of sub-state interactions between the CCP and U.S. citizens as an alternate approach to understanding the PRC’s foreign relations during the period of U.S.-China diplomatic isolation prior to Nixon’s visit. This approach centers individual citizens, groups, societies, and collectives as pivotal players in the internationalization of Maoism and African-American activism. In the latter case, this included early visits to the PRC by Paul Robeson, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Shirley Graham Du Bois, and later visits by more radical activists like Mabel and Robert F. Williams. These interactions between African Americans and the CCP highlight the utility of studies of international affairs that look beyond state-state interactions, as well as the importance of including sources from African American history in studies of U.S.-China relations in the twentieth century.

Scholarship on international Maoist movements has increasingly examined African-American activists’ interpretations of Maoism. Robeson Taj Frazier, for example, presents a comprehensive look at the role of Maoism and the imagination of the PRC among African-American activists in the United States and Black Internationalism more broadly.


highlighting the CCP’s promotion of Afro-Asian solidarity—for example, through a film produced by three Chinese cinematographers, Zhen Kaizhu, Jin Jingyi, and Zhen Jinti, concerning Mable and Robert F. William’s visit to the PRC—Frazier reveals fundamental shortcomings in the field of international relations and political science owing to their marginalization of “decolonization as a constitutive feature of Cold War Chinese political communication…” Moreover, he argues that “[b]y frequently privileging states and interstate activities as the primary units of analysis in considering Chinese foreign affairs, [these fields] have given insufficient consideration to the cultural and social dimensions of Cold War Chinese politics.”

Similarly, Robin D. G. Kelley and Betsy Esch argue that African-American activists came to uphold Mao and the PRC as a model for revolution, and more specifically that the PRC presented African-American activists with a “‘colored’ or Third World Marxist model that enabled them to challenge a white and Western vision of class struggle.” Despite the CCP’s shifting and often contradictory positions on its support for African-American activists, Kelley and Esch convincingly argue that Maoism provided an ideology for the Third World that African American activists “shaped and reshaped to suit their own political and cultural realities.”

Likewise, Julia Lovell uses the example of Robert F. Williams’ trips to the PRC in the early

---

92 Frazier, 15. Zhen Kaizhu, Jin Jingyi, and Zhen Jinti made a full-length documentary of radical activists/freedom fighters Mabel and Robert William’s 1964 visit to the PRC, with the film’s closing shot displaying a communist poster that depicts “a black person, a Native American, a Latin American, and a Chinese working standing in solidarity—visual iconography of the Third World anti-imperialist struggle. “Robert Williams in China 1964, Reels 1, 2, & 3,” RWP. Box 14, folder “video cassettes.” See also, Frazier, 141.

93 Kelley and Esch, 8. This article is reprinted in Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen, eds., Afro-Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 97-154. Subsequent page numbers refer to the edition printed in Ho and Mullen.

94 Ibid., 99.
1960s to illustrate the appeal of Maoism among African-American radicals, which she then situates within a broader history of Maoism’s global attraction across the Third World.95

Recent Chinese-language scholarship has also increasingly considered the interactions between the PRC and African-Americans, and there is a growing corpus of Chinese-language histories of African-American activists. Wang Enming, for example, uses primarily English-language secondary literature to examine Malcom X’s politicization and genealogy of the concept of “Black Nationalism,” as well as to contextualize Malcom X’s life within broader trends in African-American history.96 Wang Guilian, by contrast, argues that Malcolm X’s imagining of African Americans’ struggle in a broader international anticolonial and anti-capitalist context means that labeling him an American activist is too simplistic.97 Chinese scholars have also explored the complexity of movements and influences within African-American rights movements in the twentieth century. Qin Qingling explores various influences on the development of the Civil Rights Movement,98 with Zou Dezhen noting the particular importance of W.E.B. Du Bois’ on civil rights discourse.99 In comparison, Lin Ling draws connections between theories of black nationalism, looking at racial separatism, religious nationalism, and capitalist economic nationalism as the ideological origins of the Nation of

95 Lovell, 276


Islam. Taken collectively with English-language scholarship, these studies emphasize an increasing scholarly interest in African-American activists, both in their own right and as agents who interacted with the PRC.

Maoism was interpreted in diverse ways by different groups within the U.S. The Bay Area in California, for example, provides one paradigm for understanding the diversity of interpretations of Maoism even within the same geographic area. On the one hand, radical, working class, African-American activists in Oakland interpreted Maoist ideology as a means to articulate a form of global solidarity against racial oppression, whereby Maoism served to connect domestic political agendas with Black Internationalism and the broader Third World. On the other hand, predominantly middle class, white, and college-educated activists in nearby Berkeley viewed Maoism as a means to attack hierarchical, bureaucratic institutions that hindered the democratization of knowledge and power. Both groups constructed Americanized versions of Maoism, which were versions of Maoism as it was crafted to respond to local political contexts in the U.S., in contrast to how it was understood in the PRC. Studies of Maoism in the U.S., however, do not necessarily examine the mechanism by which such different interpretations developed. In particular, there are few studies that consider both how


101 Frazier, 19. Jeremy Friedman suggests that the PRC’s status as a “non-white, non-European, primarily agrarian nation which had suffered tremendously from the depredations of imperialism” was what enabled Mao to argue for an alternative to the Soviet Union as “leader of the world revolutionary [and decolonization] process” (Friedman, Shadow Cold War, 5). Fred Ho similarly suggests that the CCP’s revolutionary victory was “a great source of inspiration and example to Third World peoples both internationally and within the United States. The Chinese Revolution of 1949 established the PRC as a socialist government among one quarter of the world’s population, a population that is ‘non-white.’” Fred Ho, “The Inspiration of Mao and the Chinese Revolution on the Black Liberation Movement and the Asian Movement on the East Coast,” in Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen, eds., Afro-Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 155-164. See also, Fabio Lanza, The End of Concern: Maoist China, Activism, and Asian Studies (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2017), 26.

102 Lanza, 26.
African-American activists developed their own interpretations of Maoism and how the CCP developed their own interpretations of African American activism, although some recent scholarship seeks to address this gap in the literature. Specifically, where most studies of African-American activism consider Black Power archival materials as iterations of a domestic movement, this chapter considers these materials from a Maoist perspective; that is it details references to Maoism in the Black Power archives to construct how Maoism was interpreted and enacted by leaders and participants in the movement. While African American Studies has largely filled the space left by East Asian Studies—namely the neglect of studies of the CCP’s outreach to African Americans, as well as ideologies of race and racial internationalism in the PRC’s Cold War foreign relations—it still evinces a weakness in its approach to the study of China, insomuch as it presents a U.S.-centric narrative that neglects the Chinese side of the story. This chapter therefore builds on Kelley and Esch’s argument that African American activists “shaped and reshaped” Maoism to suit their interests to suggest that this interaction was in fact mutual. That is, the CCP similarly “shaped and reshaped” reports of African-American activism to further its own propaganda claims to a domestic Chinese audience. This chapter therefore argues that both African American activists and the CCP actively attempted to adapt and manipulate each other so as to advance their respective domestic political ambitions.

To address this gap, this chapter explores how African-American activist leaders in the Black Power and Black Nationalism movements, specifically among leaders of the Panthers and the Revolutionary Action Movement (R.A.M.), interpreted and adapted Maoism and support

---


104 Hongshan Li, 116.
from the CCP to advance their own domestic political ambitions. Leaders of these organizations leveraged Maoist ideas as a means of conceptualizing revolution, organizing party structures, and declaring international solidarity with the CCP and other leftist groups. While these categories are not exclusive, and in many ways overlap with and reinforce one another, they provide a framework for considering how African-American activists’ interactions with the CCP affected their understanding, interpretation, and weaponization of Maoism in support of their domestic political agendas. In particular, through close readings of articles, statements, organizational structures, and visual propaganda produced by the CCP and the Panthers, I suggest that African-American activists did not passively accept Maoism according to the CCP’s own explanations and interpretations, but rather actively adapted and appropriated Maoism to suit their own needs. Instead, these activists fused Maoist ideological tenets—specifically Mao’s calls to adapt Marxism-Leninism for different times and locations, his emphasis on revolution as issuing from the masses, and his promotion of guerilla warfare tactics—105—with other international and domestic examples of Third World revolution. These examples ranged from news about leftist guerilla movements, to statements by Third World leaders condemning U.S. Imperialism, as well as African American movements and theories, such as Black Power, Black Nationalism, and the Civil Rights Movement. Activists then adapted these multiple references to suit their own local conditions and political goals of achieving racial equality and opposing white, Western constructs of class struggle.

On the other hand, this chapter also examines how the CCP leveraged and manipulated its support for African American activists to simultaneously demonstrate its leadership of the anti-revisionist Third World and opposition to the U.S. government. African-American activists

105 Kang, 18-20.
provided a clear example that the CCP could use to promote the applicability of Maoist revolutionary methods within the imperialist First World. While Mao disagreed with African-American activists over the primacy between race and class, the CCP’s propaganda support for these activists’ racial struggle also presented a way in which the CCP could distinguish itself from Soviet-styled Marxism-Leninism among non-white revolutionaries. In the context of the CCP’s promotion of Maoism—officially as a major contribution to, rather than a replacement of, Marxism-Leninism—within the Third World after the Sino-Soviet split, the CCP’s support for African-American activists therefore provided a mechanism by which the CCP could distinguish Maoist anti-revisionism from Soviet revisionism, as well as simultaneously undermine both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Using Chinese-language articles published in state media, public declarations by CCP members, and the inclusion of African-Americans in CCP visual propaganda, this chapter intervenes in debates about Maoism’s global impact by examining how the CCP actively adapted its interactions with African-American activists to promote its own domestic and international goals.

Racial Struggle over Class Struggle? Conceiving a “Maoist” Revolution in the U.S.

The Black Power movement emerged in the mid-1960s as an anti-racism protest that favored armed resistance. While this was an extension of previous social movements that called for racial, social, and political equality for African-Americans, favoring armed resistance increased tension with other movements that prioritized an alternate non-violent approach. That said, a growing body of scholarship argues that each movement ultimately aimed for similar political goals.106 These shared goals have led to a debate regarding the extent to which Black Power was

a distinct movement from Civil Rights. Harry Haywood, an African American member of the
Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), argues that the two movements are
temporally distinct.\textsuperscript{107} He suggested that African American activism be divided into an earlier
civil rights phase and a later Black Power phase:

“Black Power…summed up the main lessons learned by the masses during the civil rights
phase of the movement; legal rights meant nothing without the power to enforce them.
Black Power expressed the growing consciousness…that [African Americans] are an
oppressed nation whose road to freedom and equality lies through taking political power
into their own hands.”\textsuperscript{108}

While distinctions between the two movements are not always so clear, the Black Power
movement’s rejection of non-violence, embrace of Marxism-Leninism (and later Maoism as a
refined version of Marxism-Leninism), and manner by which it emphasized connections with
other international anti-colonial efforts highlight some notable differences.\textsuperscript{109}

In contrast to the Black Power movement’s demand for racial equality in the U.S., the
Black Nationalist movement argued explicitly for the racial superiority of black and African-

\textsuperscript{107} It is unclear as to the role of the CPUSA in facilitating the Panthers’ access to Maoism, but the CPUSA did
facilitate the propagation of Marxism among African-American union members, for example among United Auto
Workers members in Detroit. For more, see James A. Geschwender and Judson L. Jeffries, “The League of
Revolutionary Black Workers,” in Jeffries, 137.

\textsuperscript{108} Harry Haywood, \textit{Black Bolshevik} (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1978), 635; quoted in Komovi Woodard, “Imamu
Baraka, the Newark Congress of African People, and Black Power Politics,” in Jeffries, 44.

\textsuperscript{109} For more on the distinctions between the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, see Judson L. Jeffries, “A
Retrospective Look at the Black Power Movement,” in Jeffries, 7.
Americans over other races.\textsuperscript{110} One such organization that advocated for Black Nationalism was the Revolutionary Action Movement (R.A.M.), founded by a self-identified Black Nationalist, Maxwell Stanford Jr. (also known as Muhammad Ahmad).\textsuperscript{111} Founded in 1963 as a “coalition of various groups” by several members who “had been involved in sit-ins, freedom rides, and had become Black nationalists or Muslims,” R.A.M. aimed to achieve the “liberation of Black and oppressed peoples of the world.”\textsuperscript{112} Indeed, founders of R.A.M, like Ahmad, later also helped found local chapters of the Panthers, with leaders across the two organizations sharing broadly similar objectives for an overthrow of white imperialism in the U.S. and abroad.

As the Black Nationalist movement evolved alongside the Black Power movement throughout the early 1960s, Maoism and its embrace of a non-white alternative vision of anti-imperialist revolution provided an important vocabulary for radical African-American activists to articulate their political demands.\textsuperscript{113} Ahmad argued that Maoism’s emphasis on race was a more applicable ideology for Black Nationalism than Marxism-Leninism’s foregrounding of class struggle. In comparison to Marxism-Leninism, Ahmad argues that Black nationalism “sees race


\textsuperscript{111} Muhammad Ahmad, “Résumé for Muhammad Ahmad,” 1972, \textit{The Black Power Movement} - Part 3, Papers of the R.A.M. 1962-1996, FILM A1049.3, Reel 1. University Publications of America, Bethesda, MD. Stanford/Ahmad’s resume also highlights the variety of organizations that he was involved with the 1960s and 1970s, including the Congress of Racial Equality, the Philadelphia Chapter of the NAACP, and community organizing for Malcolm X, R.A.M., before co-founding the New York chapter of the Black Panther Party.


\textsuperscript{113} Akbar Muhammad Ahmad, “RAM: The Revolutionary Action Movement,” in Jeffries, 271-272.
exploitation as being predominant over class exploitation, and sees race rather than class as being the major problem of the 20th century.”

Marxist-Leninist ideas of class struggle were still an important component of the Black Power movement’s platform, but leaders like Malcolm X emphasized their lack of faith in white working-class American’s ability to consider class solidarity above whiteness as a primary means for organizing. Indeed, Malcolm X was clear in his distrust of the white working classes to fight for class struggle alongside African Americans, arguing that “The history of America is that working class whites have been just as much against not only working class Negroes, but all Negroes…There can be no working solidarity until there’s first black solidarity.”

Although Mao interpreted the Chinese revolution and the Cultural Revolution, as primarily an expression of class struggle, Maoism’s inclusion of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism—not to mention Mao himself being non-white—emphasized racial struggle in a way that Marxism-Leninism did not. The distinction between Marxism-Leninism’s emphasis on class struggle and Black Nationalism and Maoism’s emphasis on race captures a key reason as to why Marxism-Leninism was considered less applicable to the Black Nationalist movement.

Maoism, rather than Marxism-Leninism, proved a more enticing ideology to Black Nationalist leaders. Ahmad’s writings frame the principles of R.A.M. in explicitly Maoist terms,

114 Mohammad Ahmad, “The Struggle for Black Revolutionary Power,” 1971, FILM A1049.3, Reel 2, The Black Power Movement - Part 3, Papers of the R.A.M. 1962-1996, University Publications of America, Bethesda, MD. Ahmed later wrote in 1972 that “the difference between a Marxist and a revolutionary Black nationalist is a Marxist believes the race problem will be solved after a class revolution… A revolutionary Black nationalist believes that the question of racism, the exploitation of the basis of race, economically, socially, and politically, is an historical question and is the number one problem in the 20th century, and must be eliminated before any humane society can be created.” Muhammad Ahmad, “The Cultural Revolution,” 1972, FILM A1049.3, Reel 2, The Black Power Movement - Part 3, Papers of the R.A.M. 1962-1996.

and he repeatedly quotes Mao Zedong’s call to “serve the people” and Lin Biao’s calls for “self-reliance in his writings.” Ahmad’s also frequently quotes or references English-translations of Mao’s essays. In his essay “The Struggle for Black Revolutionary Power,” published in 1971, for example, Ahmad references themes from Mao’s essay “On Protracted War” to call for a “protracted war of self-defense and survival,” in which “U.S. imperialism…has become the arch enemy of revolutionary Black Peoples of the world.” Indeed, Ahmad reinforces R.A.M.’s alignment with Maoism over Marxism-Leninism and echoed a key component of many Black Power organizations by arguing that Black America was a “colony” that needed “liberating” from the White American empire. In doing so, Ahmad inherently links the struggle for Black liberation in the United States with global decolonization movements for Pan-African Unity and Black Internationalism, the “Bandung revolutionaries” of the Third World movement, and Maoist calls for unity among the oppressed peoples of the world. Echoing the CCP’s

---


118 For example, a *Black Panther* supplement on “Revolution is the Main Trend in the World Today” argues, “For Black People inside the United States, centuries of living in a society in which our voice is and has not ever been represented by the laws of the government of that society, it is not difficult to understand the need to participate ourselves in affairs which concern ourselves. Our friends in the People’s Republic of China also understand this” ([emphasis my own], *The Black Panther*, Monday, November 29, 1971, Supplement). Several Black Power groups, like the Panthers, also explicitly stated their view that Black America was a colony of the United States. See Woodard, 47. Kelley and Esch point out that unlike other organizations in the Black Power movement, the Panthers’ description of African Americans as colonial subjects was “more of a metaphor than an analytical concept” (Kelley and Esch, 126).

119 Ahmad writes that “The only thing that can bring destruction to the Western (European) Empire is an international organization or movement of Bandung revolutionaries” (Muhammad Ahmad, “The Struggle for Black Revolutionary Power,” 1971, FILM A1049.3, Reel 2, *The Black Power Movement* - Part 3, Papers of the R.A.M. 1962-1996).
propaganda drive to distinguish Chinese Maoism from Soviet Marxism-Leninism after the Sino-Soviet split, Ahmad argued—somewhat naively—that the PRC’s position as a non-white power and support for racial struggle as well as class struggle aligned the PRC with African-American activists’ political goals, and would therefore lead to both political and material support for R.A.M. from the PRC.  

Ahmad’s linking the plight of African-Americans to Asia was by no means a novel argument; both the CCP and leaders in the Black Power movement’s calls for mutual support relied on existing ideas of global colored/non-white solidarity that for African Americans originated in an admiration of Japan as a non-white empire during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. 

Ahmad’s distinction between white Soviet/Russian imperialism and non-white Maoist/Chinese anti-imperialism was therefore one iteration in a series of transnational links between African-Americans and Asian since the late nineteenth century.

While organizations like R.A.M. interpreted Maoism as prioritizing race, the CCP maintained its prioritization of racial struggle as fundamentally about class struggle. An article in the CCP magazine *Red Flag*, for example, emphasizes Mao’s view that racial struggle was itself fundamentally about class struggle. The article, entitled “The Racial Question is Essentially a Class Question,” reported a conversation from 1963 between Mao and African visitors the day

---

120 This view echoed the CCP’s propaganda in the Third World, which argued that because the PRC had itself been at least partially colonized, had never colonized another nation, and had no part in the global slave trade of the 19th century, Beijing had a stronger claim as leader of the Third World compared to the Soviet Union. See for example “Chairman Mao’s Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism,” *Peking Review* 45 (November 4, 1977); quoted in King C. Chen (ed.), *China and the Three Worlds: A Foreign Policy Reader* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1979), 114-115.

after Mao’s announcement in support of African Americans.122 People’s Daily reported that in Mao’s conversation with these visitors he condemned U.S. imperialism and stated his support for African American activists, but then also framed racial struggle as class struggle:

“The racial question is in essence a class question. Our unity is not one of race; it is the unity of comrades and friends. We should strengthen our unity and wage a common struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and the running dogs, to attain complete and thorough national independence and liberation.”123

Viewing racial struggle as a class struggle had informed CCP discourse since the party’s founding, with CCP co-founder Li Dazhao writing in 1924 that racial struggle occupied the same position as class struggle: “white peoples…look down on other races as inferior. Because of this the race question has become a class question and the races on a world scale have come to confront each other as classes…The struggle between the white and colored races will occur simultaneously with the class struggle.”124 Li’s view was that, owing to white peoples’ occupation of a “superior” class vis-a-vis non-white peoples, the issue of race was fundamentally a class issue. Mao’s support of this stance was therefore consistent with CCP doctrine, but stood in opposition to the views of Robert Williams, who echoed Malcolm X in questioning the willingness of white American workers to support African Americans’ demands for racial


equality.\textsuperscript{125} While Williams supported the PRC over the Soviet Union as a non-white leader of the Third World and as supporters of the Black Power movement, Mao’s unwillingness to prioritize racial struggle over class struggle remained a source of difference between the CCP and the Black Power movement.

This tension between Maoism as a China-centric ideology and Black Power as an American movement may help to explain why African American activists did not rely on Maoism or Marxism-Leninism as a gospel. Instead, the Black Power movement’s inclusion of Marxist and Maoist sources of inspiration, as well as the movement’s insistence on solidarity with and assistance to other liberation and anti-colonial movements throughout the world, created a mosaic that reflected the distinct global influences and demands in the movement’s construction of its aims and purpose. For example, Richard Wright’s 1954 book, \textit{Black Power}, argued for the inseparability of global Black oppression from African-American struggles in the U.S. after his visit to Gold Coast (later Ghana).\textsuperscript{126} Other leading figures, like the singer Paul Robeson, likewise highlighted their admiration of newly independent states, like Ghana and Jamaica, as successful examples of Black Power to command political authority.\textsuperscript{127} As a result, the Black Power movement actively fused examples of successful anti-colonial movements in Ghana, Algeria, and elsewhere, with concepts like Black Nationalism and Internationalism, pan-Africanism, and black solidarity, in addition to the language of Marxism-Leninism.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{125}Robert Carl Cohen, \textit{Black Crusader: A Biography of Robert Franklin Williams} (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1972), 264. See also, Hongshan Li, 143.

\textsuperscript{126}Richard Wright, \textit{Black Power}, London: Dennis Dobson, 1954


\textsuperscript{128}The \textit{National Black Agenda}, produced for the Modern Black Convention Movement at their March 1972 Gary Convention, stated that “because the history and culture of Black people is fundamentally related to our African birthright, we are concerned about the movement of colonized African countries from subjugation to independence.
the writings of figures who argued for an explicitly racially-defined liberation struggle, including individuals like Frantz Fanon and Malcolm X, among others, were juxtaposed with ideas from Marxism-Leninism to construct a complex ideological platform for the Black Power movement.129 As Huey Newton wrote of those who influenced his own understanding of revolution, “Mao and Fanon and [Che] Guevara all saw clearly that the people had been stripped of their birthright and their dignity, not by a philosophy or mere words, but at gunpoint...for them, the only way to win freedom was to meet force with force.”130 The combination of these influences, while not necessarily determinants of the actions of the Black Power movement, certainly provided a source of inspiration, a shared vocabulary, and a claim to international support that served to legitimize the movement’s activities.

Following the founding of the Panthers in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale—along with members of several other Black Power organizations, R.A.M.—the Panther’s leadership aimed to incorporate ideas from Black Power, Black Nationalism, Marxism, and Maoism into a political organization capable of supporting words with action. The party leaders’ approximation of Maoism provided a rough handbook for how organizations like the Panthers could not only conceptualize, but also conduct revolution. In service of actively molding not just Maoism, but also other sources of inspiration to serve their own domestic goals, the Panthers aimed to create propaganda that contextualized international revolutionary struggles for a domestic North American audience. Editors of The Black Panther, the Panthers’ party

129 Frantz Fanon’s writing about the Algerian War (1954-1962) in his novel, The Wretched of the Earth, Paris, France: François Maspero (1961), was highlighted by Black Powerites as an example for how to conduct a successful anticolonial movement.

newspaper, even proposed the formation of an organization to represent such an international movement, namely “a Progressive People’s Socialist International Front for Liberation,” with the organization’s goals framed in explicitly Marxist-Leninist language, that is “the consolidation of all progressive socialist forces to move the forces of history.”\textsuperscript{131} This organization never came to fruition, but the editors’ call for such a movement indicates that they conceptualized the Panthers’ activities as fundamentally part of a global Marxist-Leninist movement—rather than simply a domestic movement within the U.S.—which they reinforced with articles, printed speeches, and interviews from individuals around the world who supported (or were purported to support by the editors) the Panthers’ mission. The international section of \textit{The Black Panther’s} 30 January 1971 issue, for example, features reprints of English-language articles from two state newspapers, North Korea’s \textit{The Pyongyang Times} and the PRC’s \textit{Peking Review}, concerning the U.S. government’s oppression of the Panthers.\textsuperscript{132} For example, an article reprinted from \textit{The Pyongyang Times}—an English and French-language publication in North Korea that served a similar overseas propaganda function to the CCP’s \textit{Peking Daily}—quotes the North Korean government’s condemnation of the U.S. government and explicit support for the BPP: “The Korean People scathingly condemn with surging indignation the U.S. imperialists for their fascist suppression of the Black Panther Party and its members…U.S. imperialists, stop the brutal


These references to other revolutionary struggles around the world, however, did not necessarily serve as a guidebook for how the Panthers could conduct a successful guerilla operation in the U.S. Instead, the newspaper’s editors aimed to demonstrate to their readers that similar activities to those conducted by the Panthers were also occurring abroad, and that the Panthers’ methods and goals were therefore justified. One such method that the editors utilized to demonstrate international support for the Panthers was by adding commentary to reports of overseas revolutionary activities or statements by foreign officials. These commentaries were frequently juxtaposed and linked to related domestic affairs that supported the Panthers’ propaganda claims or were combined with calls to action or other activities for readers. These calls for action suggest that stories in The Black Panther were not intended for a passive readership but were meant to foster local activism in support of the Panthers’ programs and organizational activities. For example, a report authored by members of the National Union of
Ethiopian University Students in Algeria about the Ethiopia-Eritrea civil war was published in February 1971 and called attention to the U.S. government’s involvement in the conflict. In the next issue, there was an advertisement for an “Ethiopian Night” at the University of California, Berkeley, with Ethiopian food served alongside speeches on the tenth anniversary of the Angolan revolution and a feature on Kathleen Cleaver’s banned demonstration in West Germany with African-American G.I.s. Such reports suggest that international events were leveraged not only to display inferred claims to international support for the Panthers’ activities, as well as to construct an imagined connection to global movements. By organizing events in the U.S. in support of global struggles against racial oppression, the Panthers both signaled their participation in a global movement and motivated their membership to participate in local party-building events and programs.

Examples of the CCP’s activities and the application of Maoist ideology in the PRC were commonplace in the pages of The Black Panther, and they played a key role in how leaders of the Black Power and Black Nationalist movements envisioned their domestic struggle within a global context. During the PRC’s entry to the United Nations (U.N.), for example, editors of The Black Panther published a supplement dedicated to the topic, which included the full text of a speech delivered by foreign minister Qiao Guanhua to the U.N. alongside an editorial that argues for “the Chinese People to be able to speak for themselves in matters that concern them.” In addition, the editorial links the PRC’s entry to the U.N. with African-American struggles in the U.S.:

---


For black people in the U.S., centuries of living in a society in which our voice is and has not ever been represented by the laws of the government of that society, it is not difficult to understand the need to participate ourselves in affairs which concern ourselves. Our friends of the People’s Republic of China also understand this. Indeed, the publishing of Qiao Guanhua’s speech came after a series of articles about the PRC’s entry to the U.N., including an editorial on a speech given by Albanian Deputy Premier Sokrat Plaka at the U.N. that emphasizes Plaka’s condemning of racism in the U.S.:

The peoples of color of the United States…realize that the only road to follow to realize their legitimate rights is resolute struggle without compromise against American imperialism, which is the stronghold of racism and economic and political exploitation.

This method of commenting on speeches allowed the Panthers to pastiche statements by world leaders into a kind of declaration of international solidarity with their cause. Indeed, these commentaries, which served to annotate speeches, statements, and articles from overseas revolutionaries, as well as news items about the global struggle against imperialism, almost never address one revolutionary movement in isolation. That is, each mention of one revolutionary group by The Black Panther’s editors is cross-referenced with multiple other sources of domestic and global inspiration. An article by an author only identified as “Eve,” for example, in arguing that racial equality is not the only struggle that the Panthers should be fighting, but that women’s liberation is also an inherent part of any liberation effort, identifies multiple points as evidence for

---


140 The 20 November 1971 issue of The Black Panther even has a section on page 8 reading, “Notice! Next week’s issue! Full story of entrance into the U.N. of the People’s Republic of China.”

her article: “Along with Blacks in America, students all over the world, Tanzanians and Cubans and Vietnamese, women realize that the fight is not for equal rights. The fight is for change in the society itself.” In this case, “Eve’s” mentioning of “Tanzanians and Cubans and Vietnamese” could just have likely also referenced “Chinese” or any of the other purportedly revolutionary states of the Third World; the references to global revolution, and the Panthers’ position as an integral part of such a global movement, are clearly signaled to the newspaper’s readership. These articles in *The Black Panthers* emphasize the manner in which global sources of inspiration were fused together by the newspapers’ editors and contributors to develop an ideological framework of interconnected movements in service to the Panthers’ domestic agenda. Maoism, as understood by the Panthers in the U.S., therefore appears less like Maoism as understood by the CCP, and more as one example within an imagined global anti-revisionist and anti-imperialist revolutionary movement.

Mao’s writings on how to conduct successful guerilla warfare proved attractive to activists who sought to promote armed resistance. Kelley and Esch, for example, argue that Robert Williams’ promotion of self-defense groups for African Americans in North Carolina, and his advocacy to “meet force with force,” formed a Maoist-inspired theory of guerilla warfare in the U.S. In a clear reference to the Soviet and Chinese “Red Guards” that formed an integral part of foreign imaginations of the Cultural Revolution, a guide written by Muhammad Ahmad in the early 1970s also details how participants in the Black Power movement should build an African-American “Black Guards.” The Black Guards—somewhat ironically named given the counter-

---


143 Kelley and Esch, 111

revolutionary connotation of “black” in the PRC during the Cultural Revolution—were framed as a necessary self-defense measure for the black nationalist movement and structured the Guards at ten distinct levels, ranging from the “Unit,” which consists of “five men with one leader…as a self-defense guerilla army” within the self-named Black People’s Liberation Army, to organizations at the city and the regional levels, and up to a “National Council.” The intention of such a structure, Ahmad writes, was so that guerilla forces could be established across the United States as part of a “People’s” or “Protracted” war, a reference to a collection of Mao’s essays entitled “On Protracted War” that was published in 1967. While organizations that aimed to echo the structure of the Red Guards in non-socialist states also occurred in other countries, such as France, the case of the Black Guards is distinct in its emphasis on race above other forms of struggle and oppression—be they class or otherwise—as the primary motivation for their organization. Consequently, Ahmad and Williams’s writings indicate that Maoism was considered a useful outline for organizing and institutionalizing an anti-oppression platform that they then adapted to their situation in the U.S.

It is unlikely that Williams’ inspiration for guerilla warfare and Ahmad’s inspiration for the Black Guards came from a single source. Instead, Mao and Guavara’s writings were most likely combined with a more general impression of the Red Guards that Williams might have gleaned from various English-language sources. Indeed, Red Guard activities in the PRC were widely reported in foreign press reports, as well as English-language outlets in the PRC like

146 Ibid.
Peking Review. In particular, the Maoist idea that a party and army should be anti-hierarchical with no clear divisions between those with power and those without, appears to have been particularly appealing to a number of radical activists in the Black Power movement. As Joan Robinson writes of her impressions after a visit to the PRC during the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, “a conventional army preserves something of the traditions of feudalism…the concept that every kind of service is equally honourable is instilled into all ranks by the study of Mao’s writings.”

Such an example of anti-hierarchical order made an impression on members of the Black Power movement looking to emulate Mao’s guerilla successes. In an essay entitled “The Cultural Revolution,” for example, Mohamad Ahmed advocates for an armed insurrection in the U.S. through a Maoist-themed “Black People’s War” and a “Black Liberation Front,” with the aim of transforming “the black mass pride movement into a black revolutionary movement.”

Indeed, the “Code of Cadres” written for R.A.M.’s People’s Army, with whom R.A.M. intended to take over the U.S. through guerilla warfare, displays clear similarities with Mao’s writings. As Kelley and Esch point out, R.A.M.’s Code includes lines like: “A Revolutionary nationalist will maintain the highest level of morality and will never take as much as a needle or a single piece of thread from the masses,” which was taken directly from Mao’s “Three Main Rules of Discipline.” Combined with ideas from Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam about self-restraint, discipline, and the need to continuously improve oneself, R.A.M.

---


Code of Cadres therefore provides a clear example of how Maoism was adapted to a domestic Black Power audience.

While the Panthers’ drew on multiple sources of inspiration in their conceptualization of revolution, there is a clear Maoist influence in the Panthers’ establishment of community programs—literally named “Serve the People” programs to echo the title of Mao’s 1944 speech\textsuperscript{152}—that catered to the needs of African-American communities. Mao’s calls to “serve the people,” were taken quite literally by the Panthers, who established around sixty programs, the “Free Breakfast for Children Program,” the “Oakland Community School”—which initially offered free meals to children at St. Augustine's Church in Oakland, California, before being extended to cities across the U.S.—and free sickle cell anemia testing.\textsuperscript{153} While the use of churches and community centers indicates that these programs developed out of existing school and church programs, the Panthers added Maoism nomenclature in a manner that fused existing local ideas to an international Maoist movement. Breakfast programs were considered a key part of the Panthers’ appeal, with Fred Crawford, who briefly held a leadership role in the Indianapolis party branch, even arguing that the breakfast program would even attract the support of the establishment, if only “the Panthers would stop calling members of the establishment ‘pigs.’”\textsuperscript{154} While Crawford’s consolatory view towards the establishment was not shared by the majority of the Panthers’ members, his comment underscores the real benefits that the Panthers’ programs brought to some of the most marginalized members of U.S. society. Consequently, while Maoism was actively


manipulated by the Panthers’ leadership to forge a U.S.-centric concept of anti-imperialist revolution, this approach did not just intend to achieve its political goals through guerilla warfare. Rather, the Panthers also took inspiration from Maoism to provide necessary services to African American communities.


In April 1968, Mao Zedong made his second public announcement through *People’s Daily* in support of African Americans in the U.S. and their struggle for political and racial equality. While Mao’s first announcement, in 1963, responded to a letter sent by activist Robert F. Williams asking for the PRC to support the March on Washington (where Martin Luther King delivered his famous “I have a Dream” speech), the 1968 announcement, by contrast, reacted to Martin Luther King’s assassination, which Mao upheld as evidence that non-violence would never yield “freedom and emancipation” for African Americans. In response to Mao’s announcement, local party officials across the PRC also declared their own support for the struggle of their “Black American Brothers.” Archival documents show that from April to June, 1968, local officials in Xinjiang, Shijiazhuang, Sichuan, Guangxi, and at Tsinghua University all echoed Mao’s announcement. A “May Song,” written by a Red Guard and

---


158 Author unknown, “Zhongguo wen hua da ge ming wen ku,” second edition, Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhong wen da xue Zhongguo yan jiu fu wu zhong xin, in Song Yongyi, 2006. For example: “Xinjiang wuchan jieji wenhua
published in a Red Guard magazine, was even dedicated to African-Americans, with the line: “Spare no effort to support our Black American Brothers!”159 Notably, a 1967 essay, authored by a presumed red guard, emphasizes the example of African-American armed struggle as exemplifying the power of Mao Zedong Thought even within the “fortress” of the U.S: “Black Americans are heroically picking up arms, inside the world’s largest reactionary fortress [the U.S.] rings the gunshot of revolution.”160 Together, these archival sources suggest that African-American activists served as a useful example that local party officials could invoke to highlight their support for overseas anti-imperialist struggles, as well as boost their anti-U.S. credentials. African-American activists allowed the CCP’s propaganda to highlight human injustice (racism), economic injustice (capitalism), and political injustice (imperialism) occurring at once in U.S. society. The archival evidence suggests that, after Mao’s two announcements in 1963 and 1968, African-American activists in the U.S.—and, in particular, their emphasis on race—became an integral part of the Third World as imagined by CCP members across the PRC.

The diversity of organizations advocating for African-American rights in the U.S. was well-publicized in Chinese-language sources. Beyond a simplistic binary of the “non-violent” (fanbao) Civil Rights Movement versus the “violent” (baoli) Black Nationalist movement, Chinese-language sources emphasize the role of multiple organizations in the U.S. and their respective and differing political agendas. Gong Niannian’s Meiguo Heiren Yundong Shi (“A

---


History of Black American Political Movements”), published in the late sixties, for example,
details Black history in the U.S. from the 1600s to the 1970s, with chapters on notable
individuals like Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King, and Robert
Williams; an appendix with a list of U.S. cities by Black population; and an in-depth guide to
eight different Black political parties and organizations across the U.S.161 Gong writes for a non-
academic audience, with short, accessible chapters on a range of topics. The book also highlights
Mao Zedong’s two proclamations in 1963 and 1968 as evidence that Mao’s revolution in the
PRC and radical African-American activists in the U.S. were not only part of the same global
revolutionary struggle, but that this struggle was also necessary in its highlighting of the violent
racism in the U.S.162 Mao’s high praise for the African-American struggle, Gong argues, served
as an inspiration to the movement’s participants, a view echoed in other Chinese-language
histories published and circulated in the PRC at the same time.163

One such example of the circulation of articles from the U.S. to the PRC is the Chinese-
language translation of an article from The Black Panther about the Panther’s visit to Beijing in
October 1970—specifically, an interview with Elaine Brown about her impressions of Beijing—
which was abridged, translated, and published by Cankao Xiaoxi (Reference News).164 This

161 Gong Niannian, Meiguo Heiren Yundong Shi, Yisheng Chuban Shechuban, Zhongyang Yinwuguan, 1968 (?). The
guide includes descriptions of the NBAWADU, Black Moslims, SNCC, Black Panthers, CORE, SCLC, NAACP,
and NUL (COVID-19).

also quotes Mao Zedong’s observation that the assassination of Martin Luther King, despite his promotion of
political non-violence, proved the violent, anti-revolutionary objectives of U.S. imperialism to “bloodily suppress”
any demands Black rights: “Mei diguo zhuyi…shiyong fan geming de baoli…dui ta [Martin Luther King] jinxing

163 Gong, 1968: 226. See also, “Mao Zhuxi de shengming…duiyu tamen de douzheng geiyu le jigao pingjia, zhe
duiyu Meiguo heiren naishi jida guwu,” quoted in (Author unknown), Meiguo Heiren Jiefang Yundong Jianshi,
Nankai University History Department, Renmin Chubanshe, Beijing: November 1977: 321.

164 “Mei Heibaodang fu xuanchuanbu changtan fanghua guangan,” Cankao Xiaoxi, December 5, 1970, copy editor
translation indicates that the republishing of articles was not a unidirectional process but was multidirectional. Not only were articles published in English in the PRC distributed overseas to other Maoist-sympathizing groups, but articles from the U.S., as well as other international sources, were also read, translated into Chinese, and published by the CCP to a domestic readership within the PRC. In this case, the CCP was not only aware of the activities of the Panthers, but was also able to obtain copies of their publications, and, crucially, leverage the Panthers’ views of revolution as evidence that the CCP’s views of Maoism were correct and applicable beyond the PRC. As a result, translated articles like those in Cankao Xiaoxi suggest that, like the editors of The Black Panther discussed in the previous section, the CCP took selected news stories from a range of overseas party newspapers and translated those that would best reinforce the party’s aims to a domestic audience.

Expressions of international leftist solidarity, and in particular solidarity with African Americans, were commonplace in the pages of People’s Daily. Articles detailing racism and unequal treatment of African-Americans, particularly in the American South, appeared as early as August 1946, but it was not until February 1960 that African-Americans were depicted as actively conducting a “struggle” against racial discrimination.165 Throughout the 1960s, People’s Daily regularly featured articles, photographs, political cartoons, maps and visualizations, reports about prominent African-Americans like W.E.B. and Shirley Graham Du Bois, detailed news about the civil rights and Black Power movements, and denouncements of the U.S. government. In comparison to reports about the BPP in Japanese newspapers—which tended to characterize the BPP as part of “The Black Question” (kokojin mondai), with frequent mentions to

kidnapping, extremism, murder, and crime as defined by U.S. law\textsuperscript{166}—the \textit{People’s Daily} also prioritized stories that promoted the perspectives of African-American activists, for whom the CCP declared their unwavering support, at the same time as they condemned the U.S. government’s violent and oppressive responses to African-American activists.\textsuperscript{167} An article published in \textit{People’s Daily} on June 14, 1963, for example, reported on the assassination of civil rights leader Medgar Evers in Jackson, Mississippi as the “savage persecution and shooting of a Black American leader,” and noted that the city’s authorities had “not only allowed Evers’ murderer [white supremacist and local Klansman Byron De La Beckwith] to get off scot-free, but they even arrested African-American mourners at Evers’ memorial service.”\textsuperscript{168} The CCP’s condemnation of the U.S. government’s approach to racial politics in the 1960s were constant regardless of administration. For example, articles in 1963 announced that the CCP “condemns the Kennedy administration’s atrocities, and firmly supports Black Americans’ struggle,”\textsuperscript{169} followed by articles in 1964 that argued that the Johnson administration’s “introduction of its ‘civil rights bill’ does not conceal the racial discrimination and class oppression of Black Americans.”\textsuperscript{170} Later, during the Nixon administration, it stated that “Black and Native Americans are raising a new struggle against oppression, with many Black Americans taking up


arms in their war against the police…at the same time as there has been an increasing wave of struggle and dissent against the Nixon administration’s domestic and foreign policies, Black Americans, Native Americans, and Puerto Ricans have also joined forces in their efforts to fight against exploitation and oppression by the U.S.’s bourgeoisie fascist rule.” Consequently, throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s, the CCP consistently leveraged African-American activism in service of its own propaganda aims.

Considering the significant changes that occurred in the PRC in the 1960s—most notably the start of the Cultural Revolution—articles in support of African-American activists are remarkably consistent in their messaging throughout the decade. In addition to articles in People’s Daily, the CCP magazine Red Flag (Hongqi) also published articles in support of African Americans’ “just struggle” and opposition to “the brutal actions of U.S. reactionaries” against African-American activists and communist party members in the U.S. An article by Chen Yuan on the (sarcastically titled) “Good Record of Racial Relations in the U.S.,” for example, responded to the violent reactions in Alabama against “Freedom Riders” and non-violent protestors as evidence of the U.S.’s hypocrisy for claiming to be a “civilized country.”

In addition, Red Flag also published an article on African-American literature as a window onto African-American life for Chinese readers, with works by W. E. B. Du Bois, the novelist Langston Hughes, and the poet Claude McKay highlighted as literary examples that “thoroughly


172 Author Unknown, “Editorial: Oppose the Brutal Actions of the US Reactionaries Against the Communist Party of USA,” Red Flag, February 1962. Red Flag was one of the “Two newspapers and one magazine” (“Liangbao Yikan”) published by the CCP.

exposed the various criminal actions of the white radical exponents.” In each case, articles about African-American activists targeted a domestic Chinese audience with a clear message: the CCP supports those in the Third World struggling against racism and imperialism, and there was no distinction between First World civil rights and revolutionary struggles and the Third World.


175 The explicit link between black civil rights activism and Third World movements in Mao Zedong thought takes seriously Mao’s calls to collapse the distinctions between First World civil rights and revolutionary struggles and the Third World into one anti-imperialist struggle. Mao Zedong 1968’s statement in Peking Review, for example, detailed the PRC’s support for the civil rights struggle in the United States as fundamentally part of the struggle against imperialism around the globe: “The struggle of the Black people in the United States for emancipation ins a component part of the general struggle of all the people of the world against U.S. imperialism, a component part of the contemporary world revolution. Mao Zedong, “A New Storm Against Imperialism,” Peking Review, April 19, 1968, pp. 5-6.
African-American activists were also depicted in CCP propaganda posters, which, along with other artistic forms, played a major role in Cultural Revolution cultural production.\textsuperscript{176} In particular, these posters contained images that depicted its subjects as hyperbolic and heroic, which is to say that these subjects were intended as models for emulation by those who viewed the posters. As Barbara Mittler argues, “these heroes are manifestations of an attempt to translate the raw material of revolutionary ideology into images turned into myths for general consumption and emulation.”\textsuperscript{177} By representing idealized and heroic African-American activists in such visual forms, these activists were made model revolutionary fighters for those within the PRC to aspire to emulate. For example, a 1963 poster by artist Cao Youcheng (figure 1), published by the People’s Fine Art Publishing House in Shanghai, added a visualization to Mao’s declaration in August of that year in support of African-American activists.\textsuperscript{178} Entitled “Firmly Support U.S. Black People’s Struggle against Racial Discrimination,” the poster shows two African-American men in the midst of their struggle—one of whom is grasping the wrist of a white arm brandishing a stick—with a depiction of what appears to be the U.S. capitol building in Washington D.C. A group of African-American protestors brandishing communist sickles, the phrase “oppose racial discrimination” in several languages, and a quote from Mao’s declaration. The layers of the poster, from the prominently featured African-American men, to presence of the capitol building as a visual assurance this poster is indeed about the U.S. and not some alternative struggle, and the use of multiple languages, together imply that an intended Chinese


\textsuperscript{177} Ibid, 261-262.

audience was supposed to conclude that African Americans were conducting a similar anti-imperialist struggle as depicted in other posters, and, like these other struggles, African Americans were likewise supported by people across the world. Similar posters published at the same time, like Zhang Ruji’s poster of an African American charging forward carrying a red flag, with individuals of different races in the background (figure 2), also highlight African-American activists as literal flag bearers for anti-imperialist struggle against the U.S.¹⁷⁹


Though we cannot be sure of the impact that such propaganda had on an intended Chinese domestic audience, the inclusion of African Americans, rather than Africans or black individuals with no explicitly defined origin, is important.¹⁸⁰ That these posters emphasize


¹⁸⁰ Most Chinese posters of the Third World from this era, for example, depict “friends in Asia, Africa, and Latin America” or a multiracial collection of individuals that represent the range of races in the Third World rather than a specific nationality. For example, Shen Jialin, “Revolutionary friendship (Friends from Asia, Africa and Latin America visit the Museum of the Chinese revolutionary army)”, Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1964, poster with caption, Landsberger Collection BG E15/648. However, as the political scientist Terence H. Qualter argues, “the impact and power of propaganda to produce change or maintain stability, depends less on the professional skills
African American’s citizenship as Americans, reinforced not only Mao’s call to collapse distinctions between First and Third World anti-imperialist struggles, but also the utility of African Americans to the CCP’s efforts to undermine the U.S. government and compete with the Soviet Union’s claims to represent all revolutionary struggles. Furthermore, by visualizing African Americans in the same socialist realism painting style as other Chinese propaganda posters, a parallel was draw between the struggles of African Americans in the U.S., other liberation struggles around the world, and domestic campaigns within China. In such posters, the depiction of radical African-American activists as idealized and hyperbolic heroes stands in stark contrast to their depiction in the U.S. as a national security threat.

The ideal of the black revolutionary hero, however, did not necessarily extend to how African and African-American visitors to the PRC were treated. Both African-American activists and the CCP displayed arguably romanticized constructions of the other, with the reality of their interactions lagging far behind such idealized views. Despite the influence that African-American activists had on the CCP’s ability to claim Maoism as a truly global ideology that upheld racial struggle, African students studying in the PRC in the 1960s experienced racism and even physical attacks. Although positive impressions of Beijing were reported by African-American visitors to the PRC, like Elaine Brown’s remarks above, the same was not necessarily true for impressions from Africans and African-Americans living in the PRC, who experienced a less-controlled view of the country compared to the sanitized visits that the CCP permitted short-term foreign visitors. One student, Emmanuel John Hevi, wrote in Harper’s Magazine of his...
experiences as a Ghanaian student at the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute and later Medical College that:

“The Chinese have so long posed as defenders of the African and the persecuted races that it must really come as a shock to many people to hear that racial discrimination is practiced in China. Chinese racial discrimination is not of the kind that springs spontaneously from the people. It is a deliberate attempt by the Communist Party to assert and to make the African accept once and for all the idea of the superiority of Yellow over Black.”

Hevi continues to describe the “exodus” of African students from China, many of whom returned to Africa after a student from Zanzibar was beaten by a Chinese hotel worker in March 1962. Additional reasons include the continued experience of racism, the poor quality education in Chinese institutions, and a general disillusionment with the PRC, which Hevi, among others, had come to consider as a “nostrum by which we dreamed to cure all the ills of Africa.” Similarly, African Americans who lived in the PRC during the 1960s, some for several years, gradually felt the PRC to be less welcoming. This was partially owing to the increasingly hostile environment towards any foreigner during the Cultural Revolution, but negative attitudes towards African Americans—both owing to their race and to their citizenship—meant that many decided to leave the PRC. Clarence Adams, an African-American prisoner of war captured in Korea, who had chosen to remain in the PRC after his release, similarly decided that the atmosphere of the Cultural Revolution was such that it would be better for him to return to the


182 Ibid, 71.

183 Anne-Marie Brady highlights the challenging of racist attitudes to African and African-American visitors to the PRC and the increase in anti-foreign sentiment during the Cultural Revolution as particular issues of concern to foreigners living in the PRC during the Mao era. Brady, 127-8.
U.S., despite knowing that he would be monitored intensely by the U.S. government, among others, for his earlier defection.\textsuperscript{184} Similarly, Vicki Garvin, an African-American activist who taught English at the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Languages and lost her employment because of the closure of higher education institutions during the Cultural Revolution, also returned to the U.S. in 1970. Even Robert Williams, who had moved to the PRC from Cuba in 1963, in part because of the strong support that Mao and Zhou Enlai had leant to African-American radical activists, became disillusioned with Mao during the Cultural Revolution, and decided to return to the U.S. in 1967.\textsuperscript{185}

A contrast persisted between the idealized revolutionary hero portrayed in CCP propaganda and the practiced reality of racism experienced by African and African-American individuals living in the PRC. Such a gap between, on the one hand, the CCP’s ideological position that upheld black subjects as exemplary fighters for global revolution, and on the other African and African-Americans residents’ experiences of discrimination in the PRC, suggests that African Americans were a useful ideological symbol that the CCP could adapt to suit its domestic propaganda efforts, rather than out of a consideration of advancing these activists’ own agenda. This argument is reinforced by the collapse in the CCP’s support for African-American activist visitors to the PRC after the normalization of relations with the U.S. in 1972. Normalization meant that the CCP’s priority was no longer to publicly undermine the U.S.

\textsuperscript{184} Clarence Adams’ decision to remain in the PRC was part of a prisoner exchange agreement signed at the ceasefire in July 1953, which allowed prisoners of war to choose which side they would be (re)patriated. Around 21 U.S. citizens, including three African Americans, chose to remain in the PRC as part of this agreement. During his time in the PRC, Clarence Adams attended People’s University in Beijing, married a Chinese woman, Liu Lin Feng, with whom he had two children. On his return to the U.S., Adams first moved to Hawaii, and then to his hometown of Memphis, Tennessee, where he opened a chop suey restaurant in 1972. Monica Kim, \textit{The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War: The Untold History}, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 352.

\textsuperscript{185} Hongshan Li, 144.
government through its support for radical activists, and instead to realign the PRC’s policy
towards the U.S. The CCP’s engagement with radical activists flipped from being a strategic
propaganda move to a potential obstacle in future negotiations between Beijing and Washington.
African-American activists subsequently became dispensable to the CCP’s new objectives. This
is not to say that there was necessarily a clean break between support for radical activists and
support for talks with the U.S. government. Newton and Brown’s October 1971 visit to the PRC
occurred after Washington’s proposal to reopen U.S.-PRC ambassadorial talks in December
1969, as well as after President Nixon’s announcement of his intention to visit the PRC in the
summer of 1971. Instead, there was a gradual shift in calculation by Beijing towards favoring
the U.S. government between 1969 and 1972, which resulted in a similar decline in African-
American activists’ utility to the CCP’s propaganda efforts. African-American activists, it is
clear, were useful to the CCP only insofar as they could be coopted for the CCP’s own goals.

**Conclusion**

African-American activists not only “shaped and reshaped”—to borrow Kelley and Esch’s
phrase—Maoism to suit their domestic political agenda, but that the CCP also similarly adapted
African-American activism to further their own propaganda objectives. Both parties therefore
actively attempted to adapt and manipulate their interactions with the other. On the one hand,
African-American activists leveraged Maoist ideas as a mechanism for conceptualizing
revolution, organizing party structures—namely welfare programs and paramilitary structures—
and declaring international solidarity with the CCP and other leftist groups. Maoism was actively
fused with other sources of global inspiration by leaders of R.A.M. and the Black Panthers to

---

186 Ibid, 147.
promote an ideological framework to suit these movements’ political objectives. On the other, the CCP leveraged their support—limited mainly to propaganda, rather than material support—for African-American activists as a means to distinguish Maoist anti-revisionism from Soviet revisionism, to undermine the U.S. government, and to promote its own agenda to a Chinese public.
In a 1970 article for the New York Times, Indian writer and poet Dom Moraes writes of his visit to Calcutta that there was “more than a flavor of Alice in Wonderland, for [Calcutta] consisted of more than 14 separate communist and leftist parties, each of which disagree with the politics of the other.” Moraes’s article highlights what he describes as Marxist-Leninist influences from northern Bengal that had hijacked the sympathies of the city’s students and working classes. In spite of the author’s hostility to the city’s leftists, however, the article paints a surprisingly detailed picture of the tensions and motivations underlying the movement. Questioning official accounts that downplayed the popularity of Marxist-Leninist groups in Calcutta, for example, Moraes reports that “every issue of Deshabrati [published in English as Liberation], the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI(ML)) underground weekly, reaches upward of 100,000 people in the city, which means there must be at least that many sympathizers.” The CPI(ML) was the formal political wing of the Naxalite movement, a radical and violent branch of the broader Marxist-Leninist movement that was named after the site of an action against land-owners in the village of Naxalbari, located in Northern Bengal, in May of 1967. The Naxalites claimed that they were

---


188 The article includes interviews with police commissioner-turned-writer Ranjit Gupta, actress Leela Naidu (his new wife), actor Utpal Dutt, editor at Frontier English-language magazine Sen Gupta, Communist Party of India Marxist-Leninist (C.P.I.[M.-L.]) spokesman Satyananda Bhattacharya, and a nameless young Naxalite leader. I use the term “leftist” to refer to the broad range of opinions on the political left at this time, from members of the CPI, CPI(M), and CPI(ML) to socialist-leaning and liberal elites.

inspired by Mao Zedong Thought, or Maoism, as their guiding principle for engaging in revolution against imperialists, revisionists, and the Indian state. Unable to avoid the highly visible presence of Mao Zedong’s quotations and speeches, which he describes as omniscient across the city, Moraes uses it as inspiration for the title of his article: “The Naxalites, whose extremism knows no extremes, are Indian Revolutionaries with A Chinese Accent.”

A number of prominent Indian scholars have examined the phenomenon of the Naxalite movement from a range of perspectives, including the movement’s historical origins, its violent peak in the late 1960s, and its continuing specter in contemporary Indian politics. Writing in the 1970s, for example, Sankar Ghosh and Bhabani Sengupta explore the impact of Maoism and Communism on social movements in India, including the Naxalites. Sumanta Banerjee and Sreemati Chakrabarti subsequently build on contemporaneous reports about the Naxalites to build more a complex picture of the motivations for why individuals participated in the movement. In particular, Chakrabarti contextualizes extensive oral histories and personal archives from former Naxalite members within a Chinese politics framework to attempt to explain why the CCP initially supported (and subsequently discouraged) the Naxalites. By

---

190 The Editorial Board of the Naxalite/CPI(ML) newspaper Liberation, for example, called for “rejecting the neo-revisionist line and courageously upholding the revolutionary line of Naxalbari, and the banner of Mao Tse-tung’s thought.” Author Unknown (attributed to “Editorial Board”), “Rebellion Is Right!” Liberation 1, no. 5 (March 1968): 92.

191 Moraes describes the walls of the college district in Calcutta, for example, as “daubed in red paint with inflammatory quotations from Mao and Lin Piao” (Moraes).

192 For example, see Robin Jeffrey, Ronojoy Sen, and Pratima Singh, eds., More than Maoism: Politics, Policies, and Insurgencies in South Asia (New Delhi: Manohar, 2012). Notably, the movement persists even today in various parts of India, albeit under a different organizational structure and with aims distinct from the 1960s. As recent as 2012, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared that “Naxalism and Left-wing extremism pose the greatest threat to our national security,” referenced in Ibid., 3.


194 Banerjee 2010; Chakrabarti, 1990.
exploring the Naxalites from a Chinese perspective, Chakrabarti provides a richer context compared to scholars who primarily consider the Naxalites in a domestic setting, but relies on Indian sources owing to a lack of access to Chinese-language sources from the PRC. Indeed, Chinese-language sources remain scarce even in more contemporary accounts of the Naxalites, which largely aim to explore the Naxalites as a distinctly Indian phenomenon and therefore prioritize a domestic Indian readership.\footnote{For example, Arun Prosad Mukherjee, Maoist ‘Spring Thunder’: The Naxalite Movement (1967-1972) (Kolkata: K P Bagchi and Company, 2007); Tarun Kumar Banerjee, The Naxalite Movement: Currents and Crosscurrents (Kolkata: Progressive Publishers, 2010); Bappaditya Paul, The First Naxal: An Authorised Biography of Kanu Sanyal (New Delhi, India: Sage Publications, 2014); Abhijit Guha, ed., Maoism in India: Ideology and Ground Reality (Jhargram, West Bengal: Indian National Confederation and Academy of Anthropologists, 2012).} In the past decade, however, there has been an increasing scholarly interest in the global impact of Maoism that has led to the inclusion of the Naxalite movement as an extension of the field of China Studies. Timothy Cheek and Alexander Cook’s edited volumes both address the Naxalite movement as an example of Maoism in South Asia.\footnote{Cheek, 15; Cook, 2014: 9.} Similarly, Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett’s edited volume on the Third World argues that the Naxalites were participants, along with the CCP, in constructing the Global 1960s.\footnote{Christiansen and Scarlett, 11.} Most recently, Julia Lovell juxtaposes the Naxalites with other examples of Global Maoism to build a comprehensive argument about the impact of Maoism as vital to understanding global decolonization movements and radical politics during the 1960s and 1970s.\footnote{Lovell, 347-383.}

While there are many publications from Indian writers and scholars about the PRC and its influence on the Naxalite Movement, there are far fewer Chinese publications about either the Naxalites or China’s relations with India, at least beyond the tropes of diplomatic isolation.
following the 1962 border war. In the past decade, a small handful of Chinese-language articles consider the influence of Mao Zedong Thought in India, but the topic is yet to be given serious and sustained consideration by Chinese historians. Among the existing literature, scholars frame the relevant debates either in terms of party-to-party relations, between the CCP and the various communist parties in India, or within the framework of Indian scholars and groups looking to Mao Zedong Thought or the PRC as a model for India to follow. Xue Nianwen and Sun Jian, for example, analyze the publication China Report—an English-language quarterly journal from the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi, based on a similar format to China Quarterly, and launched in 1964—which they argue is an Indian attempt to understand China beyond Western interpretations and as a way to better understand India’s own political position vis-à-vis China and the West. Xue and Sun position the PRC as a model for India to learn

199 The majority of Chinese-language scholarship on China-India relations focuses on state-state formal diplomatic relations, rather than relations between sub-state entities like the Naxalites, for example: Sui Xinmin, Zhongying Guanxi Yanjiu: Shehui Renzhi Shijiao (Sino-Indian Relations: A Social Cognition Perspective) (Beijing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 2007); Zhou Weiping, Bainian Zhong-Yin Guanxi (A Century of China-India Relations), (Beijing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 2006).

200 Most of the available Chinese-language articles on this specific topic are Chinese translations of Alexander Cook’s edited volume on The Little Red Book: A Global History. For example, Sreemati Chakrabati, Indu Maozhuyi he Xiaohongshu de xingshu, Xiandai Zhexue (Modern Philosophy), Issue 2, General Number 145, March 2016, translated by Liang Changping, is a translation of Chakrabati 2014, 117-129.


202 Xue Nianwen and Sun Jian, “Jin sanshi nian Indu zazhi guanyu Mao Zedong de yanjiu pingxi – yi Zhongguo Baodao wei li,” (Journal of Chongqing Jiaotong University [Social Sciences Edition])16, no. 6 (December 2016) (COVID-19). In a second article on the same topic, Xue Nianwen similarly argues that Indian scholars’ praise for Mao Zedong Thought in the China Report throughout the 1960s was owing to Indian views of China as a strong
from rather than vice versa, an assumption that is consistently echoed throughout both Chinese-language primary and secondary sources on India from the 1960s to the present. Zhang Shulan, on the other hand, is one of the few scholars to consider the Naxalites in historical context, which she considers as one of “three waves” (san bo) of Maoism that swept India.203 In sum, although Indian scholars have written extensively on the Naxalites and the movements relations with China, Chinese sources indicate that India, and in particular the Naxalite movement, are far from common themes in Chinese scholarship.

A number of scholars have attempted to address this gap in studies of China and India. In particular, recent scholarship has moved away from considering China and India through the lens of state-state relation and, instead, focuses on sub-state actors below the level of the nation state. Compared to explanations that foreground state-state relations, these approaches reveal a more complex story beyond tropes of Chinese diplomatic isolation and Sino-Indian hostility during the Cultural Revolution. Tansen Sen, for example, examines Sino-Indian relations through transnational Buddhist networks and trade and diplomatic exchanges across the Himalayas.204 Cao Yin explores the individual experiences of participants in such exchanges between India and China through the history of South Asians living in China through the history of Sikh policemen

---


in Shanghai in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.205 Regarding Sino-India relations after 1949, Arunabh Ghosh uses the example of Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, the founder of the Indian Statistical Institute, who both hosted Zhou Enlai and other Chinese statistical experts in 1956 to learn from the Institute’s approach to gathering and utilizing statistical data. Ghosh argues that there remains a gap in scholarship regarding the complexity and variety of post-1949 Sino-Indian history, studies of which largely focus on geopolitics and the Sino-Indian War of 1962.206 Moreover, instead of the Third World as a site of superpower competition—an approach taken by scholars examining superpower activities in countries like India during the Cold War207—this method foregrounds the domestic and global interactions of China and India as non-superpower actors in the Third World in their own right.208 Recent collaborative efforts have also successfully brought together scholars working on both states to examine China and India from a comparative perspective. Prasenjit Duara and Elizabeth J. Perry, for example, employ a “convergent comparison” approach to studying India and China and argue for a method that combines spatial and temporal comparison, and that privileges sub-state localities over the nation


207 David Engerman examines aid flows from the U.S. and Soviet Union to India during the Cold War, but India is arguably considered the (active) site of U.S. and Soviet activities and rivalries rather than as the protagonist. David Engerman, The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018.

state as the “sole container of change within the nation.” These efforts highlight recent attempts to bridge the divide between scholars in India and China and encourage scholarship that combines the contributions of East Asian and South Asian Studies to develop a burgeoning subfield of China-India Studies.

Despite such attempts to develop China-India Studies, there remains a lack of serious consideration of Chinese-language sources in studies of the Naxalite movement. While there are several studies of the Naxalites that utilize English, Bengali, or other Indian language sources, fewer studies use Chinese sources, and even fewer scholars writing in Chinese have seriously examined the Naxalites as a Chinese-inspired but fundamentally Indian movement. This chapter, by contrast, addresses the Naxalite movement from two directions. First, using multiple leftist and Maoist-sympathizing newspapers in India, this chapter examines how the Naxalites leveraged support from the CCP to promote their own domestic agenda of seizing power from the Indian state. Second, it interrogates the CCP’s own manipulation of the Naxalites to both support domestic Chinese-language propaganda claims and to further its foreign policy goals by first undermining and then supporting relations with the Indian government. This chapter argues that both the Naxalites and the CCP mutually “shaped and reshaped” (to paraphrase Robin D. G. Kelley and Betsy Esch) their image of the other to support their own domestic aims.

Compared to the example of the Panthers in the previous chapter, however, the Naxalites present a fundamentally different framework for understanding how Maoism was constructed in the Third World. While the Naxalites heavily relied on Maoism and the CCP to conceptualize their


revolutionary aims, the CCP only considered the Naxalites as a useful example for their domestic propaganda for a brief time, with references to the Naxalites peaking just a few months after the protests in Naxalbari. In comparison to African-American activists, the Naxalites played a relatively unimportant role in the CCP’s propaganda efforts.

This chapter is structured in three parts. First, it explores the origins of the Naxalite movement and how the movement’s leaders leveraged Maoism to support their claims to a rural-based revolution in India. Second, it examines examples from the Naxalites’ party mouthpiece, Liberation, in the context of other leftist newspapers like Frontier to suggest that the Naxalites used Maoism, as well as the CCP’s initial declarations of support for a Maoist insurgency in India, to promote their own claims to power. Third, this chapter looks at the CCP’s manipulation of the Naxalites, first to support the movement and undermine the Indian state, and then as Sino-Indian relations improved to actively discourage the movement from using Maoism as a guide to revolution.

The Transnational Origins and Influences of the Naxalite Movement

The Naxalite movement did not suddenly appear. In his comparison of rights-protests in India and China, Manjusha Nair argues that “rural protests in India and China do not draw on spontaneous or insurgent or organized repertoires exclusively, but combinations of these.” Since the nineteenth century, Marxist and communist-inspired thought engaged South Asian thinkers and elites in transnational intellectual networks that situated anti-colonial and nationalist movements

---

within a global movement for national self-determination and calls for a fundamental shift in social relations beyond capitalism. Although the Communist Party of India (CPI) was founded in the early 1920s (the exact timing of the CPI’s founding is unclear, but the party’s official date is December 1925\textsuperscript{212}), communism and socialism have a longer history in South Asia, originating with Karl Marx’s essay published in 1853 “The British Rule in India.” In his essay, Marx described the “misery inflicted by the British on Hindustan” and asked: “can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia?”\textsuperscript{213} The anti-colonial stance of Marxist/communist thought among the international left in the early-twentieth century found sympathetic ears among South Asians aiming to either reduce or end British colonial influence on the sub-continent.\textsuperscript{214} Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was similarly inspired by communist-leaning movements, personally attending the Comintern-sponsored League against Imperialism in Brussels in February 1927.\textsuperscript{215} The communist influence in India continued during World War II, when communists in West Bengal would arrange secret meetings and distribute pro-communist pamphlets and booklets in Bengali that would circulate throughout the region.\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{212} Author Unknown (attributed to Communist Party of India), “Brief History of the CPI,” accessed April 6, 2020 https://sites.google.com/a/communistparty.in/cpi/brief-history-of-cpi


\textsuperscript{214} The Bengali revolutionary M.N. Roy (1887-1954), for example, became involved with communist-inspired activism through the \textit{Swadeshi} movement, which took aim at ending British rule in India (Roy was exiled to Paulo Alto, CA before founding the Mexican Communist Party [\textit{Partido Comunista Mexicano}] in 1917, and attending the Comintern in China in 1927). For more on communist movements in Asia, see Tim Harper, \textit{Underground Asia: Global Revolutionaries and the Overthrow of Europe's Empires in the East}, Allen Lane, 2020.

\textsuperscript{215} For more on the League Against Imperialism, see Prashad, 2007: 16-30.

\textsuperscript{216} Pamphlets such as \textit{Kon Dike Paalaa Bhari} (Who has the edge), and \textit{Japan Ke Rukhte Hobe} (Japan must be stopped) were circulated by the CPI and other pro-communist groups. Bappaditya Paul, \textit{The First Naxal: An Authorised Biography of Kanu Sanyal}, New Delhi, India: Sage Publications, 2014 (COVID-19).
Communist thought in India therefore has a long and diverse history of which the Naxalite movement was one—albeit particularly violent and extreme—iteration.217

Among the “Alice in Wonderland”-like (to borrow Moraes’ phrasing) multiplicity of leftist groups in West Bengal in the 1960s, why did the Naxalites splinter to form their own group rather than join existing Marxist organizations? Communist parties in India were in the process of breaking off into increasingly extreme-left groups. The CPI, for example, splintered into the CPI and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) in 1964 over differences in opinion regarding the India-China border conflict, as well as divergent allegiances to the PRC and the Soviet Union after the Sino-Soviet split.218 The CPI(M)’s sympathetic view towards the PRC, however, waned after the PRC declared its support for Pakistan during the India-Pakistan conflict of 1965.219 The CPI(M)’s declining support for the anti-revisionist PRC opened space for more radical members of the party to declare that the CPI(M) no longer represented their interests as radical Stalinists. In particular, the radical wing rejected the CPI(M)’s decision to participate in the conventional electoral process of submitting candidates for the West Bengal state legislative assembly elections in February 1967, and instead demanded a boycott of the elections in protest against the Indian state.220 The Naxalites, also called the CPI(ML), then formed an even more left-leaning group that maintained allegiance to the PRC and the ideological leadership of Mao Zedong.

217 Avishek Ganguly, “Politics and Periodicals in the 1960s: Readings around the ‘Naxalite Movement,’” in Christensen and Scarlett, 57-68.

218 The splitting of communist parties into a “pro-Soviet” party and a “pro-PRC” parties did not just occur in India, but also around the world in countries as divergent as the Philippines and the UK. Daniel Leese, for example, highlights the objection to Khrushchev’s call for peaceful coexistence with the capitalist bloc—as well as the personal dislike of Khrushchev as a leader—as driving a cleft between pro-Khrushchev and pro-Stalinist states, which then spilled over to divide non-ruling communist parties in other states. See Daniel Leese, Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China’s Cultural Revolution (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 75-82.

219 Ganguly, 59.

220 The decision for the CPI(M) to participate in local elections was controversial among some members, but highlighted a change in both the party’s decision to participate in electoral politics, as well as the state’s acceptance
The fragmentation of India’s communist parties also coincided with increasing dissatisfaction against the state in rural areas over Prime Minister Nehru’s attempt to implement land reform policies. Nehru’s emphasis on socialist-influenced\textsuperscript{221} industrial development over agricultural development—a key feature of socialist economies that is designed to modernize and fast-track industrial and economic development—prioritized land and tenancy reform over state investment in agricultural infrastructure or subsidies. This prioritization of land reform mimicked Chinese development schemes that Nehru’s planners observed on their visits to China between 1952 and 1957.\textsuperscript{222} Land reform policies implemented post-independence, however, either failed or even concentrated land and wealth among the landowning classes.\textsuperscript{223} It is somewhat ironic that Nehru’s implementation of policies that partially echo land reform efforts in the PRC were what not only trigged protests in rural areas—which formed the core constituency of the CCP’s revolution—but also sparked a Maoist-inspired insurgency that weaponized and hijacked these rural protests to advance their own Stalinist agenda. The spark for the Naxalite’s violent “revolution” occurred in the village of Naxalbari, in West Bengal, between May 24-25, 1967, where rural peasants demanded concessions from land-owning jotedars (wealthy peasants or


\textsuperscript{223} Lovell, 355.
landlords). Sumanta Banerjee, for example, argues that villagers in Naxalbari aimed their armed resistance against the “local oppressive landlord-police nexus, and by extension, as sympathetic accounts have argued, at the post-colonial bourgeois Indian state and its systematic structures of inequality and oppression.” The protests quickly turned violent, and caught the attention of leftist students in Calcutta, about 350 miles south of Naxalbari, who immediately drew parallels with Mao’s rural-based revolutionary success.

Despite Nehru’s attempt to break up the power of the landed feudal class, the Naxalites claimed to be inspired by the more radical demands of Mao Zedong Thought, namely his analysis of how to conduct a successful revolution in the countryside and the uprising of the rural masses against land-owners. The Naxalite movement drew clear parallels between the CCP’s struggles in agrarian China and its own struggles against the post-independence Indian state. There are a number of similarities between the Naxalite movement and the Maoist revolution in the PRC. In addition to the global movements of the 1960s, for example, the trajectory of the Naxalite movement mirrored that of the PRC’s Cultural Revolution. In both India and China, protests combined global conversations with local demands that were built on existing mechanisms for mass organization. As Avishek Ganguly argues, both the Naxalite movement in West Bengal

224 Ganguly, 60.


226 Charu Mazumdar, writing in Deshabrati and Liberation, noted that, “The tactics of the revolutionaries for organizing peasant struggles must be entirely different from the revisionist tactics. The foremost duty of the revolutionaries is to spread and propagate the thought of Chairman Mao and to try to intensify the peasants’ class struggle…this is why economic struggles against the feudal class are necessary.” Charu Mazumdar, “Develop Peasants’ Class Struggle Through Class Analysis, Investigation and Study,” Liberation 2. no 1. (November 1969); first published in Bengali in Deshabrati on October 17, 1968. Marxist Internet Archives: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mazumdar/1968/11/x01.html

227 Alexander Cook highlights Lin Biao’s use of the metaphor of the Third World as “the rural areas of the world” with peasant insurgencies in the countryside inspired to overwhelm the global cities of capitalism. Lin Biao, “Long Live the Victory of the People’s War!” September 1965, MIA; quoted in Cook, (2010), 289.
and the China’s communist revolution complicate the dominant narrative of the long sixties—and in particular the protests of 1968—as “a series of spontaneous, urban, youth-based protests around the world.” Instead, both the Naxalites and the CCP were initially rural in orientation, and favored the peasant and collective land ownership over the bourgeoisie and existing landlord systems of ownership. These parallels help explain why the Naxalite movement saw commonalities in the language of Maoism as a shared lexicon for revolution; China represented a model for successful revolution in the countryside.

The uprising in Naxalbari provided a catalyst for two of the movement’s leaders, Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal, along with other dissatisfied CPI(M) members in the party’s Darjeeling District Committee, to formally break away from the CPI(M) and found the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), or the Naxalites, in 1967. In contrast to the CPI and CPI(M), the Naxalites emphasized a militant approach to achieving their objectives and opted for the radical “seizure of power through an armed agrarian revolution.” The movement’s leaders were explicit in their reliance on Maoism and the example of the CCP’s achievement of a successful revolution and seizure of power in the PRC. Alexander C. Cook notes that “the Naxalite case illustrates the three most salient features of third world Maoism: analysis of society as semi-feudal and semi-colonial; adoption of the strategy and tactics of people’s war to seize state power; and mirroring the domestic Chinese agenda of the Cultural Revolution, continuation of the revolution to combat

228 Ganguly, 60.

229 The editor of Liberation, Sushital Ray Chaudhury, for example, wrote, “for the first time in India’s communist movement Marxist Leninists decided unequivocally to break with the opportunist scum that had so long dominated it. It was no doubt under the impact of the great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China that this long delayed decision was taken.” Sushital Ray Chaudhury, “Notes: One Eventful Year,” Liberation, Vol.2 No.1. November 1968: 3-7.

230 Ibid.
revisionism and establish socialism.” The clear influence of Maoism on the movement’s leaders is apparent in the writings of the man considered to be a “leader” of the Naxalite movement, Charu Mazumdar, who is credited with coining the phrase “China’s path is our path, China’s chairman is our chairman.” Mazumdar led the dominant faction within the Naxalites, which prioritized violence as the means to achieve the movement’s goals, and competed for control over the movement’s objectives with a rival but less influential faction led by Satyanarayan Sinha, who advocated for a less extreme approach. Mazumdar’s dominance within the movement may be at least partially explained by his own attempt to replicate Mao’s cult of personality. Sreemati Chakrabati describes Mazumdar as “more Maoist than Mao himself” and as “deliberately misunderstanding Maoism” in order to promote his own dominant position within the CPI(ML). Mazumdar’s drive to develop a cult following appears to have succeeded in the early years of the movement, attracting not only rural protesters in Naxalbari, but also students in Kolkata, who painted quotations by Mazumdar alongside quotations by Mao and Lin Biao on the walls of Calcutta’s student district. Having initially relied on rural support in 1967, Mazumdar’s rhetoric increasingly struck a chord with urban intellectuals and students and, by 1969, the majority of the movement’s activities—and use of violence—had shifted from the villages of Northern West

231 Cook 2010: 291.


234 Mao’s early writings limited calls for violence against the Japanese occupying military forces, as opposed to all class enemies. Chakrabati 2014, 117-129.

235 Lovell, 356.
Bengal to Calcutta. While the rural beginnings of the movement certainly drew parallels with the CCP’s revolutionary origins, the Naxalite’s rapid embrace of urban elites and students highlights that the movement’s leaders, like Mazumdar and Sanyal, aimed to consolidate power over a broader movement that exceeded issues of land reform. Mazumdar’s “instruction booklet,” published in 1970 and issued to Naxalite members, argues that the aims of the movement:

“are to create a liberated zone in the rural areas through annihilation of the class enemy…In 1974, we will be ready to undertake our Long March, as our Chinese comrades did…The politicalized workers and peasants will welcome us and become part of the people's army, and we will liberate everyone.”

While Maoism therefore provided a framework for how the Naxalites might conduct their revolution, the movement’s leaders ultimately leveraged Maoism as a means to consolidate and promote their own political power and ultimately overthrow the Indian state.

**Liberation and India’s Leftist Publications during the late 1960s**

Party journals, such as the CPI(ML)’s *Deshabrati/Liberation* and leftist-sympathizing periodicals such as *Frontier, Seminar*, and *Mainstream* propagated left-leaning opinions across India. As Ganguly argues, “these periodicals, [while different], appeared at a time in the history of newly independent India when the post-colonial state was grappling with a host of issues critical to its survival…[they provided] a discursive site for discussing and debating a theoretically informed and globally situated left critique of the Indian left.”

These publications (shown in figure 1),

---


238 Ganguly, 62.
along with other publications sympathetic to Marxist-Leninist positions like *The Black Panther*, were circulated and read internationally, indicating that leftist dialogue in the long sixties shared influences and were in turn influenced by each other, often republishing articles that had appeared in other like-minded journals. Consequently, leftist publications in India participated in articulating the ideals of a global movement to local Indian audiences, and in doing so placed the Naxalites in conversation with a broader Third World public and within a global anti-imperialist struggle. Despite its origins in a West Bengali village, the Naxalite movement claimed support from and solidarity with leftist movements across the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication Name</th>
<th>Founders/Editors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Publication Location</th>
<th>Publication Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic and Political Weekly</td>
<td>Sachin Chowdhury</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deshabrati</td>
<td>Roy Choudhury and Suniti Kumar Ghosh</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberation</td>
<td>Roy Choudhury and Suniti Kumar Ghosh</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontier</td>
<td>Samar Sen</td>
<td>Bimonthly</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Raj and Romesh Thapar</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Bombay, then New Delhi</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream</td>
<td>Nikil Chakravartty</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>New Delhi</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1: Non-exhaustive list of Naxalite-sympathetic periodicals in the long sixties, source: Avishek Ganguly, in Christenssen and Scarlett, eds. 2012*

While each publication highlighted in Table 1 represents a politically left-leaning editorial board and readership, there are marked differences between the publications. *Deshabrati* and *Liberation* were mouthpiece publications for the Naxalites in West Bengal, specifically for the dominant figure of Manzumdar, and therefore give a more direct sense of what the leaders of the

---

239 In France, for example, magazines like *Partisans, Tout*, and *La Cause du Peuple* were circulated among Marxist-Leninist sympathizing circles, see Belden Fields, “French Maoism,” *Social Text*, No. 9/10, The 60's without Apology (Spring - Summer, 1984), pp. 148-177, Duke University Press.
movement wanted to promote to their readership.240 Frontier, in comparison, was founded in 1968 as a direct response to the events of the Vietnam War and published its first issue just days after the assassination of Martin Luther King. 241 Taken together, these publications allow a reconstruction of the broader debates around Maoism and the Naxalite movement in India in the 1960s and 1970s, and permit a contextualization of reports from Liberation within national debates.

Importantly, English was the primary language of each of these publications, although Deshabrati/Liberation published two versions simultaneously in English and Bangla. Publishing in English was both a point of convenience and frustration for the newspapers’ editors, and reflected the shared (middle-)class background. Anirudha Gupta, the editor of Frontier, noted, “we should realise the limitations of a journal produced in the English language…it can only work as a journal of the English-knowing elite – the university students, teachers, writers, and other professional classes. This is perhaps our greatest drawback – we cannot reach the common man even if we want to – but then if we shift over to a vernacular language, the journal may lose its all-India significance.”242

240 These were by no means the only party journals, but they were the central organ for the CPI(ML). Chakrabarti highlights other Maoist newspapers that formed a network of leftist writers and communist and Marxist-Leninist party members, including journals published by the Antor Party Sodhanbad Birodhi Sangram Committee (“The Committee to Resist Revisionism within the Party”): China, Commune, Bidroha, Santrash, Chhatra Fouz, and Dakshin Desh. CPI(ML) local chapters also published weekly newspapers in different localities, including Ghatana Prabaha (West Bengal), Janyuddha (Bihar), and Jana Shakti (Andhra Pradesh). See Chakrabarti 1990, 84.

241 The editorial (“Pause in Vietnam?”) of the first Frontier publication on April 14, 1968 by editor Anirudha Gupta addressed the war in Vietnam as “It would be irresponsible not to welcome any prospect of peace in Vietnam, but it would be premature to conclude that such a prospect has already been opened up.” Writing in the same issue, Charan Gupta points to the difficulties in establishing Frontier as a leftist newspaper: “Here we surface again…This was a forced disappearance for three months. If you are trying to run a non-conformist journal in this country, beyond a point nothing helps.” Anirudha Gupta, “Pause in Vietnam?” Frontier 1., no. 1 (April 14, 1968): 4.

242 Anirudha Gupta, “Anticipations,” Frontier 1. no. 4 (May 4, 1968): 15. Gupta also remarks of the “bondage” of the English language that “We the English-knowing intellectuals (the adjective is superfluous for one is not an intellectual unless one knows English) pay out humble tribute to our “makers” [the British] by trying not to act as ourselves but as “them” or, what is worse, as what we think they are;” Anirudha Gupta, “Why Written English?” Frontier 1, no. 25-27 (September 28, 1968): 39.
Echoing the frustrations of other writers in newly-independent and formerly-colonized states, Gupta recognizes the double-edged sword of publishing in English: English-language articles limited access to the Indian layman, but they permitted a country-wide and even international readership.\(^2\) The impact of international influences on the writers and readers of these newspapers varied, with some syndicating articles and speeches from abroad, and others even going so far as to dispatch foreign correspondents to the United States and Europe. The widely-read nature of these foreign correspondents’ reports, which in turn filtered into reports in the Naxalite party newspapers, suggests that the movement not only engaged with international sources of information through reports from international correspondents writing for other leftist newspapers in India, but that the movement then interpreted these sources as supportive of its own local political objectives.

The Naxalites’ mouthpiece, *Liberation*, provided the primary medium for the movement’s leaders to present their priorities for building the party apparatuses and articulating their ideas about the movement’s place within the global socialist revolution. Maoism and the CCP provided the main source of inspiration for the Naxalite leaders, with an English-language translation of the *People’s Daily* article “Spring Thunder Over India” forming the centerpiece of *Liberation*’s first issue, in November 1967, as evidence that the CCP supported the Naxalite cause.\(^2\) Most issues

\(^2\) Chinua Achebe, for example, notes that, “If you take Nigeria as an example, the national literature, as I see it, is the literature written in English; and the ethnic literatures are in Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Efik, Edo, Ijaw, etc., etc… African writers who have chosen to write in English or French are not unpatriotic smart alecks with an eye on the main chance—outside their own countries. They are by-products of the same process that made the new nations-states of Africa.” Chinua Achebe, “The African Writer and the English Language,” 1964, accessed February 16, 2020 [https://wrightinglanguage.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/0/5/24059962/achebe_englishandafricanwriter.pdf](https://wrightinglanguage.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/0/5/24059962/achebe_englishandafricanwriter.pdf)

of Liberation open with select “Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung,” an echo of the use of Mao’s quotations on the first page of issues of Peking Review. On occasion, these quotes are also accompanied by notes from the editor, Sushital Ray Chaudhury, as a form of public notice for the paper’s readership. For example, the March 1969 edition opens with a copy of a short letter sent by Chaudhury “on behalf of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Communist Reactionaries” to the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi, in which he declares the Committee’s condemnation of the “Soviet social-imperialists’ armed border provocations against Socialist China in collusion with U.S. imperialists.”

This note is then followed by a quotation from Mao regarding the “three main weapons” of the Party: a well-disciplined Party, an army under Party leadership, and a united front. The majority of these selected quotes concern the need for a strong Party in order to achieve socialism, and correspond to a theme discussed in the publication’s articles.

The November 1968 issue of Liberation, for example, discusses the 1917 October Revolution and the need for the CCP, the Naxalites, and other “anti-revisionist” parties to uphold the ideals of Lenin and Stalin. This issue opens with Mao’s quotes about the October Revolution: “the October Revolution [has] changed the whole course of world history and ushered in a new era,” and, “Although the leadership of the Soviet Party and state has now been usurped by the revisionists…the masses of the Soviet people and Party members and cadres are good, that they want revolution and that rule by revisionism will not last long.”

The issue’s opening article from

---


246 “A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people; an army under the leadership of such a Party, a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party—these are three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy,” Mao Zedong, “On the People's Democratic Dictatorship” (June 30, 1949), Selected Works, Vol. IV, p. 422, quoted in Liberation, 5, Vol. 2, March 1969.

the editor—entitled “Notes” as in each edition—then details the imagined connections between the October Revolution, Soviet revisionism, and the Naxalites’ place as firmly supporting the CCP’s leadership of the global anti-revisionist movement. First, the editor details how the Soviet Union betrayed the Marxist-Leninist revolution through capitalism and neo-colonialism:

“By using the state machine, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique, headed by Khrushchev…has restored capitalism in the Soviet Union and itself practices neo-colonialism…their peaceful co-existence with capitalism amounts to collaboration and collusion with the U.S. imperialism to re-divide the world into neo-colonial empires for themselves.”248

Second, Chaudhury echoes the CCP’s propaganda that the PRC stands in opposition to both the Soviet Union’s perceived treachery and U.S. imperialism, and that Chairman Mao is the leader of a global effort to uphold socialism:

“The international communist movement under the leadership of Chairman Mao has fought back the vicious offensive and has launched a counter-attack, which has completely disorganized the camp of revisionism…today, the world front of revolution led by China and Albania faces the world front of imperialism, revisionism and all other reaction, headed by the U.S. imperialists and the Soviet revisionist renegades.”249

Third, the Naxalites are situated as major players in a global struggle upholding anti-revisionism, and therefore supporting Mao and the CCP’s leadership. Importantly, the editors also immediately contrast the Naxalites’ “rightful” struggle against the actions of the CPI and its leader Shripad Amrit Dange, who supported both the Soviet Union and the Indian state during the 1962 border war with the PRC:


249 Ibid, 10.
“The brave peasants of Naxalbari, who have embarked on the road of the October Revolution, have given to the Indian people their rightful place within the front of world revolution…. [the CPI] have openly renounced the path of the October Revolution, the path of violent revolution… they are raving against Socialist China, against Naxalbari and all their energies are directed towards sabotaging the agrarian revolution that is now breaking out in India… Theirs has been a long career of conscious treachery to the Indian revolution and to the ideal of the October Revolution.”

By connecting global revisionism/anti-revisionism struggles between the Soviet Union and the PRC to local struggles between the Naxalites and the CPI, the editors draw clear parallels between global and local events. In doing so, they project the Naxalites as the true upholders of the revolution, connect their activities to a global arena, explain why they firmly support the PRC, and dismiss their domestic rivals. By giving similar space within the article to his critique of the Soviet Union and to the CPI, the editor suggests that both are equally worthy of the Naxalites’ condemnation. In this case, Chaudhury clearly adapts the CCP’s purportedly exemplary role as a leader of global revolution to promote the Naxalites’ own domestic rivalry against the CPI.

“Which way the Indian Revolution?" China’s View of India’s Maoists

While the previous section examined how Maoism and the CCP were leveraged by Naxalite leaders, like Charu Mazumdar, to promote his own position within the movement and to support the Naxalites’ claim that they enjoyed international support, this section explores the CCP’s own

---

250 Ibid, 11.

manipulation of the Naxalites in its domestic propaganda. Unlike African-American activists, who played a prominent role in the CCP’s Chinese-language propaganda throughout the 1960s until normalization with the U.S. in 1971, the Naxalites were featured in CCP propaganda for a much shorter period, peaking in 1967, just a few months after the protests in Naxalbari. This section examines how the Naxalites’ were used by CCP propaganda in 1967 as part of the CCP’s promotion of overseas Maoist-sympathizing guerilla groups, as well as how the CCP not only phased out mentions of the Naxalites after 1967 but went as far as to actively dissuade the movement from claiming to continue Mao’s revolution in India. This section argues that the Naxalites’ utility to CCP propaganda was limited to providing one example among many of Maoist organizations around the world, rather than as a key example of Third World revolution against the First World imperialist U.S. and Soviet Union. As a result, the CCP’s attempt to improve relations with the Indian government in the early 1970s increasingly trumped its already limited support for the Naxalite movement, a feature that is reflected in the limited use of the Naxalites in CCP propaganda after 1967.

Since the founding of the PRC, Sino-Indian relations have witnessed a persisting imbalance in the relationship: the idealization of China by Indian admirers and the general ignorance of India by those in China.252 The late 1960s, however, stand out as a period of relative interest in Indian society by the CCP. The September 22, 1967, issue of Peking Review—a newspaper that provided a major source of information about the PRC to the Naxalites—featured multiple articles on India. Two articles, for example, note that the Sino-Indian border skirmishes in Sikkim provided evidence that the Indian state was full of revisionist reactionaries in cahoots with the Soviet Union.

252 Chakrabarti points to the “Charisma of China” among Indian intellectuals, who she argues have had a “soft corner” for China throughout India’s post-independence history. Chakrabarti 1990, 83.
and the U.S. A second article (a translation of an article originally published in Chinese in *People’s Daily*) emphasizes India’s food crisis (quoting a *Times of India*’s report that labeled the Bihar famine in 1967 as the “worst famine of the century”) and the import of grain from the U.S. as evidence that India’s failings to provide adequate food were because of its ties to U.S. imperialism. The same article also praises the Naxalites as an example of a Chinese-style peasant uprising in India, which the author claimed would be successful provided that “they forge ahead along the road chartered by our great leader Chairman Mao Tse-tung for armed struggle to seize power, the Indian proletarian revolutionaries certainly can…turn the armed struggle…into a sweeping revolutionary torrent.” While the CCP had leant its verbal support to India’s various communist movements in the past—notably after the 1962 border war, as a way to promote anti-government voices within India and to call for India’s communists to emulate the Chinese revolutionary example—the sharp increase in Chinese-language articles discussing India in the late 1960s parallels the more radical line taken by the PRC’s foreign ministry at the start of the Cultural Revolution. Chakrabarti argues that this increase in the CCP’s criticism of the Indian state and support for, at first, the CPI(M) and then the Naxalites as the torchbearers of anti-


255 Ibid.


revisionism and pro-CCP support in India created a “reciprocal effect between the Indian Maoists and the Chinese publicity on India.”\textsuperscript{258} This is to say that Maoists across India considered the Naxalites as the leaders of the Indian Maoist movement through Chinese state media like \textit{Peking Review}, which in combination with encouragement from Chinese media led to the Naxalite movement believing that it was indeed such an organization. Furthermore, the increasingly brazen activities of the Naxalites, emboldened by support from the PRC, led the CCP to publish more articles on the Naxalites’ successes, with each side reinforcing the other during the late 1960s.

During the early stages of the Naxalite movement, Chinese-language articles about the Naxalites—aimed at a domestic Chinese audience rather than an overseas audience in India—were also a regular feature in \textit{People’s Daily}, particularly in 1967 after the Naxalbari protests. These articles were a result of a visit to the PRC by the Naxalite Krishna Bhakta Pourel, who was sent to the PRC at the request of Charu Mazumdar in March 1967.\textsuperscript{259} Pourel’s mission was to deliver Mazumdar’s “Eight Historic Documents” to the CCP leadership, which he managed (after surviving capture by bandits along the Nepal-Tibet border, and nearly being executed by the PLA until he produced an image of Mao Zedong)\textsuperscript{260} by securing a meeting in Beijing with Vice Chairman of the CCP Central Committee Kang Sheng. After this meeting, Pourel received a few months of training in Mao Zedong Thought before traveling back to India. Most notably, while Pourel’s visit to the PRC did not result in any material assistance from the CCP to aid the Naxalite’s armed struggle, it did convince the CCP to publish the “Spring Thunder over India” \textit{(Yindu de chun lei)}, an article that formed the center piece of \textit{Liberation}’s first issue in

\textsuperscript{258} Chakrabti 1990, 52.

\textsuperscript{259} Although this was the first visit to the PRC by a CPI(ML) member, this was not the first visit by an Indian communist.

\textsuperscript{260} Lovell, 360.
November 1967. The “Spring Thunder” article, which used the protests in Naxalbari to declare the PRC’s support for the start of a new Maoist revolution in India, marked the start of a number of articles supporting the Naxalite cause in *Peoples’ Daily* from 1967 to 1971 (see figure 2), with mentions of the Naxalites (*Nasaerbalı*) outnumbering mentions of the Black Panther Party (*Heibaodang*), and in 1967 even outnumbering mentions of “Black Americans” (*Meiguo heiren*).

Such articles include calls for the Naxalites to follow the PRC’s successful path of first establishing a rural base and then surrounding the cities from the countryside; praise for the Naxalites’ ability to spread their revolutionary “prairie fire” beyond a “single spark” in Darjeeling; and blame for India’s famine on the revisionist government, arguing that the only way to resolve the famine was to fundamentally change the structure of Indian society by replicating to the Naxalites’ “model” of armed struggle in Naxalbari across the whole of India.

These articles suggest that the Naxalites played a useful role in the CCP’s propaganda, which was targeted at not only overseas but also domestic audiences. As with the Panthers, the example of the Naxalites provided proof for the CCP’s propaganda purposes that Maoism could be leveraged as an example for revolution by groups all over the world.

---


Notably, Chinese articles and publications also contextualized the Naxalite’s struggle within both the Chinese Cultural Revolution and Black Nationalist movement by explicitly linking racial struggles in the U.S. and India. A Chinese student-run publication, for example, published an article in 1967 asking “what difference is there, really, between Black Americans, Indian ‘Sudras,’ Japan’s ‘untouchable’ class, and other caste systems.”265 This student’s observation reflected reporting in People’s Daily about India’s caste system, which mentioned “Sudras” in four articles about India prior to the student-run publication’s founding, as examples of “serfs” (nongnu)266 and “race slaves” (zhongzu nuli) that were a result of the “blending of class contradictions with racial contradictions.”267 In each case, India’s caste system is presented as a

---


267 “Jieji maodun he minzu maodun de hunhe chanwu,” in Fojiao qiuyuan wenti de yanjiu, referenced in People’s Daily, August 20, 1965. In 1968, a People’s Daily article dropped “race” from their description of Sudras to simply referred to them as “slaves” (nongnu) (citation incomplete due to COVID-19).
fact of Indian society, with the implication that India’s racially hierarchical social structures, like those in the U.S., represented a “backward” and racist society, compared to the PRC’s morally superior “embrace” of its 55 “minority nationalities” (shaoshu minzu).268 While there are far fewer Chinese-language sources on the Naxalites compared to sources on African-American activism, Chinese sources view both movements through a lens of racial oppression. Race was therefore a common theme in the Chinese imagination of India and the U.S. throughout the 1960s. Consequently, the CCP’s engagement with the Naxalites and the Panthers served not only to verbally support these movements in their domestic struggles, but also to reinforce the PRC’s own ideological position as the global leader of oppressed, non-white peoples across the Third World.

The CCP’s support for the Naxalites, however, was short lived. After Pourel’s initial success in securing CCP support for the movement, only a few Naxalites were able to travel to the PRC. The significance of these trips, moreover, is debated. While Tarun Kumar Banerjee suggests that these trips highlighted the CCP’s interest in the Naxalite movement, Chakrabarti argues that the trips to China were largely unhelpful to the Naxalites’ cause.269 Souren Bose, a Naxalite who also traveled to China in secret through Nepal in 1967, reportedly received military training during the two months of his stay and managed to meet with Premier Zhou Enlai and Kang Sheng. Notably, however, he failed to meet with Mao Zedong or secure assistance for setting up a radio station in Calcutta, which was a key request of Mazumdar.270 A later 1967 trip of four Naxalites led by Kanu

268 Author unknown, “Waiguoren de xingge,” People’s Daily, March 8, 1962. By 1965, the number of recognized shaoshu minzu—translated according to Marxism-Leninism as “nationalities”—was 55, an increase from the 39 nationalities recognized in the first national census in 1954. These minority groups were largely constructed by Han Chinese demographers as a mechanism by which the CCP was able to promote a multi-ethnic vision of the PRC. See Thomas S. Mullaney, Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 18-41.


270 Bose reported that, on asking for support to set up a radio station, the Chinese leaders “laughed and brushed it aside, stating that it was not like a toy which could be carried clandestinely,” quoted in Arun Prosad Mukherjee, Maoist ‘Spring Thunder’: The Naxalite Movement (1967-1972) (Kolkata: K P Bagchi and Company, 2007)
Sanyal—dubbed the Darjeeling County Committee Study Group—did manage to secure a meeting with Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Yang Chengwu, and Kang Sheng on December 13, the minutes of which provide a rare example of face-to-face meetings between the Naxalites and the CCP’s top leadership.\(^{271}\) Besides military training for the four members at Changping Military School outside Beijing in the months leading up to their meeting with Mao, however, it seems as if the CCP granted little in terms of equipment for the members to take back to India. In addition, it is unclear how much the CCP wanted to publicize their meeting with the Naxalites, with neither Mao Zedong nor Zhou Enlai making any mention of the meeting in their chronicles, despite the otherwise detailed entries for meetings on other days around that time.\(^{272}\) Similarly, later trips to China by fourteen Naxalites in 1970, which were facilitated by the Chinese embassy in Nepal, also appear to have resulted in little material benefit for the movement.\(^{273}\) As Chakrabarti points out, “the Naxalites received very marginal material assistance as compared to many other revolutionary movements...because regular contact with the Chinese was either not possible or deliberately avoided.”\(^{274}\) The CCP’s reluctance to engage with the Naxalites beyond articles in *Peking Review* or news items on *Radio Peking*, as well as the reduction in the number of articles that mentioned


\(^{273}\) Chakrabarti reports that Kanu Sanyal “entered Nepal to avoid arrest in India and lived there incognito for some time,” and Souren Bose’s second trip to Beijing was arranged by traveling first to Albania and then to Shanghai via a Pakistan International flight. Chakrabarti 1990, p.77-78. An additional group of Calcutta students, led by Saibal Mitra, established contact with the PRC through contacts in Sri Lanka and visited Beijing in 1971 with little apparent benefit to the Naxalite’s revolutionary goals.

\(^{274}\) Chakrabarti 1990, 78.
of the Naxalites within a short time period, highlights a paradox at the heart of the Naxalite movement: after 1967 the CCP seems to have not wanted to support a Maoist group in India.

The meetings between the Naxalites and the CCP may have been limited, but they do provide some insight into the CCP’s attempt to distance themselves from the movement. Bose’s meeting with Zhou Enlai and Kang Sheng was significant in that the CCP was able to express its discontent at the Mazumdar faction’s emphasis on violence to achieve their goals. Banerjee points out that these criticisms from Zhou Enlai were important because they were a condemnation of Mazumdar’s faction and an attempt to distance the CCP from the Naxalite’s claims to be following the PRC’s leadership. Bose’s reports about his trip to China indicate that not only was the CCP unwilling to provide material support to the Naxalites, but also that the movement under Mazumdar was veering in a direction that the CCP wanted to actively dissuade. The factional tensions within the Naxalite movement, highlighted by Mazumdar’s decision to initially prevent Bose’s notes from being publicized to other party members, was therefore not only a point of contention within the party, but also a possible reason for the CCP’s decision to refuse material aid to the movement. Zhou Enlai reportedly regretted not coordinating better between the CCP and the CPI(ML), saying that the CCP could have “corrected the Naxalites’ rigid mechanical application of the Chinese experience and propensity to unnecessary killing,” and told them “in no uncertain terms…[to] refrain from calling China’s chairman their chairman.”

In comparison to close interactions between the CCP members of the Panthers and the Black Power movement, the CCP not only failed to engage with members of the Naxalite movement, but

---

276 These criticisms included ten points for how the CPI(ML) should neither blindly follow the PRC nor try to directly apply the CCP’s experience to their own revolutionary endeavors in India. Banerjee 1980, 365-366.
278 Chakrabarti 2014, 125. See also Banerjee 1980, 365.
even discouraged such an engagement. To the CCP, the Naxalites were useful examples of an overseas armed revolutionary struggle, but they also occupied an odd position for the CCP’s propaganda teams. Unlike the Panthers, who were a country-wide organization fighting for racial justice within a First World imperialist power, the Naxalites were a regional Maoist-insurgency in a newly-independent, non-white, and non-aligned Third World state. This chapter suggests that while the Panthers provided both an example of Third World Maoism within the First World and a way to criticize the PRC’s adversary—the U.S. government—the Naxalites by contrast were a relatively minor, if violent, struggle within the Third World against a government that, while an adversary after the 1962 border war, were nevertheless not considered an imperialist power. As a result, in comparison to African-American activists, who played a prominent role in CCP domestic propaganda until 1972, the Naxalites enjoyed a far briefer period of support, with the CCP’s use of the movement in domestic propaganda peaking only a few months after the movement’s beginning in 1967. While both the Panthers and the Naxalites represented Maoist-sympathizing overseas organizations that the CCP leveraged in its domestic propaganda, the two groups were leveraged in notably different ways.

**Conclusion**

By 1971, relations between the PRC and Indian governments—in parallel to relations between the PRC and the United States—were improving to the extent that both the Naxalites and the Panthers were no longer considered important to Beijing’s new geopolitical aim of strengthening relations with New Delhi and Washington. Beijing’s previous support for Pakistan over India shifted after India’s victory in the 1971 Pakistan-India war, where India’s concerns that the PRC would intervene militarily on behalf of Islamabad were proven unfounded. Gopal Krishna, a commentator
James Gethyn Evans

in *Economic and Political Weekly*, wrote that “China has not the resources to support the Pakistani government in its misadventure…the invocation of the Chinese threat is reminiscent of the errors that led to Vietnam.” At the same time, *Economic and Political Weekly* noted the Indian government’s rediscovered interest in maintaining good relations with the PRC: “Faced with the crisis in Bangla Desh, India has rediscovered the importance of having good relations with China.” This change in the geopolitical reality between the governments of India and China signaled an end to the PRC’s already tentative support for the anti-state Naxalite movement. The CCP’s propaganda support for the Naxalite movement collapsed, with no further mentions of the movement in *People’s Daily* after 1971. In addition, the Naxalites’ own internal fighting, combined with the arrest and death in custody of Charu Mazumdar in July 1972—as well as the later arrest of almost 18,000 individuals accused of Naxalism in 1973, according to Amnesty International—led to the organization’s splintering into multiple rival factions and an end to the “second phase of Indian Maoism.” While the Naxalites leveraged the CCP’s support to advance their own grandiose political ambitions for a Chinese-style peasant revolution in India, the CCP did not find a similar degree of inspiration in the Naxalite movement. As a result, the case of the

---


280 Dhanajoy, “China, India, and Japan,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol VI, No 46, November 13, 1971, p. 2298. Dhanajoy further notes that, “China’s attitude to India has changed, but what is even more important is that our attitude to China has undergone a sea change. We have now begun to accept that China is a super power with which India cannot compete and as a neighboring super power…There is no longer the myth of Sino-Indian rivalry nor the dream of equality between India and China, nor the fantasy that China is more expansionist or aggressive than any other power of the world.”


Naxalites indicates that the CCP did not support all overseas Maoist groups uniformly. Rather, the CCP appears to have supported overseas Maoist-sympathizing organizations according to how they might be utilized in the CCP’s own domestic propaganda efforts to highlight the global appeal of Maoism to a Chinese audience, as well as further the CCP’s geopolitical ambitions.

The CCP had a specific agenda for promoting Maoism according to its objective to cast the PRC as the leader of the Third World, but then abandoned the Naxalites when those same ambitions could be realized by instead diluting the CCP’s opposition to Indian state. Despite the CCP’s lack of support for a Maoist-styled insurgency in India after 1967, the Naxalites nevertheless persisted in their use of Maoist language to frame their political ambitions. The example of the Naxalites indicates that Maoist discourse circulated in the 1960s and 1970s beyond the CCP’s control. The Naxalites adapted Chinese revolutionary ideals for an Indian audience and used their own interpretation of Maoism to situate their cause within the broader network of Third World anti-imperialist movements.

Maoist and Marxist groups in India have often inspired heavy-handed state responses. Marxist-inspired insurgencies continue to provoke disproportionately harsh rhetoric compared to the threat they pose to the Indian state, with even Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declaring that “Naxalism and Left-wing extremism pose the greatest threat to our national security.”\(^{283}\) What makes the Naxalite story so unusual is that the movement continues to the present day, at least in name.\(^{284}\) Weekly news reports indicate that the radical nature of these nominally Maoist groups has not fundamentally changed in the past 50 years, with *Foreign Policy* publishing an article as


\(^{284}\) Maoist movements continued after 1972 in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, and in 1997 half a dozen groups across claimed to be Maoist or Marxist-Leninist. Jeffrey et al, 6.
recently as September 2018 on state raids against Naxalite and Maoist groups, and even the PRC’s Xinhua News reporting on the bloody outcome of the raids. The focus of the movement, however, has shifted, and the Naxalites are no longer “a peasant revolution led by the so-called petty bourgeois intellectuals.” The ideals first espoused in the 1960s continue to be salient, but the movement has gravitated towards Central India—dubbed the “Red Corridor”—and the movement’s agenda has shifted to not only feature opposition to landlordism as the Naxalites in the 1960s, but also to focus on opposition to large-scale development projects like special economic zones and mining, and the displacement of tribal communities. As with many protracted guerilla-style insurgencies around the world, the ideals that drive individuals to violence are complex and powerful. Indeed, perhaps the Indian state should take heed from Lin Biao, who remarked that “ideological weapons can overcome physical weapons,” and that in its attempt to control insurgencies it can be incredibly challenging to kill a compelling idea.

---


287 Chakrabati 2014, 127.

288 John Harriss, “What is Going on in India’s ‘Red Corridor’? Questions about India’s Maoist Insurgency: A Literature Review,” in Jeffrey et. al., 2012, 33.

Conclusion: New Directions in Global Maoism

Mao Zedong Thought or Maoism became a truly global phenomenon during the 1960s and 1970s. The CCP promoted Mao Zedong as a Sino-centric figurehead for global revolution and Maoism as an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial ideology for the Third World. At the same time, Maoism was actively adapted by overseas actors to advance local political ambitions. While differentially enacted, Maoism provided a shared vision and vocabulary for Third World revolution. Although the CCP’s intentions were to replicate their own Maoist-style revolutionary success abroad, in reality it was adapted to local circumstances in a manner that decoupled Maoism from the CCP’s prescribed interpretation. Through such interactions between the CCP and foreign revolutionary groups, each side formulated an image of the other as a model for success that reinforced the veracity of their own domestic and international agendas.

While we might expect localized manifestations of Maoism to be different from in the PRC, by asking how Maoism was interpreted and to what ends—the mechanisms and the purposes—a kaleidoscopic picture of domestic and global influences emerges. This new perspective reveals a range of distinct and localized interpretations of Maoism outside the PRC that were simultaneously connected to China and one another through this shared discourse. By understanding Maoism as an interconnected vocabulary of revolution for the Third World, this research engages with new approaches to the study of modern China and the Cold War. First, it responds to calls by Odd Arne Westad, among others, to consider a global approach to the Cold War.290 This globalized approach shifts our focus away from superpower bipolarity and conventional warfare. Instead, explores the actions of the PRC, India, and other states with non-

state actors, and does so in a manner that centers non-state actors and the broader Third World as a key arena of the Cold War.\footnote{See also Friedman 2015; Taomo Zhou, Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019); Sergey Radchenko, Winning the Third World: Sino-American Rivalry during the Cold War (The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).} Second, this thesis adds to a growing field of research that explores connections between and among the Third World. While superpower bipolarities were ever-present during the Cold War, individual states and non-state actors maintained their own agency in pursuing their interests. For example, the CCP engaged with overseas Third World organizations in an uneven and selective way, which indicates that the CCP balanced its own ideological priorities against other and more immediate interests and perceived security threats. This is not to say that superpower competition was not important in the Cold War, rather that there is a growing need to examine interactions between non-superpower actors.\footnote{As Manu Bhagavan argues, “The superpowers drove conflict, but individual states interacted with the Americans and the Soviets, and with each other, with their own interests and ideologies in mind.” Manu Bhagavan, “Introduction,” in Manu Bhagavan (ed.), India and the Cold War, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019). See also Adom Getachew, Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self Determination, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).} Third, this thesis adds a new interpretation of the global and transnational history of radicalism, generally, and Maoism, particularly. It demonstrates how global and transnational forms of Maoism as an ideological system served as a point of connection for disparate activists around the world and situated the PRC and the CCP as an inspiration for radical action.\footnote{See Lovell, 2019; Nicolai Volland, Socialist Cosmopolitanism: The Chinese Literary Universe, 1945-1965, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); Emily Wilcox, Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018). Matthew Galway, “Book Review: Julia Lovell, Maoism: A Global History,” The PRC History Review, Book Review Series No. 23, August 2020.} While the CCP played a major role in defining and promoting Maoism to an international audience, however, this thesis highlights how Maoist-inspired Third World actors did not adopt the CCP’s interpretations without question and instead adapted it to their own circumstances. Collectively, this thesis
brings together historiographies of Chinese, Cold War, and radicalism and demonstrates how the case of Maoism and the PRC, when analyzed with respect to non-state actors, reveals new facets of the histories of all three fields.

My argument is made through two examples highlighting how the CCP and relevant non-state actors, the Black Panthers and the Naxalites, reshaped Maoism while also being used (or cast aside) by the CCP for their own ends. Chapter One examines a case in the U.S., where CCP and domestic activists’ interests aligned. On the one hand, Maoism became a key source of inspiration for radical African-American activists in their articulation of domestic political objectives, organization of welfare programs, and development of paramilitary forces. At the same time, the Panther’s use of Maoism simultaneously enabled the CCP to portray itself as having assumed an international leadership role and actively undermining U.S. political stability. Both U.S. activists and the CCP framed African-Americans’ struggle as a relatively distinct phenomenon: as victims of human injustice (racism), economic injustice (capitalism), and political injustice (imperialism), all occurring within the same society. Beyond this, however, each groups’ political agendas were realized through diverging visions of this shared ideology. For activists in the U.S., they did not passively accept Maoism according to the CCP’s interpretation. Rather, they adapted and appropriated—or “shaped and reshaped” to borrow from Robin D. G. Kelley and Betsy Esch—Maoism as a means to conceptualize revolution, organize party structures, and declare international solidarity with other leftist groups. They also combined Maoist ideology with other examples of Third World revolution in order to situate their struggles within a global revolutionary context. At the same time, the CCP manipulated African-American activism to further its own political agenda within the PRC. The image of African-American’s fight for racial justice against the “imperialist” U.S. government presented
the CCP with a ready-made example of how the U.S. oppressed racial minorities and, by extension, the entire Third World. African-American activists’ use of Maoist terminology, symbolism, and visits to the PRC provided ample ammunition for the CCP’s claims that Maoist revolutionary methods could serve as a model for resistance against the First World. Furthermore, the CCP’s support for African-American activists provided a means for the CCP to separate Maoist anti-revisionism from Soviet revisionism. And so it was from the early 1960s until President Nixon’s visit to the PRC in 1972 that both African-American activists and the CCP attempted to mutually adapt and manipulate the other in order to promote their own domestic and international objectives.

In contrast to African-American activists’ relative success in attracting the attention and public support of the CCP, Chapter Two centers on the Naxalites’ failure to win similar CCP support for their attempted Maoist revolution in India. The CCP initially encouraged the Naxalite movement, but any potential support was withdrawn when it became apparent that support for the Naxalites would not benefit the CCP’s own strategic interests. The Naxalites’ location in a post-colonial state (India), limited scope of operation, and India’s relative lack of importance to the CCP’s foreign policy meant that the CCP did not consider the Naxalites an important example for their propaganda efforts. Despite these circumstances, the Naxalites used Chinese propaganda materials to convince the public that they enjoyed the CCP’s support and were therefore legitimate in their aim of conducting revolution among the rural masses against landowners and the Indian state. In so doing, Maoism provided a vocabulary for the Naxalite leaders not to better the lives of their fellow comrades, but rather to consolidate and promote their own personal political power, both within the movement and in Indian politics more broadly. While the Naxalites “shaped and reshaped” their image of Maoism to support such aims, the CCP did
not make similar use of the Naxalites for their own ends. The PRC’s rejection of the Naxalite cause went even further than non-use and included their explicit rejection and a command to disassociate themselves from Mao. Despite this, the Naxalites’ persisted (and indeed, persist to this day) in their claims to be guided by Maoism. The example of the Naxalites highlights that even in the face of discouragement from the CCP, Maoism was both adapted to local conditions outside the PRC and developed into a revolutionary code that became detached from the CCP’s control.

Compared to the case of the Panthers, the Naxalites present a different framework for understanding how Maoism was constructed in the Third World. One such example is that the comparison of differing localized adaptations of Maoism complicates how we understand who counts as “a Maoist.” One the one hand, self-declared Maoist organizations like the Naxalites failed to receive the CCP’s endorsement; on the other the Panthers, who did not explicitly label themselves as a Maoist or organization, received CCP support and encouragement. Both organizations utilized the vocabulary of Maoism and each other to advocate for their own interests according to their localized and global political ambitions. Only the Naxalites, however, are commonly considered a “Maoist” organization, while the Panthers are not. This research therefore begins to ask not only how Maoism was interpreted across different localities, but also how we consider what it meant to be Maoist during the 1960s and 1970s.

There also remains scope for future research into the interactions between non-state, Maoist organizations outside the PRC. African-American activists, for example, had a major impact on public debates in India in the 1960s and 1970s. The Panthers’ combination of domestic references to the struggle for racial equality in the U.S., with Maoism and anti-colonization movements in Africa and Asia, not only appealed to leftists in India, but was also a
source of readily-available English-language news that was widely circulated. Unlike Chinese-language documents, which were difficult to find in India and which Naxalite members were unable to read, or propaganda from China in English and other South Asian languages, which were available but whose ownership could have led to consequences with the police or government, information about African-American activism in the 1960s and 1970s was available in most mainstream press across India. National newspapers, like *The Times of India*, and academic journals, like *Economic and Political Weekly*, reported widely on both the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, as well as how those movements were received in India.²⁹⁴ The editors of most leftist newspapers, the majority of whom—like Charu Mazumdar—were well-educated English-speaking elites, had ready access to these mainstream publications and were therefore able to take advantage of reporting from larger newspapers to provide reports from overseas that they did not have the resources to collect independently. While the Naxalites may have had limited contact with the CCP, they were still able to access materials from other revolutionary organizations that used Maoist language and symbols to articulate similar ideas and objectives. In doing so, the interactions between African-American activists and India’s Maoist-sympathizing revolutionaries, as well as with other similar organizations around the world, provide a rich archive of primary materials for future research into the manifestations of Maoism outside of and independent of the PRC.

²⁹⁴ For example, the front page of the *Times of India* on Sunday April 6, 1968 featured news of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., entitled “Martin Luther King Shot Dead in Memphis Hotel.” H.R. Vohra, “Martin Luther King shot dead in Memphis motel,” *The Times of India News Service*, Apr 6, 1968: 1.
References

Chinese-language Archives

Song Yongyi, Zhongguo wen hua da ge ming wen ku
People’s Daily (Renmin Ribao)
Zhongxuewen Gemin Bao, Beijing, 1967
People’s Daily (Renmin Ribao),
Red Flag (Hongqi)

English-language Archives

The Black Power Movement: The Papers of Robert F. Williams, University Publications of America, Bethesda, MD
Liberation, Calcutta
Frontier, Calcutta
Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay

Works Cited – Author Known


———. *Problems of Strategy in China’s Revolutionary War*, Foreign Languages Press, 1936, 1965


———. “China’s Chairman is our Chairman; China’s Path is our Path,” *Liberation* (Calcutta) 3, no. 1 (November 1969): 6-13.


Qin, Qingling. “Jianxi 20 shiji Meiguo heiren minquan yundong de xingqi.” Journal of Changchun University of Science and Technology 8, no. 3 (March 2013).


Shen Jialin, “Revolutionary friendship (Friends from Asia, Africa and Latin America visit the Museum of the Chinese revolutionary army)”, Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1964, poster with caption, Landsberger Collection BG E15/648.


Snow, Edgar. letter to Lois Wheeler, 17 February 1971, Folder 80, Edgar Snow Papers, UA-UMKC.


Zhen Kaizhu, Jin Jingyi, and Zhen Jinti (Dir.), “Robert Williams in China 1964,” Reels 1, 2, & 3, RWP. Box 14, folder “video cassettes.”


Works Cited - Authors Unknown (alphabetized by article title)


Author Unknown (attributed to Communist Party of India), “Brief History of the CPI,” accessed April 6, 2020 [https://sites.google.com/a/communistparty.in/cpi/brief-history-of-cpi](https://sites.google.com/a/communistparty.in/cpi/brief-history-of-cpi)


Author Unknown (attributed to “Editorial Board”), “Rebellion Is Right!” *Liberation* 1, no. 5 (March 1968): 92.


Author unknown (attributed to Members of the National Union of Ethiopian University Students in Algeria), “U.S. Empire’s Ethiopian Estate,” *The Black Panther - Black Community News Service* 6, no. 2 (February 6, 1971): 12-14


