

# The success and failures of mao in china essay sample

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There are certain parts of Mao in China where Mao was very successful for instance his rise and consolidation of power, either by the Long March, as Mao's role as an inspirational political leader, won him loyalty of most of the population, even after his disasters of the economic policies such as the Great Leap Forward which led to the worst famine ever recorded in Chinese history with approximately 30 million dying because of it, nevertheless Mao fought his way back to power through the Cultural Revolution.

However Mao's foreign policy was questionable, especially when it comes down to the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950, which gave two of China's key industrial and tradable regions away to Russia, among other terms that only really benefited Russia, in spite of this Mao's resistance of America in the Korean War, and his win against Japan in the Sino-Japanese conflict continually won Mao great loyalty and admiration among the Chinese public. Mao's social policies were politically successful, but at the cost of human lives.

The failure of The Great Leap Forward, meant the Mao took a step back politically, furthermore in 1960 Mao was forced to resign as President of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and from this point onwards Liu Shaoqi ("a moderate") governed China, whilst Mao remained in the background. Mao didn't like the "moderates" whom he thought were creating a "new middle class of party officials" and were taking a step back from traditional communists' views. However China under the "moderates", saw a steady economic recovery, however when Mao saw a weakening of power he started to plan his comeback.

Therefore in 1963 Mao published the “ Little Red Book” which was part of his cult of personality and became a bible to most people. This book was an attempt to spread Maoist ideas through the army, as China was still militarily controlled. Furthermore in 1966 Mao launched the Cultural Revolution to restore the momentum of communist revolution, which he thought should never stop, as the country should be in a constant state of revolution. Mao then called upon the youth to restore China, which involved rebelling against non-communist behaviour of the elders.

And on the 16th July 1966 Mao who was aged 72 along with many other young people saw down the River Yangzi, this got a lot of press coverage and signalled Mao return to power. Mao encouraged young people to take to the streets in demonstration against anything old, traditional or western, this led to thousands of young people leaving their schools and colleges to become Red Guards, who were groups of Maoists that organised themselves into military styled units.

In addition between August and November 1966 the Red Guards attended huge rallies in Beijing, where Moa urge them to attack the capitalists wanters and the four olds, which were old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits. The Red Guards travelled around China promoting Maoist view and attacking anybody they suspected of being anti-Mao in thought or action, these people were called “ counter-revolutionaries”. Wherever the Red Guards went they caused terror, by bullying, torturing even killing whoever they claimed to be anti-Mao.

They prevented shops from selling western objects which included clothes and music, whilst alcohol, perfume and antiques were all banned. As a consequence to the Red Guards behaviour China was on the verge on another civil war, in the meanwhile Mao had returned to power, but at the cost of 704 suicides and 534 deaths, therefore in this respect a failure of Mao. The level of violence was out of control, as rival Red Guard groups were formed and fought amongst each other to prove who was the most loyal to Mao.

Mao in an attempt to restore order reopened schools and colleges, however in the end Mao had to resort to sending in the PLA to break up and disarm these gangs, and send them to the countryside to work with the peasants, where thousands of Red Guards were sent. In 1969 Mao had resorted order and in addition the Cultural Revolution was complete and Mao announced it was officially over, and it was overall a success to Mao, as it had successfully allowed Mao to remerge as the leader of China after the disaster of the great Leap Forward, but at the cost of many lives, and nearly another civil war, as well as long term economic chaos.

In 1949 Mao came to power in China and when he did China was behind all the industrial powers of the world and Mao wanted to change this. The First Year Plan 1953-57 was an attempt to boost China's industry, and followed the Soviet's model of the First Year Plan. Russia sent planners to assist China, they sent technicians and scientists. The Chinese government's control over industry increase as both private and modern firms were

convinced to sell to the state or convert their businesses into joint public-private enterprisers under state control.

By 1956, approximately 67% of modern enterprises were state owned and 32% were under joint private-public ownership, and by this time there were no more private firms. The First Year Plan was a success for Mao as China's coal production nearly doubled, their electric power production nearly tripled and steel productions quadrupled. The First Year Plan was mainly about industry but agriculture also underwent some changes, and despite they being a lack of state investment the output increased by 4% per a year.

Overall the Five Year Plan was a success, to a certain extent as the agriculture side wasn't well investment; also the social impact was there too, as socialist transformations were pushed too quickly and had long lasting effects. The Great Leap Forward 1958-62 has been argued by many historians that this was Mao biggest failure, the Leap Forward was plan to improve China's agriculture and industry so that it could become a great power like the USA and Britain and also compete with the leading powers of the world, within 15 years.

The government thought that the peasants should be brought under control, through collectivisation therefore China's agricultural land was split up into 10000 communes with each commune made up of 75000 brigades, with each brigade contained around 200 households. Everything was divided by the government; this included the sale and distributions of the produce, and

also setting the prices for the produce. Mao saw China's greatest resources as its massive population, and so set them to work.

The Great Leap Forward fell a long way for meeting the targets set for industry, as China's backyard furnaces were unable to produce industrial goods of sufficient quantity and quality to compete in the international market. Industry was a disaster but agriculture was catastrophic. Mao's collectivisation was based on agricultural techniques that were from a Soviet researcher which was a complete failure, the crops failed and this led to the greatest famine ever recorded in Chinese history, with rural areas being the worst hit.

Socially the effects were catastrophic with men resorting to selling their wives for food, and women were forced into prostitution to help feed their families, 30 million people died due to the famine, which was a long term cause, and is seen as Mao's greatest failure. The Sino-Japanese Conflict 1931-41, was a major success for not only did it win him great admiration and support from the CPP it also helped him get into power. The conflict played a huge role in the rise of Mao to power.

In 1938 Japan controlled most of the northern Chinese railways, the opposition of the CCP party the GMD weren't seen to be doing much about this, only the CCP were seen to be taking any action. Furthermore it was seen that the CCP had launched a more effective resistance against the Japanese, when compare to the GMD. The GMD were regarded as a nationalist force which had refused to accept the humiliation of the Japanese

and simply didn't just didn't launch as a successful resistance as Mao and the communists had.

The Japanese conflict certainly strengthened the communist position within China, therefore when the Japanese surrendered it helped Mao to win the civil war against the Nationalists and seize power and victory over China, thus being a huge success. In contrast a failure for Mao in China was the Sino-Soviet Treaty in 1950, it was made as at the time China were isolated from the rest of the world, therefore wanted an ally, but the treaty fell short of what Mao wanted.

The key benefit for China was the treaty stated the Soviet Union would support China in future conflicts with Japan, or any state which was allied to Japan. Russia also gave the Chinese credits of US\$300 million over the next five year, however this was far less than what even the smallest east Asian states were receiving from the American, and at higher repayment terms. In addition to this Stalin gave permission for 50 large scale industrial projects; however this was a good deal smaller than what Mao had wanted.

In spite of this Mao agreed that Manchuria and Xinjiang were to be given to the Soviet Spheres of influence, and Russia was given exclusive access to their industrial, financial and commercial activities. This was agreed by Mao even though these two areas were the main regions with rich mineral resources; therefore Mao had effectively signed away most of China's tradable assets.

To make matters worst China was forced to accept the independence of Outer Mongolia, which many Chinese thought of as an integral part of China. Furthermore Stalin insisted that Russian technicians who went to China were paid greatly, and on top of this they were exempted form Chinese jurisdiction, which was a huge embarrassment to Mao. This treaty was a huge failure which Mao went to huge lengths to conceal, so not many people would know just how much Mao had given away to gain an ally.