



Content » [News and analysis](#)

Rare essay humbles Mao Zedong

By David Bandurski | Posted on **2011-04-28**

On April 26, prominent reformist and social critic Mao Yushi (茅于轼) ran a piece on Caixin Online, the website of the media group now run by former *Caijing* editor-in-chief Hu Shuli (胡舒立), called “Returning Mao Zedong to Human Form” (把毛泽东还原成人), enumerating the various crimes of the Chinese Communist Party’s revolutionary leader, and noting with criticism that the image of this “backstage orchestrator who wrecked the country and brought ruin to the people” still hangs over the Gate of Heavenly Peace. To call the appearance of such a piece in China’s media highly unorthodox would be a vast understatement. It is probably fair to say that such an essay has never, ever appeared in China’s media.

Of course, the essay disappeared quite quickly. By mid-day yesterday it had been scrubbed clean away from China’s internet.

The appearance of the piece is particularly interesting and significant in light of the [recent tightening of pressure on dissident voices in China](#) — such as Ai Weiwei, as well as other artists, activists, journalists, academics and lawyers — and in light of the apparent Maoist resurgence in places like Chongqing [and Henan](#).

We have also seen what seems to be an intensification of intellectual divisions in China along ideological lines — along, that is, what is typically characterized as a fault line between the conservative Maoist “left” and the reformist liberal “right.” While the former emphasizes the glories of Chinese socialism, Maoism and the “China Model,” with a clarion call to maintain “stability” and not rock the boat (remember Hu Jintao’s *bu zheteng* 不折腾?), the latter emphasizes the importance of “universal values” such as democracy and freedom, and calls for a deepening of political reforms.

Exchanges along this fault line often get nasty. There were two relevant controversies last week. The first was between liberal scholar and CMP fellow Xiong Peiyun (熊培云) and Fan Zemin (樊泽民), deputy director of the university’s Student Affairs Division at the University of International Business and Economics, [which we’ve profiled here](#). The second was between Wang Wen (王文), the head of the editorial desk at the Chinese-language *Global Times*, a newspaper generally known for its nationalistic bent (and most recently, for its character attacks on Ai Weiwei), and the poet and essayist Ye Fu (野夫). [We have a full rundown of that exchange right here](#).

As Xiong Peiyun mentioned in his “cancelled” lecture at the University of International Business and Economics, both he and Mao Yushi, the author of this Mao Zedong bombshell, have been recently branded “slaves of the West” (西奴) by “angry youth” online, who have called for their hanging.

Without further ado, let’s get right into Mao Yushi’s piece, which is sure to draw blood from the eyes of those “angry youth.” We have translated the beginning of the essay to give readers a flavor. We include the rest in Chinese below.

“Returning Mao Zedong to Human Form”

Caixin Online

By Mao Yushi (茅于轼)

Mao Zedong was once a god. Now, as more and more materials have come to light, we have been able slowly to return him to human form, a person of flesh and blood. But still there are those who regard him as a god, and who regard any critical remarks against him as a mark of disrespect. If you suggest that he committed errors, well that’s something really not permitted.

In the eyes of these people, Mao Zedong is someone for whom criticism is eternally unexcused, someone who cannot be looked at directly, a spirit that cannot be questioned. They refuse to see how Mao Zedong was unable to control himself and drooled, how he couldn’t even speak clearly, how he couldn’t step inside a car himself but had to ask people to lift him up, that he was frequently bedridden, and that his legs were thin and weak. Fortunately, more materials are now available, and we can now view Mao Zedong as an ordinary human being, and form new impressions. There is no doubt about his humanity, and regardless of his great intellect he could not escape being caught up in the patterns that we all come up against. He could not escape these patterns, but in fact was limited by them. He was not a god, and all of the superstitions about him will gradually vanish . . .

One of the major things of his hand was the [Cultural Revolution](#). This was his response to the dread of his responsibility for the

three-year famine. More than 30 million Chinese starved, surpassing all estimates of starvation in the entire history of the world outside China, in peace and in war. In such a time of peace, there was no reason to be put forward by which [Mao Zedong] might evade responsibility. Who was responsible? Without a doubt, Mao Zedong was responsible . . .

Utterly without reason, he opposed the criticisms of Peng Dehuai (彭德怀), terrified that Peng Dehuai would seize his power. He ignored the calamities already caused by his left-leaning [policies], and continued his severe deflection to the left, not allowing people to speak the truth, carrying on with the so-called so-called "three red flags" and their complete divorce from reality — the Great Leap Forward, backyard steel production, and the People's Communes. The result was the Great Starvation. In order to avoid this responsibility, he instigated the Cultural Revolution, hounding Liu Shaoqi (刘少奇), who had criticized him for the three year famine [and the Great Leap Forward], to his death. He sought to destroy all of his opponents in the political arena, and he planned as well to hand over his own power after his death to the person he trusted above all others, Jiang Qing (江青). In his eyes, the people were just meat and muscle, tools he could use to shout out "Long live!" His thirst for power dominated his life, and to this end he went entirely mad, paying the ultimate price in his quest for power, even though his power was actually weakened as a result.

His means of seeking power was the class struggle. The original idea of class struggle was to pit the bourgeois classes against the proletariat. But Mao Zedong's class struggle wasn't about the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. What he called the bourgeoisie meant those people he did not like, and most of these were true members of the proletariat. Ultimately, he himself was destroyed in this unprincipled class struggle. His obsession with class struggle began in the 1950s. The campaign of criticism against [Shanghai cultural figure] Hu Feng (胡风), the Anti-Rightist Movement, opposing "rightism", the Four Cleanups Movement, the Cultural Revolution, all were launched around the notion of class struggle.

Based on details that have now been made available, Mao Zedong's class struggle weakened everyone within the Party, and interpersonal relations became extremely abnormal. Every matter orbited around the question of "power." National unity, the interests of the people, all were given secondary importance. All the country's top leaders racked their brains about all day long was who benefitted [politically] from certain matters, and particularly what the [possible impact would be] on Mao Zedong's power and standing. No one dared give offense to Mao Zedong. All national matters became personal matters of the Mao family. Many circumstances people found impossible to understand at the time have no become clear. How did the red-character posters of Nie Yuanzi (聂元梓) [criticizing what she saw as the control of Peking University by "bourgeois" intellectuals] become the red-character posters of revolution? How were a number of rebel leaders in the universities manipulated? How did the Wuhan Incident involving Wang Li (王力) occur? . . . [Other political mysteries are enumerated here] . . . All of these are things outsiders have been unable to understand. But actually they were all Mao Zedong eliminating his political opponents. He was very clear in his own heart, but could not say it . . .

把毛泽东还原成人

茅于轼
财新网

毛泽东原来是一座神，现在随着越来越多的资料的揭露，慢慢地还原为一个人，一个有血有肉的人。但是至今仍然有些人把他看成神，对他的任何评论都是大不敬。如果说他也有错误，那是万万不容许的。在这些人看来，毛泽东永远是不容分析，不许正视，不可评论的一尊神。他们永远看不到毛泽东控制不住自己而流口水，连说话都说不清，跨不上汽车而不得不请人把他抬上去，他长期卧床而腿肚子又细又弱。幸亏更多的材料的发表，我们能从一般人的角度来看毛泽东，得到了许多新的印象。他无非是一个人，虽然他的智力过人，但是免不了陷入每一个人都会碰到的规律。他不能突破规律，而是被普遍的规律所限制。他根本不是神，对他的一切迷信将会逐步消退。

他做的一件大事就是文化大革命。这是他对三年灾荒责任恐惧的反应。中国饿死三千多万人，超过中外历史上和平或战争时期饿死人的最高记录。在和平时期，没有任何别的理由可推脱。这是谁的责任。无疑是毛泽东的责任。他毫无道理地反对彭德怀的批评，生怕彭德怀会夺了他的权，不顾已经暴露的左倾祸害，继续更严厉地往左偏离，不许人说真话，搞完全脱离实际的大跃进，大炼钢铁，人民公社的所谓“三面红旗”。导致大饥荒。为了逃脱这个责任，他发动文化革命，逼死曾经因三年灾荒批评过他的刘少奇。他想消灭一切政治上的对手，无限地扩大自己的权力，还打算把自己的权力在他死后交班给自己最可靠的人，江青。在他的眼中，人民只不过是一推肉，是叫喊万岁口号的工具。权力欲望控制住了他的生命，他为此而完全疯狂了，用最大的代价去追求权力，以至于他的权力本身因此而削弱。

他追求权力的方法是阶级斗争。阶级斗争的原意是资产阶级和无产阶级斗。但是毛泽东的阶级斗争和资产或无产根本不相关。他所谓的资产阶级实际上就是他所不喜欢的人，大部分还是真正的无产阶级。这种无原则的斗争最后把他自己也毁了。从五十年代开始他就迷恋于阶级斗争。反胡风，反右派，反右倾，四清，文革，都是围绕着阶级斗争展开的。他清除了彭德怀，贺龙，陈毅，刘伯承，陶铸。又利用林彪斗倒了刘少奇。到后来对林彪也不信任，想搞掉林彪。最后连周恩来也要反，只剩下孤家寡人和几个亲戚，江青，毛远新，王海荣，和极少数几个家丁，像张玉凤等。如果毛泽东不那么相信阶级斗争，而是以和为贵，搞团结，他死的时候绝不会那么孤独，虽然有三年灾荒的责任，他作为开国元勋，还能受到大多数人的尊敬。可见毛泽东是被自己的阶级斗争毁坏的。林彪出事以后毛泽东多次教训江青要团结，他只看见江青到处斗人如何糟糕，但是江青只不过是他的一个工具，叫她咬谁就咬谁。他自己到最后也没有放弃阶级斗争。

毛泽东搞阶级斗争，死人无数，在所不惜。每次搞运动都有人自杀（他杀就不用说了）。特别是文革自杀的人还不是一般的人，大多数是社会知名人士，对社会做出过巨大贡献的人，有许多还是毛泽东的朋友。这些人自杀毛泽东完全知道，但是他 丝毫没有同情心。三年灾荒饿死三千多万人，大部分是帮助他打江山的贫下中农。但是他一点也没有感到痛心。和他有肌肤之亲的孙维世，上官云珠等人也被逼得自杀。他毫无怜惜之意。现在揭发发现，毛泽东奸污过不计其数的妇女。原来他在神坛上，他的人性的兽欲方面谁也不敢说。他从神坛上走下来之后，这些事一桩桩被暴露。其冷血性无与伦比。其心理的阴暗实在叫人吃惊。大家都说，毛泽东有超高的智慧，没人学得了。但是更没人能学的是他的冷酷无情，没有起码的人性。

从现在揭发出来的细节看，毛泽东搞阶级斗争使得党内人人自危，人际关系极不正常。一切事务都围绕一个“权”字。什么国家的团结，人民的利益，统统都放到脑后。国家的几个领导人成天想的是一件事对谁有利，特别是对毛泽东的权如何。没有任何人敢于冒犯毛泽东，一个国家的事完全变成了毛家的私事。当时许多人无法理解的种种事态，现在一件件都摆清楚了。聂元梓的大字报怎么变成了革命的大字报，几个大学的造反小将怎么被呼来喝去被利用的，在武汉王力被打，和以后的天安门保卫中央文革的大会的背景，谁是516分子，为什么要

整516, 何以要批林批孔批周公, 这一切外人根本看不懂的事, 其实就是毛泽东消灭政治对手的策略。他心里很清楚, 但又不便说清楚。文革中许多重要的事情请示他, 他总是模棱两可, 叫别人去猜。

因为他的真正目的是见不得人的, 他的心理非常阴暗。一个国家由这样一个权力无边, 又有不可告人目的的领导人指挥, 一直走到了经济和政治双崩溃的边缘, 这是一点也不奇怪的。原来许多人都以为毛泽东发动文化大革命是为了夺取资产阶级在国家机器中的权力, 为无产阶级争利。现在这场骗局被完全戳穿了。

毛泽东的最后几年里, 虽然身体完全不行了, 但是脑子还很清楚。他知道自己快要死了。国家的领导权交给谁? 在他心目中只有江青最可靠。所以决定让江青接班。但是他也明白江青结怨过多, 无法获得大多数人的同意, 所以让华国锋协助江青。毛泽东一面对华国锋说: 你办事, 我放心。但是还说: 有事找江青商量。毛在他死前一年对他死后的国家领导人的安排是: 党主席, 江青; 总理, 华国锋; 人大委员长: 王洪文或毛远新; 军委主席: 陈锡联。以后又改为党主席是毛远新。总之没有超出他自己的几个近亲。江青或毛远新何德何能, 凭什么能担任国家主席之职? 江青在文革中的表现完全是一个泼妇, 丝毫没有远见卓识, 自我膨胀, 不知天高地厚。粉碎四人帮后对江青的审判把她定为篡党夺权的反革命, 判刑死缓, 是极其公平的。毛泽东居然想把国家的政权交给一个反革命分子。他脑子里唯一想的就是毛泽东的家天下如何维持。和资产阶级无产阶级毫不相干。

一九七一年林彪出事后全国人民松了一口气, 认为林彪为了夺权误导伟大领袖搞文化大革命。现在林彪死了这场毫无道理的文化大革命应该停止了。各处地方都在落实政策, 解放原来反林彪和反文革的人。当然, 因为反林彪而被处死的人已经不可再生。可是毛泽东因为林彪出事而心情极端压抑, 生了一场大病, 他的健康再也没有恢复。一国的领袖其心情和百姓的心情极端相反, 面对同一件事百姓兴高采烈, 领袖闷闷不乐, 真是百姓的极大不幸。在一九七五年邓小平第二次复出后, 首先整顿了梗塞了的全国铁路系统, 使其能够正常运作。然后整顿各级政府中的派性, 消除互相对立的情绪, 并解放了一批被打倒了的干部, 抓一部分坏头头, 从而使政府工作逐渐走上正轨, 生产明显恢复, 各项指标转为上升, 全国人民感到有了邓小平, 形势在好转, 破碎的国家有可能恢复正常。可是毛泽东想的和百姓的利益无关, 只想着自己的权能不能保住, 江青能不能接班。邓小平几次和江青发生正面冲突, 毛泽东决定搞掉邓小平。这就是一九七六年毛泽东临死前的批邓运动。邓小平又一次被打倒。毛泽东从一个政治家沦落为处处和人民相对立的人民公敌, 就是因为他被权力的迷信所控制, 丧失了起码的理性。

权力欲彻底毁掉了毛泽东, 使他完全丧失了正常思维, 把国家的事看成了自己一家的事。虽然他知道江青不得人心, 说“不出三五年必将腥风血雨”。但是他无法摆脱这个局面。他已经疯狂了, 被阶级斗争搞疯狂了。让江青接班是他仅有的最佳选择。他之所以欲置周恩来于死地, 就是因为他不相信周会臣服江青。他本来的理想是让周恩来协助江青掌权。但是周恩来无法和江青合作。江青根本不是一个政治家。共产党在建国时期涌现无数英雄人物竟没有一个能够及得上一个泼妇。毛泽东之昏庸和他极高的智力相结合, 把中国搞成一个不成为国家的“国家”。在毁坏国家上他的能力发挥到了极致, 无人能及得上他的百分之一。

越来越多的资料解密, 文革这场闹剧的来龙去脉越看越清楚了。毛泽东是了不起的, 能够把这么多的英雄人物一个个斗倒, 消灭。毛泽东和斯大林不同。斯大林的目的就是清除异党, 杀人就是目的。而毛泽东的目的不在把人杀掉, 而是让他遭受极大的侮辱和痛苦。首先让他被孤立, 谁也不敢同情他, 把他搞成人民的敌人, 继而剥夺他的基本人权, 任何一个人都能随意侮辱他, 可以随便打他, 叫他喝痰盂里的脏水, 打伤了不许医院给他治疗。最后让他自己觉得生不如死, 自杀算了。而且自杀的时候还要喊“毛主席万岁”如果他胆敢有丝毫对毛泽东的不敬, 他死后所有的亲属都会遭遇更悲惨的命运。毛泽东整刘少奇就是一个例子。刘少奇快要死了, 毛泽东下令抢救, 要等党代会通过决议, 把叛徒特务工贼内奸刘少奇永远开除出党, 并选择在他七十岁生日的那天当面宣读给刘少奇听, 然后让他慢慢在无助的痛苦中死去。毛整死的高干无一是经过审判(哪怕是走形式)正式处死的, 都是让他们慢慢地在孤立无援的极端隔绝的状态下, 受够了一切痛苦再死掉。毛泽东极其痛恨周恩来, 因为百姓拥护周远胜于拥护毛。但毛又无法整掉周恩来, 因为这个国家内外都离不开周恩来。在周活着的最后几天中, 痛苦极度地折磨着他。毛泽东乘这个机会翻出了几十年前写的批评周恩来的文章, 用尽挖苦, 讽刺, 刻薄的语言, 叫人当面念给周恩来听, 以增加周的痛苦。这一过程是需要精心设计的, 是耗费精力的。毛的精力大部分都用在了这方面。

拿斯大林和毛泽东比, 斯大林杀的人比毛泽东杀的多。解放前井冈山肃反杀了十几万人, 这笔账该算在谁的头上, 我说不清。解放后镇压反革命杀了七十万人。这主要是毛泽东的主意。以后在文革时搞清理阶级队伍, 三反五反, 杀过一大批。具体数目从来没有公布, 估计不超过二百万人。除此以外没有大规模枪毙人。饿死的三千多不是直接杀害的, 整死的, 自杀死的, 武斗死的都不是毛泽东直接杀的。而斯大林实在是处死了几百万人。但是斯大林领导卫国战争, 抵抗希特勒的军队并取得胜利, 这是谁也不能否认的。反观毛泽东, 除了抗战头两年共产党的军队打过几次抵抗日本军队的仗, 从一九三九年以后就没有打过一场稍微大一点的仗。共产党的主要精力放在扩大解放区, 培养自己的武装力量。这时候是中华民族生死存亡的关键时刻, 毛泽东放着日本人不打, 打自己的小算盘, 准备胜利后搞果子。他确实做到了。可是解放并没有给中国人带来幸福, 相反, 带来的是生灵涂炭的三十年。因政治原因死亡达五千万之众。超过第二次世界大战死亡总数。二战结束给世界带来和平。战败国德国, 日本, 都变成了民主文明, 繁荣幸福的国家。唯独中国这个战胜国却陷入内部无穷无尽的阶级斗争, 造成人类史无前例的生命损失。

毛给中国带来的是使人痛苦, 然后死去。不但自己用尽办法叫人痛苦, 而且动员全国人民互相斗, 互相制造痛苦。对一般的小人物, 也不是简单地处死, 而同样叫他们经受极大的痛苦才杀掉, 像张志新, 遇罗克, 林昭, 王佩英, 无一不是在就义前叫他们受尽了罪才把他们杀掉。毛泽东还把人间一切美好的东西加以破坏。中国几千年积累的文化, 理想, 道德, 艺术, 全部被否定。可移动的古董, 绘画, 雕刻, 统统烧掉砸碎。对不能移动的建筑物则推倒, 把美丽的电影明星剃光头, 让无知的群众用一切办法侮辱她们。把对社会最有用的知识分子一个个打倒, 甚至逼他们自杀。把宣扬善的宗教领袖关进监狱, 甚至干脆杀掉。毛泽东的目的在于全世界都因他而痛苦。如果每个人的痛苦可以相加的话, 毛泽东的目的是全社会痛苦的极大化。通过文化大革命他的这个目的确实做到了。痛苦的极大化是文化大革命最本质的东西。这就是“人民的大救星”所给予人民的礼物。

毛泽东不但做到了在国内制造痛苦极大化, 而且输出他的理论, 让全世界都要残酷斗争。他鼓励在东南亚搞武装革命, 制造死亡。在马来西亚, 印度, 泰国, 菲律宾, 缅甸, 印度尼西亚, 尼泊尔, 斯里兰卡, 都有武装叛乱。他死后三十多年的今天遗留问题还一大堆。印度的毛派有独立的武装, 拥有两亿贫苦群众的拥护, 但是三十多年来贫困问题丝毫没有改进。因武装斗争每年死亡上千人。印度的中央政府拿他们没办法。搞得最惨的是柬埔寨。毛主席的好学生, 波尔布特, 遵从毛泽东的教导杀人无数, 成为全世界近代史中杀人比例最高的人类灭绝案。这就是毛泽东功盖天下的事迹。这一连串事迹也说明一个问题。他的理论非常具有欺骗性, 所以会有那么多的人上当受骗。至今还有人高举他的牌子做事。究竟他的理论是对是错? 道理很简单, 改善人们的生活要靠发展生产, 靠人与人斗怎么能变富。所有遵从毛泽东理论的人, 也许斗得很开心(被斗的人可倒了霉), 但是摆脱不了贫困。无一例外。

但是毛泽东又是幼稚的, 他绝没有想到最后自己变成了孤家寡人, 没有一个真正志同道合的政治家在身边, 剩下一批狐群狗党。最后他信赖的人, 只剩下后来被判刑的四人帮。大家吹嘘毛的高瞻远瞩, 其实毛是鼠目寸光。他发动文化革命的时候怎么能想到自己会变成孤家寡人。最初和自己一起奋斗的亲密战友都被整得众叛亲离。毛泽东到死神智都非常清醒, 但是在非常孤独, 失望, 没有前途, 没有同志和朋友的状

态下死去的。他绝没有想到自己辉煌的一生竟然是这样一个结局。毛到死也没有丝毫的自责或后悔。毛死后华国锋和叶剑英抓捕了四人帮，最高法院审判了四人帮，把他们判了刑。但是四人帮的头头，这祸国殃民的总后台还在天安门城楼上挂着，在大家每天用的钞票上印着。中国的这幕滑稽剧现在还没有真正谢幕。不过毛泽东是人不是神，他终究要完全走下神台，成为一个普通人，在剥离一切神像外衣的条件下，在消除所有迷信的条件下接受公正的评判。

Related Posts

36

1.  [Chinese news reports from Guangdong's "two meetings" offer rare glimpse of heated political debate](#) [2008-01-25]
2.  [Second Yu Keping essay re-visits democracy, human rights and constitutionalism ahead of 17th National Congress](#) [2007-09-17]
3. [Southern Metropolis Daily runs first post-Freezing Point mainland essay by Taiwanese intellectual Lung Ying-tai](#) [2007-02-05]
4. [Southern Metropolis Daily offers rare perspective on China's recent showbiz sex scandals](#) [2006-11-24]
5. [Chinese media continue to cover Cultural Revolution in the wake of the fortieth anniversary](#) [2006-06-14]
6. [What China's media minders had to say about the anniversary of the Cultural Revolution](#) [2006-05-19]

7 Comments to “Rare essay humbles Mao Zedong”

1. Parker says:
2011-06-18 at 12:42 am

Here is my translation of the full text:

<http://parkertranslation.wordpress.com/2011/06/17/restore-mao-zedong-as-a-man/>

I am not too clear on the details of the “516分子”, but believe the basic story is right. Opinions, comments, and criticisms are welcome.

2. Anne H. says:
2011-05-05 at 3:10 am

idleray: At some point, the link you offered was disabled. When I click it, I get this message: 参数错误 (parameter error).

3. David says:
2011-05-01 at 10:44 am

idleray:

Yes, the site, run by the Carter Center China Program (and a good one at that) did re-post it, but look at the post date and time (本站发布时间: 2011-4-29 0:57:51). After we published our article. The Mao Yushi piece has come back up in a number of places, an illustration again of what a strange and inconsistent world Chinese media and media controls can be.

The article, I believe, is still not available at Caixin, where it was first posted. But I'll check.

Best,
David

4. idleray says:
2011-05-01 at 9:55 am

Um.... You say this has been scrubbed clean of the Chinese internet, yet when I type in the article title into baidu the first thing I get is this serviceable link(replete with comments):

<http://www.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=205591>

5. Mark says:
2011-04-29 at 1:20 pm

For non-Chinese speakers who want to get an idea of where Mao Yushi is coming from, one of my colleagues at BON TV recently interviewed him in English. While he's not quite as controversial as in this latest essay, he's certainly very clear on how much of what the party says can be trusted. This was recorded shortly before the latest round of arrests and detentions but even so he predicts that, in terms of political reform, things are probably going to get worse before they get

any better. Link to the video is here:

<http://www.bon.tv/0/0/5398-on-the-level-mao-yushi-%E2%80%93-institutional-reform-in-china.shtml>

6. *David* says:

2011-04-28 at 4:39 pm

Tatiana:

I would be working on it if I weren't on other things. I may do a few more sections, but I haven't found a full translation anywhere.

Best,
David

7. *Tatiana* says:

2011-04-28 at 4:10 pm

Is there a full English translation somewhere? Or pending?

Leave a Comment