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敌我关系
Friend and Enemy

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'Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question germane to the revolution.'[1] Found at the very beginning of Mao's *Selected Works,* these words would remain as key pillars of the thought of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) throughout the years of Maoism. They appeared a few years before the rustication process that transformed the CCP into a distinctly telluric Maoist revolutionary force.[2] They were also words written some time before Western theory discovered the centrality of the friend/enemy dyad to the concept of the political through the work of Carl Schmitt. While friend and enemy were never used by Schmitt as an exhaustive definition, he, nevertheless, came to regard it as being at the 'essence of the political.'[3] In terms of understanding not only modern Chinese history but also, at a more general theoretical level, the very concept of the political, this friend/enemy dyad is, then, central.[4]

Schmitt may have theorised the friend/enemy binary, but Mao lived it. The Maoist years were built on this knife edge and it was not until the death of Mao and the arrest of the radical Maoists that the question of friend and enemy would give way to the binary of profit and loss. Along with this shift, attitudes toward Mao and his revolutionary ideas also changed. His fall from grace, both in China and in the West, was spectacular.

In China, Mao was brought down from his 'sacred pedestal' by a combination of official criticism of his (later) radical years and, as economic reform kicked in, by a gradual commodification and trinketisation of his image.[5] If the Chinese critiques brought the Chairman back to earth, Western reassessments sent him straight to hell. 'Marx, Mao, and Marcuse' had once been a slogan chanted by Western leftist students in the 1960s and 1970s. Not anymore. By the turn of the century, that slogan was but a distant and embarrassing memory.[6] Revelations of tens of millions of deaths in the Great Leap Forward, coupled with tales of fear, horror, and cruelty during the Cultural Revolution, had turned the image of Mao, even among Western radicals, on its head. As a result,

'Marx, Mao, and Marcuse' became 'Hitler, Stalin, and Mao.'[7] As the moral opprobrium that had once been reserved for Hitler and Stalin crept into Western understandings of Mao, in the antimony of good and evil, Mao became almost universally vilified and disdained—and depicted as evil manifest.

Translated into a political form, good and evil became freedom and tyranny, and it was in this form that it became a key dyadic pressure point of Western politics. It was this politicised moral grid that came to define who 'we' in the West were by showing us what we stood against. Faced with such an overwhelmingly powerful and morally defining binary distinction, it became almost impossible to think of Mao and Maoism outside the shadows of this unholy good/evil binary and immoral triumvirate of twentieth-century dictators.

At the Heart of the Political

Paradoxically, in Maoist China it was a similarly structured intense binary antagonism that would reduce the space to think outside the category of class struggle. In terms of political theory, however, the key difference between the Maoist binary of friend and enemy and the Western binary of good and evil is that Mao takes us directly to the heart of the political. As Carl Schmitt explains:

> A definition of the political can be obtained only by discovering and defining the specifically political categories … . Let us assume that in the realm of morality the final distinctions are between good and evil, in aesthetics beautiful and ugly, in economics profitable and unprofitable. The question then is whether there is also a special distinction which can serve as a simple criterion of the political and of what it consists. The nature of such a political distinction is surely different from that of those others. It is independent of them and as such can speak clearly for itself.
> The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that of friend and enemy.[8]

From 1927 onwards, Schmitt's theoretical work turned on this question, which he claimed, 'denotes the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or disassociation.'[9] For Schmitt, this friend/enemy dyad was not only the specific political distinction to which all political actions and motives could be reduced, but it was also a particular form that would manifest as the political in 'the most extreme antagonism.'[10] Indeed, according to Jan-Werner Müller, Schmitt came to think of the political as 'purely a matter of *intensity*,' and it was at its most intense, Schmitt would later write, in the 'telluric partisanship' of Mao Zedong.[11] It was Mao's telluric partisanship, derived from years of rustication, that came closer—'closer than Lenin,' Schmitt tells us—to what he called 'the core of the matter,' and the core of the matter for Schmitt was always the political.[12]

In circling around Schmitt's concept of the political and a Maoist political practice predicated upon an intensification of the friend/enemy dyad, this encounter becomes not just a history of a nation-state or Party, and far more than a simple record of tyranny. Read together, Mao and Schmitt lead to broader conceptual questions as to the nature of the Schmittian political as it congeals into a form of Maoist governmentality.[13]

Registered in this fashion, the Maoist historical moment opens onto a radically different understanding of both Chinese political history and how to approach the concept of the political. Put simply, while this is a concrete, culturally, and temporally specific moment, creating a unique and irreproducible political form (Maoism), it nevertheless opens onto a broader conceptual question but only after (Western) political philosophy articulates it. These questions gain form in material practices rather than purely text-based conceptualisations, and focus on the affective, and not simply the rational dimensions of human life. Engendering these sorts of practices, technologies, and machinery, Maoism attempted—sometimes murderously—to develop a system based on tapping into affective energy flows and transforming these flows into political energy through a process of intensification. This is where the grid of class struggle would provide Maoism with a mechanism to intensify (see Russo's essay in the present volume).

Manufacturing Emotions

While class struggle was ever present, the state machinery operated to intermittently press forth with rhythmically pulsating political campaigns that intensified as the category of enemy was deepened and extended. Such campaigns were an attempt to harness and channel political intensity. To work with intensity is to work off affect. Hence, Maoism was attempting to design machinery to channel 'affective,' as well as cognitive knowledge forms in order to produce a revolutionary intensity which would manifest not just with words, but with the evocation of feelings registered by lumps in the throat, goosebumps on the skin, or the pounding of a revolutionary heart (see Lee's essay in the present volume). In other words, it attempted to develop technologies to focus the revolution on a process of 'touching people to their very soul' by instituting an economy of sacrifice.[14]

To produce this sacrifice, a form of governmentality emerged around the production, channelling, and harnessing of political intensity, which would be produced by framing the abstract question of friend and enemy in the language of class struggle. Through struggle, the abstraction of the dyadic form became an existentially felt knowledge and the machinery of the Party-state was redesigned to channel that knowledge and energy into the struggle and into personal sacrifice.

That these Maoist experiments failed—and sometimes failed spectacularly with the loss of millions of lives—is without question. Moral opprobrium is in order, but it needs to be put into context. Here was a new, revolutionary political practice (Maoism) that attempted to manage the social through the channelling of affectivity. These very early, sometimes very rudimentary, devices and technologies were attempting to harness and direct an affective flow and turn it into an intensity that would build toward an economy of sacrifice. This stands in sharp contrast to the government of flows within liberal market economy-based democracies and it took many struggles to arrive at this

point. In its earlier manifestations, capitalist market expansion saw a litany of abuses, famines, and deaths—colonialism, imperialism, and slavery. While we seldom affix the word 'murderous' to this form of government, it must be remembered that the new technologies of capitalism spread, not just through scientific advances, but by forcibly creating new markets through imperialism and colonialism, and by producing and trading in any commodity on a mass scale, be that opium or slaves.[15]

Viewed in this light, the Maoist experiment needs to be recognised as a complex and fragmentary set of lessons that, despite all the problems, threw up technologies, machines, and questions about the political that are currently difficult to ignore.

Faux Friends

It would, no doubt, be tempting to try to address the complexity of Maoism by adopting the binary of tyranny and freedom. Indeed, in drawing attention to the link between Mao and Schmitt, I have possibly supplied critics with new ammunition. After all, someone could point out that Schmitt, a Nazi Party member, praised Mao, the left-wing tyrant. To suggest, however, that the two extremes are comparable is a misunderstanding based on the fact that while these 'extremes' may theoretically and practically direct our attention to the affectively based elements in the production of the political, they certainly do not share a political viewpoint. In other words, the operations of such regimes rely on the capture of political intensity, whereas liberal democracies try to extinguish these intensities or dissipate their effects through market forces. Whereas Maoism attempted a Cultural Revolution as a means to develop machines of intensification, neoliberal democracies used the Culture Industry as a means to limit or dissipate those same energy flows.

The singular intensity of Maoist class struggle was replaced by a dispersion of this energy as it was transformed into a million desires that actually took the form of one single desire for the commodity. These two distinct modes of being political still revolve around the friend/enemy distinction, but do so in different ways, taking us well beyond both Schmitt and Mao. Whereas Maoism agglutinates energy, channelling it toward an intensity, liberal democracy attempts to stave off such intensities by dissipating and transforming them into material desires.[16] As this liberal agenda now gives way to a right wing populist surge worldwide, it would indeed be ironic if the use of Schmitt to explain Mao now led to an understanding of Maoist technologies that, theoretically, help us understand the emergence of the Alt-Right.