

HISTORICAL "BAD GUYS":
BIOGRAPHY AS A TEACHING TOOL

Donald J. Dietrich
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

1.

Two questions guide the historian as scholar and teacher--how and why? The former leads to a narrative account and focuses on illuminating past events and the lives of past actors, on organizing historical data into a coherent body of knowledge, and on eliciting from human experience all the variety and nuances characteristic of man in society. The latter demands that the historian explain the motivations that bring about historical activities. As scholars and teachers, historians seek to make connections between events and actors, to reveal societal transformations over time, and to "fit" discrete data into a coherent pattern that reflects as many dimensions of reality as possible. Basically, then, these two questions impel historians as teachers at all levels to grapple with the same issues, albeit with different audiences and in varied arenas.*

During the past decade most of the excitement in the historical profession has developed in such areas as social history, black history, and women's history, too long ignored by academic professionals. In this context, the study of individual leaders, their ideologies or political principles, and the political institutions in which they were active seemed to many in the profession a retrogression and only tangentially connected to the new social interests historians saw as the bedrock of socio-political developments. As a result, traditional biographical study has attracted less attention than previously, except for those engaged in psychohistory.¹ Still, the study of the "great man" is more attractive to the student in the classroom than such esoteric, although certainly useful, methodologies as the statistical multivariate analysis so vital in the study of electoral politics and social history. How can the teacher present the most recent, and frequently somewhat abstract, interpretations in the classroom without becoming enmeshed in the array of detail needed to elucidate the structure of a specific society.² Certainly socio-historical analyses have helped reveal the sinews and arteries of the body politic. But how can history as a subject taught in the classroom enkindle in students the enthusiasm felt by professionals in the field?

One approach may be to connect political leaders and thinkers to the social milieu that shapes their actions. The "great man" is the product of the social structure as well as the leader who shapes the culture. Analyzing seminal historical figures, then, could be a means to gain access to normally elusive social impulses. Even more to the point, comparative biography³ can help move political history beyond concern with single individuals and toward a recognition of the socio-economic processes inherent in a society that lead to historical development.

2.

At the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, a course entitled "Historical 'Bad Guys': Machiavelli, Hitler, and Genghis Khan" was

*I am deeply indebted to Stephen Pistono and Hugh Walker of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point for their contributions to the course and Institute described as well as to this article.

introduced in 1984. Students responded favorably to the course and calls were even received by the three instructors involved, asking when the course would be offered again. Upon reflection and discussion with the students in the undergraduate course, the instructors felt that such a course could serve well as an outline for a Teacher Institute, since elementary and secondary school teachers generally teach disparate units in their own curricula, but need some themes that can provide continuity. To show how this can be done even in a multi-cultural context, the course was redesigned into a Summer Institute (see attached syllabus) eventually funded by the Wisconsin Humanities Committee. The goal of the Institute was to examine three political figures, Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao Tse-tung, and to uncover the guiding principles that they developed in the context of the political, social, and economic issues shaping their respective societies. For all three the political organization that ordered their societies exercised extensive authority. Historically, political theories have been accepted and acted upon, not primarily because of their internal consistency, but because they conform to societal and moral beliefs, revolving around the status of the individual in the community. Three instructors provided the lectures in the Institute and explicated the relationship between the men studied and the societal configurations in which they lived, using secondary sources and The Prince, Mein Kampf, and The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung. Thematically, the institute was constructed to explore the socio-political dynamics operating in three distinct societies and then to compare these societies along such lines as those of the role of evil reputations in history, of the role of discontinuity in producing politically vigorous movements, and of the relationship between leader and follower.

The teacher-participants in the institute focused primarily on the works of Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao for six weeks to explore the connections between their patterns of thought and the complex behavioral relationships existing in their societies. In both the undergraduate course and the institute, the theories developed by the "bad guys" enabled students and the institute participants to explore the interaction between the political leader and the citizen of the state and more rigorously to understand the nature of and dynamics behind political rule in three diverse societies. Ultimately comparisons could be made on such issues as the role of the political leader in his society, the role of consent and force in the construction of the political organism, and the historiographical issue, i.e., the development of the evil reputations of these "bad guys." Were the reputations deserved and, if so, what does the prominence of these leaders tell us about their societies?

Historical reputations sometimes condition our approaches to historical figures, resulting in false suppositions, pre-judgments, or distorted evaluations. Thus, the institute had as one goal the interpretation that historically has developed as Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao have taken their places in the works of commentators and in popular perceptions. Since these figures were rooted in a specific social milieu and reflected societal values dominant in their environments, to label them "bad" should also say something about their respective societies.

In the institute, the lectures provided the background for analyses and discussions of the texts that contained the hopes, fears, and ideals of the authors and their contemporaries. Each module of the institute focused on one man and his times. A brief description of what each module contained indicates how biography was used as a technique to help reveal the tensions present in these three societies. Finally, the theme that societies shape

their leaders, just as leaders can mold historical developments, was highlighted in the institute through an analysis of the political treatises of these three men.

3.

Since his death over four and a half centuries ago, Niccolo Machiavelli⁴ has been described as the most hated man in history, as the incarnation of evil. In England, for instance, it was long believed that his Christian name Niccolo or Nicholas was the origin of the phrase "Old Nick" meaning the Devil. "Machiavel" became a regular bad guy in European drama. Witness Christopher Marlowe, who brought him onstage in the prologue to The Jew of Malta, Machiavel being the only character fierce and unscrupulous enough to introduce Barabas, the hero-villain. On the continent, Machiavelli's name became intimately associated with the Catholic treachery of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day. Protestants blamed him for the deaths of thousands of French Huguenots because the instigator of the plot, Catherine de Medici, an Italian, was believed to have been inspired by Machiavelli. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, disliked his bitter anti-clericalism, and, therefore, all his works were placed on the list of banned books--the Index. He was even thought to have been an atheist because of his belief that religion must be viewed as an instrument of politics. He criticized Christianity because it made men soft, teaching them to turn the other cheek when they should have been more war-like. Thus, Islam with its emphasis upon Jihad or the holy war was of greater assistance to the state in military matters than Christianity.

Much of Machiavelli's bad reputation rests upon a slender, little volume entitled The Prince, that he wrote in the year after his dismissal from public office. No other Renaissance book on any topic has been more widely read and studied in all the centuries since its publication. The subject of the work is political power: how the ruler should gain, maintain, and increase power. Since human beings are basically selfish, corrupt, and eager to advance their own interests, the prince should manipulate the people in any manner he sees fit. Because of the innate badness of men, Machiavelli advises the prince to instill fear rather than love in his subjects and to break his word, when necessary, with other princes who, in any case, will be no more honest than he. Violence, faithlessness, and lying are often vital tools for the successful statesman. Machiavelli's remarks over the centuries have shocked people who prefer to think of their rulers as good, kind-hearted human beings. Accordingly, on the basis of his ideas in The Prince, he has been condemned as an author of evil, as a cold, hard, calculating cynic. But is such a view justified considering that the man wrote several other important works as well? His view of the state cannot only be found in The Prince but also in The Discourses on Titus Livy, Florentine History, and The Art of War. Machiavelli's Prince was used to enhance the overall understanding of the historical Machiavelli who was examined in the context of the age in which he lived. Machiavelli's political principles served as a natural introduction to the module focusing on Hitler among the Germans.

The desire for a homogeneous, radically harmonious community based on a particularly German but nonetheless integrative version of socialism and on revolutionary deeds carried out in its name was commonplace among right-wing intellectuals and activists in post-World War I Germany. There was, however, considerable debate over the meaning of the concepts of race, nation, and especially socialism as it involved the nation or racial community. In Mein Kampf (1923), Hitler⁵ reached his own solution.

Confirming his sense of Nazism as a radical departure from a failed bourgeois past, Hitler offered a unique vision of the virtue and necessity of perpetual warfare, of ruthless movement through space to secure by conquest the future of the racial community, which he thought could ultimately be rendered impervious to the effects of time. Hitler's vision, based on an unmatched gradiosity and ferocity, inspired the Holocaust--indisputable evidence for the uniqueness and peculiarity of the Nazi experience.

In Mein Kampf Hitler stated that he intended to describe his own development. Scholars have since shown that in many details the autobiographical passages of Hitler's first work project only an approximate and sometimes even an erroneous image of the external circumstances that shaped Hitler's early development. Also, Hitler himself was not a very systematic thinker or writer. Mein Kampf, however, provides the scholar with many valuable insights into a fairly clear understanding of Hitler and his subsequent development of a clear Weltanschauung. The genesis of his world view can be seen as a slow development from the ordinary to the extraordinary. The political reality of war and genocide that horrifies us today was rooted in the fantasies of the neophyte rabble-rouser of 1923.

Hitler stressed three factors--the value of a people (Volk), the personality value, and the drive for self-preservation. They might also be labeled nationalism, the Führer principle, and militarism. All three values are found in Mein Kampf in terms of their opposites--internationalism, democracy, and pacifism. The originators and bearers of these three negative values were, of course, the Jews. Both a psychological and logical link was forged between an expansionistic foreign policy, based on the needs of the Volk, and the Jews considered by the Nazis as "Germany's misfortune." Hitler's world view, although primitive and nihilistic, deserves study, since it has had an historical, although repugnant, effect. This remains the primary task of historical scholarship. Mein Kampf in many respects provided a blueprint of Hitler's intentions.

Mein Kampf was analyzed on three levels. First, the teacher participants were asked to check the purportedly autobiographical interpretations in the text against the known facts and historical analyses of Hitler's life and the intellectual influences that had an impact on his development. Secondly, since Hitler's beliefs ultimately proved crucial in world history, the students then analyzed the development of Hitler's basic Weltanschauung through studying selections from his speeches, Secret Book, and Hitler's Secret Conversations. Finally, since Hitler's ideas themselves were accepted by significant numbers of Germans in all walks of life and classes, the concluding portion of this module was devoted to probing the resonance existing between Hitler's political faith and the aspirations of his supporters in post-1918 Germany. Selections from some of the autobiographical essays available in translation of pre-1933 Nazi stormtroopers (SA) were also employed.⁶ Mein Kampf offered the students, then, a tool that could be used to investigate the dynamics involved in the destructive political assault of Nazism on western civilization. Recent history has amply demonstrated that people will go to extraordinary lengths to sustain or impose an ideological orientation that legitimizes valued activity. Ideology is the link between organized mental activity and the organized social world. Mein Kampf can be seen as the first solid link in the chain leading to Auschwitz. By allowing the students in class and the participants in the institute to examine European totalitarianism, a basis was created for comparing types of totalitarianism from two distinct cultures when concluding with the module focusing on Mao.

Depending upon the observer's political orientation, Mao Tse-tung⁷ has been variously described as the epitome of evil, the greatest dictator of all times, or the "Great Helmsman" of the Chinese Revolution. As poet, philosopher of history, and political and military genius, he effectively led China's Revolution through four decades, from a mere struggle for survival against overwhelming odds, through the Long March--a heroic nearly-constant battle lasting more than a year and traversing about 5,000 miles through some of the world's most difficult terrain, with a total cost to both sides in the millions--to the victory over the Nationalists, and the establishment of a Chinese brand of socialist state. The latter has often been pictured as the most totalitarian rule in history; it clearly was the largest single state in history, with Mao easily ruling a greater number of people than any previous ruler.

As a revolutionist, Mao had a greater appreciation of history than is often the case with those who would sweep away the past with bold, decisive strokes. Under Mao's leadership, China not only threw off the shackles of semi-colonialist dependency that western imperialist nations and Japan imposed upon it since the end of the nineteenth century but also the earlier unequal treaties that had lasted a century, 1842-1942.

China under Mao became self-sufficient in many areas of life, with an emphasis on self-sufficiency in all aspects. More was done to alleviate starvation and the plight of impoverished peasants than at any previous time in Chinese history. More hospitals and clinics were established, along with a system of remote-area health care delivery, the so-called "barefoot doctors," which brought greater standards of basic health to more people, than any similar effort in world history. Massive literacy campaigns brought basic literacy to the masses of China, constituting one-fourth of the world's population, a greater effort than was ever attempted elsewhere. Finally, the Han Chinese--the majority of China's population, established in leadership through many centuries, though interspersed with foreign rule--were required to develop better treatment of China's minority peoples than had ever existed throughout Chinese history.

Even with such obvious positive accomplishments, the idea has persisted in conservative quarters that Mao was a type of arch-fiend. Liberals have found him unattractive because he was too radical, too thorough-going in both his theories and his actions. More recently, the current revisionistic leaders of China--including Teng Hsiao-ping, who had been purged by Mao on two previous occasions--have criticized Mao's leadership in allowing the ideological and personal influences of the "Notorious Gang of Four," including his wife Chiang Ching, to sway his decisions.

It is clear that all such views would be understood more thoroughly through study and analysis of Mao's selected writings. Most of his written works involved rather short essays, but it would be virtually impossible to understand Mao without consideration of such fundamental works as On New Democracy and On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People, as well as the earlier Report of a Peasant Uprising in Hunan Province in 1927. His views of the role of individual leaders in the making of history are unusual and interesting, particularly for a man who was ideologically committed to Marxist-Leninist historical materialism and the determinism of the material dialectic's role in history. As an orthodox Marxist, Mao was able to assess both the shaping of history and the resolution of contradictions inherent in a continuous revolution. Those who equate this with Trotskyism do not understand Mao. He was an independent thinker within the framework of orthodoxy.

4.

Politics involves value systems of every type. It particularly implies moral valuation. In attempting to order human affairs, the participants confronted the question of what kind of political order they wanted to construct. That issue in turn depended on what they labeled "good" and "evil." In asking this question, students of politics are forced to ask how our moral experience as a whole has developed and whether moral valuations are intuitive, rational, "emotive," or a combination of these and other elements. Particularly significant for the historian's purposes is the fact that Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao Tse-tung all stressed that their political theories were merely reinstating past socio-political values in an attempt to deal with the contemporary crises they perceived. The application of past values, legitimized through successful historical experience, would help, each thought, reform his contemporary milieu and support the creation of the future "New Order." Historically, they, as well as we, are confronted by the problem of whether the good to be attained by the individual is the same as that for the community. Are the ethics for the individual inextricably tied to social and political norms? Ultimately, the participants were forced to look at evil or "bad men" in history to discern the relationship between morals and politics in historical developments. In that context Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao either as evil men or as individuals with sordid reputations offered superb examples of the dynamic tension undergirding historical activities and allowed the participants to focus on issues as current as today's newspapers. Focusing on the interaction between the individual and the society also can serve to introduce the student of history to such social science models as Staats's work on social behaviorism,⁸ a psychological theory that should prove itself most fruitful in the years ahead as historians and other social scientists share methods to understand human behavior. The institute participants found this particularly useful since in their own work various academic orientations are frequently fused in the social science curriculum.

According to social behaviorists, complex human behavior is learned through social learning or interaction. There is a determining relationship between man's conception of the world, based on his societal experiences, and the way in which he behaves. Essentially a person's world-view involves the individual's conception of the universe and his own position and that of others in the world. A world-view also includes philosophical and religious beliefs as well as prescriptive statements of modes of social interaction. Thus, just as the socio-political environment shapes an ideology or configuration of political principles, so the world-view helps determine complex social actions. In his or her vast learning history, an individual acquires complex systems of behavior tied together by language, which subsequently can be applied to many of the situations faced in making societal decisions and to the actions finally taken. The individual learns conceptions about the physical world, the biological world, and the social world. Also learned are complex forms of thought (language), many of which are imbued with emotional value and are linked with classes of actions and instrumental skills.

Human cognitive characteristics, e.g., ideologies or political principles, derive from repertoires of behaviors the individual has learned. Previously learned complex repertoires are the reason a person can learn so readily, learn vicariously, imagine things he has never seen, develop theories to make sense out of discrete events as well as, in general, reason, think, and plan. These repertoires are largely of a language nature and so include such phenomena as historical events as well as the

reputations of historical figures dominant in a specific culture. Since individuals are shaped and conditioned within the confines of specific historical epochs and cultures, they respond to issues in a manner consonant with their learning experiences.

To study an outstanding historical figure offers to the student of history the opportunity to enter an historical era, society, and culture in a way that is pleasant as well as fruitful for reflecting on the prominent issues of the time, on the relation between the ideas of the political theorist and those emerging in the community as a whole, and, more broadly, on the meaning of "evil" in the human condition. Using a biographical approach allowed university students and teacher-participants to gain access to the subtle developments occurring in any society, which become the basis for significant historical developments.

Institute participants were given a narrative evaluation form as well as a computerized form provided by the Wisconsin Humanities Committee. On the computerized form 1 = excellent and 5 = poor. With respect to topic, the evaluation averaged 1.1, assigned readings 1.5, lectures 1.3, and discussion sessions 1.4. According to this form, the participants were motivated to enroll in the institute in order to renew and refresh commitments to teaching as well as to experience a sense of collegiality. Graduate credit offerings were also perceived, of course, as a motivation for attendance and a major benefit. The narrative evaluation form indicated that participants enjoyed the biographical access to the discrete societies studied and found the historiographical issue of evil reputations intriguing. They also commented that analyzing Machiavelli, Hitler, and Mao together reflected the type of activity common in their own professional experiences. Thus, they found the organization of the institute in itself very useful. Apparently, the topic is attractive to a larger audience as well. A session, "Historical Bad Guys and Teacher Strategies in the Social Sciences Curriculum" has been offered at the annual meeting (April 1986) of the Wisconsin Council for the Social Sciences. Five participants from the institute offered a panel describing the use of primary sources in the classroom. Two participants from the institute have also participated on a panel, "Building Bridges: Professional Development as a Link between University and Secondary School Teachers" for the Northern Great Plains History Conference (September 1986).

NOTES

¹Two scholarly journals, History of Childhood Quarterly (currently The Journal of Psychohistory) and The Psychohistory Review, contain articles and reviews, which offer materials on the current state of the discipline. For a review of the literature in this area, see Donald J. Dietrich, "Psychohistory: Clio on the Couch - or Off?", Historical Methods, 15 (1982), 83-90.

²See for example, Richard F. Hamilton, Who Voted for Hitler? (Princeton, 1982); Stephen E. Fienberg, "A Statistical Technique for Historians: Standardizing Tables of Counties," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 1 (1971), 305-315; J.R. Nesselrode and P.B. Boltes, "Adolescent Personality Development and Historical Changes: 1970-1972," Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 39 (1974). Two journals, Historical Methodology and The Journal of Interdisciplinary History, provide excellent forums for new techniques applicable by historians.

³Alan Brinkley, "Comparative Biography as Political History: Huey Long and Father Coughlin," The History Teacher, 18 (1984), 9-16; Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory," History and Theory, 23 (1984), 1-33.

⁴Denys Hay, The Italian Renaissance in Its Historical Background (New York, 1961); J.R. Hale, Renaissance Europe: The Individual and Society, 1480-1520 (Oxford, 1978); M. Mallett, Mercenaries and Their Masters (Boston, 1974).

⁵Karl Dietrich Bracher, The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism (New York, 1970); Martin Broszat, The Hitler State: The Foundation and Development of the Internal Structure of the Third Reich (New York, 1981); Eberhard Jackel, Hitler's Weltanschauung (Middletown, 1972).

⁶Theodore Abel, The Nazi Movement; Why Hitler Came to Power (New York, 1938); Peter Merkl, Political Violence Under the Swastika (Princeton, 1978).

⁷Stuart Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung (New York, 1963); Maurice Meisner, Mao's China: A History of the People's Republic (New York, 1977); Dick Wilson, ed., Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History (London, 1977).

⁸Arthur W. Staats, Social Behaviorism (Homewood, IL, 1975).

APPENDIX

The institute lasted six weeks and participants were able to earn 2, 4, or 6 credits, depending on whether they enrolled for 1, 2, or 3 modules. There were five morning classes each week, and each class was 2 1/2 hours. There were several afternoon meetings as well to deal with the material in each module on an informal basis through discussion. Each instructor provided an extensive, but optional reading list of appropriate secondary works and required a paper or a curriculum guide, indicating a comprehensive grasp of the material covered. No tests were administered; grades were calculated on the basis of intelligent class participation and on the rigorous analysis contained in the written assignment. The following includes the required reading and the topics covered.

Module I: Machiavelli

Assigned Reading: Machiavelli - The Prince

Denys Hay - The Italian Renaissance in Its Historical Background

I. Introduction

A. Objectives

1. The Renaissance as an historical period.
2. Problem of evil reputations in history.

B. Works of Machiavelli

II. The Italian Renaissance

A. Definition of term

B. Major trends or characteristics

1. Individualism.

- 2. Humanism.
 - 3. Secularism.
 - 4. Versatility.
 - C. Beginnings of the Renaissance in Florence: Civic Humanism
 - D. The state system of Italy in the Age of Machiavelli
- III. Machiavelli: Government Service under the Florentine Republic.
- A. The early years: Lorenzo de Medici and Savonarola
 - B. His humanist background
 - C. The diplomatic missions: Louis XII, Cesare Borgia, Julius II
 - D. Lessons of Diplomacy: Francesco Soderini and Pandolfo, Lord of Siena
- IV. The Prince
- A. Correspondence with Francesco Vettori and the composition of The Prince
 - B. Motives for writing The Prince
 - C. New principalities
 - D. Fortune and Virtù
 - E. Classical Morality
 - F. The Machiavellian revolution and the new morality
 - G. Discussion for two class periods - each 2 1/2 hours
- V. War and Politics
- A. Machiavelli: secretary to the Ten of War
 - B. War with Pisa
 - C. The Florentine militia
 - D. Capture of Pisa 1509
 - E. Disaster at Prato and Exile
 - F. Machiavelli's assessment of Piero Soderini: Standard Bearer of Justice
- VI. The Discourses and Other Works
- A. His personal life in exile
 - B. Circle of new friends at the Oricellari Gardens and writing of the Discourses (1518)
 - C. Acceptance by the Medici and the commission to write The History of Florence (1520-25)
 - D. The meaning of The Mandrake Root: does it reflect Machiavelli's political thought?
 - E. Sack of Rome and death in 1527
 - F. Machiavellism
- VII. Discussion for two class periods - each 2 1/2 hours

Module II: Hitler

Assigned Reading: Hitler - Mein Kampf

- I. Germany, 1870-1918
 - A. Unification
 - B. Development of Germany as a Great Power
 - C. World War I and its German-Austrian Roots
 - D. The Austro-Germanic Culture Milieu: The Critique of Liberal Humanism and Political Democracy

- II. Weimar Germany
 - A. Hitler, 1889-1918
 - B. Political Instability
 - C. Economic Disparity
 - D. Social Cleavages
 - E. Cultural Tensions
 Film: The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Evening film)
- III. Germany and the Nazis
 - A. Nazis in Weimar
 - B. Mein Kampf as an ideological tract for the times
- IV. Discussion of Mein Kampf (2 1/2 hours)
- V. Discussion of Mein Kampf as an ideological tract for the times (2 1/2 hours)
- VI. Third Reich, 1933-1939
 - A. Mein Kampf as a Political Primer
 - B. Hitler's post-1933 divergence from the "respectable" anti-Weimar patterns of thought and action
 - C. The Third Reich and the German Citizen
 - D. Hitler's Secret Book and Secret Conversations (both on reserve in the Library)
 - E. Triumph of the Will (Evening film)
- VII. The Third Reich as an Expansionistic Power
 - A. The Twisted Road to Auschwitz
 - B. Nazi Foreign Policy and War
 - C. Simulation Game: Life in Nazi German, and discussion (2 1/2 hours)

Module III: Mao

Assigned Reading: Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tse-tung; Stuart Schram, ed., Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters: 1956-1971

- I. Early Life in a Revolutionary Age: 1900-1919
 - A. Introduction: Evil reputation, leadership, and personality in China
 - B. China in an Era of Revolution: An Overview, 1900-1985
 - C. Was Mao a "Child of Revolution?"
- II. The Making of a Revolutionist and the growth of the CCP, 1919-1931
 - A. The May Fourth Movement, Marxism, and Mao
 - B. Early Party Member and KMT-CCP Cooperation
 - C. Impact of the Peasantry on Mao's Thought and the Kiangsi Soviet
- III. Emergence of Mao as a Revolutionary Leader, 1931-1945
 - A. The Long March and the Emergence of Mao
 - B. The United Front and the Second Sino-Japanese War
 - C. Yanan: Seedbed of Mao's Revolution
- IV. Discussion on Major Documents by Mao (2 1/2 hours)
- V. Discussion on Major Documents by Mao (2 1/2 hours)

- VI. Launching the People's Republic and Handling New Challenges
 - A. Mao on "Democratic Centralism": Building the Socialist State
 - B. "The Lips and Teeth" and Revolutionary Foreign Policy
 - C. The "Hundred Flowers" and Continuing Contradictions

- VII. Charting New Courses and Deepening the Revolution, 1956-1966
 - A. The "Great Leap Forward" and the People's Communes
 - B. International Contradictions: The Sino-Soviet Split
 - C. Mao's "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution"

- VIII. From Personality Cult to Declining Years: Transition to Post-Mao Era, 1966-1976
 - A. Impact of the Cultural Revolution and "A Gang of Four"
 - B. The "Great Helmsman" Departs and a New Leadership Emerges
 - C. "Wasted Years" and "Flaws of the Great Helmsman": Post-Mao Criticism

- IX. Discussion on Major Documents by Mao (2 1/2 hours)