

# Maoism and central planning

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- What was the Northern expedition?
- Which city was China's capital before WWII?
- When did the Communist party came to power?



# Today

- The intellectual journey of Marxism thought from Karl Marx to Mao Zedong
- Maoist rule of China (1949 – 1976)

# Karl Marx

- „A ..... is haunting Europe—the ..... of communism“

# Karl Marx

- „A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of communism“

# Karl Marx

- Philosophy of history – **teleological development towards more advanced modes of society**

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- Philosophy of history – **teleological development towards more advanced modes of society**
- Deterministic – the path is inevitable
- Historical materialism – structure and superstructure

# Karl Marx

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- Feudal system – **land** as the most important resource > landowners as the ruling class
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- Rich bourgeois entrepreneurs **will eventually overthrow the monarchy and aristocracy**
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- = **French Revolution 1789**, Revolutions of 1848

# Karl Marx

- French Revolution 1789, Revolutions of 1848
- = „**first revolution**“ = **transition from feudalism to capitalism**

# Karl Marx

- Is this good or not?

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- **Yes!**

# Karl Marx

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- Capitalists **compete** to effectively use labor and new technologies to serve their customers
- Significantly more efficient than feudalism
- But also even more exploitative – humans have no other value than as workers



# Karl Marx

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- > accumulation of wealth in the hands of the elite, impoverishment of everyone else
- Ruthless competition will bankrupt most capitalists
- In the end, workers will overthrow the capitalists and establish communism
- = **„second revolution“ > transition from capitalism to communism**
- In the future, not in Marx' lifetime!

# Karl Marx

- „Dictatorship of the proletariat“ – **the many will overthrow the few**
- = majority rule!

# Karl Marx

- Why cannot a society go from pre-modern agricultural state straight to communism?

# Karl Marx

- Why cannot a society go from pre-modern agricultural state straight to communism?
- **Because there would be no wealth to redistribute!**

# Karl Marx

- Capitalism is a **necessary stage** through which every human society must pass
- Therefore, **every society must at first have the liberal, bourgeois revolution**

# Karl Marx

- Communist revolutions will happen in the **richest, most advanced societies on Earth**, as the **next step of civilization**
- > Germany, Britain, or the United States



# Lenin and Trotsky

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- **> investment comes from foreign capitalists and the state**

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- Russia – Europe's economic periphery, **still at the feudal stage > „How can we have a communist revolution here?“**
- Poorer countries follow a different path (x Marx)
- **> investment comes from foreign capitalists and the state**
- **> there is no bourgeoisie to establish capitalism and liberal democracy!**

# Lenin and Trotsky

- Exchange with rich countries will only enrich the traditional, conservative elite
- For example, aristocratic landowners in Russia will export food to rich countries > they will make money and hold power indefinitely

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- **> poor countries don't follow the same path as the West**
- **They are not going to transition to Western-style capitalism**

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- **> poor countries don't follow the same path as the West**
- **They are not going to transition to Western-style capitalism**
  
- **The capitalist and democratic stage must be bypassed – straight from feudalism into communism**



**STRAIGHT**

**OUTTA**

**FEUDALISM**

**LENIN AND TROTSKY**

# Lenin and Trotsky

- Russia (**and China!**) – **urban workers** in the few existing modern industries are a **minority**

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- Russia (**and China!**) – **urban workers** in the few existing modern industries are a **minority**
- **Who made up the bulk of the population? > peasants** – who are conservative and will never rise up
- **Socialism cannot come via a popular revolt**
- > workers must become **organized and carry out a coup d'état**

中國工農紅軍



# Lenin and Trotsky

- **Communist party** – extremely important – it will unify the workers and carry out the coup
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- = decision inside the party are made democratically, but once they are made, they are binding

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- – Marx thought that almost everyone will be a worker at this stage, so **the revolution will simply mean majority rule**
- x Lenin: *„nothing other than power which is totally unlimited by any laws, totally unrestrained by absolutely any rules, and based directly on force.“*

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- > central planning
- > totalitarianism – total control of economy, culture etc.

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- **Wealth must be extracted from peasants and invested into developing modern industry**

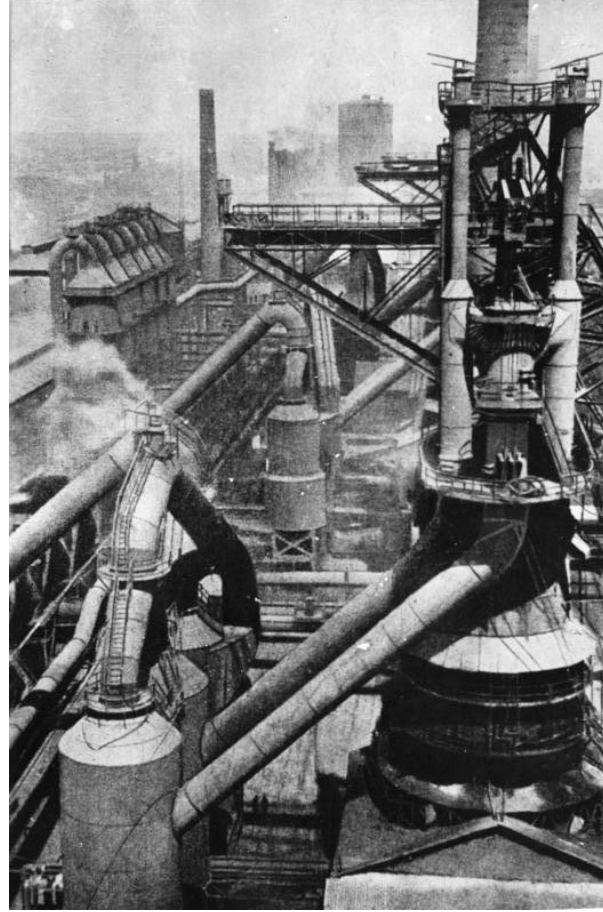
# Central planning

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- Outright confiscation of harvest



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- Outright confiscation of harvest
- > black market, peasant uprisings > harsh punishments



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-P66023  
Foto: o. Ang. | 1920

# SIX MILLION PERISH IN SOVIET FAMINE

Peasants' Crops Seized, They and Their Animals Starve



Like hundreds of the poorest Soviet peasants, these women are unable to buy food. They stand in a line to buy what is left of grain—the famine ration—in the state rationing office.

Russia's beautiful, overworked horses, heavy the world over, are sold and used as government property. The peasants are left with nothing but the bones of their animals.

## Reporter Risks Life to Get Photographs Showing Starvation

STAVROPOL, Russia (Special Telegram)—The Soviet Union is the most deadly famine-stricken area in the world. The death toll is in the millions, according to the United Nations. The famine is the most deadly famine in the world.

By THOMAS WALKER, Special Telegramist and Moscow Bureau Chief, Associated Press

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When the photograph shows that these children were abandoned in the state rationing office and were left to die, the mother was told to take them home. She says she has no food to feed them.



Peasants, hungry and starving, search for grain. The horse-drawn cart is abandoned because the peasants have no grain to transport.

Peasants, hungry and starving, search for grain. The horse-drawn cart is abandoned because the peasants have no grain to transport. The search for grain is a desperate and often fruitless endeavor for the starving peasants.

- „Foreign tourists in Russia stand in silent amazement before the gigantic enterprises created there, as they stand before the pyramids, for example. Only seldom does the thought occur to them what enslavement, what lowering of human self-esteem was connected with the construction of those gigantic establishments.“
- - Karl Kautsky

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- = „race to the bottom“ situations

# Central planning

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- Capitalists behave in a way that is **individually rational but collectively irrational**
- = they spend money on advertising their product and making it more attractive than the competition
- = „race to the bottom“ situations
- **In a communist society, all these resources would be invested more productively 😊**

# Central planning

- NEP

# Central planning

- Russian Civil War (1917-1921) > **War Communism**
- = Attempt to stamp out money and all private transactions
- Allowed Bolsheviks to mobilize resources and defeat Whites, but unpopular > peasant uprisings
- > **New Economic Policy (NEP, 1923-1928) = market-oriented reform > small business allowed!**
- 1928 – Stalin – end of NEP, start of **Five Year plans**
- = blueprint for China and other communist countries

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- x „Fukuyamist neoliberalism“

# The Chinese Communist Party

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# The Chinese Communist Party

- 1921
- Initially – a smaller sibling of the Kuomintang
- **Theory of two revolutions**
- **„1911 was the first revolution, the Kuomintang is the party of the Chinese bourgeoisie“**
- **„we must help the Kuomintang to develop capitalism first“**

# Maoism

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- > **a prolonged rural guerilla war against landlords and the KMT**

抗日游擊戰爭的戰略問題

新華日報館印行  
新華叢書第一十種

毛澤東著



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- > **a prolonged rural guerilla war against landlords and the KMT**
- = „Maoism“
- At first seen as a fringe position

- Marx – **short** mass revolution by **workers** – who are the majority
- Lenin – **short** armed insurrection by **workers**, who are a minority
- Mao – **long** armed insurrection by **peasants**, who are the majority



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- > asymmetric guerilla warfare
- > **Mao's position vindicated**
- > a rural guerilla is actually **necessary** – cities (with workers) are controlled by the KMT

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- **Long March (1934-1935)**





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- **Long March (1934-1935) > to the north of China where the KMT was less powerful**
- Most leaders of the CCP died during the KMT crackdown, or during the march
- > Mao emerged as the **undisputed leader**



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- > this will be the fight that really matters
- x Nationalists – „Japan is our mortal enemy, we must spare no effort to kick them out“
- > **the KMT bore the brunt of the war**

# WWII

- The Japanese could only control large cities, **not the Chinese countryside** > the Party could probably operate easier than under KMT rule



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- „**Yan'an Rectification Movement**“ – 1942-45 – Mao's cult of personality, suppression of dissent **within the party, Maoism as the official ideology**
- = **blueprint for future purges**

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# WWII

- „thought reform“, „though realignment“
- = confession of one's mistakes during combative sessions > opponents driven to suicide

# Communist victory

- **1946-1949 – Civil war – communist victory** over the exhausted, overextended and corrupt KMT in 1949







XINHUANET



# Communist victory

- Communist promises: **to carry out a land reform**

# Communist victory

- **Inequality of land ownership** – the main problem in all of East Asia
- Brutal **exploitation of peasants** > poverty and resentment
- KMT – allied itself with the landlords



- **Korea, Japan, Taiwan – land reforms „from above“** – carried out by the conservative regimes to avoid revolution – US pressure!
- > „blank slate“ > **start of a successful capitalist development!**

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- **3) Create democracy and pluralism!** – CCP will lead a **broad coalition** of progressive parties and movements
  
- **CCP will thus finish what was started in 1911, Mao is the true heir of Sun Yat Sen!**





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- - land reform ✓
- - socialism different from the Soviet model – gradual path, no threat for small businesses ✓
- - democracy – „National Front“ coalition ✓
- = **fulfillment of the dream of the republic from 1918!** ✓

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- Initially more or less as promised, but...

# First years of the PRC - 1949-1953

- **Purge** of former KMT officials; „third way“ intellectuals, entrepreneurs  
– **thought reform campaigns, re-education through labor**

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- Industry – **slow nationalization** of companies
- Agriculture – independent farmers – pressure to form cooperatives
  
- Recovery from all the wars, participation in Korea > **the CCP was not strong enough to control all of the economy**

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- Centralized, hierarchical, technocratic
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- **Full nationalization of industry, collective farming**







互助代耕多打粮 军属生活过得强

力耕堂

湖南人民出版社 一九五二年出版

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- 1957 – turn in a more radical direction
  
- **Hundred Flowers Campaign** – „you can criticize us without fear“
- **Anti-Rightist Campaign** – another purge; **full one-party state**; led by Deng Xiaoping!

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- **Small industrialization** carried out by these village communes



# „Great Leap Forward“ (1958-1962)

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乘風破浪 各顯神通



chinese posters . net

1955.10.10

# „Great Leap Forward“ (1958-1962)

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- „They probably have a lot of spare workers who aren't doing anything valuable, let's force them to work in manufacturing“

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- People fulfilled their quotas by **melting down tools and reforging them** into useless, low-quality iron

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- People fulfilled their quotas by **melting down tools and reforging them** into useless, low quality iron
- **Unrealistic production quotas** > all the food was forcibly confiscated
- Biggest famine in China's history – **30 million deaths**

# „Great Leap Forward“ (1958-1962)

- The program had to be called off in 1962

- **Lysenkoism**

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- **Lysenkoism** – Soviet attempt to discredit genetics as bourgeois pseudoscience and replace it with **Marxist-Leninist biological theory**
- Seeds of wheat should be placed deep underground and close together > **they will form a collectivist spirit and grow together...**
- Both USSR and China actually attempted to implement this (!)

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- **Basic economic model until 1978**

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- **Decision making was divided between different levers of party and government**
- Typically, many enterprises were controlled on the provincial level etc.
- > opaque system, **it is difficult to say who is in charge of what**

# Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)

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- Officially: **attempt to prevent the Communist party from becoming a new elite** – permanent revolution

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- „**Self-criticism**“ – public humiliation and torture





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- **1968 – the army had to move in to rein in the Red Brigades**

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- Mao's final years (1970-76) – **the situation slowly calmed down**

- “Had Mao died in 1956, his achievements would have been immortal. Had he died in 1966, he would still have been a great man but flawed. But he died in **1976**. Alas, what can one say?”

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- „Gang of Four“ – blamed for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution so that Mao himself could be absolved of all responsibility

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- **No competition and no bankruptcies** > no pressure to make products and services attractive to buyers > low quality + little choice

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- > as communist countries neared the technological frontier, growth stalled
- > problem for all state-dominated economies (China...?)

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- Great power status abroad
- But, obviously, also famine and death, trauma, destruction of institutions...

- Next time – **economic reforms after 1978**