

The Long Game and Its Contradictions



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The People's Republic has overcome feudal corruption and colonial oppression, emerged from "100 years of humiliation", rebuilt from rubble, repeatedly foiled imperialist sabotage to today remain 100% independent, and is now developing its socialist power on the world stage. The path chosen by the Communist Party is now, as it has been since 1949, guided by Marxism Leninism, but not a dogmatic interpretation. Socialism with Chinese Characteristics is shaped by the concrete geopolitical realities today, and is adapting to the global material conditions of the 21st Century.

The following is a bird's-eye-view outline of China's concrete path of national rejuvenation and international world historic decolonisation, paving the road toward global communisation.



NATIONAL

Nationally, the communist party aims to build a harmonious, prosperous, sustainable, and robust home base on which international engagements will rest. Domestic policy of 21st Century China hinges not only on orthodox Marxist class struggle, but a hybrid with quasi-Confucian Social Harmony. Revolutionary ideology has evolved from its earlier modes and conceptions, adapted to the particulars of Chinese culture, history, and present situation.

1987

Shanghai



During the first developmental phase of Reform and Opening up, roughly 1980 to 2000, China has focussed on building the productive forces on top of the industrial foundation laid down in the previous era, growing a strong mixed economy for which foreign investment was crucially important, and improving conditions for the working class and rural poor. The second phase, roughly 2000 to now, has been focused on overcoming the problems which have arisen from the developmental process of the first phase. Uneven development/wealth inequality, corruption, pollution/environmental degradation, and various labour issues are problems par the course of adopting a hybrid economy in a global market dominated by neoliberalism, and of using private entrepreneurship as a tool of development.

Uneven development between urban East Coast and the large inner and Western rural regions has been addressed by the building of an elaborate highspeed rail system which connects regional economies and various initiatives which strengthens inter-regional trade. Uneven development between the entrepreneurs who got rich first and the working class and especially migrants has been addressed by a series of labour reform policies which have resulted in dramatic growth in the lowest earning segments of Chinese society. By the most modest estimation, between 1990 and 2018 the number of Chinese people living in extreme poverty was reduced from 750m to less than 10m (Economist).

One of Xi Jinping's first major projects after becoming leader was the epic anti-corruption drive, which punished 1.5 million state officials and business leaders for unjustly benefiting themselves at the expense of the people. Also implemented was a wide array of new policies which further restricted the excesses of private enterprise, in terms of trade practices, environmental regulation, worker's rights, etc.

To combat pollution and climate change, during this second phase of development many decisions were made and initiatives were implemented from local to international level. These have included the reduction of reliance on coal, banning it in Beijing altogether (although not yet completely eliminated); massive reforestation projects; and becoming

the global leader in green-technology investment.

On the path toward full socialisation, it is in the interest of the CPC to improve conditions for workers, fix labor issues, fight pollution, increase equality, and address uneven development, on its own terms, and according to its plans. Many such measures have taken place in recent years, such as the millions of urban youths sent to rural areas to assist in development and education, or the many stricter rules regarding worker well being which private businesses must follow at the risk of their companies being collectivised (a not at all uncommon occurrence).

But at the same time, grass roots labor movements are not only allowed, but encouraged. The vast majority of strikes in China are not suppressed as they are under capitalist regimes. The vast majority of protest movements are against the unjust decisions and policies of local bosses and officials, appealing to the central government, which usually steps in on the side of the workers, punishing the capitalists and corrupt politicians and forcing them to change their ways. The strikes and protests which are suppressed mostly belong to the category of anti-communist trouble makers with ties to insidious imperialist entities, whose aim is destabilisation (and these are of course amplified in Western media). The lessons of compromised independent labor unions used by hostile bourgeois states to destroy socialism such as Solidarność in Poland, which doomed the nation to 4 decades of poverty and under development, and paved the way for the rise of fascism today, are heeded by the CPC, and such organisations are not allowed. But at the end of each day, any still existing legitimate discontent and criticism must be viewed in the context of material reality: in the past 4 decades, the working class of China have seen a 400% increase in wages.

According to the longest study of a people's satisfaction with their government ever conducted by the Ash Center in China, and published by Harvard:

"In 2016, 95.5 percent of respondents were either "relatively satisfied" or "highly satisfied" with Beijing."

INTERNATIONAL

Internationally, China's socialist foreign policy is decidedly not a continuation of the past socialist export of revolutions, but focused on the restructuring of global trade. It is a new form of internationalism based on the promotion of independent economic development of the over-exploited nations of the Global South, through mutually beneficial relationships and a policy of peaceful co-existence. The long term goal is nothing short of the elimination of the primary contradiction of imperialist capitalism — inter-continental inequality. Ending the fundamental injustice of our age, disparity between rich and poor countries, will also spell the end of myriads of cascading ancillary injustices. Alleviating poverty, promoting trade and learning, and building relationships based on respect and cooperation, new economic alliances between colonised regions will together displace Western hegemony, break imperialist cycles of violence, and end capitalist domination.

The creation of a more equal and level global playing field will have two major effects upon the world. One: workers in the former "first world" will again have bargaining power to conduct their own revolutions, because it will no longer be possible for their jobs to be exported to poor regions with low wages. Two: people of the former "third world" will be empowered to set the terms of their own engagement in the world, and to build their own socialisms.



Business with Assholes: Narendra Modi, Benjamin Netanyahu, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, Some Orange Moron

Contradictions in the foreign policies of the CPC include those which result from the strict non-interference in the affairs of foreign states, which has characterised Chinese foreign relations for thousands of years, and the prioritising of larger international trade relationships over ideological conflicts. One example is unscrupulous business deals with right-wing governments, such as Saudi Arabia or Israel. The “live and let live” ethic of this modus operandi even applies to ideological enemies: China also trades with the biggest terrorist organisation in the world, the USA, without even criticising its long list of illegal wars and heinous crimes against humanity (although this may be changing). Another is not supporting local leftist struggles in partner nations, such as guerrilla Maoist insurrections in SE Asia, if it might jeopardise trade relations with state entities. If the temporary “ethical net-losses” of these contradictions lead to larger “net-gains” and positive results in the long term, they are calculated as worthwhile or unavoidable.

The CPC understands that national leaders and ruling parties are fickle and ephemeral, but development and the improvement of material conditions will have long lasting effects. Creating a more balanced global playing field is the long game, which will create the conditions necessary for systemic change in each country, by their own agency. The phrase “Socialism With Chinese Characteristics” may have seemed clumsy and overly wordy at first, but the world will slowly come to understand its internationalist meaning, and that it is this way for a very specific reason: in anticipation of Socialism with Indian Characteristics, Socialism with French Characteristics, Socialism with USAmerican Characteristics, and 1000 socialisms with local characteristics to bloom.

As of 2019, 125 countries have signed up to the Belt and Road Initiative, The PRC’s epic effort to connect the world through infrastructure and trade, to foster cooperative relationships, to develop under-developed regions, to strengthen nations weakened by imperialism, in a world historic process of actual, material decolonisation. Due for completion by later this century, the Bri will provide ground work for further sustainable international cooperative ventures such as the Global Energy SuperGrid or the Health

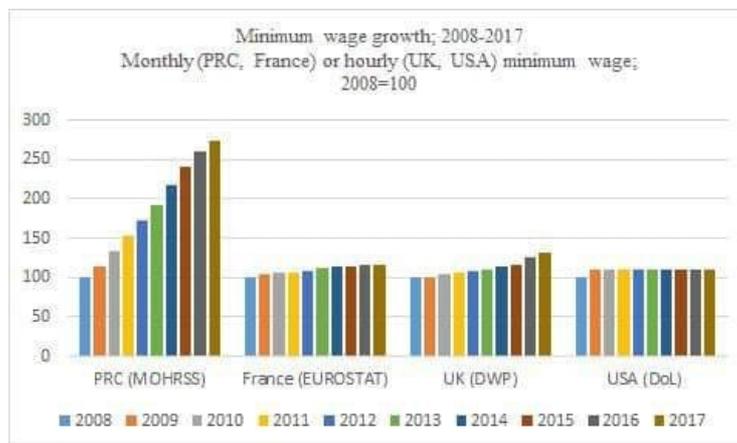
international market, a trajectory which, in every way, should be seen as a continuation and extension of the historical legacy of Marxist Leninist theory and practice.

“it is only possible to achieve real liberation in the real world by employing real means, that slavery cannot be abolished without the steam-engine and the mule and spinning-jenny, serfdom cannot be abolished without improved agriculture, and that, in general, people cannot be liberated as long as they are unable to obtain food and drink, housing and clothing in adequate quality and quantity. “Liberation” is an historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions, the development of industry, commerce, agriculture, the conditions of intercourse”.

— Karl Marx, *“The German Ideology”*

“Between capitalist and communist society there lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.”

— Karl Marx, *“in the critique of the Gotha Program”*

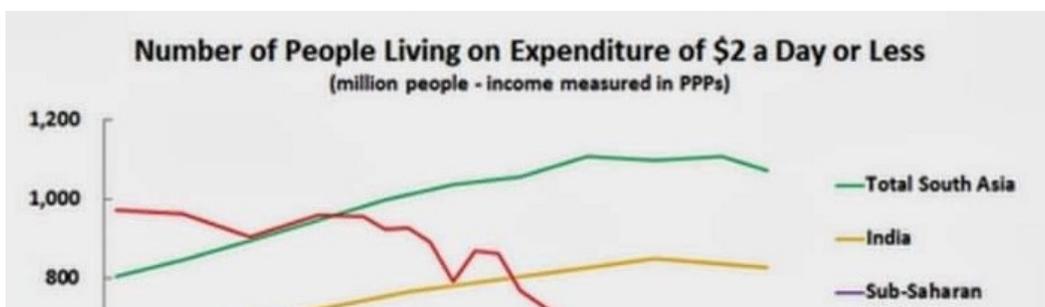


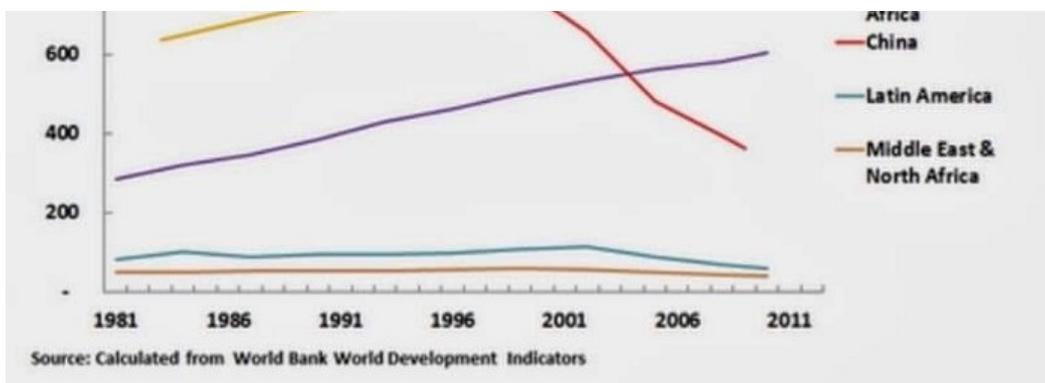
Thanks to OSD — Observatory of Sovereign Development

“For socialism is merely the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly which is made to serve the interests of the whole people and has to that extent ceased to be capitalist monopoly”

“The state capitalism, which is one of the principal aspects of the New Economic Policy, is, under Soviet power, a form of capitalism that is deliberately permitted and restricted by the working class. Our state capitalism differs essentially from the state capitalism in countries that have bourgeois governments in that the state with us is represented not by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat, who has succeeded in winning the full confidence of the peasantry.”

— Vladimir Lenin, *Can We Go Forward If We Fear To Advance Towards Socialism?*





“We want to do business.” Quite right, business will be done. We are against no one except the domestic and foreign reactionaries who hinder us from doing business. ... When we have beaten the internal and external reactionaries by uniting all domestic and international forces, we shall be able to do business with all foreign countries on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.”

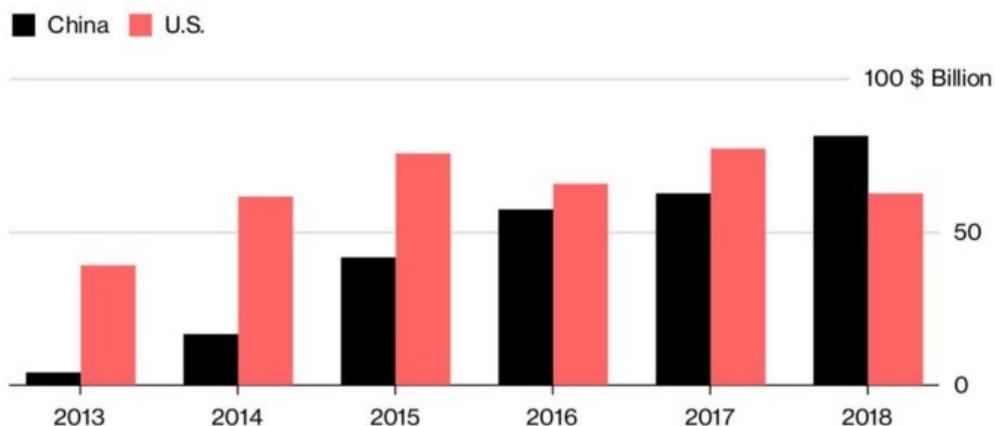
— Mao Ze Dong, *On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship*

“So, to build socialism it is necessary to develop the productive forces. Poverty is not socialism. To uphold socialism, a socialism that is to be superior to capitalism, it is imperative first and foremost to eliminate poverty. True, we are building socialism, but that doesn’t mean that what we have achieved so far is up to the socialist standard. Not until the middle of the next century, when we have reached the level of the moderately developed countries, shall we be able to say that we have really built socialism and to declare convincingly that it is superior to capitalism. We are advancing towards that goal.”

— Deng XiaoPing

China's Rise

The value of venture investments in China has soared in the past five years



2018 figures are year to date
Source: Preqin

Bloomberg

SOCIALISM WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS

The Communist Party of China does not in fact claim that China is today already a socialist country, but a country with a mixed economy, lead by a socialist state, that is actively working toward the officially stated goal of “Fully Developed Socialism by 2050”.

Now lets take a bird’s eye view of modern China, of Socialism with Chinese

Characteristics, and the particular shape of its astonishing development in the past 40 years at a historically unprecedented pace:

1) Never privatised major industries, which are all public owned. Compare this to the collapse of Yugoslavia, USSR, etc., which were all marked by an immediate devouring of national industry by private entities: true transitions to capitalism.

2) Land remains collectivised, and leased to private persons or business entities for a maximum of 70 years. While home ownership numbers are extremely high in China compared to other countries, property inheritance does not exist, thus neither does a landlord class.

3) The rich do not control politics. The CPC is comprised almost entirely of working class representatives, extremely few capitalists. In the highest governing body, the National People's Congress, there are 26 owners of private enterprises among 2600+ members (2018).

4) In Democratic Centralism, directly democratic decision making through elections proceeds from neighbourhood and local councils up to the National Congress, and from there and above are appointed by elected officials, according to merit. This combines the best of both democracy and meritocracy, while the dangers of both are checked by the other.

5) Never experienced the boom-bust cycles typical of capitalist economies in its 40 years of steady development at a rate of roughly 10% per year, even with partial private entrepreneurship methods.

6) Bottom segments of Chinese society experienced 40% growth since 1979; bottom segments of USA during same period: 1%. If the USA is not a good comparison due to its drastic differences in history and position, a much better one is India, another post colonial nation developing during the same period, which actually transitioned to capitalism: exponentially more inequality, nearly no progress or even regress for the poorest segments of society.

7) CPC representatives oversee all operation of corporations, which are entirely answerable to the state. CEOs, capitalists, and the super wealthy do not control politics and influence policy via lobbies and campaign contributions, and are not at all above the law like in the capitalist West.

8) 1.5 million capitalists and state officials punished for corruption since 2007, 17% of whom imprisoned or executed. Compare this to capitalist countries that always rewards the excesses and crimes of their elites, such as the Wall Street bankers whose excesses caused the 2008 global financial crash.

9) Very real problems created by economic infrastructure building with capitalist methods, such as uneven development, inequality, bad work conditions, corruption, pollution, etc. are clearly and repeatedly addressed publicly, and in no uncertain terms. Correctional policies addressing each of these problems have been implemented, and already have had significant results.

10) Foreign engagement is always mutually beneficial, guided by the millennia old policy of strict non-interference, in support of independent development of regions dominated by imperialism. The New Silk Road, or Belt and Road initiative, seeks to

build an international brotherhood of former colonised nations, together in strength against capitalist hegemony and imperial domination.



If private property, money, abstract value production, class society, and the state, are abolished prematurely, when the oppressive logic and power of capital still controls the entire world, China would become vulnerable to both external imperialist violence and internal reactionary sabotage (no doubt under the banner of “democracy”). The Communist Party would be immediately compromised by foreign backed elements; the country might be torn apart once again by civil war, and once again subjected to imperialist domination. The Chinese revolution, what so many millions fought, worked tirelessly, and sacrificed their lives for, will have been for nothing.

Marxism is anything but rigid and dogmatic, and has always been about adapting to the ever changing objective conditions of each era, using what ever is available toward revolutionary goals. The opinion of those baizuo who think that China should have chosen the disastrous course of action described above, or at least remained underdeveloped, poor, and weak, in order to satisfy their fundamentalist interpretation of Marxism, should not be indulged. These myopic and short-sighted “left com”, “ultra-left”, or modern “Maoist” types love to denounce modern China as a betrayal of socialism, without considering that it is the failure of the Western left to do successful revolutions in their countries which made it necessary for existing socialist states to adapt to the global conditions of entrenched neo-liberal capitalism.

Those who think that 1.4 billion people, who for 200 years suffered so immensely under vicious colonial rule and brutal capitalist domination, will so quickly forget what their true enemy is, don't know much about capitalism, colonialism, or people.

The fight against capitalism continues, but on economic grounds. Because war is the

way of imperialism, and military spending accounts for 90% of US GDP, while Chinese socialism is developing alliances with Africa, South America, Europe, and other parts of Asia based on mutual development. Socialists will beat the capitalists at the (what they consider their own) game of markets with rational planning, and through peaceful trade and prosperity for all, end bourgeois global hegemony.



But at the same time, criticism and self-criticism remains of course a central part of Maoist thought and practice. And yes, as communists, we should of course support authentic labor movements while opposing neo-liberal forces, but also careful not to repeat the same mistakes of ultra-leftism 60 years ago which resulted in the catastrophic Cultural Revolution. The CPC has been so extraordinarily competent and successful exactly because of having adapted to much critique, and addressed the demands of activists over the years. We must remain ever vigilant, instead of becoming lazy and putting blind trust in the state, which is always in danger of being corrupted and lead astray, by (in the context of Chinese socialism) either the left or right.

The entrenched and pervasive structures of capitalism took 500 years to build, and the propertarian system of which it is an extension, 6000 years. Its dissolution requires strategies on a scale bigger and longer than is easily conceived or understood by any individual without many years of dedication, and will take more than a few decades to unfold.

Western liberals think in terms of quarterly reports and election cycles. Eastern communists think in terms of centuries, if not millennia.





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