



## Ear to Asia podcast

- Title:** The market for Maoism outside China
- Description:** Despite its roots in China, Mao Zedong's theories of class struggle and violent revolution spread around the globe in the second half of the twentieth century, igniting armed uprisings in its wake. Asia historian Dr Matthew Galway and Latin American cultural studies researcher Dr Carlos Amador examine the appeal and impact of Maoism outside of China. With host Peter Clarke. An Asia Institute podcast. Since recording this interview, Dr Galway has moved to the Australian National University.
- Listen:** <https://player.whooshkaa.com/episode?id=695580>
- Voiceover:** The Ear to Asia podcast is made available on the Jakarta Post platform under agreement between the Jakarta Post and the University of Melbourne.
- Peter Clarke:** Hello, I'm Peter Clarke. This is Ear To Asia.
- Carlos Amador:** You know Maoism is at the end of the day appealing because it isn't aligned with the Soviet or the US arc. It is a way to critique the mistakes of Soviet expansionism and US imperialism while at the same time maintaining the ethical and political commitment to the communist revolution.
- Matthew Galway:** This constant vigilance to self-criticize and to kind of enforce this discipline on not only just the party apparatus but on the entire populace. I think that is certainly a very appealing element for would be Maoists across the world.
- Peter Clarke:** In this episode, exporting Mao Zedong Thought. Ear To Asia is the podcast from Asia Institute, the Asia research specialist at the University of Melbourne. In the decades after Mao Zedong and his peasant army won China's civil war and established the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao became a source of inspiration for many who had aspirations or pretensions of liberating the poor and the oppressed. Mao's theories of class struggle and violent revolution were encapsulated as Mao Zedong Thought in China and became known as Maoism elsewhere.
- Peter Clarke:** Despite its roots in China, Maoism spread around the globe in the second half of the 20th century, igniting revolutions and armed uprisings from Southeast Asia to South America and beyond. As we'll hear, global Maoism in thought and action is not just a thing of the past, a relic of history. With us to examine how Mao Zedong's ideology spread beyond China's geographic boundaries and its impact on the lives of millions of people across the planet, our University of Melbourne Asia historian, Dr M atthew Galway,



and expert on Mao's influence and legacy in central and South America, Dr Carlos Amador from Michigan Technological University in the United States.

Peter Clarke: Matt, Carlos, welcome to Ear To Asia.

Matthew Galway: Thank you for having me.

Carlos Amador: Thank you so much.

Peter Clarke: Now, Matt, let's start with a bit of an anatomy, I suppose, of what Maoism actually is. Most of us have heard the term over the decades and we probably have our little idea of what Maoism is actually is. Let's unpack that now. What are the main elements of Maoism?

Matthew Galway: It's a great question and one that is not super easy to answer, but I will do my best. In essence, Mao Zedong's various written texts, his thought, his speeches, and the institutions that he envisioned and established in China as he conceived in the 1930s and '40s, and as he applied from '49 onward very much constitute the foundation of what I've argued as an ideological system. What it constitutes mainly in terms of actual practice is the notion of a critical interpretive paradigm, an ideological discourse, a radical vocabulary and syntax for waging political struggle, and a strategy for fighting protracted war.

Matthew Galway: Some of these key elements include, of course, New Democracy, which is the whole idea of developing on the Marxist premise of stages of development or stages of revolutionary development and socialist revolution, and then applying that concretely to the historical situation that was prevailing in China during the anti-Japanese war of the 1930s and 1940s.

Peter Clarke: Can we tease out a little of those elements you just highlighted? New Democracy, we'll probably come back to this word democracy a few in our conversation, but what did Mao actually mean when he projected that word, that banner word, if you like, democracy?

Matthew Galway: When Mao talks about New Democracy, he's making the argument that bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution ought to be combined into a single stage rather than two separate back to back stages. This of course is developing on a Marxist understanding of the stages of economic and historical development, of the modes of production. What Mao is meaning by New Democracy is that China must progress through several stages, but that the single stage ought to lead to the development of a new democratic type of China, and this would mean, of course, socialist edification and kind of the mass politics that came to characterise Maoist China from '49 to '76.



- Peter Clarke: The word contradictions or contradiction really fundamental to the whole idea of Maoism.
- Matthew Galway: Absolutely. Mao believed that even with the establishment of socialism in China or anywhere, that there would constantly be the pervasive contradictions that would come to challenge the legitimacy of socialism in an established country. What Mao argued is that the revolution must always continue to safeguard the gains of the Communist Party. He argued that contradictions are actually very natural and that one ought to kind of accept them as always going to exist, thus the revolution must be resolute and must continue, and this, of course, establishes his theory of permanent revolution.
- Peter Clarke: Carlos, would you like to enlarge a little on the idea of what Maoism actually is through your lens?
- Carlos Amador: From your question on contradiction, when we get to the case of Peru specifically, one of the things that this contradiction is going to emerge as is a kind of disciplinary, constant self-criticism, right? The whole idea of the Two-Lines Theory in Marxism, that within the development you always have tendencies that are pulling – bourgeois tendencies. The contradiction is always at play. You have two lines, bourgeois pulling and the revolutionary party, the communist party, trying to fight these tendencies. Contradiction is healthy emerges and creates a sense of self-disciplining.
- Carlos Amador: We have the stereotypical ideology of the struggle session or the struggle meeting, but in Latin American, specifically in the Peruvian context, which is I think the most really historically developed and archived emanation of Maoism in the western hemisphere, you have this constant of vital disciplinary identity to self-critique almost, a loyalist idea that the party is always to be refined. For me, I think the interesting thing as a scholar of Maoism in Latin America is how this is deployed both rhetorically and disciplinarily within party ideas.
- Carlos Amador: How did the Sendero Luminoso, the Shining Path, PCP, Partido Comunista del Peru, the Peruvian Community Party, how did they constantly critique and look for contradictions within their own party and how did that become focalized and practised out in the world?
- Peter Clarke: Matt, let's just enumerate some of the key differences between Mao's ideas and historically up river from the Soviet revolution in the late 19th century Marxism-Leninism?
- Matthew Galway: One of the big debates in the 1960s and 1970s when earlier historians of Mao were producing these very pioneering texts was whether Mao was truly a Marxist-Leninist. Now, we're at a point where historians almost universally agreed that Mao is a serious Marxist-Leninist. We ought to take



his Marxism-Leninism seriously, but also see how he developed and adapted it to apply it concretely to the Chinese historical experience. One of the key revelations from these decades of study is that Mao's sinification of Marxism-Leninism, which he initiated in the mid-1930s, towards the end of the 1930s and reiterated on New Democracy in 1940, entailed creative adaptation that Marxism-Leninism is not to live in abstraction.

Matthew Galway: It must be breathed into a national voice for it to mean something beyond mere dogma or abstraction. Mao often railed against dogmatists, including one of his chief rivals, Wang Ming. Then after Wang Ming's falling out of grace, Mao became, of course, the supreme theorist of the party and encouraged all members of the CCP and then later all members of China to not merely fondle the arrow of Marxism-Leninism, but to shoot it to the target of the Chinese historical experience and the Chinese revolution.

Matthew Galway: I would say that what differentiates Mao Zedong Thought or Mao Zedong Sixiang from Marxism-Leninism, especially the Soviet accretion of Marxism-Leninism, is that emphasis on creative adaptation, that one should not merely follow to a T the Soviet model of bureaucratic centralism, but one must take into account the concrete historical, social and cultural milieu into which Marxism-Leninism has to take root for it to mean something normative and mean something concrete to the people who are going to fight and die for it.

Peter Clarke: Be more specific than just to identify some of those aspects that Mao used as adaptation within the Chinese setting, the Chinese culture.

Matthew Galway: Mal recognised, of course, that China lacked a comparable urban-based proletariat to rival the Russian empire or the Soviet Union and many of the European case studies that Marx made central, but, of course, Marx in the 1880s noticed in Russia that there was tremendous potential in peasants under the right proletarian leadership could constitute a very powerful force. Mao, of course, recognising this and seeing this perfectly in line with Marxism-Leninism at the time regarded the primacy of peasants in China's revolutionary movement. He did not say they would lead the party, but did say that they constituted a major force, and this he observes in his 1927 report on a Hunan peasant movement.

Matthew Galway: There are also other elements that are equally important. Of course, we've already discussed New Democracy, which he views it as very much in line with the prevailing Marxism-Leninism of the day, but again that whole idea of sinification to make Marxism-Leninism its inherent universality speak to the concrete realities of China, which in this case, of course, would be predominantly agrarian society, a communist party that had very little, if no access to the urban centres in which it was founded.



- Matthew Galway: They also had to recognise that how are you going to mobilise people on ideas of dialectical materialism or these very core concepts of Marxism-Leninism. You have to speak it into their own grievances and their own struggle. This is one of the great successes of Mao as both a charismatic person, a charismatic leader, that he's able to crystallise in the 1930s and '40s and how he's able to kind of with almost a folksy approach to things draw people into these abstract concepts and make them relate to their everyday lives. The best way to put this, and just to sum up my long-winded point here, is how he looked at the major contradictions between classes in China.
- Matthew Galway: He saw very much that the landlords and the peasants therein lay the major conflict between classes in China. This was very much different from what his predecessors and the Marxist-Leninist cannon had viewed.
- Peter Clarke: Carlos, listening to those descriptions of the adaptations that Mao made, what are your thoughts on those I guess looking through your lens in Central and South America?
- Carlos Amador: In the Latin American context, probably the most famous or at least the most widely read Latin American Marxist before Che Guevara and Fidel Castro and others is Jose Carlos Mariátegui. Mariátegui's Seven Essays and the Interpretation of Peruvian Reality is one of the most developed Marxist historical documents and theoretical documents that looks at the specific historical, precise relationship between the classes. I would say that almost independently right around the same time, in the mid '20s, you have Mariátegui and Mao, no communication with each other, coming up with these very precise interpretations of class in their context.
- Carlos Amador: Marxism always has this as part of its wheelhouse, but yet Marxism-Leninism become seen as a kind of intransigent, rigid, unyielding, lockstep, dedication to party movement. What's interesting to me in Peru in the specific case of the Sendero Luminoso, the Shining Path, it's never Maoism. It's Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. From the earliest days of the PCP, Partido Comunista Peru, the Peruvian Communist Party, at least the PCP as Gonzalo, Abimael Guzmán Reinoso developed it, there's this creation of the three strands of thinking.
- Peter Clarke: Matt and Carlos, our central theme for this conversation is the export of Maoism. Matt, take us back to that fevid period after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. What was the world like then?
- Matthew Galway: From 1949 onward, here we have China, of course, establishing itself as a communist country under the Chinese Communist Party and Mao Zedong as its Supreme Leader. China from then on pretty much had a few major hurdles to get over. One of them was establishing new allies. After the Korean War, which waged on from the late '40s until 1953 and then with the



settlement at the Geneva Convention in 1954, the partition of Korea, you have China now trying to struggle to get new allies, to get countries to recognise it as the PRC, the People's Republic of China, and to regard it not as this isolated enemy that needs to be handled with extreme caution.

Matthew Galway: One of the things that leaders in China, policy makers, did was to try and cement alliances with the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The 1955 Non-Aligned Conference or the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference in Bandung, Indonesia presented one major opportunity whereby China sent its great statesmen, Zhou Enlai, who was Mao's premier and the premier of the CCP, to Bandung and there he made personal friendships with many leaders from the newly independent countries. Afterwards, he would go on tours.

Matthew Galway: He visited Cambodia, for one example, many times, developing a very, very strong personal friendship with Norodom Sihanouk, who was the neutral Non-Aligned leader of independent Cambodia. This was a major foreign policy and domestic policy win for the CCP. They were able to show their people that the revolution was winning and that they were actually champions of world peace and that communism is an overall global good and that the Soviet Union and the United States were the actual problematic agents, at least the Soviet Union from 1960 onward.

Matthew Galway: They're also able to show international audiences that China was willing to listen to Non-Aligned nations and was actually interested in promoting autonomous socialist development in the former colonial worlds of Africa and Asia.

Peter Clarke: Matt, the words colonialism and imperialism are fundamental to that description.

Matthew Galway: Absolutely. After the European colonial powers started to kind of turn inward, especially after World War II with the repairing of Europe and the colonial peoples of Asia specifically and then Africa standing up and fighting for the deliverance of the promises that the colonial powers said they would grant them to go fight on behalf of these empires in the two world wars now by this point, these countries, of course, would fight these very long battles for independence. Some more violent than others, but nevertheless.

Matthew Galway: What this did is it allowed China to again support the development of these countries as Non-Aligned nations, which meant that they would not side with DC or Moscow. But the problem was that Mao believed that just because colonialism was gone doesn't mean that those powers that kept the underclasses oppressed had been removed wholesale, and that there must be a constant struggle against imperialism, which he viewed as capitalism.



- Matthew Galway: These new countries were hastily integrated into a global market and what he would characterise as the third world, these newly independent African, Asian and Latin American countries, ought to strive and fight against capitalism from entrenching these countries in a cyclical phenomenon of under development. This is why Mao and Zhou Enlai and many of his greatest supporters advocated that countries be not aligned, that they don't serve as mere cannon fodder for Moscow or DC designs, and that they stand up for themselves, become self-reliant and develop as autonomous socialist non-aligned countries.
- Peter Clarke: It's worth underlining, isn't it, that Mao's schema of "for third world", a phrase we use these days to mean something else, I guess, but his schema for third world as a label is very different from today.
- Matthew Galway: Oh, absolutely. The Three Worlds Theory developed in Communist China was not a pejorative in any sense of the word. In fact, the idea of three worlds, as Mao discussed with Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda in 1975, was that there was the first world of the Soviet Union and the United States, these major powers that had imperialist designs on the third world or these newly independent countries. There was the second world of countries that were allied to these respective countries.
- Matthew Galway: In the case of Mao's usage, we're talking about Japan, which was very much built by the United States under the vice royalty of Douglas MacArthur, the former head general of the Pacific Theatre in World War II, to make it a bulwark against communism, especially with the fall of China to the communist in '49, and then Canada, of course, would have fallen into this as well, and Australia. These countries would have been the second world, these allied states to these metropolises.
- Matthew Galway: Then the third world would be all those countries that had previously been colonies or semi-colonies, as Mao would define them, and that they ought to band together and form a solidarity movement grounded on autonomous development of socialism and not stand as allied to any of these countries for their own nefarious imperialist purposes.
- Carlos Amador: Now, the Three Worlds Theory I think for many people in Latin America aligned not perfectly, but at least more coherently with some of the developmental and class issues that countries like Peru, countries like Bolivia, countries like Colombia were dealing with at the time. There were still questions of land reform, sharecropping, issues of massively impoverished peasants classes away from the urban centre, while at the same time you had cities like the Lima, Peru, Bogota, capital of Colombia, Santiago, Chile that were developed, that were relatively cosmopolitan as capitals that were penetrated into the international conflict between the US and the Soviet Union over hegemony, for lack of a better term.



- Carlos Amador: The Three Worlds Theory that Mao articulated helped penetrate into Peru specifically because it aligned itself. It was a way of seeing what was actually happening. This kind of simultaneity of feudal relations or what Mao called semi-colonial relations that still have the mark of the 16th century. There were families who had been in charge of massive estates for hundreds and hundreds of years. It was a way to see the world with I think maybe not much more accuracy, but with a great deal more affinity. Now, would you say that that's something that you can see that the Three Worlds Theory becomes a sort of inspirational moment for a lot of Marxists in the region?
- Matthew Galway: Absolutely. That is exactly it. This is one of the big triumphs of Peruvian Marxist Jose Carlos Mariátegui is that he recognised that systemic perpetuation of these estates and wealth concentrated in very few hands, predominantly white Peruvian hands. He recognised the plight of the rural peoples, specifically the indigenous populations of Peru. The idea that Peru, despite its independence, many, many centuries removed, still had these various issues that were keeping the poor in this perpetual state of poverty and the disenfranchisement of the indigenous peoples.
- Matthew Galway: It created a locus and kind of a local example of the Three Worlds Theory between city and countryside, that the city was a reflection of a greater country that did not exist, right? It was the city who was the first world. Its surrounding suburbs where the second world, and the third world was in the countryside, right? This allowed someone like Abimael Guzman, the founder and leader of the Shining Path, who goes to China and he reads Mao's works, having already read Mariátegui's criticisms of Peruvian society and kind of his analysis of its socioeconomic structure.
- Matthew Galway: Then Mao provided very much these analytical tools, the vocabulary, the syntax, and some of the elements that were missing in Mariátegui's diagnoses from the 1920s and '30s. Guzman is able to combine them through that creative adaptation element and emancipatory element that is endemic to Maoism and thus create what he will later characterise as the Fourth Sword of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, which he would characterise as Gonzalo Thought or Pensamiento Gonzalo.
- Peter Clarke: You're listening to Ear To Asia from Asia Institute at the University of Melbourne. I'm Peter Clarke with guests Dr. Matthew Galway and Dr. Carlos Amador. We're discussing the global export and legacy of Maoism. Matt, let's go to Southeast Asia and look at some actual revolutions and fights for independence and change with their politics. Let's use Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar as our case studies, if you like. How was Maoism used by various insurgents and leaders in Southeast Asia?
- Matthew Galway: In those three case studies, you see three very resilient and fascinating manifestations of Maoism take root. The Vietnamese Communist Party is engaging with translations of Mao's works. At that time, they would have





been French translations, of Russian translations of the original Chinese. They're reading these pieces by Mao in translation and seeing value in particularly Mao's ideas of New Democracy and People's War or Guerrilla Warfare whereby the countryside will surround the cities and overwhelm them through a broad classes movement of peasants, workers and the like. This is what is most resilient to the Vietnamese communists at that point.

Matthew Galway: Now, this is where the Cambodians come in because there are two forces at work with Cambodian Maoism and I'll try and keep this as succinct as possible. You have the intellectual movement of Cambodian Maoist, which is your Pol Pots, Hou Yuons, Hu Nims, These are all at least major figures and future ministers of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, aka, the Khmer Rouge. They all went and pursued advanced degrees in Paris and there they read French translations of Mao's works, but not all of them went in the same direction with what they were reading. Some of them engaged with the political economy of Maoism and others were purely interested in kind of the strategy and practise of Maoism.

Matthew Galway: This is where Pol Pot who returns to Cambodia without a degree joins the Vietnamese Communist Party in a sense. He's a member of the Khmer Workers Party, one of the predecessor organisations to the Khmer Rouge, learns from the Vietnamese very much the operational tactics and the strategies that they were engaging with and wrestling with that were very much informed by Mao. It's only in 1965-'66 when he visits China, possibly even at the same time as Abimael Guzman. We don't know for sure. The Asia, Africa, Latin American Centre is quite large in many, many future communist leaders would end up studying there.

Matthew Galway: It is after his visit to China that he sees these ideas in practise and has like a vision or a dream that he wakes up to and says, "This is what I want my movement to be. I want us to be implementing this Maoism in Cambodia." The shape it takes after that is very much centred on this intellectual Paris-trained vision of implementing Maoism in Cambodia and, of course, using his military and tactical strategies there. In Burma, it takes a very similar outlook as well with the Burmese Communist Party, which itself has a lot of factionalism in the '60s.

Matthew Galway: But the idea, of course, is very much like with the two previous examples, taking the ideas from the Chinese historical experience of waging struggle from the countrysides to surround the cities, creating a broad classes movement, and then implementing the socialist vision that Mao had outlined in his works to Burma, what will become Myanmar. This movement because of its factionalism and because, of course, the very strong right wing nature of the Ne Win government. Ne Win, of course, was the head of the Burmese government for decades.



- Matthew Galway: The BCP or Burmese Communist Party was unable to really succeed to the degree that Cambodia and Vietnam, their respective revolutions, let out. Of course, they had disastrous consequences in the end.
- Peter Clarke: Let's jump across the oceans now to Peru. Carlos, the Shining Path, they led to some bloody insurgencies in the Andean part of Peru during that decade of the '80s into the '90s. Now introduce us more seriously to Gonzalo. Who was he? What was the appeal of Maoism to him and how did he adapt it?
- Carlos Amador: There's a whole tradition of left leaning parties in Latin America, especially in Peru, that are I would say left nationalists, maybe left populists. Prior to the first big action, which is the taking of one of the election offices in 1980 in Ayacucho, Peru by a small Shining Path body, there had been a military dictatorship in Peru, the Alvarado regime. Alvarado was a really interesting figure. He was a nationalist. He was powerfully sort of anti-US. He was pro-indigenous. It was very soon after he takes over in 1968, Quechua, which is the second most spoken language in Peru, is turned into an official language.
- Carlos Amador: The national anthem is sung in Quechua. There are Quechua programmes in the schools. The economy becomes this kind of fusion of kind of left corporativism, corporations and businesses that want to work with the regime are working with Alvarado. The interesting thing is that there is a left government in power just before Gonzalo and the Shining Path really start to accelerate. Because of economic collapse and a variety of reasons, economic problems, the Alvarado regime cedes and they call for elections.
- Carlos Amador: Guzman is a philosophy professor who had been slowly but surely since his return in the mid '60s from China building a kind of base, a base of young, sometimes poor, but mostly middle-class rural-urban. What I mean by rural-urban is from the cities of these primarily rural provinces of Peru and creating his own synthesis slowly but surely of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought. One of the first things that happens when the Shining Path forms is when the elections are called for the first time in over a decade, they declared themselves against electoral politics. They already begin that creative adaptive critique, but singularly anti-capitalist and anti-bourgeois.
- Carlos Amador: What do we mean by that, by anti-bourgeois? The idea that electoral politics only reflect a synthesis between the state and the most powerful capitalist forces. Gonzalo, Abimael Guzman, will take on the name Gonzalo very shortly, like '75-'76. Gonzalo becomes a figure that abandoned all pretences, at least in the Shining Path version of the Communist Party, the PCP, Partido Comunista Peru, the Peruvian Community Party, becomes completely anti-electoral. They still maintain this identity as a political party, but the focus is on the revolutionary guerrilla warfare based on a synthesis of Mao's protracted warfare and his three stages of strategic warfare to take over Peru.



and expert on Mao's influence and legacy in central and South America, Dr. Carlos Amador from Michigan Technological University in the United States.

Peter Clarke: Matt, Carlos, welcome to Ear To Asia.

Matthew Galway: Thank you for having me.

Carlos Amador: Thank you so much.

Peter Clarke: Now, Matt, let's start with a bit of an anatomy, I suppose, of what Maoism actually is. Most of us have heard the term over the decades and we probably have our little idea of what Maoism is actually is. Let's unpack that now. What are the main elements of Maoism?

Matthew Galway: It's a great question and one that is not super easy to answer, but I will do my best. In essence, Mao Zedong's various written texts, his thought, his speeches, and the institutions that he envisioned and established in China as he conceived in the 1930s and '40s, and as he applied from '49 onward very much constitute the foundation of what I've argued as an ideological system. What it constitutes mainly in terms of actual practice is the notion of a critical interpretive paradigm, an ideological discourse, a radical vocabulary and syntax for waging political struggle, and a strategy for fighting protracted war.

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Peter Clarke: Can we tease out a little of those elements you just highlighted? New Democracy, we'll probably come back to this word democracy a few in our conversation, but what did Mao actually mean when he projected that word, that banner word, if you like, democracy?

Matthew Galway: When Mao talks about New Democracy, he's making the argument that bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution ought to be combined into a single stage rather than two separate back to back stages. This of course is developing on a Marxist understanding of the stages of economic and historical development, of the modes of production. What Mao is meaning by New Democracy is that China must progress through several stages, but that the single stage ought to lead to the development of a new democratic type of China, and this would mean, of course, socialist edification and kind of the mass politics that came to characterise Maoist China from '49 to '76.



Carlos Amador: It was always a very small party in terms of raw numbers, but an incredibly disciplined one. The Shining Path was incredibly bloodthirsty. There's this idea that the historian and Guzman himself talks about called the quota. In English, it's translated into quota with a "q", but in Spanish it means something much more like a payment, una quota, a payment in blood. Part of the idea is that this Shining Path begins as this incredibly violent, summary executions, forcing individuals to kill members of their family for ideological error.

Carlos Amador: The violence was always executed with a discipline and absolute lack of ethical doubt. In 1980 in I think it's Breña, which is a municipality of Lima, there's a famous picture of a dog nailed to a post with a small cardboard sign on it that says Deng Xiaoping Thought. This little symbol of nailing an animal in order to critique Deng Xiaoping Thought is kind of a good way to understand the absolute commitment to violence that the Sendero have. The Shining Path turns into an organisation where violence against anyone, indigenous or otherwise, could be justified in order to support the path of permanent revolution.

Carlos Amador: I think the third one is, and it's not one that I've seen written about a lot, is the kind of independence. Maoism is at the end of the day appealing because it isn't aligned with the Soviet or the US arc. It is a way to critique the mistakes of Soviet expansionism and US imperialism while at the same time maintaining the ethical and political commitment to communist revolution.

Carlos Amador: I think that's a really interesting point because Peru with its independent Marxist tradition and Latin America with a long independent Marxist tradition in Cuba, as well as in Argentina and other places, nonetheless is always within these two spheres of the Soviet and the US sphere after the '40s. I think that Maoism allowed the Shining Path to take up a Peruvian independence.

Matthew Galway: Just to add one little thing there, and I think Carlos has alluded to it already, so I'll just elaborate, is the notion of permanent revolution. That even with independence, even with that secured, at least to a degree, you don't have the real independence. Your country may still be hastily part of this unfair system of exploitation, right, which is capitalism. Maoism provides the critical interpretive lens to view that as an unequal relationship and to fight to change it. I think Mao's advocacy for a permanent struggle to safeguard revolutionary gains and to eliminate the resurgence of bourgeois elements really kind of strikes a sympathetic chord in many newly independent countries.

Matthew Galway: In the case of Cambodia, Maoism is often used as a lens, at least among the future CPK ministers of the Khmer Rouge. Maoism is used very much as a lens to interpret the various classes in society to explain why there's this



persistence of usury and cyclical poverty in the countryside and there's a stark rural urban divide. Mao provides the language and the syntax for understanding those class differences and permanent revolution becomes very much the theoretical underpinning for it that we must continue to struggle.

Matthew Galway: Even after taking state power on 17 April 1975, the Cambodian communists say that the revolution has actually just started and they declare year zero and that the revolution has to continue anew. This is very appealing to someone like Abimael Guzman who've used very much that of the Peruvian movement as one that needs to go in perpetuity. I mean, one very famous quote from Guzman's... An interview that he did in 1988 with El Diario, if I may quote it, I have it somewhat memorised here, but he argued that the democratic revolution or the Peruvian democratic revolution must be followed uninterruptedly by a socialist revolution.

Matthew Galway: Harkening to Mao's New Democracy, "On this would like to specify, taking what President Mao has taught us with a lot of foresight thinking about what could arise; he tells us that the democratic revolution ends on the same day that power is taken in the whole country and the People's Republic is founded, and on that same day and hour the socialist revolution begins, and in it, we have to develop a dictatorship of the proletariat and, thus, initiate the basic transformation to develop socialism. There's this constant struggle to move that paradigm forward, keep the revolution going, and safeguard those revolutionary gains.

Matthew Galway: This is I think again what Carlos has mentioned already, this constant vigilance to self-criticise and to enforce this discipline on not only just the party apparatus, but on the entire populace. I think that is certainly a very appealing element for would be Maoists across the world.

Peter Clarke: Matt, the image of Mao, that huge image of Mao that sits at the gate to the Old Imperial Palace in the Forbidden City looking out on Tiananmen Square, but the party he looks out on now in the age of Xi Jinping is fundamentally different. Hyper capitalism, very little socialism in education, health, et cetera. How is Xi Jinping the inheritor of Maoism?

Matthew Galway: In every sense, every subsequent leader of the Chinese Communist Party has had to pay some homage to Mao. Whether they believe so or not, he is very much the national father of the People's Republic of China. His thought codified in the PRC's constitution, and even Xi Jinping himself has included homages to Mao in his various speeches that were released in translation by the foreign languages press called The Governance of China. Xi Jinping himself I think recognises that one needs to identify value in Mao and Maoism if they're going to have legitimacy for leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the PRC at large. But I think this is just a legitimating practise, right?



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- Peter Clarke:** Hello, I'm Peter Clarke. This is Ear To Asia.
- Carlos Amador:** You know Maoism is at the end of the day appealing because it isn't aligned with the Soviet or the US arc. It is a way to critique the mistakes of Soviet expansionism and US imperialism while at the same time maintaining the ethical and political commitment to the communist revolution.
- Matthew Galway:** This constant vigilance to self-criticize and to kind of enforce this discipline on not only just the party apparatus but on the entire populace. I think that is certainly a very appealing element for would be Maoists across the world.
- Peter Clarke:** In this episode, exporting Mao Zedong Thought. Ear To Asia is the podcast from Asia Institute, the Asia research specialist at the University of Melbourne. In the decades after Mao Zedong and his peasant army won China's civil war and established the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao became a source of inspiration for many who had aspirations or pretensions of liberating the poor and the oppressed. Mao's theories of class struggle and violent revolution were encapsulated as Mao Zedong Thought in China and became known as Maoism elsewhere.
- Peter Clarke:** Despite its roots in China, Maoism spread around the globe in the second half of the 20th century, igniting revolutions and armed uprisings from Southeast Asia to South America and beyond. As we'll hear, global Maoism in thought and action is not just a thing of the past, a relic of history. With us to examine how Mao Zedong's ideology spread beyond China's geographic boundaries and its impact on the lives of millions of people across the planet, our University of Melbourne Asia historian, Dr. Matthew Galway,



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Peter Clarke:

This episode was recorded on the 14th of April 2020 with all participants safely ensconced in their homes. Producers were Kelvin Param and Eric van Bommel of Profactual.com. Ear to Asia is licenced under Creative Commons, copyright 2020, The University of Melbourne. I'm Peter Clarke. Thanks for your company.