

Symbolism and Ritual in Mao's Cultural Revolution:

An Exploration of the Relationship between Religion and Politics

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The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of China, as launched by Chairman Mao Zedong, broadly sought to eradicate both capitalism and cultural traditionalism as a means of firmly establishing Mao's vision of socialism. Largely through the radical implementation of various forms of propaganda, Mao was able to heighten his goals for China to considerable levels of popular approval, particularly amongst the youth of the nation. Most interestingly, however, is not how Mao's socialist visions garnered collective acceptance, but rather the way in which Mao himself became a figure of absolute adulation.¹ As he devised and put forth a new form of visual culture for China, traditional forms of art came to be regarded as seditious and counter to national development. This incited new interest in younger artists who were employed to further the cause of the Cultural Revolution.² Under these conditions, the sole purpose of art came to be to serve the goals of Mao's movement. Despite the fact that Mao considered religion to be an impediment to the development of an ideal socialist society, it can be argued that the people's regard for Mao's political ideology as transformed by the

art of the Cultural Revolution mirrors a kind of religiosity. This is made particularly evident through the propagation of massive portraits of Mao Zedong through which he attained near god-like recognition and became emblematic of the Cultural Revolution itself. Much like a religious tradition gains its power and solidarity through its ritualized practices and the "condensation" as well as "multivocality" of its symbols,³ the Cultural Revolution too was characterized by these features. It can be posited that as Mao actively endeavoured to remove religious traditions from Chinese society, his movement adopted religious qualities to fill that void.⁴ Furthermore, Mao's political reign can be used to illustrate how religion and politics are not easily distinguishable factions but are rather inextricably linked through the power struggles that ultimately shape society. Before developing these issues further, however, it is imperative to explore the climate in which the Cultural Revolution arose and the goals it projected upon the nation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Put forth by Mao Zedong in 1966, the Cultural Revolution was an iconoclastic movement that sought to liberate the People's Republic of China from bourgeoisie domination and to instate socialism through the rallying of the proletariat. Although the Cultural Revolution is frequently referenced as a marked and discrete period of time, it did not emerge out of vacuity; the preceding years leading up to the movement, beginning with Mao's rule of the Communist Party of China in 1943, had already gone about actively asserting the political principles of Maoism, and further, the persecutions for which the Cultural Revolution has now become

¹ David E. Apter, "Bearing Witness: Maoism as Religion," *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies* 22 (2005): 7, 8, accessed 14 November, 2011, <http://www.journalofbusinessanthropology.com/index.php/cjas/article/view/519/549>; Jennifer Hubbert, "(Re)collecting Mao: Memory and fetish in contemporary China," *American Ethnologist* 33.2 (2006): 148, accessed 12 November, 2011, doi: 10.1525/ae.2006.33.2.145; Qiu Jin, *The Culture of Power: The Lin Biao Incident in the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 16.

² "Art and China's Revolution," last modified 2008, <http://sites.asiasociety.org/chinarevo/?p=10> par. 4.

³ David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 11.

⁴ Apter, 2005, 8, 18, 32.

known were not new to China.⁵ Instead, it was the vehemence with which Mao's socialist ideals were implemented during the Cultural Revolution that it came to be so historically significant. This is evidenced by how emotionally evocative the movement was and still is by way of being initially revered and then ultimately rebuked, earning its euphemism of the 'ten lost years.'⁶

A number of scholars contend that in addition to promulgating a socialist doctrine, the Cultural Revolution was also a response to Mao's concern of growing capitalist interests within the Communist Party of China.⁷ Because he himself was unable to purge the Communist Party of central leaders such as Liu Shaoqi who he regarded as right-wing revisionists, he brought about the Cultural Revolution to mobilize people by the millions "to destroy the party apparatus."⁸ Notably, Mao appealed to the youth of the nation by emphasizing the importance of experiencing the vigour of a revolution during the formative years of a person's life and stressing their role in the realization of a utopian society for which they would later be celebrated for creating. Such fanciful notions served as effective ploys for enlisting the younger generation in Mao's cause by encouraging them to organize themselves into units known as the Red Guards. This was such a success that in the autumn of 1966, only months after Mao had set the Cultural Revolution into motion, "eight massive Red Guard rallies were held in Beijing, attracting, it is said, more than eight million youths."⁹ Cities were ravaged as the Red Guards attacked the 'four olds'—old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits—which were regarded as hindrances to

the forward thinking of Maoism. Religion, in particular, was deemed an outdated mechanism of the past, only serving to provide solace to its practitioners by masking the real problems of society. As such, religious sites were ransacked and destroyed, seeking to eliminate all emblems of religious heritage from Chinese society.¹⁰

Mao endeavoured to justify launching the Cultural Revolution and to contribute to Marxism by putting forth the notion of 'continuous revolution.' This theory recognized the tenuousness of socialist societies due to the inherent greed of humanity, which could result in the potential restoration of capitalism.¹¹ Thus, the importance of being in a continuous state of revolution was to constantly reignite populist ideals and incite an active passion across the nation. Perhaps genuinely envisioning a better future for his country, Mao held on with zeal to these chimerical plans throughout the Cultural Revolution.¹² It is widely recognized, however, that his cause became grossly removed from its original moral claim to produce a more egalitarian society. The quest to eradicate social stratification moved beyond the implementation of reforms and instead manifested itself in the often violent persecution of those holding privileged positions in society. Millions of the bourgeoisie or the suspected subversive "were tortured, imprisoned, starved, denied medical treatment, or forced to leave their children unsupervised when they were sent out to labour camps."¹³ For tens of thousands of people the outcome of this mass persecution was death.¹⁴

Most sympathetically, scholar Julia F. Andrews attributes these atrocities to "[Mao's] failure to control the activity he set in motion."¹⁵ Others are not as forgiving. Anne-Marie Brady, for

⁵ Julia F. Andrews, "The Art of the Cultural Revolution," in *Art in Turmoil: The Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1966-76*, ed. Richard King (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 31.

⁶ Andrews, 2010, 31.

⁷ Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 37; Andrews, 2010, 28.

⁸ Andrews, 2010, 28.

⁹ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, ed., "Red Guards," *Chinese Civilization: a sourcebook* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 449.

¹⁰ Jones, Stephen, "Chinese Ritual Music under Mao and Deng," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 8 (1999): 50, accessed 11 October, 2011, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3060851>.

¹¹ Jin, 1999, 17.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, ed., "Victims," *Chinese Civilization: a sourcebook* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 458.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Andrews, 2010, 28.

instance, regards the Cultural Revolution as a movement governed by Mao's employment of propaganda. It is evident that she views Mao as manipulative in his flagrant fabrications concerning the creation of a just society, noting that "[he] and his associates seized control of the propaganda system as a weapon."¹⁶ Many have come to construe the Cultural Revolution as Mao's final act of desperation; Harry Harding encapsulates this notion in his claim that "it was the attempt of an aging Mao to shake up the Chinese Communist Party, reshape its policies, and ensure that his vision of continuing revolution for China would survive his own death."¹⁷ Although such negative sentiments came to be popularly held nearing the end of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's death in 1976, much of the Cultural Revolution was characterized by the fervent response of the public in favour of Mao's movement.

MAO'S NEW VISUAL CULTURE

One of the most fascinating developments during the Cultural Revolution was the emergence of a new, distinctive art form. The influence of socialist realism previously seen in the Soviet Union was clear, as traditional ink painting was abandoned and replaced by a colourful, bright, clean, and, markedly realistic style of art.¹⁸ At this time, already established artists were persecuted, forgotten, or at best, forced to adopt the artistic vision set forth by Mao. This again provided room for the youth to be elevated to the forefront of the Cultural Revolution as younger artists relished in the possibility of serving their country through their art. This also introduced an entirely new means of producing and disseminating art; rather than placing original pieces of art in galleries to be admired, the sign of a respected piece of art was in the extent to which it was reproduced in posters,

magazines, and newspapers.¹⁹ There was no longer reverence placed in creative pursuits; art, like all other facets of society under the ideals of Maoism, had no benefit in being esoteric or unique.

As is evidenced by Mao's writings and speeches, he had a very particular vision for the role that artistic practices should have in China. At a talk he gave to music workers in August of 1956, Mao asserted, "art must have independent creative qualities; it must be distinctly imbued with the character of the times and also with the national character. China's art must not look more and more to the past, nor must it become more and more Westernized. It must increasingly reflect the characteristics of the times and of the nation."²⁰ Notably in his pamphlet published in 1942, *Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art*, Mao regarded all artistic endeavours of the past to be "either feudalistic, imperialistic, bourgeois, or revisionist."²¹ In an effort to change this, Mao wrote:

Our literary and art workers must [...] shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society. Only in this way can we have literature and art that are truly for the workers, peasants and soldiers, a truly proletarian literature and art.²²

¹⁶ Brady, 2008, 37.

¹⁷ Harry Harding. "Reappraising the Cultural Revolution." *The Wilson Quarterly* 4.4 (1980): 132.

¹⁸ "Art and China's Revolution," last modified 2008, <http://sites.asiasociety.org/chinarevo/?p=15> par. 1.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, par. 1.

²⁰ Tse-Tung Mao, "Chairman Mao's Talk to Music Workers: 24 August 1956," in *Mao Tse-Tung Unrehearsed: Talk and Letters 1956-71*, ed. Stuart Schram, trans. John Chinnery and Tiejun (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1974), 88-9.

²¹ Yu Run Mao, "Music under Mao, Its Background and Aftermath," *Asian Music* 22.2 (1991): 117, accessed 12 November, 2011, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/834309>.

²² Tse-Tung Mao, "Culture and Art," in *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*, trans. A. Doak Barnett (London: Bantman Books, Inc., 1967), 173.

This promotion of art for the working class could be regarded as a largely positive move away from any elitism previously associated with art. As such, it seems more beneficial than potentially harmful. In the same pamphlet, however, Mao refers to literature and art as “powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy.”²³ It is evident that as early as 1942 when this pamphlet was published, Mao recognized the formidable potential for art as propaganda.

At the onset of the Cultural Revolution, Mao not only sought to ameliorate and remodel the entire purpose of art but also outlawed all forms of art created in the past as he felt they would only

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serve to undermine the artistic aims of his movement.²⁴ Arnold Perris regards Mao’s objectives for art as threefold and outlines them as such: “One purpose was to promote nationalism. The second was a kind of artistic populism, the creation and presentation of music and the other arts for the masses. Surpassing these two was a third value necessary in a proletarian society: a culture that would support socialism and the dictatorship of the Communist Party in the name of the proletariat.”²⁵ Art was reduced to and employed as another form of propaganda, as Andrews insists its primary intent was to “codify the cult of Mao.”²⁶ Maoism became branded through the proliferation of these conspicuously placed images that often depicted an idealized

socialist nation. This was a wise tactic as undoubtedly the pervasiveness and uniformity of the imagery became persuasive.

THE SYMBOLIC AND RITUALIZED POWER OF MAO

David I. Kertzer has produced extensive literature pertaining to the role of symbols in politics. He notes that “through the manipulation of symbols the powerful reinforce their authority” while also establishing what he identifies as “political reality.”²⁷ Further, he asserts that the construction and cementation of this reality is the strongest indication of the maintenance of power.²⁸ Thus, symbols equal power. Ritual is what connects these dyadic constituents as individuals become identified with these symbolic entities of power through the performance of ritualized acts. Perhaps most importantly, “rituals provide a context in which the myths that sustain [a political] party can be validated and kept alive.”²⁹

If we regard ideology as effectively equivalent to political ideals, then the French Marxist theorist Louis Althusser presents similar ideas about the role of ritualized acts in politics. In relation to this argument, he claims the following:

The power of ideology works in a circular way: an ideology which is propagated by a state apparatus produces material practices such as rituals, which require people to actually do them, by taking part, and through so doing a personal and internalised ideology is created. The ideology is embodied through the practice and is lived out by the people who are interpellated by the ideology.³⁰

²³ Tse-Tung Mao, 1967, 173.

²⁴ Mao, 1991, 117.

²⁵ Arnold Perris, “Music as Propaganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People’s Republic of China,” *Ethnomusicology* 27.1 (1983): 16, accessed 11 October, 2011, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/850880>.

²⁶ Andrews, 2010, 30.

²⁷ Kertzer, 1988, 5.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Kertzer, David I., *Politics & Symbols: The Italian Communist Party and the Fall of Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 125.

³⁰ Malory Nye, “Power,” in *Religion: the basics*, Second edition (London: Routledge, 2004), 68.

Within this discussion, Mao's politics, particularly during the Cultural Revolution, seem undeniably relevant. The Cultural Revolution itself was performative in nature,³¹ utilizing rituals to "elicit powerful emotions to mobilize the people for revolt."³² This is not only seen in the collective destruction of the 'four olds' by the Red Guards but also in more formally recognized acts of ritual such as the official sanction encouraging citizens to ask Mao for instruction each morning.³³ Ritual scholar Catherine Bell asserts that "not only do rituals express authority, the process of performing rituals—or doing things with that sense of ritualisation—is a means by which people construct relationships of authority and submission,"³⁴ and subsequently from these ritualized developments, Mao himself became a recognized symbol.

One of the most significant reasons why Mao became an illustrious symbol of his own Cultural Revolution was through the visual culture that he established. As early as the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Central Propaganda Department standardized the production of Mao portraits.³⁵ From the relatively early stages of Mao's rule, his portraits could often be found in the homes of the Chinese people.

The image to the right (Fig. 1) from 1954 entitled "Chairman Mao gives us a happy life" depicts the very comfortable life of a working-class family. This is evidenced by the spacious living area, full table of food, radio set, fresh vase of flowers, and of course, the beaming family members. Looming above this scene is a portrait of Mao Zedong. This serves not only as a means of indicating the success of his socialist regime but also places Mao himself at the forefront of this

success; his image comes to represent this ideal.



Fig. 1. Xin Liang, *Chairman Mao gives us a happy life*, 1954.³⁶

It was not until the Cultural Revolution began in 1966, however, that these portraits became so idealized, often depicting Mao as being "surrounded by a luminescence that seems to radiate from his body."³⁷ The following pieces of art (Fig. 2; Fig. 3; Fig. 4) exemplify this style of portrayal of Mao.

The titles of these pieces alone speak volumes about what the art is intended to convey. The last poster in particular not only functions as a model work of art itself, but it also makes explicit through its images the forms that art should take to move forward the cause of the Cultural Revolution. This can be seen with "the dancing

³¹ Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 150.

³² Kertzer, 1996, 14.

³³ Hubbert, 2006, 148; Leese, 2011, 201, 202.

³⁴ Malory Nye, "Ritual," in *Religion: the basics*, Second edition (London: Routledge, 2004), 150.

³⁵ "Art and China's Revolution," <http://sites.asiasociety.org/chinarevo/?p=15> par. 1.

³⁶ Xin Liliang, *Chairman Mao gives us a happy life*. 1954. Accessed from <http://chineseposters.net/gallery/e16-269.php>

³⁷ "Art and China's Revolution," <http://sites.asiasociety.org/chinarevo/?p=15> par. 1.

figures [...] from the revolutionary model operas developed by Mao's wife Jiang Qing."³⁸ Most strikingly in this piece of art, however, is how Mao Zedong is literally placed in, or possibly even as, the radiant sun giving light and life to his people. Perhaps largely because of the prevalence of these images nearing the end of the 1960s, Mao became a ubiquitous figure, possessing immense symbolic power.



Fig. 2. Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House Propaganda Group, *The sunlight of Mao Zedong Thought illuminates the road of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, 1966.³⁹



Fig. 3. Artist unknown, *Respectfully wish Chairman Mao eternal life*, 1968.⁴⁰

³⁸ "Advance victoriously while following Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and the arts," International Institute of Social History, last modified 20 June 2011, http://chinese posters.net/posters/e13-632_633_634.php.

³⁹ Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House Propaganda Group. *The sunlight of Mao Zedong Thought illuminates the road of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*. 1966. Accessed from <http://chinese posters.net/posters/e13-644.php>

⁴⁰ Artist unknown. *Respectfully wish Chairman Mao eternal life*. 1968. Accessed from <http://chinese posters.net/posters/e13-549.php>.



Fig. 4. Central Academy of Industrial Arts collective work, *Advance victoriously while following Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and the arts*, 1968.⁴¹

MAOISM AND RELIGION

Although political leaders are typically visually present and recognizable in the area in which they rule, the images of Mao produced during the Cultural Revolution became evocative of the entire socialist endeavour in China. This, however, moved beyond the image of Mao serving as a physical representation of his movement; rather, Mao transcended his entire political cause to become a figure of worship. Hubbert explicates this phenomenon, noting that "things that Mao touched physically (e.g., people's hands he had shaken) or that contained his image (e.g., badges, posters, and statues) or his thoughts and ideas (Little Red Books or newspaper editorials) were understood to possess special powers."⁴² His word became "ultimate truth."⁴³ David I. Kertzer discusses political and religious truth claims in his work on the salient role of symbols in affirming political power. Employing the work of Michel Foucault in his own scholarship, Kertzer notes how "truth"⁴⁴ is itself to be understood as a function

⁴¹ Central Academy of Industrial Arts collective work. *Advance victoriously while following Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and the arts*. 1968. Accessed from http://chinese posters.net/posters/e13-632_633_634.php.

⁴² Hubbert, 2006, 148.

⁴³ Jin, 1999, 16.

⁴⁴ N.B.: Here, 'truth' is taken to simply mean what is politically or popularly believed. Although this may entail ascribing to an ultimate truth, theoretically, Foucault felt that all truth was of human creation but subsequently regarded it as both existing within and containing power. As such, truth is powerfully manufactured in the world in which we live by a circular process wherein truth both creates and is sustained by power.

of power.”⁴⁵ Moreover, rituals that are enacted in response to symbols serve to legitimize power and establish what is regarded as ‘truth.’⁴⁶ Thus, the ritual adulation of Mao as a symbol enabled Mao to affirm his word as truth, substantiating his power. Apter notes that Mao’s “monopolistic truth claims” came to be regarded by the general populace as so indisputable that “political violence bec[ame] ritualized as a structural factor in the organization of power.”⁴⁷ This became a cyclical problem as Mao recognized that it was because he had been exalted to something of a superhuman that he was able to justify these violent actions, but it was also through these ritualized performances of revolt that he was elevated to such a status; one could not exist without the other. Thus, it may never have been Mao’s intentions to be regarded as a figure akin to a god, but rather that such regard for a leader may have been a necessary development for the Cultural Revolution to receive heightened support.

Most interestingly in this analysis is how contradictory the worship of Mao was to his proposed ideology. Not only did Karl Marx abhor such personality cults, placing Mao in direct opposition with the social theorist that he so revered, but it also elevated Mao to demigod status, making his politics adopt elements of the religiosity that he actively sought to destroy in society.⁴⁸ Whether the apotheosis of Mao should be regarded in the realm of political religion is a debate concerning mere questions of semantics. It is more meaningful instead to consider why, in the near absence of religion in Chinese society, its characteristics materialized so irrefutably in Mao’s politics.

RELIGION AND POLITICS

It may be too bold to claim that a relationship between religion and politics appears to have existed since the beginning of documented history, partly because it presupposes that the concept of religion existed in a time when it did not. With respect to China, however, there is conclusive evidence for the relationship between Confucius’ teachings during his lifetime (551-479 B.C.E.) and politics.⁴⁹ Not only was

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Confucius known to advise politicians but *The Analects of Confucius* is replete with teachings on governance. That Confucianism did not come to be regarded as a religion until centuries after Confucius’ death is perhaps indicative

of the fact that no distinction between religion and politics was even conceivable. Even when religion and politics are regarded as discrete entities, their influence on each other can be palpably observed throughout history. Continuing with the example of Confucianism, the Qin dynasty (256-206 B.C.E.) sought to eliminate Confucian ideology from society while Emperor Wu (r. 141-87 B.C.E.) of the Han era endeavoured to reinvigorate it.⁵⁰ Thus, the relationship between religion and politics appears to be one of cyclicity, as religious doctrines are used, removed, and reformed as dictated by a given political entity’s struggle for power. A more contemporary instance of this is Mao’s eradication of religion during the Cultural Revolution as contrasted by current General Secretary Hu Jintao’s appeal to Confucian ideals by putting forth notions such as filial piety

⁴⁵ Kertzer, 1996, 154.

⁴⁶ Kertzer, 1988, 40.

⁴⁷ Apter, 2005, 8-9.

⁴⁸ Jin, 1999, 16.

⁴⁹ Robert T. Ames and Henry Rosemont Jr., trans., *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (New York: The Random House Publishing Group, 1998), 1-5.

⁵⁰ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, ed., “Heaven, Earth, and Man,” *Chinese Civilization: a sourcebook* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 57.

(*xiao*), right relationships, and harmony (*he*) in order to “save [the] Communist Party.”⁵¹

This inconsistent role that religion has within politics, as often dictated by the politics themselves, does not exist exclusively in the context of China but can be observed cross-culturally. This is substantiated by the plethora of literature pertaining to this litigious relationship between religion and politics.⁵² Particularly in ‘Western’ thought, religion and politics are often regarded as separate spheres, as evidenced by the emergence of theories of secularization and modernization.⁵³ More appositely in the discussion of why Mao’s politics became imbued with elements of religiosity is to consider what such a development might reveal about the grander desires of humanity.

CONCLUSION

As elucidated above, adopting Mao as a god-like leader heightened the support for the Cultural Revolution. By imputing these powers to Mao, he and his cause became regarded as infallible. While this has often been examined as a gross exploitation of power, there has been little deliberation on why such an exploitation of power was allowed and at times even encouraged by the people. This latter issue concerning the way in which power comes to be given and accepted by the people is perhaps far more revelatory with respect to what it exposes about human nature. Kertzer attends to this precise matter, asserting that “we attribute cosmological meaning to our political order, believing that our society has somehow been divinely ordained, that it reflects

some higher purpose.”⁵⁴ Thus, it is through the adoption of characteristics that might typically be associated with religion that a political party, movement, or person is able to affirm power. This is most conclusively observed in the case of Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution as he was elevated to a place of near omnipotence, thus validating his political ideology and actions. Mao’s rule has been studied extensively, largely because it was perceived as an anomalous occurrence. Particularly during the Cultural Revolution, Mao’s governance was a case of extreme dictatorial rule. Nevertheless, these same elements of religiosity can be observed to a lesser extent in arguably all instances of politics. A person in a position of power has often attained that power because people have bestowed it upon them. As developed in the work of Michel Foucault, politics must be endowed with truth in order to attain any validity or power,⁵⁵ and it is the nature of all beings to believe that we invest our confidence in what is best and true.⁵⁶ Religion and politics mirror each other in this respect, attesting to the influence one continuously bears on the other in the interminable struggle for power. Finally, regardless of where power is given by the people, its legitimacy exists in the sense that people everywhere “imagine that their own society represents both the best and most natural social order.”⁵⁷ Therefore, humans are inherently inclined to believe in the truth of their own culture and in the power that they have vested in the institutions—both religious and political—that govern it. As exemplified through the status that Mao gained during his political reign as a figure analogous to a religious icon, it is further evidenced how this dynamic interaction between that which is religious and that which is political plays an intrinsic role in the ultimate struggle for power.

⁵¹ Allen T. Cheng, “Hu Invokes Confucius to Appease Masses, Save Communist Party,” *Bloomberg*, 11 October, 2007, Cheng, Allen T., “Hu Invokes Confucius to Appease Masses, Save Communist Party,” *Bloomberg*, 11 October, 2007, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=avMr4F3vE_GM.

⁵² Nye, 2004, 57-78.

⁵³ Scott M. Thomas, “Blind Spots and Blowback: Why Culture and Religion were Marginalized in the Theory of International Relations,” in *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 51-52.

⁵⁴ Kertzer, 1988, 37.

⁵⁵ Michel Foucault, “Truth and Power,” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 51-75. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984; Kertzer, *Politics & Symbols*, 154.

⁵⁶ Kertzer, 1988, 37.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*