

**WHAT XI JINPING IS MADE OF:
XI IN HIS OWN WORDS**

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Executive Summary

1. Chinese President Xi Jinping remains a mystery to outside observers even after two years at the helm. He has radically altered the direction of Chinese foreign policy with his ambitious “One-belt, One-road” and Asian Infrastructure Development Bank initiatives. His assertiveness has caused widespread unease, due in part to the lack of understanding who he is.
2. Xi is neither a conservative ideologue that people in the West dread, nor a liberal reformer that many hope for. He is a complicated person and his policies so far have been full of surprises.
3. Many of his policies and reform programmes as well as his character and personal style can be discerned from his early writings when he was an obscure provincial party secretary of Zhejiang province. Between February 2003 and March 2007 Xi wrote a regular column for *Zhejiang Daily*; a book is compiled of these short articles and has become a national best seller after Xi assumed top office.
4. Xi had been groomed as a candidate for top jobs by the 1990s. This motivated him to think about various issues from a future leader’s perspective. Whereas his recent articles and speeches are mostly prepared by others, this collection of his articles was written by Xi himself and is hence a more accurate reflection of his thinking as well as his personality.
5. Xi is well-versed with Maoist traditions and methods of rule because of his revolutionary family background. Though he carries with him mindsets reminiscent of Maoism, he is also a committed reformer.
6. Conforming with the age-long Chinese cultural tradition, Xi values high morals, modesty, hard work, pragmatism, simple living and moral self-cultivation. He is bold in taking on initiatives and does not shrink from responsibilities. His work style is detail-oriented, and he believes in planning ahead and relies on extensive consultation.

7. He puts great emphasis on continuous learning and believes in the rule by virtue. He is a Marxist as well as a Confucian who strives for a common ground between the two.
8. Singapore's late Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew had likened Xi Jinping to Nelson Mandela and he may well be right. However, what Xi could accomplish for China is another matter.