After Mao launched the Cultural Revolution in 1966, vast numbers of students, workers, peasants and other ordinary people divided into hostile groups that violently fought against each other for more than a year and a half. Each group claimed it was fighting out of loyalty to Mao's teachings. But research by the speaker that included well over a hundred in-depth interviews in the 1970s and 1980s with former participants in these conflicts revealed that the fighting between groups was actually the consequence of mounting tensions within Chinese society prior to the Cultural Revolution. The upheavals in the Cultural Revolution pitted those who had earlier been favoured by Communist Party policies against those who had been disfavoured. But the nature of grievances and antagonisms differed from group to group—be they students, workers, peasants or government office workers. As a result, there were a number of different types of upheavals, generated by different reasons, in different sectors of society. Examining these provides insights into the complex fabric of Chinese society under Mao.