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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA at BERKELEY
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Building a Nation-State

China after Forty Years

EDITED BY
Joyce K. Kallgren



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Introduction

JOYCE K. KALLGREN

As the events of June 1989 recede from prominence in the public memory, it has become easier to recall that the inauguration of the People's Republic of China was characterized by upheaval, chaos, and violence along with considerable surprise at the success of the victors. Underdogs in the civil war, the Chinese Communist Party and army had been able to overcome long odds and successfully oust the Nationalist government, commencing a revolution that for scale and vision would be hard to duplicate.

The intervening years have had interludes of relative peace and harmony interspersed with periods of sustained violence including (1) the bloody social revolution in China's countryside that accompanied land reform; (2) a continued assault on the status of China's intellectuals, especially during the antirightist campaigns; (3) the turmoil and suffering of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and (4) most recently, the stark violence of the Tiananmen suppression of June 1989.

Sharp as the social and political earthquake of 1989 may have been, it should not cause the external observer to ignore either the progressive achievements of forty years or the costs paid by peasants, workers, intellectuals, and cadres. Crises did not prevent substantial progress in virtually all aspects of state and society. Indicators such as life span, literacy rate, measures of industrial growth, and signs of international prestige and standing all give evidence that by 1989 China had moved forward in a number of sectors and, despite ongoing problems, faced a new set of possibilities perhaps unthinkable in 1949.

Both at the beginning and at the end of these four decades, any assessment of the Chinese nation-state, of its society and its international standing was often equivocal. Those chancing an assessment recognized that the changes had been made and well understood that such change had required a high price of China's population. What can be said of the cost-benefit ratio? Estimates of the Chinese experience differ.

Chinese nationals and leaders in the country, although acknowledging the costs especially during certain periods, stress the achievements. As of early 1989, outsiders showed a degree of cautious optimism for the future.

But less than one year later estimates have become more guarded. Why is this so? The answer can be summarized thus: The difficulties besetting the Chinese state as the pace of modern reform accelerated were offset somewhat by confidence in the process of leadership transition, which appeared to be progressing smoothly. Even as the student protests grew and the political divisions at the top seemed evident, there remained into May 1989 confidence that the retirement of cadres, the development of party procedures for change, and the apparent ongoing commitment of China's paramount leader would suffice to carry the nation through the difficulties and protests of May. This assessment proved to be false. The events of June and perhaps more importantly of the eight months that followed the Tiananmen suppression demonstrate deep divisions over goals, institutions to facilitate those goals, economic plans, the role of intellectuals, and many other important matters associated with China's efforts to modernize and build a strong, modern nation-state. The experiences also showed how shallow were the roots of the institutions that had been extolled during the 1980s as both important and permanently in place.

This volume is an assessment of the Chinese state after forty years, including events through January 1990. It does not endeavor to be a comprehensive review of all aspects of life. Rather, in a series of essays written by specialists, the volume addresses some key matters in international politics, ideology and political institutions, economic change, civil society, and the role of intellectuals. It concludes with a discussion of the social problems, hinted at or touched upon in other papers, that will certainly be significant for the leadership in the remainder of the century.

Many issues have not been the subject of separate chapters. Matters of military modernization, discussions of minority affairs and of science and technology transfer, indeed, even discussions of the post-Mao reforms themselves are referred to but are not discussed in any detail in the volume.

Rather, the chapters are designed to raise issues as well as inform the reader of key developments over the forty-year period that are at the core—political matters. Moreover, each chapter concludes with some suggested readings that expand upon socio-political issues, economic tactics and strategies, and the like. The books recommended to the reader will provide further details not only about the developments mentioned

in the text but also about issues and controversies that have been the source of conflict and discussion within China as well as in scholarly works published outside the PRC.

In a region where the economic progress of the newly industrializing countries (NICs) such as Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore received much attention, it is easy to dismiss or underplay the progress of China over the forty years. Such a dismissal would be as foolish as to extol the Chinese achievement without recognizing its limitations and costs. This volume tries to avoid both temptations.

Although each chapter focuses on important developments within the forty years, the chapters are not designed as historical summaries but rather as interpretative essays. The sequence of presentation reflects many of the contemporary concerns of 1989–1990 and progresses from the macro level to the micro.

The volume commences with a chapter by Robert Scalapino. Most observers would agree that it is in the domain of international relations that the Chinese have proven themselves to be most successful. The Chinese people “have stood up,” Chairman Mao Zedong announced in 1949. Scalapino is acutely aware, as are those whose chapters follow his in this volume, of the external dilemmas the increasingly powerful Chinese state must confront and the difficult decisions that must be made in the next decade. In a time of transition regarding internal political leadership as well as a changing Asian world with altered security concerns, the Chinese will need skillful management by their leaders, who must be aware of the science and technology needs of China. China will also need some degree of luck to forward the interests of the Chinese state.

The next two chapters, by Lowell Dittmer and Richard Baum, focus upon the nation-state and the Communist Party. These two institutions have been the effective instruments for pursuing foreign as well as domestic goals and policies. Using development as one measure and the emergence of effective political institutions as the other, Dittmer and Baum lay out some of the difficult choices made by the Chinese leaders and assess the strength of the leadership afforded to China by the Chinese Communist Party. Here as elsewhere throughout the volume, the judgment is mixed.

Concentrating on economics, Benjamin Ward assesses the Chinese economic record, both in comparative Communist perspective and with reference to China’s status as a developing country. Using Chinese reports and statistics, which most commonly measure current results against the benchmark of 1949, Ward shows the reader the extraordinary

dualism of the Chinese situation: China's impressive achievements in terms of total production and yet the limitations that a per capita measure demonstrates with respect to most targets. He takes account of the constraints of population and the different experiments of the forty-year period but ends his analysis on a cautiously optimistic note.

The chapter by Tom Gold addresses the conditions of Chinese society. Although conditions in the rural sector are mentioned, the major focus is on urban China. Drawing on some of the development literature, Gold considers both the achievements in Chinese society and the difficulties in social development that accompanied the economic progress of the forty years.

In chapter 6, Rudolph Wagner writes about the problems of intellectuals, a topic that received much attention during the disturbances of spring 1989 and has been a central point of conflict over the forty years. Wagner's views will provoke opposition from some, since he criticizes Chinese intellectuals as well as the state's repressive policies. Wagner makes clear the heavy burden that the Chinese policies placed on the intellectual class and hints at the price paid by the state and society because of the party's tactics toward this segment of the population, a segment crucial to the modernization efforts of the state and society.

In the final chapter, Joyce Kallgren, building on themes initially mentioned by the other contributors, addresses important social problems that have been and will remain the focus of government and party policies. She suggests the key role that such problems continue to play in the ongoing life of the state. Such issues as who shall be educated, what population and migration policies should be adopted, and the how far the "reach of the state" (to use Vivienne Shue's phrase) should extend to achieve societal aims are sketched out, drawing on the forty-year experience. Kallgren also highlights the hard alternatives that such problems pose for China as the country approaches the end of the century.

Without the disastrous political struggles of 1989 and the economic indecision that preceded and followed it, there might have been higher confidence in the capacity of the Chinese state and society to manage its affairs and resolve the harsh contradictions imposed by the effort to harmonize programs to deal with problems of ecology and population and the desire to modernize. Instead, as the final decade of the twentieth century commences, it is much more hazardous to project the outcome for China.

CHAPTER ONE

China's Foreign Policy: Coming of Age

ROBERT A. SCALAPINO

In its largest dimensions, the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China has been shaped—and altered—by two factors: the external environment (or the Chinese perception of that environment) and domestic conditions, including the policy priorities established by leadership as well as their identification of China's national interests. The relative weight of these two factors, moreover, has varied with time and circumstances, but always, there has been a complex interrelation between them.

The Evolution of the Chinese World View

My initial task, therefore, is to depict the international scene as it has been seen by the Chinese leaders of the time. When the Communists first came to power, like other Marxist-Leninist-Stalinists of that era, they espoused the thesis of two camps, a socialist and capitalist (or imperialist) camp, acknowledging that a certain number of societies, “mistakenly believing they can maintain a neutrality between good and evil,” sought to remain on the sidelines.¹ Even in this strongly ideological period, however, national interests were never overlooked. The Chinese Communists readily accepted membership in the socialist bloc under the leadership of the Great Soviet Union not only because they shared a common ideology (and with Soviet aid, hoped to build socialism in China) but also because they shared a common enemy. The perceived

¹ A comprehensive treatment of early PRC foreign policy is presented by Harold C. Hinton, *China's Turbulent Quest: An Analysis of China's Foreign Relations since 1949*, new and enl. (rev.) ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 35–120. See also J. D. Simmonds, *China's World: The Foreign Policy of a Developing State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970); Allen S. Whiting, “The Logic of Communist China's Foreign Policy: The First Decade,” *Yale Review*, Autumn 1960, pp. 1–17; and Robert A. Scalapino, “China and the Balance of Power,” *Foreign Affairs*, January 1974, pp. 349–385.

threat of the United States was a powerful factor in cementing the Sino-Soviet alliance.

The alliance with the USSR lent significant support in providing China with developmental assistance and security—China's two principal concerns, then and now.² When Nikita Khrushchev—foreshadowing Mikhail Gorbachev—realizing that the Soviet Union needed basic reforms, took steps to effect a limited *détente* with the United States, a breach with China was set in motion. There were other factors, to be sure, including growing Chinese doubts about the relevance of some aspects of the Soviet economic model and, more important, Soviet high-handedness in ruling the international Communist movement. But the critical factor was Khrushchev's unwillingness to take high risks with the United States on behalf of China, the second Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 being a key test case.

There followed the Soviet drawback from promised assistance in China's nuclear program. The basic issue was now laid bare. If, in addition to being a dubious model, Moscow was not credible as an ally, the purposes of the alliance were vitiated. Another factor of importance is to be noted. In these years, China—profoundly dissatisfied with the regional and international status quo—was in a confrontational mood, but lacking in the power to translate that mood into action. Its principal weapon was rhetoric: ideological pronouncements were continuously hurled at the enemy and also visited upon those whom the PRC hoped to convert.

Even in the strident early years of Communist rule, however, China harbored a deeply implanted paradox. With revolutionary banners firmly held in one hand, Chinese leaders sought to advance the cause by giving aid and training to Communist or militant guerrillas, especially in Asia and Africa, risking the antagonism of newly established governments struggling to survive. If Beijing believed or hoped that the revolutionary tide would sweep over the non-Western world, it also saw this as a means of distracting "the imperialist camp" headed by the United States, causing it to expend its resources in an effort to quell the flames.³

² For Soviet views, see M. S. Kapitsa, *The CPR: Two Decades—Two Policies* (1969), translated in Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) 51425, September 22, 1970; and O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, *Soviet-Chinese Relations, 1945–1970* (Moscow: MYSL Publishing House, 1971). For an American view, see O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia: The Great Game* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

³ Two works dealing with China's policies toward revolutionary movements abroad are Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971); and Jay Taylor, *China and Southeast Asia*, expanded and updated ed. (New York: Praeger, 1976). For a recent study of China's foreign policies with

Yet with the other hand, as the 1955 Bandung Conference illustrated, Chinese leaders proffered peaceful coexistence to nonsocialist states, insisting that nations having different political and economic systems could live harmoniously together if they eschewed interference in each other's internal affairs. Understandably, a number of China's neighbors remained skeptical.

This skepticism was reinforced by a question as to whether China's classical world view had changed. Had the "Middle Kingdom" psychology disappeared? The new message was equality among nations, with the sovereignty of each to be fully respected. But was that self-satisfaction, that conviction that the Chinese Way was superior, supplanted or supported by Marxism-Leninism? To the traditional Chinese view of the world divided into the civilized (cultured) and the barbarian, had there not been added a vibrant nationalism that would find expression in the insistence that China had to have a buffer state system like other major nations and be recognized as a regional, possibly global power? In sum, even during its opening years, the PRC sent forth two conflicting images, at home and abroad: weak, struggling member of the developing world sharing its problems and views—and incipient or actual major power, capable of affecting the fate of its neighbors and ultimately of the larger community of nations.

These contradictory perceptions—and the policies that flowed from them—were to continue in the next major phase of Chinese foreign policy, one that opened in the early 1960s. Now, the two camps had been replaced by the three worlds. Khrushchev and his associates had destroyed socialist unity, according to the Chinese, and pointed the Soviet Union in the direction of fascism.⁴ The First World, populated by the United States and the USSR, threatened the globe with war, Beijing argued, and sought to make other nations march to their batons. The Second World, comprising the more advanced capitalist states of West Europe and Japan, were allied with the United States, but might be caused to express their national identity more independently. The Third World, of which China now counted itself a part, constituted the overwhelming majority of the world's peoples; and for the most part, it represented to PRC leaders the global proletariat—poor, suppressed by

some emphasis on the Third World, see Samuel S. Kim, *China, the United Nations and World Order* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1984).

⁴ Two classic works on the Sino-Soviet split are William E. Griffith, *The Sino-Soviet Rift* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1964); and Donald S. Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict—1956–1961* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962).

the wealthy states and engaged in a righteous struggle for equality and self-reliance.

Such a view of the world served to keep the ideological quotient in Chinese foreign policy alive, but it did little to serve national interests. The Third World could neither assist in China's development nor underwrite China's security. At home, meanwhile, politics was put in command as strife within the inner Communist elite intensified, culminating in the Cultural Revolution. The world watched, at first with curiosity, then in disbelief as China seemed to be tearing itself apart. Only that high level of tolerance for chaos that is a part of Chinese culture prevented disintegration. The cost of internal developments on Chinese foreign policy was extremely high. Most "old friends" were alienated or caused to draw back by a series of bizarre events, including repeated manifestations of xenophobia and efforts to project the Mao cult abroad.

Meanwhile, relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union worsened. American overtures at the beginning of the Kennedy administration for cross-contacts were rejected, and as the Vietnam conflict heated up, a Sino-American confrontation seemed possible despite the desires of both Washington and Beijing to avoid another Korea-type war. The quarrel with the Soviets took on more complex dimensions as the two Communist parties battled for legitimacy throughout the socialist world, and incidents along the 4,500-mile border proliferated, leading to open conflict on the Ussuri River.

The moment of truth had arrived. Under the circumstances prevailing, China could neither negotiate nor fight with Russia from a position of strength; nor did it have a single ally or source of support upon whom it could count. Suddenly, an opening to the "arch-imperialist" United States seemed an eminently logical step to Mao and his close associates. We must await more Chinese documentation to know whether the issue of a turn toward the United States or, as an alternative, an attempt to seek reconciliation with the Soviet Union divided the Chinese elite at this point, but Mao's dislike and distrust of the Russians seem to have been decisive. Signals that the United States intended to abandon South Vietnam, as well as earlier overtures, including that of Richard Nixon, who had become president, may have made Beijing's decision easier, but the fundamental *raison d'être* for the new policies lay in the Soviet threat.

In these years, and in the decade that followed, PRC spokesmen saw the world largely in pessimistic terms, at least for the short run. A global war was inevitable, but China would survive, proclaimed Chinese spokesmen. Nuclear proliferation would also take place, and indeed, it

should not be opposed since there was no reason why the superpowers should have a nuclear near-monopoly. International disorder, certain to increase, could serve as a prelude to a new world order, it was asserted, one in which the yellow, brown, and black people—long down-trodden—would come into their own.

Such themes enabled China to hew to a Third World position, and the polemics of the early 1970s continued to excoriate the United States as well as the Soviet Union on a number of issues. But the Chinese genius for separating words from actions now came to full flower. Step by step, a process of normalizing relations with the United States was pursued, with both Washington and Beijing cooperating to that end. From Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's secret trip to the Chinese capital in 1971 to the announcement of diplomatic recognition by the two parties taking effect January 1, 1979, a period of less than a decade had passed. In these years, both sides made concessions and reached compromises. The most thorny issue, Taiwan, was finessed. American recognition and formal security arrangements with the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan were withdrawn, but it was understood that American economic, cultural, *and* strategic relations (in the form of arms sales) with Taiwan would continue, and the U.S. Congress bolstered the latter commitment by passing the Taiwan Relations Act, which President Jimmy Carter signed.⁵

The process of normalization of PRC-U.S. relations opened various doors for China. With the American veto withheld, admission to the United Nations took place. Relations with leading American allies, including Japan and the principal West European countries, opened or were expanded. While relations with what China had called the Second and Third worlds generally improved, however, those with the Soviet Union and East Europe remained frigid. Indeed, as the 1970s drew toward a close, PRC leaders had signaled yet another change in China's foreign policy. Deng Xiaoping and others called for a global alliance against Soviet hegemonism, one in which the United States along with China would play a leading role.

Behind this extraordinary turn of events was a deep concern about what China's leaders perceived to be a growing military imbalance, especially in the Pacific-Asian region. The United States had withdrawn from Vietnam and threatened to remove its forces also from South Korea. It had been largely marking time in its military program while

⁵ A detailed analysis of these developments can be found in A. Doak Barnett, *China and the Major Powers in East Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1977).

the Soviet Union had been engaged in a major military buildup. The first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) had enabled this to happen in Chinese eyes, and SALT II threatened to ratify Soviet advantages as the Chinese viewed the scene. Meanwhile, Soviet encirclement of China was progressing, with the alliance with Vietnam, a nation in the process of asserting its hegemony over Indochina, the latest threatening move. The decision of Beijing to attack Vietnam testifies to the Chinese determination that Hanoi must not be allowed to dominate Indochina in alliance with Moscow. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan seemed to confirm Chinese fears. Suddenly, the American security alliance with Japan was seen in a new light, and objections to American bases in the Philippines and even to those in South Korea were muted. Soviet expansionism had to be stopped. The global balance of power had to be re-established.

This was the situation viewed through the prism of Chinese lens at the end of the 1970s. Yet within a few years, developments within China coupled with changes in the international scene produced still another major shift in both the rhetoric and the reality of China's foreign policy. At home, a series of dramatic political events and intense behind-the-scenes bargaining completed the reversal of the late Mao era, bringing those humiliated by the Cultural Revolution back to power.⁶ Sobered by the occurrences of recent years, the restored leaders, headed by Deng Xiaoping, deciding to put economics in command, launched the Four Modernizations drive. It must have been clear to the reformers from the beginning that if human and material resources were to be effectively concentrated upon the prodigious task of revitalizing an economy in deepening trouble, a reduction of tension—and especially with the Soviet Union—was critically important. The lesson that China intended to teach Vietnam in 1979 in reality had been a lesson for the teacher, demonstrating how unprepared China was for combat with a seasoned, well-equipped foe and what a substantial cost the attempt to rapidly

⁶ On the Cultural Revolution and its various dimensions together with the personalities and policies dominating the era, see Lowell Dittmer, *Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974); Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Lucian W. Pye, *Mao Tse-tung, The Man in the Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972); Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978); and Richard H. Solomon, *Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971).

develop a modernized, high-posture military force would exact.⁷

Fortunately for China, the international environment looked more promising than it had a few years earlier. The Reagan administration was in the process of redressing the military balance with huge expenditures devoted to enhancing American military power. All talk of U.S. withdrawal from Asia had ended even before Ronald Reagan assumed office. The Soviet Union, meanwhile, was bogged down in Afghanistan, and it was in the process of losing the political battle in West Europe to prevent the deployment of U.S. intermediate missiles. Hobbled by weak leadership at home, a series of foreign policy setbacks, and a badly tarnished image internationally, including among the nonaligned nations, the Soviet Union suddenly seemed less formidable despite the very considerable military strength it had assembled in China's near vicinity.

It was in this context that Beijing proclaimed its new foreign policy. Defining its stance as one of independence from any power bloc, China announced that it would continue to subscribe to the five principles of peaceful coexistence, seeking friendly relations with all governments; oppose hegemonism in any form and pledge firmly that it would never become an expansionist power; support the developing world in its struggle for a new economic order based on justice, equality and development; and campaign for complete nuclear disarmament, insisting that the two superpowers fulfill their obligations in this respect.

In the years that this policy has been in effect, it has served China's interests better than any earlier set of policies, granting that comparisons are misleading unless one takes full account of the circumstances. It is not sufficient, however, to accept at face value the official definition of that policy. One must push beyond the rhetoric, reaching the realities. Let me set forth the basic realities at the outset, then illustrate them by examining in greater detail the specifics.

Beijing's claim of independence is correct insofar as it goes, but Chinese leaders have not asserted that theirs is a policy of equidistance. The PRC has not been aligned in the sense in which that term is usually understood, but, until recently at least, it has pursued a policy of tilted nonalignment, and the tilt has been toward the United States and Japan,

⁷ Details are given in Douglas Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio, 1986); for an essay that deals with Sino-Vietnamese relations on a broader perspective, see idem, "The Indochina Issue: Its Impact on Regional and Global Relations," in Robert A. Scalapino et al., *Asian Security Issues—Regional and Global*, Research Papers and Policy Studies No. 26 (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1989), pp. 228–245. See also William J. Duiker, *Vietnam since the Fall of Saigon* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985).

whether the measure be economic, cultural, or strategic. The reasons for such a posture are related to my earlier analysis: Such a tilt has served China's two principal interests, development and security.

In this respect, China has not been different from most other nations that define their policy as one of nonalignment. Two simultaneous and interrelated developments of far-reaching significance have been occurring in international relations. On the one hand, the nature of alliances is changing. At the close of World War II, most alliances were sharply hierarchical in nature, with the major partner promising extensive security and economic assistance and the minor partner(s) promising assured political allegiance together with such supplemental support as it (they) could muster. In recent years, however, the conditions governing all parties to such alliances have changed. The major-power guarantees have been more conditional and guarded and the political commitments of the minor power less unequivocal. Thus, the relationships have been more flexible and porous, with greater independence of action granted both parties. As in the economic realm, vertical relations are becoming horizontal ones.

On the other hand, as economic interdependence has grown and a network of supplementary ties—cultural, political, and even strategic—has accumulated, a capacity for genuine self-reliance has diminished. Indeed, the impact of these developments on the sovereignty of all nations has raised concerns, with a nationalist backlash in diverse forms. In this setting, nonalignment as it was originally conceived has become both less desirable and less possible. Burma is Asia's only genuinely nonaligned country, and there, stagnation coupled with repression has brought upheaval. And now, even Burma has begun the process of turning out.

Despite its tilt, however, China has now normalized its relations with the Soviet Union. Some observers suggest that the recent trend has been toward equidistance, taking the U.S. and the USSR as the polar points. The domestic and global events of 1989, however, make predictions regarding the near-term future very hazardous. The current Chinese leaders are unhappy both with Gorbachev's political policies and with U.S. pressures relating to human rights. Thus, a type of negative neutralism, with stronger public attacks on the United States, has ensued. Future events, however, both domestic and international, could rapidly alter present official attitudes and policies.

In sum, with significant improvements in American-Soviet relations now being signaled and challenges to both Sino-American and Sino-Soviet relations having emerged, an unprecedented fluidity in the rela-

tions of all three states exists. Moreover, the imagery of a triangle has itself been brought into question, given the asymmetry of power, the substantial geopolitical differences governing the parties, and the absence of Japan from such a geometric design.

Meanwhile, China's propensity to identify itself closely with the developing societies (now often defined as South instead of Third World) is understandable. First, China is a developing state, with many of the problems of the poorer tier of such states. Second, this aspect of PRC foreign policy retains the ideological connotations noted earlier without the threatening implications to other governments of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. Beijing can condemn the "selfishness" of the rich countries and demand justice as well as equality for the poor without great damage to its image and with the conviction that it is both being righteous and serving its own interests.

Yet the paradox spelled out earlier has not been exorcised. Following the Cultural Revolution, China reasserted its claim to being a regional power in ways subtle and not so subtle. On boundary and territorial issues, the stance is tough, with force not excluded, as the conflict with Vietnam over the Spratley Islands demonstrates.⁸ Great care is taken to cultivate most neighbors, yet whether the issue be economic, political, or strategic, China has increasingly sought to play the role of the major state in the region, tending to its national interests whatever contradictions result. This will be highlighted when we examine China's Korea policies.

Sino-Soviet Relations

Let us now turn to the specifics, commencing with Sino-Soviet relations. When the road to the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union was first charted, Chinese leaders set forth three obstacles that according to them had to be overcome if normalized relations were to be realized: the presence of large numbers of Soviet troops on China's borders, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and the Vietnamese presence in Cambodia. Initially, there was ample suspicion on both sides. The Soviets complained that the obstacles were merely excuses to retard normalization. Privately, Chinese continued to assert that the Soviet Union represented the principal threat to China's security even after such remarks ceased to find their way into print in China. Yet the dia-

⁸ Recent relations between China and Vietnam are analyzed in Ronald J. Cima, "Vietnam in 1988—The Brink of Renewal," *Asian Survey*, January 1989, pp. 64–72.

logue got under way, with subsequent elevations in the rank of the discussants, reaching the foreign minister level by 1988.

Virtually all of the concessions were made by the Soviet Union. In addition to accepting the removal of SS-20s from Asia as part of the intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement with the United States, Moscow authorities progressively withdrew Soviet troops from the People's Republic of Mongolia, pledging full withdrawal by the early 1990s, and signaled flexibility on border issues. Gorbachev made it clear, first in his July 1986 Vladivostok speech, then two years later, in a second speech at Krasnoyarsk, that improvement of relations with China was at the top of his Asian agenda. The Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan, while motivated by many considerations, represented a major shift in Soviet policy, one that probably surprised the Chinese along with others. That decision, together with the "friendly advice" to Vietnam to reach a political settlement in Cambodia, went far toward meeting Chinese demands. These and other actions in the foreign policy arena illustrated the fact that like the Chinese, the Soviets urgently needed a lower-cost, lower-risk foreign policy if the massive domestic reform program was to be tackled with any chance of success.

The summit meeting between Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping, held in May 1989, symbolized the completion of the normalization process, with Party-to-party relations also being reestablished. Sizable increases in economic and cultural relations had already taken place, with trade reaching approximately \$3 billion in 1988 and a number of cultural and academic visits having occurred. Cross-border exchanges were of special importance. It should be emphasized, however, that economic-cultural relations between the two countries remained modest in comparison with those between China and the United States or Japan. Chinese leaders were careful to reiterate that relations with the USSR would not return to the allianceship of the 1950s and would not affect China's relations with other countries.⁹

Chinese specialists, like those in Japan and the West, continued to debate the extent and meaning of Soviet foreign policy changes, as well as the prospects for the Soviet domestic reforms and Gorbachev's chances for survival. In general, however, Gorbachev garnered increased sympathy among Chinese intellectuals and reformers, as in other parts of the world. The Gorbachev visit, however, served to focus global atten-

⁹ For the official Chinese position on Sino-Soviet normalization, see Yi Chu, "Sino-Soviet Relations: Review and Prospect," *Beijing Review*, May 15-21, 1989, p. 7; and Yu Gang, "World Impact of Sino-Soviet Normalization," *ibid.*, May 8-14, 1989, pp. 14-17.

tion on China's own domestic problems and the intimate relation between these and foreign policy issues. Probably realizing that the government would be loathe to crack down on them during a state visit of the Soviet leader, students escalated their demonstrations in Beijing and other major Chinese cities. These displays, moreover, were given massive support by the urban citizenry, illustrating the deep dissatisfactions that existed as a result of inflation, corruption, gross income inequalities, unemployment, crime, and other socioeconomic maladies. Both the Communist Party and the government were revealed to be in serious trouble with their citizenry. A new question thus emerged among foreign officials and observers: rather than a strong China, was a weak China in the offing?

In the course of 1989, moreover, a new problem in Sino-Soviet relations emerged—or perhaps one should say that an old problem was re-born. Once again, an ideological-political split surfaced. After the Tiananmen crackdown, as earlier indicated, Chinese leaders viewed Gorbachev and his program with growing distaste, blaming him for the upheavals in East Europe and even charging that the Russian leadership was abandoning Leninism. As in the time of Mao, the question of revisionism rose to the fore and a certain cooling of Sino-Soviet relations took place despite efforts on both sides to avoid a polemic battle.

Earlier, however, improved Sino-Soviet relations had repercussions both in and out of Asia. For such small Asian Communists as the North Koreans, Mongolians, and Vietnamese, concern was evidenced, resulting in increased efforts to widen the range of their contacts. Developments had reduced the opportunity to play off one big Communist state against the other and had increased the risk of collusion against the interests of small clients. The Vietnamese in particular felt the pressure and recalled with foreboding what they regarded as the sell out of their interests by the Russians and Chinese at the time of the 1954 Geneva Conference. Almost desperately, they sought to bring the United States back to Vietnam, retrieving their mistakes in this respect made during the period immediately after 1975, when they could have established diplomatic relations with the Carter administration had they not insisted upon reparations.¹⁰ Overtures to Japan and West Europe were also heightened.

North Korean leaders watched with dismay as both big Communist states openly expanded their economic and cultural relations with South

¹⁰ See James T. H. Tang, "U.S. and Japanese Policies towards Indochina," unpublished paper for the conference on Southeast Asia, Japan, and the United States—Constructive Engagement in the Decade Ahead, May 9–12, 1989, Singapore.

Korea. Since the late 1950s, Pyongyang had been able to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet split, tilting first in one direction, then in the other, always being careful not to align itself totally with either Party, but benefiting from the fact that neither Moscow nor Beijing wanted to be counted out of this strategically important region. With Sino-Soviet rapprochement, the North Korean strategy seemed likely to be less effective. For this reason, and also to aid its ailing economy, Pyongyang began to cast its net more widely, albeit in halting fashion, with reservations and internal differences of opinion.¹¹ In the aftermath of the Beijing massacre, however, North Korea and China drew closer together politically, seemingly determined to protect their regimes against Gorbachevian as well as bourgeois "pollution." Indeed, the ideological-political gap between European and East Asian socialist states progressively widened as the 1980s closed. The PRC together with North Korea and Vietnam announced its determination to uphold Leninism including the dictatorship of the Communist Party, and privately if not publicly the three accused their European comrades of deserting the cause.

Mongolia—long under the extensive influence of the USSR—began to take a different course at the very end of the decade. Reform groups openly organized, old Party and government leaders resigned, and the country prepared for competitive elections. Even before these events, the policy of turning out had been accelerated, with the United States and Japan prime targets.

Meanwhile, the reverberations of Sino-Soviet normalization in the United States were generally mild. Few American specialists, in or out of government, believed that Sino-Soviet relations would reach a level of intimacy threatening the regional or global balance, notwithstanding the anger of some of Beijing's leaders at the United States. They saw strict limitations existing on the assistance that one Party could give the other in this relationship, the continuance of adverse geopolitical factors, and important cultural barriers. Moreover, the rising tension over the ideological-political split in the Leninist world added to the complications.

Despite current trends and the opinion of virtually all foreign experts, the possibility of a closer Sino-Soviet relationship at a later point cannot be dismissed out of hand. Such a course, however, would have to be connected with domestic events in one or both countries. If the Gor-

¹¹ See Robert A. Scalapino and Hongkoo Lee, eds., *North Korea in a Regional and Global Context*, Korea Research Monograph No. 11 (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1986).

bachevian era were to end with a resumption of a hard-line leadership, efforts to rebuild political links with China might ensue. If one assumes, moreover, that the current repressive political policies of the Chinese leaders continue (along with Western condemnation of those policies), that the strategic assistance furnished by the United States ceases, and that U.S. foreign investment along with technology transfer greatly diminishes, the recent tilt in China's nonalignment would be dramatically affected. Indeed, it is this concern that has caused the Bush administration to approach the China issue with greater caution than the Congress up to date.

Under the above conditions, China's leaders—or some of them—might seek solace in a closer relation with the USSR especially if the political climate were appropriate, to obtain such assistance from Moscow as was available, to further reduce any security threat from the North, and “to teach the bourgeois liberals a lesson.” A number of the men now in top government positions had their training in the Soviet Union during the 1950s. More importantly, perhaps, this is also true of many of the key military people. And there can be little doubt that the fear of “spiritual pollution” from the West, and especially from the United States, runs deep among those individuals currently in top authority.

Yet there are a number of reasons to regard the odds as strongly against this prospect irrespective of the future course of Chinese domestic politics. For those who fear spiritual pollution, Gorbachev's Russia is scarcely a model. Indeed, Gorbachev's increasing “reactionary tendencies” as defined in Chinese leaders' convoluted parlance have made him an anathema recently. And even if adversity befalls him and his efforts, it seems very unlikely that Stalinism can be reestablished, whether in its political or economic forms.

Moreover, the Soviet Union gives every indication of wanting to turn West, not East, and for the same reasons as China. It is only from the advanced industrial societies of the West plus Japan that the underdeveloped socialist states can obtain the support so vital to their future advancement. It was important to Gorbachev to normalize relations with China for strategic and political reasons, but that having been accomplished, the top priority now—and for the foreseeable future—will be to build “a common European house,” namely, to aim at achieving de Gaulle's vision of a Europe united from the Atlantic to the Urals. However difficult the task, Soviet leaders would like to see West Europe and the United States harnessed to their developmental program, with a growing stake in their stability—and that of East Europe as well. From China, Moscow can obtain little except the benefits to be derived from a reduction of tension.

An alternative scenario with seemingly greater prospect can be labeled that of benign but limited relations. Such a future would require a situation where the principal issues between the two states were resolved or contained and where both continued to concentrate upon internal reform and development and, moving in a similar direction, at least in terms of placing the priority on economic development, were able to interact economically and culturally with increasing effectiveness. More Chinese labor, for example, would be used in the development of Siberia, and border trade would expand. A commonality of interests with respect to certain regional and global issues would grow, and by cooperating, the two states could avoid being played against each other by third parties. The ideological quotient in the relationship would be set aside, with earlier polemics regarding legitimacy avoided. And while not insignificant, the bilateral relationship would not be the central relationship of the two states. Each would maintain growing ties with its respective regions and count heavily upon a major economic and perforce cultural interaction with the advanced industrial countries.

A third, less benign scenario plays heavily upon geopolitical factors. Here are two great empires, the last major land empires in the world, living cheek by jowl, with no significant buffer state system separating them. Their border regions, moreover, are potentially unstable, especially in the case of the Soviet Union, being sparsely populated and with ethnic minorities predominating in many areas. Thus, defense of empire and bilateral relations can be easily intertwined. In both states, a strong nationalism exists, with more than a slight amount of racism involved. For the Russians, the "yellow peril" is by no means out of mind. For the Chinese, the encroaching "northern barbarian" is an image easily revived. Moreover, the rising ethnic problems within each nation, and especially the USSR, could add to apprehensions, especially regarding those Central Asians who populate both sides of the Sino-Soviet border. Already, rising racial tensions in Soviet Asia (and renewed Mongolian nationalism) deeply trouble the Chinese. In sum, the different levels of development, degrees of power, and dominant cultures exacerbate apprehensions.

When, under such circumstances, have relations been warm and trusting? Large, potentially powerful states existing next to each other have formed a close relation only when they have faced a common enemy, as was the situation perceived by the USSR and the PRC at the end of the 1940s. No such enemy is in sight today. One can, of course, argue that the union being formed in West Europe points to a different possibility, but the circumstances—and the *raison d'être*—of the Europe-

an union are entirely different. Even now, some Russians worry about the time when China becomes a truly major power, economically and militarily, in the first half of the twenty-first century—assuming that this comes to pass. Will China not have its own agenda, and a different one from that which serves Russian interests? As suggested, is it not possible that then—or long before then—the Soviet Union will turn to the West, not merely for economic assistance but for security as well?

These scenarios have been rather simply drawn. Reality may be more complex, with successive shifts depending upon both external and domestic developments, as has occurred in the past. In any case, the Sino-Soviet relationship will continue to be one powerfully affecting other nations, large and small, and especially those on the Eurasian continent.

Sino-American Relations

Meanwhile, China has looked at the United States with a mixture of hope and uncertainty. The official PRC position until mid-1989 was that relations with the United States were generally good, the mild qualification intended to convey an element of Chinese dissatisfaction, centering mainly on economic issues and the question of Taiwan. In actual fact, the ten years since diplomatic relations were established saw an extraordinary expansion of Sino-American relations.¹² Two-way trade exceeded US\$8 billion in 1988 and more than doubled in 1989. Moreover, progressively, the trade balance favored China—by some \$3 billion in 1988 and \$6 billion in 1989. U.S. private investment in China surpassed \$3 billion, making Americans the largest private investors in the PRC. At the same time, China had some 40,000 students and visiting scholars in the United States engaged in advanced training and research, a far greater number than in any other country. More than 90 percent of these were studying science and technology.

Americans teaching in China also significantly exceeded other foreigners in this category, and American tourists had become a major source of foreign exchange. Finally, despite COCOM (Coordinating Committee for Export Controls) restrictions, China was securing dual-use technology and select military hardware from the United States, and in return, enabling some U.S. military access to China and a sharing of information. While the security relationship was low-level, it was regarded as serving the interests of both countries.

¹² A survey is given in U. Alexis Johnson and George R. Packard, eds., *China Policy for the Next Decade* (Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council, 1988).

These facts constitute the data that have supported the thesis advanced earlier that despite its official line, the PRC has been pursuing a policy of tilted nonalignment, with the tilt strongly toward the United States. As I have noted, the reasons are neither ideological nor sentimental, although most Chinese who have contacts find Americans relatively interesting and friendly people, if somewhat curious. The tilt toward the United States has been grounded in the perceptions held by PRC leaders that such a position serves China's economic and security interests, as indeed has been the case.

The American official view has been rooted in similar considerations, but with the emphasis more on political and strategic matters. Until recently, China had not been an issue in American politics. It had been generally agreed that a politically stable, economically developing China is in the interest of the United States and those nations aligned with it, although there have been modest apprehensions in certain quarters about a time when China might become more powerful. Romanticism, however, had been largely replaced by realism, even before the events of 1989. And while China has been seen by some as a counterbalancing force to the Soviet Union, an alliance with China against the USSR, a view rather prevalent in the late 1970s, has been generally regarded as neither feasible nor desirable, especially since the policies of Gorbachev became more clearly defined. The advocates of improving relations simultaneously with China and Russia had once again been in the ascendancy. As noted, however, recent occurrences make predictions on the future of such a view hazardous.

The economic issues between China and the United States fall into several categories. Having geared its reform program to an export-oriented strategy in the manner of the avant garde Asian economies, China has argued that it is being penalized by the quota system for having come late to the American market (despite a strongly favorable trade balance according to U.S. statistics). Like others, it has worried about U.S. protectionism (while applying a wide variety of protectionist measures at home) and has complained about the COCOM restrictions despite the fact that it has been labeled by the U.S. government "a friendly, non-allied country" and has imported from the U.S. high-technology products valued at more than \$3.5 billion in the years 1982-1986.

American economic complaints have generally paralleled those of the Japanese and others seeking to do business with China: abrupt changes in regulations and the resulting invalidation of contracts, limited access to the domestic market, numerous difficulties involved in securing materials and components from abroad, problems in expatriating profits,

the spread of corruption, the waste and inefficiency of the Chinese industrial system, the difficulty in securing accurate information, and the obstacles blocking corrective measures.¹³

These issues will not disappear, and to them have now been added the political uncertainties that engulf China at a time when leaders and policies both are in flux. In the aftermath of the turmoil of early 1989, key Chinese spokesmen continued to insist that the policy of turning out economically would continue and that there would be no retreat from the economic reform program. And despite internal divisions over the pace and extent of these reforms, it cannot be doubted that for the present at least, the dominant leaders, symbolized by Deng Xiaoping, are committed to such a course. Yet it is also true that the Chinese economy currently faces numerous serious problems. Like other Leninist societies, it has not as yet found a satisfactory way in which to combine a command and market economy. Moreover, some policies seem in disarray as the center and the key regions struggle for control. Compared with investment prospects in such countries as Thailand and Malaysia, China is currently a doubtful gamble. There is also the question of China's continued "most favored nation" status.

Thus, while the certain economic grievances of both parties can be resolved or contained through a process of jaw-boning, the question more difficult to answer is the extent to which China will overcome its present troubles and restore the confidence of the American private sector and that of other countries in its economic future. The Chinese leaders are themselves acutely aware of this challenge, but their present drive to turn to the West (and Japan) for economic advancement while keeping out Western political ideas has dubious prospects. To be sure, it is in line with Chinese efforts that extend back for more than a hundred years. For example, Zhang Zhidong, the great Chinese statesman of the late nineteenth century, argued for a policy of seeking science and technology from the West while rigorously protecting Chinese values. However, from that point on, the ideas as well as the goods of the West flowed into China, greatly complicating the tasks of whoever happened to be in power. And in fact, the very ideology to which China's current

¹³ An interesting, detailed analysis of a Japanese-Chinese joint venture's operations is Satoshi Imai, "Case Study of Joint Venture with China (v)," *China Newsletter* no. 79, March-April 1989, pp. 9-17, one of an ongoing series of such studies. For two recent articles on China's reform efforts, see Jan S. Prybyla, "China's Economic Experiment: Back from the Market?"; and Dorothy J. Solinger, "Capitalist Measures with Chinese Characteristics," both in *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1989, pp. 1-19 and 19-33, respectively.

leaders pay homage—Marxism strained through a Leninist sieve—came from the West.

The issue of Taiwan falls into a different category although there are connections. As is well known, Taiwan is in the process of a major political transition, moving toward much greater political openness, with the acceptance of a legal opposition Party, expanded political rights for the citizenry, and a generational change in leadership. While the precise outcome of this transition cannot be predicted, it is certain that the process of Taiwanization—long under way—will continue. The membership of the Kuomintang itself is now 70 percent Taiwanese, and the ranks of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) are almost exclusively from that category.

In the past several years, economic and cultural contacts between Taiwan and the mainland have mushroomed in a manner not predicted by even the boldest observers. Trade, direct as well as through Hong Kong, probably reached \$3 billion in 1988, and investment from Taiwan has also been going into the PRC. Moreover, despite the so-called Three No's policy of the Taipei government (no official contact, no compromise, and no negotiations), ROC leaders have not only acknowledged but justified recent developments, asserting that through economic relations, Taiwan can teach China about modern market practices.

Visits in both directions are also taking place. More than 500,000 individuals from Taiwan had visited the PRC up to the end of 1988, with few restrictions any longer enforced. Visits of PRC citizens to Taiwan had also commenced on a very small scale under tighter rules. Meanwhile, intellectual, cultural, and sports contacts have been proliferating through international meetings in third countries, and dual membership in various regional and international organizations has been accepted under formulae mutually agreed.

While these developments have served to reduce tension and promise a growing network of permanent ties between the people on the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, they do not necessarily promote reunification. Indeed, polls indicate that those who have visited the mainland are even less inclined to support reunification than those who have not traveled there. Moreover, all available evidence in recent years indicates that the overwhelming majority of the people on Taiwan want to maintain their present status or (in the case of perhaps 25 percent) establish an independent Republic of Taiwan. The reasons are not difficult to understand. Whether measured in economic or political terms, the gap between Taiwan and the PRC is enormous, and in certain respects, it has been growing rather than shrinking as recent events in the main-

land underscore. There are some indications, to be sure, that sympathy with the PRC students and their cause, accompanied by an outpouring of support, brought the people of Taiwan closer to their Chinese compatriots on the mainland. But the June events also brought into bold relief the differences and prompted the Taiwan government to emphasize its long-standing position that the reunification of China could take place only when the mainland had abandoned Marxism-Leninism and espoused Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles.

In truth, younger generations on Taiwan, including those of refugee parents, have few emotional ties to the mainland, having spent their lives in a separate homeland. Despite continuing cultural links, their lifestyles, their values, and their politics are significantly different, although certain ties exist with China's rebellious youth. Even comparisons between China's more advanced regions such as Canton or Shanghai and Taiwan reveal major differences. In the past, a number of Taiwanese have recurrently voiced the fear that older mainlanders might sell them out, reaching a deal with Beijing over their heads. This now seems a very remote possibility.

The future of PRC-Taiwan relations will hinge first on internal developments in the two regions, and particularly in China. One of the greatest prices paid by Beijing for the June 4 massacre was the deterioration of its image in those regions deemed most vital to it, including Taiwan and Hong Kong. Hong Kong has been lost politically to the PRC, at least for the present, and how to regain it constitutes a major problem for Beijing (and London). The prospects are for both an accelerating brain drain and a capital drain, with South China adversely affected very quickly. While trade with Taiwan and Taiwanese investment already in place are likely to remain more or less intact as future prospects are weighed, almost certainly growth in both categories will suffer, at least in the short term.

Longer term China-Taiwan relations depend upon whether in both the economic and political spheres the two societies move toward greater compatibility or greater difference. If the PRC can hew to the broad program first set forth at the end of the 1970s, and if the government can restore not merely order but political legitimacy, a natural interaction between these two Chinese societies can continue to grow, one probably well short of reunification, but meaningful to both sides. If, however, the mainland is the scene of accelerating economic problems, political instability, and recurrent repression, its relations with Taiwan are certain to be troubled.

The Taiwan issue has been joined with the United States as far as Beijing is concerned on several levels. First, the PRC demands "a strict observance" of the three communiqués signed with the United States that relate to Taiwan whereby Washington has accepted the position that there is one China, and Taiwan is a part of China.¹⁴ Beijing officials insist that despite formal adherence to this position, the United States in fact pursues a one China—one Taiwan policy, treating Taiwan as an independent entity in all but a legal sense. It asserts that the United States has upgraded its military as well as its economic relations via technology transfer, despite a 1982 commitment gradually to reduce military assistance.

In particular, the PRC condemns the Taiwan Relations Act as in contravention of the normalization agreement and subsequent communiqués, and it demands the repeal of that act (which, among other things, defines the security of Taiwan as a matter of deep concern to the United States and insists upon a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue). In addition, PRC authorities call upon the United States to use its leverage upon the ROC government to enter into formal discussions with Beijing on the conditions for reunification and other matters.

Unquestionably, there is a strong arena of deliberate ambiguity, indeed, of contradiction in the U.S. position with respect to Taiwan. While formal recognition has been transferred to the PRC, in practical terms, Taiwan is treated as an independent entity—as indeed, it is at this time. However, the broad formula devised was understood by PRC authorities at the time it was put into practice and implicitly accepted by China as the *quid pro quo* for U.S. official recognition. Indeed, recognition could not have been proffered on any other terms, given the political environment in the United States. And for the U.S. government to intervene officially in an effort to bring the two parties together for reunification negotiations would have one certain effect: the China issue would be reopened in American politics even more deeply than is now the case, a development scarcely helpful to the PRC or to PRC-U.S. relations. In the aftermath of recent developments, moreover, this type of U.S. involvement is all the more unlikely.

The issue at the top of the agenda at present in U.S.-China relations, however, is not Taiwan but human rights, at least from an American perspective. This is not a new issue. From the inception of the PRC, periodic reports of brutality and suppression have exercised Amer-

¹⁴ See Harry Harding, ed., *China's Foreign Relations in the 1980s* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984).

icans; and in the days of official hostility, human rights was one of the justifications for maintaining the containment policy. More recently, China's policies toward Tibet have been the subject of intense acrimony on both sides. In truth, the great majority of Tibetans have been no more reconciled to Chinese rule in recent years than in centuries past, and the Dalai Lama from exile has served as the rallying point for his countrymen. After a series of demonstrations and riots, Chinese authorities suppressed all public opposition with numerous arrests and some reported executions along with a declaration of martial law. For a time, all outsiders were prohibited from entering Tibet, cutting down on reportage, but from Tibetans in exile, disturbing accounts of the Tibetan situation continued to be received.

The U.S. government, while reiterating its position that Tibet is a part of China, expressed its concern over developments. The U.S. Congress went much further, unanimously passing resolutions condemning PRC policies. The PRC authorities responded angrily that such criticism constituted unjustified interference in China's internal affairs. They also took pains to publicize "improvements in Tibetan life" and "the corrections of abuses that took place during the Cultural Revolution," as well as indicating a willingness to hold a dialogue with the Dalai Lama if he would accept their terms, principally an abandonment of all efforts to achieve Tibetan independence. Despite the propaganda, however, the official Chinese view of the Tibetan situation has had very limited appeal to those Americans interested in the subject.

The stage had been set for the much more explosive events that unfolded in May and June 1989. A huge Western media contingent was present to cover the Gorbachev visit. Instead, they directed the bulk of their attention to the violent climax of the Beijing student demonstrations. Millions of Americans along with multitudes of other people around the world saw the unforgettable spectacle of the people's army shooting people.

In vain, the Chinese authorities protested that many false stories had been disseminated abroad and that the outside media had grossly distorted the true picture, selecting only the scenes that were the most dramatic or that supported their biases. There is no doubt that a government accustomed to managing the news temporarily lost control of the situation. The Voice of America along with the BBC, Hong Kong news, fax messages from the United States, and countless other sources overwhelmed official propaganda for several weeks. The battle to control communications had been one of the two crucial struggles of the weeks that preceded June 4, the other being the struggle to control the gun (the

People's Liberation Army [PLA]). There *were* many false stories, some of them planted by dissidents. And as is its wont, the Western media focused upon the most sensational events, thereby distorting matters to some extent. That is a problem with which democracies have wrestled for decades.

The credibility of the official line was irreparably damaged, however, by a stream of falsehoods and distortions, some of them contradicted by what countless people at home and abroad had seen and heard. Many of China's own journalists were in revolt at one time, and even the pro-Communist *Wen Wei Pao* of Hong Kong defied Beijing in an astonishing manner. If and when the total story can be known and told, numerous complexities will emerge, including the deep divisions among the civilian and military leaders that led first to prolonged indecision followed by brutality. At the end, there can be little doubt that the government saw itself threatened with losing control of Beijing and possibly other cities. It became "us or them," and in such a setting, moderation has little chance.

As is well known, the initial reaction of the U.S. government followed predictable lines. The Bush administration voiced criticism of PRC actions and took certain steps to give substance to its displeasure: a stoppage of military sales and a curtailment of technology transfer; a suspension of high-level official contacts (soon modified); an announcement of support for a halt to consideration of funds for the PRC through international agencies and other sources, amounting to partial economic sanctions; and an agreement to extend visas for Chinese students and others in the United States. At the same time, the administration voiced concern about taking measures that would be ineffective without strong international support (a full-fledged economic embargo); that might harm those Chinese whom the United States wished to help; or that might cause permanent damage to U.S. relations with China. It was indicated by President George Bush himself that the relationship with China had a value that should not be ignored.

Again, Congress was prepared to go further than the administration. Resolutions proposing more severe sanctions were passed in both houses, and a severe condemnation was proclaimed. There could be no doubt, moreover, that the congressional actions expressed the mood of a large majority of the American people. A *Los Angeles Times* poll taken in June 1989 indicated that 75 percent of the respondents had a negative image of China. Once again, the great American dilemma was set forth in stark form. How was a moral foundation to be preserved for a foreign policy that also had to serve basic national interests?

As in the case of Sino-Soviet relations, at least three scenarios can be sketched with respect to the future of Sino-American relations. Each of them is intimately connected with domestic as well as international developments. The first might be described as that of harmonious reconciliation and close cooperation. It would require that China's leadership revert to reformers closer to the Gorbachev than the Li Peng type, individuals prepared to experiment more boldly with political as well as economic reform. It would not be necessary (or possible) for China to adopt Western-style parliamentarism at this stage, but it would be required that China pursue the path of the authoritarian-pluralist society (a restricted but not closed politics accompanied by a significant degree of social and economic pluralism, including a major private economic sector).

Under this scenario, successive generations of young Chinese would continue to come to the United States for advanced training. Science and technology would be the favored fields of study, but the social sciences and humanities would not be ignored. Meanwhile, the economy would advance, with growth rates in the 6–9 percent range, and the most serious social and economic problems now existing would become manageable. The priority upon domestic development would continue, restraining any temptation for aggressive policies abroad; and to serve its defense as well as its developmental needs, the PRC would continue to look to the United States for advanced technology. Over time, the PRC economy would become ever more firmly tied to that of the great market economies, notably, Japan and the United States, and the latter two countries would manage their macroeconomic policies in such a fashion as to prevent a major economic crisis for themselves and the world.

A second scenario, more likely in the near term at least, can be described as one of restrained accommodation and limited movement. For an indeterminate period, political reform in China would be limited, as successive leaders struggled to retain control over an intrinsically unstable situation. Meanwhile, as in the early days of Sun Yat-sen, at the beginning of the twentieth century, overseas Chinese, many of them in the United States, would constitute the principal political opposition, demanding fundamental changes and, together with U.S. media and a portion of the academic community, constituting a powerful lobby.

The Chinese government would strive desperately to separate economics from politics, seeking growing economic interaction with the "capitalist world," but it would view with suspicion the type of cultural or political contacts between Americans and Chinese that might lend themselves to further "subversion." Yet there would be a reluctance to

terminate such relations, partly because of the internal repercussions that would result. Strategic ties, however, would be minimal—restricted to forms of interaction that were clearly in the immediate interests of both parties. And in the international arena, China would continue to cooperate with the United States in those situations (possibly Indochina or Korea) where its interests were served; but on all other matters, agreement would require very hard bargaining, with limited interest on the part of either Party in taking chances.

The most negative scenario again rests primarily upon domestic considerations. For the coming years at least, China would revert to relatively harsh authoritarian rule, civilian or military, and efforts to ameliorate economic ills would fail or be only minimally satisfactory. As one weapon to counteract public discontent, the government would continue to call upon the force of nationalism, including those xenophobic tendencies that remain imbedded in a considerable portion of the Chinese people. The United States would be singled out as the principal enemy, with those intellectuals having American ties made special targets. Possibly to distract attention from domestic problems, moreover, Beijing authorities would undertake actions—whether in the South China seas or elsewhere—to reassert China's "rightful claims." This would lead to a regional crisis, further exacerbating Sino-American relations. Meanwhile, economic relations would have made scant progress, with American entrepreneurs deterred by the general situation.

Once again, these represent relatively simple extractions of what in reality will surely be a highly complicated environment, at home and abroad. Moreover, they suggest a static quality that almost certainly will not prevail. Thus, one scenario could easily be blended with another, or replace, in whole or in part, a previous one. Certain enduring conditions, however, suggest that highly negative PRC-U.S. relations could only be temporary. The United States is the repository of vast scientific and technical resources that China can tap more easily than in most if not all other settings. Moreover, the United States does not constitute a threat to China, now or in the foreseeable future. The rapidly changing strategic environment, including the preoccupation of the USSR with domestic difficulties, has reduced the strategic significance of China to the United States on a global basis, but the PRC still has meaning in the regional scene. And the United States, despite its various weaknesses, still plays a critical role in the broader Pacific and global community that China hopes to enter. Even if the first or second scenario—or more likely, some combination of these—ultimately prevails, however, various obstacles and detours may well appear as the route ahead is traversed.

Sino-Japanese Relations

The third nation of vital importance to China is Japan. As is well known, the history of Sino-Japanese relations in the past hundred years has been marked by an intricate mixture of cooperation and conflict, with the latter frequently the dominant feature.¹⁵ Recurrently, Pan-Asianism was advanced as a means whereby the two major societies of East Asia could mutually support each other and fend off the inroads of Western imperialism. In the end, however, the Pacific War was testimony to the deep and seemingly irreconcilable differences between two nations sharing in some degree a common culture, but having taken very different paths in modern times, hence, being at different stages of development, with different needs, capacities, and perceptions of national interest.

The situation today stands in striking contrast to the pre-1945 years in many respects, but the past is not completely without relevance. Japan, shorn of empire and restricted to a defense-oriented military force, has pursued a market foreign policy in recent decades, depending upon the United States to play the primary role in providing security for it and associated East Asian states. Yet once again, the Japanese have made their presence powerfully felt on the Asian continent, especially in South Korea, China, and Southeast Asia—this time, by virtue of their rising economic power. In the recent past, moreover, the Japanese government has given some indication of being willing to play a more meaningful political role, although its commitments in this direction are still cautious and tentative.

Meanwhile, despite its defensive nature, the Japanese Self-Defense Force (SDF) has acquired highly modern conventional weaponry and is pledged to regional air and sea surveillance. Its current defense expenditures are the world's third highest, and according to some estimates, it now possesses the globe's sixth to eighth most effective military force (although in numbers, at least, it lags far behind the military establishments of all its neighbors, including Taiwan and the two Koreas).¹⁶ Nor does the SDF have the missiles, long-range bombers, or large aircraft carriers that would project its military power far from its territory.

¹⁵ The Japan Forum on International Relations, Inc., *Long-Term Political Vision for Stabilization and Cooperation in Northeast Asia* (1989), contains policy proposals formulated by a distinguished group of Japanese leaders and scholars. For a recent analysis of China's policies toward Japan, see Allen S. Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989).

¹⁶ See Tetsuya Umemoto, "Comprehensive Security and the Evolution of the Japanese Security Posture," in *Asian Security Issues*, ed. Scalapino et al., pp. 28–49.

On the one hand, Chinese authorities have viewed Japan in recent years with begrudging admiration coupled with the desire to commit a portion of Japan's mighty economy to China's modernization. On the other hand, Chinese memories stretch back to the past; hence, apprehension is laced with periodic anger at actions perceived to reflect Japanese arrogance, self-centered economic practices, and militarist potentials. For their part, Japanese, both in official life and the private sector, want a stable, developing China—but they want China to grow at a pace that will permit the mellowing of nationalist sentiments and the establishment of a record of cooperation with Pacific-Asian neighbors. Sometimes, they worry that a powerful, highly nationalistic China may emerge in the early twenty-first century, a China capable of destabilizing the region and tempted to do so. Yet paradoxically, they also have doubts as to whether China can ever get its act together, and the Japanese business community has found cooperation with the PRC on joint ventures to be generally frustrating, as I have noted. Although some Japanese concerns are methodically planning for the long term, immediate profits are sparse, except in trade.

In 1988, Sino-Japanese trade totaled some US\$19 billion, representing approximately one-fourth of all Chinese import-exports. For a decade, moreover, Japan has been providing low interest rate yen-loans primarily for infrastructural purposes—railroads, harbor facilities, communications, hydroelectric power, and water systems. Some 700 billion yen had been expended by the end of 1988, and a third-stage loan was being negotiated, with the Chinese requesting major assistance for industrial plant construction as well as infrastructure, a development that Japanese authorities have been loath to support.

The appreciation of the yen created serious complications, but Japanese assistance has been of considerable assistance coinciding as it has with the PRC economic reform program. The Chinese, however, have had a number of complaints with respect to Japanese economic policies. In the early reform years, a sharp trade imbalance occurred, with sizable amounts of Japanese consumer goods coming into China, partly as a result of decentralization and the subsequent activities of local authorities. Corruption in a variety of forms shot up, and some of it was attributed to Japanese entrepreneurs. Shoddy goods, it was alleged, were pawned off on unsuspecting Chinese, and other sharp business practices were perpetrated. Student protests against “Japanese economic imperialism” broke out in Beijing and elsewhere, and one factor in the demise of Hu Yaobang was the charge that he was “pro-Japanese.”

Subsequently, even as the trade imbalance was alleviated, Chinese spokesmen complained that the Japanese were interested only in trade and were reluctant to invest in China via joint ventures or to transfer technology. Japanese sources responded by cataloguing the difficulties encountered in doing business in China. There was also some concern about the boomerang effect, namely, the Chinese use of Japanese technology to compete in the Japanese market and elsewhere, taking advantage of China's very cheap labor.

Unquestionably, the Sino-Japanese dialogue on economic relations will continue to be marked by negotiations over both general principles and specific issues. In broad terms, the Japanese private sector had moved from an initial enthusiasm for China to a much more cautious appraisal of the situation even before the occurrences of 1989. Some Sino-Japanese ventures have been successful; many have been marked by frustration and losses, although most continue. Gradually, the Chinese government has moved to improve conditions for the foreign investor and trader while falling considerably short of what is desired. On balance, among all outsiders, a combination of having connections and cultural understanding had earlier given the best opportunities to the Hong Kong entrepreneur, but some Japanese—along with others—had learned the ropes by the end of 1988, including methods that would not pass inspection on their ethical merits.

Assuming China's future economic viability, Japan will continue to be a major force in its economic modernization. Both governments recognize that fact and will adjust policies accordingly. In addition, the Japanese private sector, learning from past experience, will apply its own pressures to obtain better conditions while training a new generation of managers—both Chinese and Japanese—and hoping that technical skills can be brought up to international standards and labor productivity greatly improved. In a fashion typical of their mode of operation, key Japanese industries are prepared to accept a period of negative returns while the foundations for long-term benefits are laid. The ultimate results, to be sure, will hinge upon the broad course of the Chinese economy, and one can assume even greater caution on the part of the Japanese private sector in the period immediately ahead. But for them—as for others—there is no other course than to take a chance on China's successful if painful development in the long run, unless one chooses to remain aloof, thereby running other risks.

Meanwhile, Sino-Japanese differences have also existed with respect to political and security issues. Since the early 1980s, Chinese spokesmen have periodically warned against a resurgence of Japanese national-

ism and militarism. Citing such developments as the revision of textbooks to downplay Japanese atrocities in China during the Pacific War, former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's visit to Yasukuni Shrine where Japanese war dead—including some condemned by the Allies as war criminals—are buried, and statements made by certain Japanese officials, Chinese leaders have alleged that a rightist movement is resurgent and must be opposed.

Coupled with these warnings has been a shift on the issue of Japanese armaments. Earlier, when Beijing's primary concern was the Soviet threat, Chinese officials stated that increased Japanese expenditures for self-defense were entirely understandable and that if the Japanese people approved, the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty was a valid response to external dangers. With the declining worry about the Soviet Union, however, the Chinese attitude toward Japanese military expansion stiffened. It was asserted that the breaching of the 1 percent limit (in the 1970s Japan pledged to contain military expenditures below 1 percent of gross national product [GNP]) that took place in 1987 was worrisome and seemed unwarranted. Japan's decision to participate in the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI—"Star Wars") was also decried by Beijing. Somewhat paradoxically, however, the Chinese—heavily involved in the arms export business—have made it clear that they want access to advanced Japanese military technology. Just as Japan views future Chinese power with apprehension, China watches a resurgent Japan with growing concern, in the context of a situation where the Soviet menace seems diminished and the continued U.S. presence in the Pacific Asian theater subject to modifications.

Taiwan represents another issue that riles the Chinese. Beijing feels that Japan, like the United States, is pursuing a *de facto* one China—one Taiwan policy although Tokyo has no overt security relations with the Taipei government. Japan-Taiwan trade is massive, joint ventures have been advancing, and technology transfer—including dual-use technology—is also significant. Moreover, certain prominent members of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) have had close ties with Kuomintang leaders. Thus, when a Japanese court awarded a Kyoto dormitory, historically owned by China's Nationalist government, to Taiwan authorities, Beijing responded with resounding protests. Strong objections were also voiced when certain LDP figures made plans to attend the Taiwan ceremonies commemorating the 100th birthday of Chiang Kai-shek. While the PRC sees U.S. actions as a key to the Taiwan issue, it seeks to keep the pressure on Japan to cease actions that symbolize a one China—one Taiwan policy.

In comparison with the United States, Japan has never placed a high premium on the human rights issue in foreign policy. Tokyo's initial response to the June 1989 events was moderate, and only after some prodding from Washington was a stronger statement issued. It is claimed, of course, that given the record of Japanese atrocities in China during the 1937-1945 years, Japan must exercise care in leveling charges against China. But Japan has challenged virtually no nation on this issue, practicing low-posture diplomacy as it has concentrated upon economic matters. Nevertheless, Japan supported the economic strictures imposed on the PRC after June 4.

Once again, different scenarios for the future can be sketched. If, on balance, China's current economic reforms are successful and the PRC is increasingly drawn into the Pacific economic orbit, economic relations with Japan will assume even greater importance. Problems, to be sure, will remain, but the mutual interests of the two countries in resolving these will serve to facilitate accommodation. On the political and strategic fronts, a combination of greater political openness in China and a continuing PRC concern about the Soviet Union could bring the two great Asian societies into closer interaction and a degree of cooperation on matters like the Korean peninsula, especially if economic relations facilitated such a development. Japan, indeed, might be more prepared than the United States to tolerate an authoritarian China if order was maintained and economic growth sustained.

Even if a strongly positive Sino-Japanese relationship were to eventuate, however, Pan-Asianism of the type once envisaged is a dim prospect. Both nations will continue to have vital ties outside the region. Japan is a global economic power and at the same time strongly dependent upon its strategic ties with the United States. China remains a developing nation, albeit one with the advantages and disadvantages of massiveness. At most, it can be accounted a regional power, but one with special economic, political, and strategic needs connecting it both to other developing nations and to the superpowers.

A less positive scenario for Sino-Japanese relations can also be envisaged. If the main thrust of the current Chinese economic experiment cannot be sustained and a return to past rigidities or a descent into grave instability occurs, Sino-Japanese economic relations would naturally be adversely affected. Even if the Chinese future is less dismal, there may be a prolonged period of uncertainty amidst constant changes of policy; the Japanese private sector may be too discouraged to play a prominent role, and on the Chinese side, a scapegoat may be sought, with Japan a prime candidate.

Should Sino-Soviet relations significantly improve, moreover, apprehensions in Japan could easily mount, having far-reaching implications. There are also some specific issues, not merely Taiwan but also the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu tai), that could trigger trouble at some future point. And while impossible to quantify, the psychological factors in this picture cannot be ignored. In the aggregate, the Chinese and Japanese are extraordinarily different peoples. While there have been numerous instances of personal as well as political friendships, the chemistry of the two cultures has more frequently made for formal courtesy masking wariness or relations even less harmonious.

In all probability, as in the past, the future will see an intricate combination of cooperation born out of mutual interests and tension or at a minimum, separateness, the product of vital, continuing differences. Neither society is likely to find itself attracted to the other in terms that would result in intimacy. Nor can Japan serve as an economic model for China in any full sense, granting the possibility, even likelihood of various adaptations. Above all, Sino-Japanese relations will not stand alone, in some isolated fashion. They will be encased in a much broader systemic structure, taking shape from the characteristics of that structure.

Regional Relations—East and West

Let us now turn to Chinese relations with other nations. At the outset, it should be noted that any attempt to treat current relations with the Third World as a whole is fraught with peril, first, because there is no such world, the developmental, cultural, and geopolitical distinctions between states assigned this category being massive; and second, because China's interest in and approach to various countries and regions other than the major states vary hugely.

It is logical to commence with the Korean peninsula since this is an area of critical significance to China in every respect. In 1950, the PRC committed itself to war against the United States at great cost in order to keep North Korea as a buffer state. Even today, Chinese officials cannot bring themselves publicly to face the facts relating to that war, although there is no difficulty in obtaining private admission that Kim Il Sung started the conflict. However, recent relations between the PRC and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), while superficially correct, have been far from cordial.¹⁷ After having greater influence in

¹⁷ For two perspectives, see Chai-Jin Lee, "China's Policy toward North Korea: Changing Relations in the 1980s"; and Chin-Wee Chung, "North Korea's Relations with China," in *North Korea in Regional and Global Context*, ed. Scalapino and Lee, pp. 190–225 and 226–239, respectively.

Pyongyang during most of the 1970s, Beijing subsequently witnessed the return of the Soviet Union to a position of increased importance in the DPRK. Significant Russian military and economic aid to the hard-pressed North Koreans resulted in concessions, including over-flights and port visitations, making regional surveillance by the Soviets easier.

In addition, North Korean authorities were clearly upset by the growing intercourse between China and South Korea (the Republic of Korea [ROK]). In truth, China today follows a two-Koreas policy. Explained in classic Chinese terms, it might be said that the North is China's legal wife, but the South is China's favorite concubine. Sino-South Korean trade is now open and has reached some US\$3 billion, dwarfing Chinese economic relations with the North. Joint ventures in China are also under way. Cultural relations are rapidly expanding, from sports to intellectual conferences. Negotiations at a quasi-official level on various matters have also taken place.

There is little likelihood that the PRC will establish formal diplomatic relations with the ROK in the near future. The further development of relations can take place through the type of liaison represented by trade missions and by informal diplomatic exchanges. A direct confrontation with Pyongyang over official recognition of the ROK at this point is unnecessary. But it is equally clear that Pyongyang no longer has the same veto power on the Korean policies of either the PRC or the USSR as existed in the past. It cannot go far beyond preventing formal recognition.

In some effort to balance its relations, the PRC has solemnly supported the various proposals for Korean reunification put forth by Pyongyang, including the demand for the removal of American military forces from the South and the initiation of trilateral ROK-U.S.-DPRK talks. It has also exchanged high-level visits with the North and permitted no public criticism of the Pyongyang government while frequently presenting negative features relating to the South in its media. As noted, moreover, the PRC and DPRK have recently drawn closer politically, and for the present, at least, this closer relationship has resulted in a more cautious Chinese approach to South Korea. Earlier, China played an important role in serving as exhorter and facilitator in promoting cross-contacts between the United States and North Korea—only to have its efforts frustrated several times in the past by North Korean terrorism. Even now, a low-level dialogue takes place in Beijing between officials of the U.S. and DPRK embassies.

Previously, some Chinese were concerned about Pyongyang's closer relations with Moscow, especially the military privileges granted the Rus-

sians. This worry has been mitigated by several factors. First, Beijing officials were convinced that North Korean leaders would avoid full alignment with the USSR, maintaining a degree of flexibility between its giant neighbors as had been the case in the past. They have been aware of the strong strain of xenophobia in North Korea. The Chinese also have known that, as in Beijing, there is no great love for Kim Il Sung or the Pyongyang regime in Moscow. The ties have been based on realpolitik. Further, with Sino-Soviet relations improving, with both parties having a mutual interest in preventing an increase of tension on the Korean peninsula, and with the USSR openly signaling that it intended to follow the PRC lead in upgrading its relations with South Korea, the momentum has been running in Beijing's favor. Indeed, the USSR is currently running ahead of the PRC in courting Seoul.

PRC policies in Southeast Asia, another region of vital importance to China, have been marked by satisfactory developments in the recent past, Indochina excluded. Beijing has made every effort to establish the primacy of state-to-state relations over either people-to-people or comrade-to-comrade ties. Official visitations have been exchanged, even with the two Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) states with which China has as yet no diplomatic relations, namely, Singapore and Indonesia.

At all times, PRC authorities have reiterated the fact that their relations will be based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence and the ten principles enunciated at Bandung. The only ties with the Communist movements of the region, it is explained, are moral ones, and even this commitment is exacted from the Chinese publicly only when it cannot be avoided. The "overseas Chinese," namely, those individuals of Chinese extraction living in Southeast Asia, a source of much trouble at points in the past—and still the objects of discrimination in certain countries—are encouraged to become citizens, and in any case, to obey the laws and customs of the nation in which they live. While this has certainly not alleviated the tensions in Malaysia and Indonesia, nor the suspicions of certain leaders, current PRC policies are careful and correct.

Yet within Southeast Asia, there is a wide variation in Chinese policies, these general principles notwithstanding. As of early 1990, the enemy remains Vietnam, despite the opening of Sino-Vietnamese conversations. Beijing continues to insist that the withdrawal of Hanoi's forces from Cambodia must be certified by international supervisors before normalized relations can be reestablished. Meanwhile, it continues to provide support to the Khmer Rouge and, in more modest amounts, to

the other anti-Vietnamese resistance forces. However, it has recently asserted that it will not support Khmer Rouge domination of a postwar government (nor domination by the Phnom Penh authorities). Rather, free elections under international supervision should be held, with an interim four-party coalition government, Prince Sihanouk presiding, first established. In this manner, Beijing has brought its policies closer to those of the ASEAN states and the United States, although despite the Australian proposal of late 1989 for sustained U.N. involvement, the impasse over Cambodia has not yet been broken.¹⁸

There is a broader consideration that hovers over the Cambodian issue. In the long run, Vietnam will have to find an accommodation with China unless it chooses to be permanently militarized, poor, and dependent upon some other external power. Beijing's leaders know this and proceed accordingly, but with a consciousness of desirability of keeping in step with ASEAN.

The Cambodian invasion resulted in close ties being established between Thailand, a front-line state, and China. However, differences of opinion both over the proper policies regarding the Indochina conflict and relations with China have emerged in Bangkok between Prime Minister Chatichai and the Foreign Ministry, worrying Beijing. Some Thai would prefer greater flexibility in dealing with Vietnam and a loosening of ties with China. Chatichai has spoken of turning Indochina from a battle field into a marketplace, letting the Thai private sector seek its fortune throughout the region and in Burma as well. In addition, what impact a weakening of China's influence due to internal strife might have on the Indochina issue remains a question.

Meanwhile, China's cautious policies toward the other ASEAN members are best revealed by noting relations with Singapore and Indonesia. Despite the absence of diplomatic relations with either country, China encouraged visits by Singapore's President Lee Kuan Yew and Indonesian officials, allowed not a word of criticism regarding these two nations to be voiced in its media, and ceaselessly urged closer economic and cultural relations. This approach had paid dividends by 1988, when both nations announced that they would soon move to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC. Nor is there any present indication that the events of early 1989 will cause a cancellation of those plans. Trade, especially with Singapore, has expanded.

¹⁸ Robert A. Scalapino, "Asia and the United States—The Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs*, February 1990, pp. 89–115. This essay explores the subject.

The distance between China's current policies and those of the early 1950s can only be measured in light years, Bandung notwithstanding. Then, the PRC was giving assistance to virtually every Communist guerilla movement in the region, and Chinese aid played a major role in establishing the Communist regime in North Vietnam. Most governments, as they came to independence, were being denounced as lackeys of the United States or of Western imperialism. Among the Southeast Asian non-Communist leaders, only Sukarno was eventually seen as a friend. At present, in contrast, China seeks to be recognized as a stabilizing force, standing by the "peace-loving nations" of the region, anxious to advance state-to-state relations, accepting ASEAN as a constructive regional organization and even prepared to turn the other cheek on occasion when some ASEAN figure makes a disparaging comment.

In South Asia also, China's policies reflect a consciousness of national interests virtually devoid of ideological coloration. The border dispute with India, the Tibet issue, and India's alignment with the Soviet Union have combined to create Sino-Indian tension for nearly three decades, including one hot war and a number of skirmishes. The opposite side of this coin has been revealed in China's warm relations with Islamabad irrespective of Pakistan's precise rulers and political system. Similarly, Beijing has made continuous efforts to cultivate the small Himalayan states, especially Nepal, despite the economic and strategic factors that tilt them to the south.

The border issue could be settled were the status-quo—now intact for nearly thirty years—to be accepted, but only a strong government in India could withstand the political storm that would follow such acceptance. For its part, China has no great need to make concessions since India represents neither a threat to nor a serious drain on China's resources. Certain developments may work toward an easing of Sino-Indian relations: the end of the Afghanistan conflict and the strong Soviet interest in improved relations between a state with which it has long had close ties and a state with which it wants rapprochement (one central Soviet goal in Asia is to woo China without losing India). The December 1988 trip of Rajiv Gandhi to Beijing, while yielding no spectacular results, may have represented a step toward a reduction in Sino-Indian tension.¹⁹

¹⁹ Leo E. Rose, "Recent Trends in U.S.-Soviet-Chinese Relations and Their Impact on South Asia," unpublished ms., thoroughly covers certain developments relating to China-India trade relations.

Beyond Asia, China's reach remains relatively modest except for its growing arms-export program, to be discussed shortly. As noted, by taking what it believes to be conventional Third World positions, China both serves its own interests generally and expects to garner political dividends. It costs little to support the Arab nations (resolutely refusing to take sides in intra-Arab conflicts), to uphold new debt settlement plans for Latin America, and to stand firmly behind Black Africa. China, like many others, was shocked by the electoral defeat of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, but it clings to Cuba politically, one of the few remaining hard-line states. Earlier Chinese economic assistance to Third World countries has been sharply curtailed, and support for global revolutionaries does not generally go beyond verbal approval. Even that is rare at present. China recognizes almost all Third World governments in power, however divergent they may be from the PRC in structure, program, and ideology. Its stand that "revolution cannot be exported, but must be won by the indigenous people" serves to underwrite such a policy. And its principal contribution to the governments in power is to avoid criticism, although increasingly the Chinese media have reported the troubles of certain governments such as Burma, when difficulties of crisis proportions are reached.

A somewhat similar policy is pursued with respect to Europe. Toward East Europe, Beijing has made strenuous efforts to improve relations in recent years, including the reestablishment of party-to-party ties and the advancement of cultural and economic relations. The politics of a given country or its economic status have been largely waved aside. Thus, the Polish government was upheld in its refusal to recognize Solidarity, but now that Solidarity leaders hold power, they are given due respect. Nevertheless, the East European upheaval and particularly the bloody overthrow of Ceausescu sent a shock wave through the Chinese leadership, reenforcing their determination to make stability a principal goal at whatever cost.

Meanwhile, West European nations are treated with courtesy and generally receive favorable comments except when, as recently, the European members of the Group of Seven joined in condemning China for human rights violations. China's fear of isolation lies under the surface of the bravado exhibited by such statements as "China is a large country with 1.1 billion people and a vast territory. It cannot be ignored."

Chinese Military Policies

It remains to deal with China's military policies, since these bear directly upon PRC foreign policy. China has reduced its conventional

military forces while seeking gradually to improve the quality of those forces. Meanwhile, it has continued to devote a relatively high percentage of its funds and manpower to its nuclear weapons program, giving this as little publicity as possible in order to avoid arousing the concern of others. With the progress in U.S.-USSR strategic negotiations, demands that China participate as a full party in arms limitation negotiations have accelerated.²⁰

The four-million-man armed forces have been cut by approximately one million men. As indicated earlier, China discovered during the brief conflict with Vietnam that its military operations were defective, shot through with problems—from those of coordination and command to those involving weaponry. Continuous efforts are being made to upgrade conventional weapons, and this drive is likely to be accelerated by the fact that both the U.S. and the USSR intend to concentrate upon the same policy. China's nuclear program, however, is also receiving high priority. The PRC first detonated an atomic device in 1964, and three years later, tested a thermonuclear bomb. One year earlier, it had fired its first nuclear-capable ballistic missile, and missile tests have been continued since that time. With a small nuclear arsenal (estimated by some specialists as about 300 weapons), the Chinese have sought to convince the Soviets that a first strike would not succeed in eliminating the total Chinese nuclear capacity by placing a premium upon mobility and concealment. They now have a very modest SLBM (submarine-launched ballistic missile) capability. It is not clear whether the Chinese have been developing tactical nuclear weapons and what importance they place on such weapons.

At the time they fired their first atomic device, the Chinese took a no-first-use pledge. Although they have been unwilling to agree to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, they have insisted in recent years that they are not participating in proliferation despite charges that they have provided nuclear assistance to Pakistan and possibly to some other countries. China has been unwilling to take part in the U.S.-USSR arms limitation negotiations, calling attention to the smallness of its nuclear arsenal. It has also rejected Soviet proposals to accept arms control arrangements specifically relating to Asia. However, it has shifted its position on the value of the "superpower" arms talks, strongly urging the U.S. and USSR to reach further agreements. Earlier, PRC authorities stated that

²⁰ See Jonathan Pollack, "China and the Global Strategic Balance," in *China's Foreign Relations*, ed. Harding, and other works by Pollack. See also the articles and monographs of Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glazer.

China would participate in such talks when 50 percent reductions in strategic weapons have been achieved, but the PRC position on this matter was less clear in early 1990. PRC spokesmen have strongly condemned both major powers' programs aimed at space weapons (which would have a strongly negative effect upon China's deterrence strategy).

In opposition to current U.S. policies, China has also supported nuclear-free zones in the Pacific-Asian region. Despite its ultimate agreement to remove SS-20s from Asia as a part of the INF agreement, the Soviet Union is certain to insist that China be included in strategic arms negotiations at some point in the process, and such a stance may very well have American concurrence. Will China adhere to its earlier position on this matter?

The more immediate policy issue, however, particularly from the standpoint of the United States, has been China's arms transfer program. The PRC at present is the world's fifth largest weapons supplier. The evidence indicates that the motive for arms transfers has been overwhelmingly economic, not strategic. China has been prepared to sell weapons where the market is strongest and the ability to pay greatest. In recent years, this has been the Middle East. Sizable Chinese arms sales went to both combatants in the Iran-Iraq war; and after Saudi Arabia failed to get certain weapons it wanted from the West, it turned to the PRC for intermediate-range, nuclear-capable missiles, and those weapons were sold despite the fact that the two countries have no formal diplomatic relations.²¹

Since the Chinese Silkworm missiles sold to Iran threatened American naval forces in the Gulf, and since the missiles sold to Saudi Arabia raised the prospect of an escalation of Middle East violence, the United States was deeply concerned. Negotiations ensued, and agreement on some issues appears to have been reached. PRC authorities have asserted that in the future, China will not sell intermediate- or long-range missiles to the Middle East. The Chinese have naturally pointed out that the United States and the Soviet Union are the world's largest arms suppliers, with PRC sales comparatively small. However, they recognized that if past practices were continued or expanded, the willingness of the United States—and Japan—to furnish military-related technology could well be affected, quite apart from the considerations now prevailing.

²¹ For the Sino-Saudi missile deal, see Yitzhak Shichor, *East Wind over Arabia: Origins and Implications of the Sino-Saudi Missile Deal*, China Research Monograph No. 35 (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1989).

In Conclusion

As one reflects upon the combination of substantial change and partial continuity that has marked Chinese foreign policy in the past forty years, both external and domestic factors must be given their due, as was stressed at the outset of this chapter. In the beginning, when China was materially weak and highly dependent upon Soviet assistance, it naturally emphasized the ideological component. Less understandable was its propensity to use a larger proportion of its very meager resources than was rational in an effort to influence the Third World, particularly African countries, in its direction. Like others, it was later to discover that while you may be able to rent countries in this fashion, you cannot permanently buy them. The aid program was ultimately scaled down.

A second component in Chinese foreign policy survived the Communist revolution, namely, that traditional mind set that has characterized Chinese attitudes toward the outer world for millennia. Traditionalism took various forms in the years after 1949, but whether it was distributing cloth and crockery to Burmese peasants upon the signing of a Sino-Burmese border agreement or announcing that the Vietnamese had to be "punished" because they had behaved badly, the deeply implanted concepts of suzerainty, civilized peoples versus barbarians, and a special sense of righteousness have continued to color and shape both the rhetoric and the reality of China's relations with others. In the years of the Cultural Revolution, traditionalism took a relatively ugly, xenophobic course. At other times, it has been more benign. But never has it been absent.

Yet the strongest and now dominant element can be variously defined as the spirit of nationalism or the driving force of perceived national interest, although an important distinction should be made between these two factors. Even in earlier decades, these elements were present, albeit with genuine national interests often inadequately expressed. As I have noted, PRC foreign policies in the 1960s ignored China's basic developmental and security needs in the service of ideological and nationalist expressions of a particularly narrow type. By the 1970s, this situation was en route to being corrected, with the facts of international life demanding recognition. Perhaps it was reasonable in these years for China to view the course of international relations in relatively gloomy terms. It was virtually alone, bereft of friends or those to whom it could turn for assistance. It had torn itself apart by putting politics in command and toppling such political institutions as existed, simultaneously damaging its economy. Thus, Chinese spokesmen proclaimed war as inevitable, cultivated Communist insurrections, and

heralded what they called "great disorder throughout the world" as a harbinger of radical change.

At present, the official Chinese analysis of the world—and of the desirable course for China—is markedly different. There are still risks in the behavior of the U.S. and the USSR, according to Chinese authorities, but their power is waning, and multipolarism is en route, a situation enhancing the influence of smaller states. Superpower interference in the affairs of others is destined to decline, Chinese spokesmen proclaim, as they tend to their own serious domestic problems. Nearly all countries, indeed, will concentrate upon economic reform and adjustment to accord with the new industrial-technical revolution that offers great hope to late developing societies. Thus, the world situation can be stabilized for the indefinite future. War is not inevitable or even probable. The forces of peace are ascendant. Disarmament is a demand of all peoples, and every nation has the right to be heard on this matter. Finally, it is asserted, these conditions are favorable for the achievement of China's Four Modernizations, a task that will preoccupy the nation for many decades to come.

As in all official evaluations, the subjective element in China's global analysis is not inconsiderable, and the present tendency to defend policies on the basis of a few pat slogans, constantly repeated, testifies to a strong element of defensiveness—a regime under siege. Yet on balance, the recent Chinese appraisal of the world scene, at least prior to mid-1989, was a vastly more rational analysis than at any earlier time in PRC history. The principal uncertainty at present is whether the PRC can hew to its revamped foreign policies in the midst of a volatile domestic political and economic situation. Whatever temporary detours, if this is possible, PRC foreign policy will provide a promising backdrop against which to confront China's most daunting challenge, that of moving from a government of men toward a government of law and, in the process, combining stability with the greater quotient of political openness necessary for satisfactory economic growth.

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CHAPTER TWO

Beyond Revolution: Political Development in the People's Republic of China

LOWELL DITTMER

The purpose of this chapter is to survey the general nature and thrust of political development in China over the past forty years. I shall conceptualize political development in terms of three analytical categories: ideology, leadership, and politics. By "ideology" I mean the articulation of the general vision toward which the leadership is attempting to steer the political system (thus sometimes referred to by Chinese participant-observers as a "road"). By "leadership" I mean the way central leaders mobilize the popular and bureaucratic support they need to make and implement national policies. By "politics" I refer to the way leaders mediate power relationships among themselves, whether through dispute, compromise, or domination. I shall deal with each of these topics separately for the entire forty-year period, then try to extract some cross-generalizations for consideration in the conclusion.

Ideology

In his pioneering analysis of political belief systems, Karl Mannheim proposed a distinction between "ideologies," which are contrived to justify and preserve the status quo, and "utopias," which are designed to transcend and transform it.¹ This was of course an analytical distinction in a world of empirically mixed types, for even among the most conservative ideologies there are few that do not aspire to change certain aspects of reality, and even among the most radical there are few that do not hope to preserve aspects of the status quo. It is therefore perhaps more useful to distinguish among ideologies on the basis of

¹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936).

which aspects of reality they wish to change and which they desire to keep as they are.

Certainly this is true of ideology in the People's Republic of China (PRC), where that variant of Marxism-Leninism still popularly known as Mao Zedong Thought has always indicated that just as some aspects of reality must inevitably change, other aspects of reality (such as the imperative for struggle) would remain the same. The reason for this prioritizing is that ideology in the PRC is not merely a vague legitimization of the structure of authority and privilege in society, as it is in most systems, but an instrument for the exercise of power and the implementation of policy. Because of the relative absence of a legal (either constitutional or legislative) tradition, ideology has become the most abstract formulation of policy. Rather than relying heavily on an internal police and spy network for enforcement (although these assuredly exist), the regime will generate consensus around the latest gloss on Marxist ideology (e.g., the persistence of class struggle, the implications of bourgeois right), then mobilize the masses through the social pressure of the campaign to perform the set of policies deemed consonant with that particular gloss.

Aside from its agenda-setting quality, what is distinctive about Chinese Marxism is the fact that its priorities change—and change fairly frequently. Although rigid ideologues are no doubt as common in the PRC as in any country in which ideology defines ultimate values, the ideology *per se* is not rigid; quite the contrary, it is highly adaptive to circumstances. In theory the “classics” of Marxism-Leninism set certain limits on the exegetical flexibility of leadership, but in fact knowledge of the classics is neither widespread nor deep; more to the point, no one has the authority to construe them but the Party (and, more definitively, the leader of the Party).

Thus the concept of ideology may be broken down in terms of levels of abstraction. “Theory” (*lilun*) is the most abstract dimension, referring to the internationally valid (ostensibly) intellectual edifice of Marxism-Leninism. “Thought” (*sixiang*) refers to the adaptation of theory to the particular circumstances of a given nation-state (as in “Marxism-Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought”). A “line” (*luxian*) consists of the selective application of thought to a historical period of three to nine years. Finally, “policy” consists of the application of the line to a functionally specific area.

At any given period, the ideology will be construed in terms of a general line; for more specific cues, an array of policies will be announced. These make up the agenda, and set the priorities, for that

period. Those aspects of reality to be changed will usually be frontally assaulted; those to be preserved will be sanctified and often ritualized. At the end of each period some error will be discovered in the way ideology has been construed or implemented, for which some member of the elite will be criticized and purged; the leadership will then be graced with a new ideological insight, ushering in the next battery of policies. This gives rise to a tidelike sequence of change and consolidation in different sectors of the political system, punctuated by leadership disputes.

The first period, from Liberation through the Great Leap Forward, may be generally characterized as one of *socialist transformation*. (Technically, it encompassed two periods, but the early slogans of United Front and New Democracy seem to have been tactical ones designed to placate the middle classes and disguise a consistently transformational approach to change.) The content focused on transformation of a “half-feudal, half-capitalist” traditional system into modern socialism, based essentially on the Soviet model. A correlation of political (socialist) and economic (modernization) stage theories was assumed—and this assumption was to prove justified, as socialization of the means of production was generally accompanied by substantial improvements in living standards.

This “general line” was accompanied by policies designed to transform the institutions shoring up the old authority structure. In the countryside, the attack on existing ownership relations was made quite iconoclastically: poor and lower-middle pleasants were encouraged to confront their erstwhile oppressors and overcome their psycho-cultural inhibitions, while redividing about a third of rural landholdings. Land reform was immediately followed by the organization of mutual-aid teams, lower-level cooperatives, Advanced Production Cooperatives (APCs), and finally by the People’s Communes. Socialization of the means of industrial production proceeded at a more moderate pace, beginning with joint public-private operation, nationalizing industry simultaneously with the last stage of collectivization. But the power of the old ruling classes did not rest on ownership alone. “It also involved the *political* control of the peasantry through the vertical institutions (such as kinship institutions, etc.) and through the complex of Confucian values, local customs, and traditional ways of acting and thinking that comprised a culture of gentry hegemony and peasant subordination.”² Thus the traditional family structure was attacked in the campaign to

² Marc Blecher, *China: Politics, Economics and Society* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1986), p. 47.

implement the Marriage Law of 1950; the consequences were mixed, initially resulting in a steep climb in the divorce rate and a rash of suicides among women, but also eliminating such kinship-based political organizations as the clan that might have provided an alternative focus of allegiance.

What was preserved from alteration during this period was the authority of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Quickly emerging as the hegemonial leadership institution, the CCP set up a governmental structure on Leninist principles of dual rule and democratic centralism and established under its guidance a network of auxiliary organizations for women, workers, peasants, and youths. This network for the first time since the Qin penetrated all the way down to the local level, replacing authority structures based on extended kinship ties with its own "branches" inside the party and with (party dominated) "basic units" (*jiben danwei*) outside it. To help sanctify allegiance to this institution, the education and socialization system was restructured, the intellectuals who manned it subjected to thought reform, a comprehensive police and penal apparatus set up, and the regimen of weekly political meetings at work sites or residences instituted.

Of course the obvious flaw marking the end to this period was the Great Leap Forward, but the nature of the flaw and the locus of responsibility for its perpetration remained unsettled during the next six years of transition (1960–1966) because of the power of Mao Zedong. There was, however, eventual agreement within the regime that the next phase would be one of *cultural revolution*, and that quest was indeed to pre-occupy the country over the next decade (1966–1976), although tactics of implementation occasioned great controversy. Based on the assumption that relicts of bourgeois ideology lingered in the cultural superstructure despite successful socialization of the means of production, a vast and unprecedentedly spontaneous movement was launched to purge culture and the arts of such impurities. Included in the cultural superstructure was the single-party authority network so carefully nurtured during the first phase, which in fact quickly became the central focus of attack, thanks to Mao's suspicions of "party persons in authority taking the capitalist road." The enemy was thus conceived to be both without (mainly the two superpowers) and within, giving rise to a sense of cultural paranoia. The Cultural Revolution derived from the theory of "continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat," which imputed a more significant role to ideological factors as independent variables in historical change, thereby legitimating progress on the ideological front even if ideology happened to be out of step, well in advance of the

economic “base.” Yet at the same time the assumption of inevitable progress became more uncertain with the notion that a country that had undergone the transition to socialism could reverse all that and embark on a “capitalist road.” The indeterminacy of history gave rise to an emphasis on voluntarism, on the will of the individual, on heroic leadership—hence to the cult of Mao Zedong.

The policy package that accompanied the Cultural Revolution was extremely ambitious and far-reaching. The political apparatus of both Party and state, including central, provincial, and local levels, was thoroughly purged, guilty cadres being sent out to work among the workers or peasants; there were also important structural changes, including introduction of the Revolutionary Committee, “unified leadership” including Party, state, and army elites, and so forth. The cultural sector was purified of Western or traditional influences to a state of monotonous revolutionary homogeneity; indeed, unprecedented uniformity characterized the political culture as well, consistent with the emphasis on egalitarianism. The economic sector was not a priority area of change but was nonetheless affected, *inter alia*, by the emphasis on populism and “self-reliance,” construed to mean rejection of foreign models and reliance on indigenous proletarian innovators (as in the Great Leap, implied was a rejection of intellectuals, whose learning was tainted).

Standing virtually alone amid the ruins of revolutionary iconoclasm was the personal authority of Mao Zedong, as embodied in his Thought. This was ritualized in the memorization and recitation of passages from his texts—which achieved unprecedented currency, particularly among young people—in marches, rallies, “struggle” meetings, and other mass ceremonies.

There was no single flaw that brought this period to its end, but a congeries of internal contradictions. Renunciation of material incentives and individual egoism cut the movement off from any legitimate way to motivate the masses, ironically stimulating widespread corruption (the “back door” phenomenon). Mao’s Thought proved to be an unreliable guide to society, on the one hand because it was often vague, permitting discrepant local interpretations, and on the other because Mao himself could interpret it differently to fit his own agenda. The focus on “struggle” and self-sacrifice to the point of martyrdom unleashed powerful destructive forces and set them at war with one another, to be subdued only by the application of superior force. The emphasis on “rebellion” and critique of bureaucracy made it difficult for stable rule to be imposed and interfered with production.

The interpretation of Marxism-Leninism that forms the foundation of the post-Mao reform period first emerged full-blown with the rise of Deng Xiaoping at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, although there was already discernible movement in this direction during the Hua Guofeng interregnum. After socialist transformation and cultural revolution, priority shifts to *economic reform*; its underlying assumptions are in many ways an inversion of the two previous periods. Thus the avant-garde role of ideology and the cultural superstructure is rejected in favor of a reflectionist interpretation; as in the "theory of production forces" that Red Guards ascribed to Liu Shaoqi in the 1950s, it is assumed that changes in the relations of production must await maturation of the forces of production, and that changes in the cultural superstructure depend upon (and must await) changes in production relations. Whereas in the 1950s a correlation of economic and political stages of development was assumed, and in the 1960s politics could forge ahead or "take command," in the 1980s economics is the focal point of change. Indeed, in terms of stages of development, progress in terms of economic modernization has been accompanied by theoretical regress, so to speak; whereas Mao in 1958 deemed China to be on the threshold of the Communist utopia, at the Thirteenth Party Congress in November 1987 Zhao Ziyang placed the PRC at an early stage of socialism, furthermore predicting that it would remain there for a hundred years. All this means that ideology no longer plays a pace-setting role in social change; economic reform gropes ahead on the basis of "practice," stepping from one stone to another while crossing the stream (*mozhe shitou guo he*).

The policy agenda to which the reform gloss on Marxism coincides has pivoted on three programs: the responsibility system, the policy of opening to the outside world, and economic marketization. The responsibility system, designed primarily to revive the efficacy of incentives, draws a distinction between ownership and control, allocating the latter to those who are also given responsibility for production outputs, along with commensurate rewards for success. The policy of opening to the outside world involves integrating China into world markets, inviting both international trade and foreign direct investment. Marketization means that the central command plan is supplemented by a free-market sector, implying freedom of access for agents wishing to buy or sell and some freedom for prices to rise or fall. These three policies have hitherto added up to a great economic success story, by most statistical indicators, although since 1985 there have been problems in both agriculture and industry as the reform has entered its second and apparently more complex phase.

What is preserved against tampering in the period of economic reform is the “four cardinal principles” first enunciated by Deng Xiaoping in early 1979: uphold the socialist road, uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat, uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and uphold Marxism-Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought (thus sometimes dubbed the “four upholds”). If politics is no longer on the cutting edge of revolutionary change, it is still “in command” in the sense that little criticism is tolerated. This is not to say that political reform is foreclosed, and indeed a few important reforms have been undertaken. But the political realm remains obviously sensitive, characterized by top-down reform and the suppression of mass feedback.

Leadership

Although much of what the People’s Republic has achieved over the past forty years may be attributed to the high quality of the CCP leadership, its leaders have displayed a curiously ambivalent attitude about their own role. In place of the Leninist cult of the elite, we find an assertive populism. “The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history,” as Mao once put it.³ With the passage of time, Mao became if anything more outspoken in this conviction. “The masses have an immense force of enthusiasm for socialism,” he said during land reform. They “are endowed with an unlimited creative power.” In 1968: “Humble people are the most intelligent and prominent people the most idiotic.” Yet on the other hand, Mao also indirectly attributed great influence to leadership, particularly intellectual leadership. In fact, the Cultural Revolution was based on the notion that ideas, in the form of the “cultural superstructure,” could play a decisive role in historical development, under certain circumstances, and that this superstructure was at least to some degree immune from developments in the economic “base” (i.e., the “forces of production”)—otherwise, the superstructure might have been expected to adjust to the socialization of the means of production, which had been completed ten years before. One of the more benign effects of this assumption is that the “people” are never blamed for errors of “line”; they are found to have been misled by “backstage backers”—that is, by wicked, manipulative leaders.

The paradox is reconciled by an understanding of the Maoist conception of leadership. First, in departure from traditional authoritarian rule, whether under the empire or Chiang Kai-shek’s Kuomintang

³ Mao Zedong, *Selected Works* (hereafter *Works*) (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), vol. 3, p. 257.

(KMT), effective leadership implies not only the absence of dissent but the presence of enthusiastic popular assent. Second, although the masses supply the necessary spirit and thrust to the movement, the leaders supply direction—to assume otherwise would be falling prey to “tailism.” They supply this direction through a combination of symbolism and relatively ad hoc organizational techniques, known as the “mobilization of the masses.”⁴ Mass mobilization was deemed especially useful to implement new policies marking a radical departure from the status quo, which required active community commitment to foster an atmosphere conducive to consensual enforcement. But the CCP was perhaps unique among Communist movements in the resourcefulness with which it found new uses for the mass movement. Throughout the 1950s the mass movement played a major role in the transformation of the Chinese political landscape: mass movements socialized the means of production, ostracized and punished enemies of the “people,” rectified the world of ideas and culture, even facilitated public sanitation efforts. And at the forefront of each of these campaigns, exhorting the masses with pithy slogans and chiding balky bureaucrats, was Chairman Mao, whose stature was appreciably enhanced by his role in the series of successes achieved.

Of course, ultimately the ambition to restructure Chinese social reality through the campaign came to grief in the Great Leap Forward. And despite the successful revival of the campaign style (in somewhat modified form) in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution nearly a decade later, the mass movement was never really able to reclaim its efficacy as a vehicle for effective charismatic leadership and sociopolitical change. Part of the reason was that the campaign had overreached itself, being used to accomplish tasks for which it was not ideally suited, such as the campaign to manufacture steel in small-scale rural factories during the Great Leap. But even before this, I would argue, subtle changes were taking place in Chinese society that tended to undermine the prerequisites for effective mass campaigns. The three most important of these prerequisites were mass consciousness, a plausible opposition, and a simple and feasible positive objective. Let me try to define these three prerequisites more explicitly and show how they were being undermined.

By *mass consciousness* I mean an agreement among the relevant masses upon certain common values and interests—the term is a variant of the Marxist term “class consciousness” that has been modified to take

⁴ For a relatively systematic attempt to analyze mass mobilization, see Charles Cell, *Revolution at Work: Mobilization Campaigns in China* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

into account the CCP's propensity to work with United Front-style multiclass coalitions. The early campaigns were able to mobilize mass consciousness by making fairly explicit appeals to common material interests. Both land reform and collectivization advertised and to some extent also provided material benefits to the poor and lower-middle peasants who constituted the movement's constituency, for example. The campaign to implement the Marriage Law of 1950 appealed to women and to the younger generation, who had been most oppressed under the traditional family system. But the Great Leap Forward, which made a similar appeal to mass interests in material betterment that it proved incompetent to fulfill, inaugurated a new era of dwindling campaign resources.⁵

This occurred for at least two reasons. First, with completion of socialization of the means of production (thought to have been finalized by collectivization in 1956, but then taken a stage further with the launching of the commune in 1958), all of the property belonging to the "class enemy" had been expropriated and redistributed to the masses. This exhausted the "cheap" resources available to the regime. Second, the depression that followed the Leap meant that new collective resources could not easily or soon be produced; indeed, we now know that one of history's most catastrophic famines ensued, resulting in the deaths of some twenty million people. This meant that a campaign could not for the foreseeable future be launched that would either open up a new field of cheap resources to redistribute or credibly claim to accelerate production (to "leap forward") in such a way as to provide bountiful resources in this manner.

The Cultural Revolution seemed to offer a solution to this dilemma. With its call to "seize power," it seemed to contain implicit promises of political enfranchisement to China's educated generation of "revolutionary successors." But to their surprise and dismay, the "revolutionary masses" mobilized in this great movement experienced downward rather than upward mobility, being sent "up to the mountains and down to the villages" to do manual labor for the rest of their lives.⁶ Most of the supplementary campaigns launched by the "Gang of Four" in what is now defined as the late Cultural Revolution avoided any such

⁵ For an interesting discussion of the function of campaign resources, see Albert Breton and Raymond Breton, "An Economic Theory of Social Movements," *The American Economic Review* 54:2 (May 1969): 198-205, *inter alia*.

⁶ Cf. Thomas Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976).

misunderstanding, going so far as to repudiate the very idea that the masses should aspire to realize their interests through mass action: for example, the campaign against “bourgeois right” implicitly condemned the principle of “to each according to his/her work” and encouraged the masses to work voluntarily in the public interest; the campaign against taking the back door condemned the privileges that were allocated to China’s officialdom and professionals; and so forth. Even the more strictly economic campaigns, such as the campaign to emulate the heroic Dazhai Brigade’s irrigation projects, focused on the more egalitarian distribution of existing resources rather than on the production of a larger pool of resources that would actually boost material living standards. As if to compensate for its denial of material incentives, the leadership placed increasing emphasis on ideological exhortation and organization: meetings became burdening in their frequency, the entertainment and news media were monopolized by ideological precepts. Egalitarian austerity seems to have been the leadership’s symbolic adaptation to an era of dwindling resources. But to judge from the (unfortunately inadequate) public opinion data available, this resulted over time in a “dulling” (*mamuhua*) of campaign enthusiasm and even a decline in the charisma of the campaign leadership (the latter became visible in the Tiananmen Incident of April 5, 1976).⁷

With Mao’s death, the post-Mao leadership found itself in a difficult position, inheriting Mao’s commitment to an activist, mobilizational style of leadership but confronted by an exhausted mass to whom the logic of continuing revolution exerted diminishing appeal. Not only had the movement lost any rational functional relation to the economy, it tended to disrupt productive work. Hua Guofeng sought in vain for a formula whereby he could revive the effective practice of charismatic leadership, making an attempt to link mobilization to another “leap forward” that would sufficiently accelerate production to provide side-payments to movement constituents. Aside from the fact that this attempt was to run aground for economic reasons, Hua never really succeeded in mobilizing the masses in its pursuit—although he did succeed in regenerating a certain consensus in a badly fractionalized bureaucracy.

Deng Xiaoping seems to have had a somewhat clearer understanding of the problem of resource depletion and was willing to face the fact that the campaign could no longer generate resources either through

⁷ See Lowell Dittmer, “Cultural Revolution and Cultural Change,” in *Moving a Mountain*, ed. Godwin Chu and Francis L. K. Hsu (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1979), pp. 207–237.

redistribution or production. Tacitly assuming that ideological symbolism alone had been discredited (“dulled”), he established a direct linkage between material incentives and productive work, allowing work to proceed on an organizationally segmented or even privatized basis without the mediation of mass movements. Far from providing incentives to movement activists (as during the Cultural Revolution), punitive sanctions were applied to spontaneous mass innovators, from the crack-down on the Democracy Wall movement in early 1979 to the suppression of the campaign for democracy and reform that erupted in December 1986. The constituency for mass mobilization in the post-Mao era seems to have shifted from disprivileged workers and peasants in search of their place in the economic sun to defensive bureaucrats seeking to shore up the structural legitimacy of the status quo.

Mao deemed *plausible opposition* essential to mass leadership for several reasons. First, opposition was functionally necessary for the heroism to emerge: employing metaphors from the blast furnace as well as the inoculation ward,⁸ Mao had emphasized the need for would-be adherents to test their mettle under fire; those who survived the ordeal would be “steeled,” while those who wavered would be sloughed off.⁹ Another function of opposition was to provide the movement with a clear target for catharsis of negative impulses and to indicate reflexively the correct direction of movement. Thus quotas were typically assigned to units for the criticism or “struggle” of a specific percentage of targets for each campaign. However, the very success of the recurrent criticism campaigns in destroying or discrediting opposition led to a steady diminution in the supply of those realistically qualified to play this role.

Again, the Great Leap Forward seems to have been the watershed after which this dilemma became acute. Socialization of the means of production not only exhausted a source of spoils, it also eliminated the objective basis for identification of class enemies (i.e., the owners of the means of production, land, and industrial capital). At around the same time, the relatively elaborate investigative procedures that had once been

⁸ See Mao, “Talks at a Conference of Secretaries of Provincial, Municipal, and Autonomous Region Party Committees” (January 1957), *Works*, vol. 5, pp. 369–370; and “Beat Back the Attacks of the Bourgeois Rightists” (July 9, 1957), *Works*, vol 5, p. 459.

⁹ As he noted in retrospect regarding the Cultural Revolution: “Actually, it only disrupted the enemy and tempered the good clearly people... Without the disorder, how would it be possible for us to discriminate between the good and the bad people; how could we have forced Lin Biao to jump out?” “Mao’s Talks to Liberated Cadres and Cadres from Wuhan” (Autumn 1974), *Feiqing yuebao* (Studies in communism) (Taipei), 17:12 (February 1975): 78–79.

prerequisite to selecting targets on the basis of legal violations fell into desuetude.¹⁰ For both reasons, it became more difficult to delineate the “line of demarcation” between “people” and “enemies of the people.” One of the reasons the Socialist Education Movement never really got off the ground is that it became enthralled in controversy over how to define the target of criticism (and hence, how to define its own mass constituency); one leadership group would refer to a central cleavage between advanced and backward productive sectors or to the “four clean” and the “four unclean,” and the other would attempt to mobilize the poor and lower-middle peasants against some “revisionist” Party powerholders who were taking the “capitalist road.”¹¹

The loss of objective criteria for identifying movement targets on the one hand facilitated Mao’s more flexible use of ideological epithets in high-level power-political maneuvers, but on the mass level it also inadvertently gave greater discretion to the masses. Throughout the post-Leap period, but particularly during the ten years of Cultural Revolution, the identification of friend and foe became the basis for ubiquitous factionalism and occasional factional violence, and the attempt to focus on a central symbolic target of criticism in order to “condense” myriad local grievances (as in the criticism campaign against Liu Shaoqi or Lin Biao and Confucius) was never entirely successful. With time and political experience, the masses grew sophisticated enough to use media symbolism for their own political purposes—particularly when the organizational network within which this language was operationalized broke down, as it did during the Cultural Revolution.

Upon Mao’s death, the successor regime soon sensed the unpopularity of rampant search-and-destroy tactics against regime targets and proceeded in quite deliberate fashion not only to rehabilitate various categories of officials who had been targeted in one campaign or another in the past, but to disqualify most of the social classes or groups formerly held in suspicion. In January 1978, all discrimination against overseas Chinese was ordered ceased. The intelligentsia, previously grouped among the petty bourgeoisie, was reclassified among the proletariat, on grounds that intellectuals work with their minds. In early 1978 the Party also desisted from using the label “rightist.” Finally, the regime proceeded to remove the designations of “four-category elements” (i.e., landlord,

¹⁰ See Gordon Bennett, “Political Labels and Popular Tension,” *Current Scene* 7:4 (February 26, 1969): 1–10.

¹¹ Cf. Richard Baum and Frederick Teiwes, *Ssu-ch’ing: The Socialist Education Movement of 1962–1966* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1968).

rich peasant, counterrevolutionary, and bad element) from all but 1–2 percent of those previously penalized on those grounds.

Whereas ascriptive criteria for targeting were thus virtually eliminated, arbitrary use of ideological labels against political rivals was also greatly modulated (with certain exceptions, such as the Gang of Four); the downfall of Hua Guofeng and the so-called Small Gang of Four with whom he was allegedly in league went forth without public vituperation, as did the forced resignation of Hu Yaobang (from his position as Party secretary-general) in 1987 and even the eviction of Zhao Ziyang from all Party and government positions in 1989. Meanwhile, normalization of relations with the United States in 1979 and with the Soviet Union in 1982–1989 deprived China of any major international enemy with whom a domestic opponent might be treacherously associated (as Peng Dehuai, Liu Shaoqi, and Lin Biao had once been linked with the Soviet Union). After four decades, the Chinese leadership seemed to have entered an era without major international adversaries with which to implicate elite purge victims.

The third criterion for successful charismatic leadership is a simply defined, *feasible positive objective* for the mass movement. Whether it be the eradication of schistosomiasis or prostitution, the harnessing of the Huai, or completion of collectivization within a year, if the positive objectives of the campaign (as distinguished from its criticism targets) were simple and easily understood by the masses, they could generally be achieved. When the CCP exhausted its fund of such collective objectives, mass movements began to collapse in confusion. The positive objectives of the Great Leap already departed from this standard, in the sense that they embraced productive and redistributive objectives that were perhaps empirically definable, but vastly overblown. As noted above, the Socialist Education Movement failed ever to define its objectives clearly, in part because of unresolved leadership disagreements. The Cultural Revolution held out objectives (e.g., a complete turnover of leadership and the establishment of Paris Communes) that were specific but either phony or illusory, in the sense that as soon as movement activists were in a position to implement them the regime rescinded them. The objectives proposed by the Gang of Four during the late Cultural Revolution were vague and essentially reflexive, in the sense that they aimed more at transforming the attitudes of the participants or opponents than at achieving clearly defined external projects. The “quasi-campaigns” launched since the death of Mao (see below) have been similarly moralistic and reflexive—although they have, of course, been

different in function, aiming at conservation rather than revolutionary cultural transformation.

The death of Mao and, more specifically, the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee (CC) marks a watershed in the evolution of the concept of leadership, officially repudiating mass campaigns entirely (with certain theoretically conceivable exceptions). The Maoist conception of leadership as necessarily attached to an activated mass constituency seems to have gone by the board, to be replaced by an elite preference for a demobilized mass. Despite their monopoly control of the instruments of violence and mass communication, the leadership—including reformers as well as conservatives—no longer feels assured of its ability to control a mass movement. Deng and his followers have justified this departure by forswearing the ideological legacy of “continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat” and by indicating in tactful but unmistakable terms that Mao himself made many serious blunders during his later years. Clearly, the ghost of the Cultural Revolution still haunts this leadership.

Closer examination reveals, however, that it has not been a clean break. Aside from attempting to maintain the organizational apparatus of mobilization (study meetings, criticism, and self-criticism) on a more routine, low-key schedule, the regime has launched a series of quasi campaigns: most noteworthy have been the campaigns against bourgeois liberalization in 1981–1982, against spiritual pollution in 1983–1984, against unhealthy tendencies in 1985, against bourgeois liberalism in 1987, against “peaceful evolution” in 1989. Compared to the Cultural Revolution these have hitherto been relatively half-hearted affairs, having only vague positive objectives, granting anonymity to all but a handful of targets, providing no incentives to followers aside from a chance to vent their frustration against the uncontrollable, unsettling waves of change that modernization has unleashed; the moment these movements jeopardize economic production or threaten to get out of hand they are abandoned. The masses have exhibited a similar ambivalence, on the one hand welcoming the relaxation of pressure for continuous mobilization, on the other hand recurrently reverting to the mass participatory pattern to which they became accustomed during the Cultural Revolution—and big-character posters, protest marches, stump speeches, and even tabloid newspapers may still burst upon the political scene with disconcerting swiftness.

What accounts for this ambivalence? Even though the mobilized masses can no longer achieve any constructive outcome under contemporary economic circumstances, demobilization of the masses tends to

both incapacitate the leadership and disenfranchise the masses. It also contributes to the "crisis of faith" by undermining ideologically derived norms and values. While it is true that the leaders no longer have confidence in their ability to control the mass movement, its abandonment leaves them unable to control the masses at all except through the still hated bureaucracy, and the masses have begun to display numerous autonomous or even deviant social tendencies, including corrupt economic behavior, an accelerating crime wave, and an interest in "spiritually polluted" culture or "bourgeois liberal" consumer commodities (e.g., VCR tapes, audio recordings). Meanwhile, without the mass movement to stimulate and channel interest in various collective projects, there is serious concern that the public sector will fall into disrepair, as the masses chase heedlessly after their private interests. This is already visible in the plateauing of grain production since 1984, attributable at least partly to the declining rate of investment in water conservancy and hydroelectric and irrigation projects. Rural education and health and welfare facilities appear to have suffered a decline. The private sector has been thriving as never before, but that also necessitates infrastructure, policing, and other public services; the public sector will thus require a major infusion of new support (both political and fiscal) at a time when the revenue-generating capabilities of the regime have been overtaxed (there have been budget deficits every year but one—1985—since 1979), and a negative balance of foreign trade is not uncommon.

Politics

There has been a great deal of discussion of the nature of the decision-making process at the highest levels of the Chinese political system, which is only natural in view of the still highly centralized structure of the system and the critical importance of that process. In view of the veil of unanimity that normally enshrouds politics at the top, much of this discussion has been based on inferences from protocol data (who appears when, with whom, in what order or sequence, etc.) and other relatively fallible circumstantial evidence. Until 1966, the most widely accepted paradigm of the central leadership among Western China-watchers was perhaps the "Mao in command" model, consisting of a Supreme Leader who rules with the complaisant advice and assistance of the Politburo and is worshipped by the politically indoctrinated masses. But there have been variants: the "collective leadership" model imputes a more nearly equal or "collegial" relationship within the Politburo, for example.

Publication of various Red Guard tabloids during the Cultural Revolution revealed a hitherto unsuspected level of conflict within the top leadership, as a result of which these two models were supplemented by various conflict models. One, the factional model, assumed that the leadership was riven into an indefinite number of factions or loyalty groups, based either on bureaucratic interests or on such primordial ties as a patron-client linkage, common geographic origin, or old school ties.¹² The “line-struggle” model, on the other hand, assumed the existence of a permanent cleavage dividing the leadership into two “head-quarters” (two organizationally distinct informal decision-making units), two “roads” (two distinct policy agendas), and two “classes” (i.e., the elite groupings were supported by opposing mass constituencies). This shares with the factional model a denial of the previously accepted image of leadership solidarity, but differs in limiting the number of factions to two; also, whereas the factional model tends to focus on primordial ties as a basis for group formation, the line-struggle model assumes that ideology lies at the root of the cleavage. Yet despite its generalization to the entire history of the Chinese Communist movement during the period it was in vogue, the line-struggle model does not seem to have survived the Cultural Revolution that spawned it as a realistic depiction of elite politics.

Politics among CCP elites may usefully be categorized according to two variables: the distribution of power and the distribution of agreement. The former may be subdivided into hierarchical and collegial arrangements, the latter into solidarity and cleavage, as depicted in the matrix shown here:

		Distribution of Agreement	
		Cleavage	Solidarity
Distribution of Power	Hierarchy	Organizational discipline	Primus inter pares
	Collegiality	Factionalism	Collective leadership

What determines how the two defining variables are distributed? The distribution of power—whether it is broadly distributed among colleagues, or concentrated hierarchically—depends essentially on two fac-

¹² See especially Andrew J. Nathan, “A Factional Model for CCP Politics,” *China Quarterly* (hereafter, *CQ*), 53 (January–March 1973): 34–67; and the critique by Tang Tsou, “Prolegomenon to the Study of Informal Groups in CCP Politics,” *CQ* 65 (January–March 1976): 98–114.

tors: formal bureaucratic position and the informal web of “connections” that Chinese refer as a “political base” (*zhengzhi jichu*). In apparent contradistinction to the distribution of power in the Soviet Union and other European Communist Party-states, formal bureaucratic position is by far the less important of these. Though it might be said to be a necessary but not sufficient condition to have a seat on those committees where decisions are made—purge from one’s bureaucratic post thus normally suffices to eliminate an opponent from the power play—even purge can sometimes be survived provided one’s base is preserved intact (e.g., Deng Xiaoping and the “gang of elders” who emerged to play pivotal roles in the purges of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang). The continuing significance of bases is a function of the personalization and lack of formal institutionalization of Chinese politics.

A political base consists of the circle of loyal friends who may be relied upon to render aid when political survival is at stake. A base may be roughly gauged by whether it is wide or narrow, shallow or deep: An official with a network of cronies widely dispersed through the various functional branches of the central civilian and military bureaucracy as well as the provincial apparatus has a “broad” base; an official whose connections date from the Party’s founding, or from Jiangxi or even Yanan, has a “deep” base.¹³ The members of a political leader’s base will expect help from their patron in promoting their careers, while the patron will depend on his protégés to provide support and protection. Thus an upwardly mobile leader will appoint as many base members as possible to formal bureaucratic positions in which these mutual needs can be accommodated. The long and the short of it is that in any given Politburo, whether the distribution of power is hierarchical or collegial may be determined not merely by examining the distribution of formal offices but by comparing the members’ bases. If one member’s base is significantly broader and deeper than that of the others, the distribution of power may normally be assumed to be hierarchical (particularly if other members are found to be former subordinates); if several members have comparable bases, a more collegial relationship may be assumed to obtain.

Members of a Politburo may normally be expected to agree, particularly if the distribution of power is hierarchical and the economy is operating smoothly. But there are at least two types of situations in which “antagonistic” (i.e., irreconcilable) disagreement may be expected

¹³ See Lowell Dittmer, “Bases of Power in Chinese Politics: A Theory and an Analysis of the ‘Gang of Four,’” *World Politics* 31:1 (October 1978): 26–61.

to emerge. One of these has to do with *errors of line*: perhaps because of the inflated claims practicing Marxist-Leninists make about their scientific understanding of the unity of theory and practice in historical development, an error of line has always been deemed sufficient condition for a career-crippling purge. Although decisions later found to be erroneous are in fact typically made by broad consensus, the rules of the game are that blame is then typically consigned to one or two persons. Thus the assignment of guilt is to some extent arbitrary, and liable to precipitate sharp disagreement. Disagreement may also emerge before a decision is made that some members feel will turn out to be erroneous, but this type of disagreement is covered by the rules of democratic centralism and never as bitter as when the mistakes are clear and the onus must be publicly shouldered.

A *succession crisis*, either anticipatory or actual, is the second type of situation likely to provoke antagonistic disagreement within a Politburo. Although most dangerous for the incumbent and for potential candidates for his position, a succession crisis also contains risks for other Politburo members, whose choice could either ensure their future or spell the end of a career. Because succession is a relatively pure power-political issue, factional alignments are apt to shift with great flexibility as different candidates come into consideration.

According to Bunce, succession crises also offer the opportunity for political innovation—and this is to some extent borne out in China, as the reforms launched under Deng Xiaoping's aegis indicate.¹⁴ During the pre-mortem phase of a succession crisis, however—which the longevity of Chinese elites tends to prolong indefinitely—political innovation is typically suppressed by a combination of rival successors and the incumbent leader. Only after a new leadership establishes itself securely enough to create a new political horizon are lasting changes possible. And this normally implies a *primus inter pares* arrangement, enforced when necessary by purge or other organizational sanctions. The diffusion of power in collective leadership is relatively cumbersome even when relations are reasonably collegial, and this is hence usually a transitional arrangement. Factionalism precipitates stalemate and leadership paralysis, a seesaw decision-making process in which new policies may be repeatedly introduced only to be canceled by factional counterattacks.

¹⁴ See Valerie Bunce, *Do New Leaders Make a Difference?* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981); also Elizabeth Perry and Joseph Esherick, "Leadership Succession in the People's Republic of China: Crisis or Opportunity?" *Studies in Comparative Communism* (Fall 1983): 171–177.

During the period of Mao's post-Liberation tenure, currently available evidence leads me to infer that the distribution of power within the Politburo was generally hierarchical; during the 1930s, when Mao was obliged to share power with such rivals as Wang Ming or Zhang Guotao, there seems to have been a more collegial distribution; but in the course of the Zhengfeng movement Mao was able to eliminate his opponents and staff the Politburo with his own supporters. Antagonistic disagreement first surfaced in 1953–1954, resulting in the purge of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi, who seem to have challenged the positions of Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai; whether important issues or culpable policy errors were at stake remains unclear. A dispute arose once again in the summer of 1959 concerning the question of responsibility for the failure of the Great Leap, resulting in the scapegoating of Peng Dehuai. The many disagreements that occurred in the course of the Cultural Revolution (resulting in the purges of Liu Shaoqi, Lin Biao, and the Gang of Four) all revolved around an anticipatory succession crisis, unduly protracted because of Mao's long illness and refusal to make binding pre-mortem succession arrangements. During the post-Mao era, the leadership started out in a collective pattern and gradually evolved toward a *primus inter pares* arrangement. Thanks to the good health of the contenders for power and the fact that the nation encountered no major misfortunes for which blame would have to be allotted, the leadership remained for the most part consensual. The initial power distribution was collective because Mao had left a dark horse (*viz.*, Hua Guofeng), whose base was neither wide nor deep, in control of all three formal leadership positions, and Hua was unable to prevent the reemergence of a number of seasoned gerontocrats—including Ye Jianying, Chen Yun, and Deng Xiaoping—who disposed of much more formidable bases. Deng enlisted Chen Yun in 1977 and proceeded to outmaneuver Hua Guofeng and his supporters (the so-called small gang of four), overriding Ye Jianying's reservations. Into the vacancies left by their purge he installed his own supporters—Hu Yaobang, Hu Qiaomu, Zhao Ziyang, et al.—thus gradually emerging as first among equals. For tactical reasons, Deng conducted this process of eliminating rivals and consolidating his own position (which climaxed at the November 1987 Thirteenth Party Congress with the retirement of Chen Yun, Hu Qiaomu, Peng Zhen, Chen Yun, and Deng Liqun) while simultaneously acceding to his own nominal retirement (in 1990, Deng relinquished his last remaining formal positions). But his actual power seems to have been unaffected; indeed, he has thereby evaded blame for the recent difficulties with inflation and corruption.

The outlook for politics in the immediate future is for continued alternation among these four basic configurations, depending on the distribution of power and agreement within the Politburo. Among the longer-term prospects is a shift from a politics calculated in terms of personal bases to one in which formal positions are an accurate indicator of power and responsibility, and this may indeed occur as socialist legality gains currency and institutionalization takes hold; that it has not yet occurred was best illustrated during the purge of Zhao Ziyang in June 1989, when a group of veterans without formal standing joined to delegitimize Zhao's moderate policy with a harsh crackdown on Tiananmen demonstrators and then force his ouster. It is, however, still conceivable that the sponsorship of policies tailored to appeal to identifiable bureaucratic and social interests will increasingly supersede the depth and breadth of one's elite "connections" as raw material in building a political base, particularly when the generation of old revolutionaries gives ground to their less illustrious successors; the swift rise of Li Peng and Qiao Shi, who have shrewdly aligned themselves with the interests of the central planning and control apparatuses respectively, is a cogent illustration of this possibility. Deng Xiaoping is at this writing an apparently healthy eighty-six-year-old, but the uncertainties of mortality and an ambiguous succession scenario make future disagreement on this question predictable.

From this vantage point succession seems fraught with serious transitional difficulties. Since Deng has completely disrupted his own succession arrangements not once but twice, it seems clear that post-hoc arrangements are the only type he will tolerate, but it is unclear who (if any) among the presently available contenders will survive the demise of their patrons. Meanwhile it is far from certain that reform will continue to foster prosperity and thereby bolster leadership consensus. Indeed, it is unclear whether reform will survive, and if so what form it will take.

Conclusions

Over the past forty years there have been profound changes in the Chinese political system, challenging us to ask ourselves whether these changes fit any coherent pattern and if so where they seem likely to lead. But before undertaking this brave or even foolhardy enterprise it may be useful to try to summarize briefly some of the implications of the foregoing discussion as these apply to the situation in China at this writing. How do we stand?

With regard to ideology, the death of Mao and the demise of continuing revolution, solemnly announced at the Sixth Plenum of the

Eleventh CC in June 1981, have inaugurated a general recession of the role and power of Marxist-Leninist dogma. Although the outlines of the latest ideological gloss have remained stable since the Third Plenum, there are still significant areas of ambiguity: on the one hand individual entrepreneurship is encouraged with the slogan "To get rich is glorious," but on the other there are still drives to emulate the selfless young martyr Lei Feng; the reflectionist conception of ideology rests uneasily with the notion introduced in 1982 that there is a "socialist spiritual civilization" that is to some extent autonomous from the economic base; sometimes the policy of "opening to the outside world" is encouraged, sometimes bitter complaints resound about "spiritual pollution" from that same implied source. More important than these ambivalences are the silences: as ideology retreats to pragmatism ("Practice is the sole criterion of truth."), ideology says less and less about how matters should be arranged in areas of uncertainty where practice has no ready answers. The result is a "crisis of faith."

Ideology has very little to say about modernization, for example—the centerpiece of the era; ideology talks rather about communism, which is (by its own reckoning) receding. Ideology has for practical purposes forfeited its claim to a unique knowledge of transcendence. Modernization is not really an ideologically derived goal, as were the socialization of the means of production or the creation of a proletarian revolutionary culture and a New Man, but rather a goal widely shared throughout the Third World. If the goal of modernization is widely shared, so too are the resources and skills necessary for modernization. The classic proletariat has an important but by no means uniquely important contribution to make. This enables the leadership to shift from the mobilization of an exclusive class constituency against a designated target to the inclusion of all interested social groups in a common project. But it also means the Party risks losing its claim to a monopoly of "scientific" insight into the nature of the goal culture and the uniquely appropriate transfer culture. The cooptation of nonparty experts, as most recently symbolized by the adoption of a civil service examination system for government officials, challenges the Party to redefine the relationship between knowledge and power.

With regard to leadership, the whole relationship between leaders and masses has become problematic, a sleeping dragon. The functional differentiation that accompanies modernization has fragmented mass interests to such an extent that it is increasingly difficult to define a mass consciousness. Mobilization has in any case been more or less ruled out, and any spontaneous expression of opinion from the masses strikes an

extremely sensitive elite nerve. This leaves only the still loathed bureaucracy (here the Maoist bias lingers on) as a medium for contact. How can this relationship be structured in such a way as to provide the leadership with stability and a certain modicum of security while still encouraging needed feedback? As the market sector flourishes, elite-mass contacts are increasingly characterized by market exchange, as in bourgeois democracies, but this is of course beyond the pale. Should Liu Shaoqi's notion of the cloistered Party, with its own cherished subculture of altruism, be resuscitated, or is that unrealistic in market socialism? Electoral democracy has been introduced with a limited latitude for popular choice, but the party has been extremely chary about permitting genuine mass initiatives. The mind-boggling upshot of Eastern European experiments along these lines, with the sudden appearance in 1989–1990 of multiparty electoral democracy in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia, may incline it to even greater paranoia.

With regard to intraelite politics, change seems to have evolved over the years into a somewhat more structured set of possibilities, each possibility being associated with predictable policy outcomes. The point of greatest vulnerability seems still to be the transition phase from one period to another, which tends to be characterized by power struggle and the postponement of decisive policy choices. Part of what gives succession crises such potential for mischief is that they are always on the horizon—particularly in a system with gerontocratic tendencies. The forced resignation of Hu Yaobang from his position as Party general-secretary (and heir apparent to Deng Xiaoping) took place in the context of rumors that Hu had been advocating that Deng retire in his favor, for example, and the undermining of Zhao Ziyang's position in the summer of 1988 may well have been related to the fact that he was now heir apparent (as well as being a sorting out of blame for permitting the student movement to get out of hand, the inflation rate, and other problems). Such crises may be expected to recur during the terminal years of Deng's reign.

What is distinctive about the post-Mao era—as in the Soviet Union since Stalin—is the decline in the power of the Supreme Leader vis-à-vis the rest of the Politburo. The trend toward collective, and perhaps increasingly unstable, leadership seems likely to continue in the future, as a new generation comes to the helm that has not undergone those ordeals (e.g., Long March, civil war, revolution) in which heroism has the chance to manifest itself. A generational shift from legendary heroism to technocratic epigones or “princes” may entail an overall decline in leadership stature. Whereas leadership errors in the past have been those of

excessive adventurism by a leader whose stature allowed him to survive all setbacks, the leadership errors of the future may be those of relative weakness and insecurity.

And what of the future? The phase of economic modernization has been in place now for more than a decade, and the leadership has proclaimed its intention that it should endure for at least a century, but past experience suggests that one stage will be followed by another quite different one somewhat more promptly than that. Is there any logic to the sequence of stages that might allow us to predict what the next stage will look like? Prediction can be hazarded only with great trepidation, but it would seem that each previous stage has drawn to a close when its agenda has been by popular consensus exhausted, or when some major error shatters the faith that further efforts along the same "line" will bear fruit. At this point, the clear priority ranking that characterized the stage in its heyday tends to give way to a confused groping among alternatives. After a period of transition, when vacillation and drift become intolerable, the regime rallies around a new ideological gloss ("line") and policy agenda, focusing with an air of sudden discovery on precisely those areas that were sanctified and sheltered from change in the previous stage.

This would lead us to anticipate that, *ceteris paribus* and *mutatis mutandis*, hitherto suppressed political issues—suppressed in deference to Deng's Four Cardinal Principles—are likely to burst upon the scene during China's next stage of development. Assuming the established pattern holds true, Tiananmen's historical significance will be that of the mortal flaw that presages the twilight of one period and the dawn of the next. The interest in modernization will no doubt survive, becoming politically salient, however, only when it lags behind, as the level of expectations rises. But economic modernization will not be enough: inspired by reference groups in the newly industrialized economies of East Asia as well as by Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the Chinese people are likely to demand at a minimum an emancipation of the mass media, some form of meaningful electoral participation, and a more pluralistic division of power among elites.

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CHAPTER THREE

China's Political Institutions: A Forty-Year Appraisal

RICHARD BAUM

Until the Tiananmen debacle of June 1989 temporarily stalled the process of political reform, China's Party and state institutions had been undergoing a long-term process of growth and transformation. In this chapter we examine the evolution of China's political institutions since 1949. We look first at the Chinese variant of "proletarian dictatorship," introduced into the PRC from the Soviet Union shortly after liberation. We then examine some of the more salient institutional modifications initiated by Mao Zedong during the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–69). Turning next to the post-Mao period, we explore the nature and impact of the many political-legal reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping beginning in 1978, relating these reforms to salient factors in China's domestic and international environments. Finally, we examine China's traumatic political crisis of April–June 1989, assessing the likely effects of that crisis on the long-term process of institutional development as the PRC enters its fifth decade under Communist Party rule.

People's Democratic Dictatorship

With the advent of the Communist regime in October 1949, a new form of state power was introduced in China. Known as "people's democratic dictatorship," the system was modeled closely after the Soviet "dictatorship of the proletariat"—but with one important difference: Whereas the Soviet state nominally comprised a one-class dictatorship, the people's democratic dictatorship embodied—at least in theory—a broad united front made up of four classes: the working class, the peasantry, the small bourgeoisie (including shopkeepers, peddlers, white-collar workers, and intellectuals), and the national bourgeoisie.

Notwithstanding the democratic rhetoric of the united front, at the center of power stood the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), a well-disciplined, hierarchical organization comprising, at any given time, between two and four percent of China's total population. Within this elite body, and particularly within its ruling Central Committee of a few hundred top leaders, all major decisions affecting China's social, economic, military, and foreign policies were made.

A primary function of the Party organization in the early 1950s was to provide leadership over the united front, whose constituent socioeconomic classes were known collectively as "the people." In Leninist theory a Communist Party is the organized vanguard of the working class; in China's Maoist variant of this Leninist principle, the Party ostensibly incorporates the interests of all sectors of "the people" while exercising tight surveillance and control over all putative "enemies of the people"—most notably landlords, big capitalists, criminals, traitors, spies, and other assorted "counterrevolutionaries." Under the people's democratic dictatorship, political rights are reserved exclusively to "the people," while dictatorship is exercised unremittingly over "enemies of the people."

From 1949 to 1953 the Chinese Communists consolidated their power under the mantle of Mao's transitional "new democratic united front." Broad-based representative institutions were established to rally popular support for the regime. The most important of these was the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), a legislative assembly high in popular prestige though lacking in effective political power, since real power was at all times exercised by the CCP. Among the CPPCC's 622 original members were representatives drawn from various occupational groups, social strata, regions, and political parties—Communist and non-Communist alike.

In 1954, with consolidation basically completed and "enemies of the people" effectively neutralized through nationwide land reform and "suppress counterrevolutionaries" campaigns, the informal structure of the united front was supplanted by a formal constitution. Adopted in September 1954, and subsequently revised in 1975, 1978, and most recently in 1982, the PRC constitution proclaimed China to be a people's democratic state and a unitary, multinational state. The constitution stressed the government's commitment to the abolition of exploitation and to the construction of a socialist society under the leadership of the CCP.

The Central Government

The 1954 constitution described a government structure headed by a National People's Congress (legislative branch), a chairman of the republic (head of state), a State Council (executive cabinet), and a Supreme People's Court and Procuracy (judicial branch). The chairman of the republic was elected to a four-year term by the National People's Congress. From 1954 to 1958, Mao Zedong served as head of state. From 1959 to 1968 the post was filled by Mao's erstwhile "comrade-in-arms," Liu Shaoqi. When Liu was purged during the Cultural Revolution, the post (which was largely ceremonial) remained unfilled for almost a decade until it was formally abolished by constitutional revision in 1975. It was restored (also by constitutional amendment) in December 1982; and in June of 1983 the post was expanded from a four- to a five-year term and retitled "president of the republic."¹

Legislative Authority

The National People's Congress (NPC) is defined constitutionally as the highest governmental organ, holding supreme legislative power. Members of the NPC are indirectly elected to five-year terms by provincial-level people's congresses. Although the constitution calls for annual sessions, the NPC failed to meet for almost a decade following the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. Since 1978 the legislative body has met annually, as the post-Mao regime has sought to honor its commitment to strengthen the rule of law in China.

Because of its large size (2,978 deputies in 1988) and infrequent meetings, the NPC delegates much of its legislative authority to a much smaller Standing Committee, led by a single chairman and several vice chairmen. The Standing Committee is empowered to act for the NPC when the latter is not in session. According to the PRC constitution, the NPC elects the president and vice-president of the republic; decides upon the choice of the premier of the State Council (upon nomination by the president of the republic); interprets, amends, and supervises enforcement of the constitution; enacts, amends, and interprets laws and decrees; appoints and removes judges and procurators of the Supreme People's Court and Procuracy; decides on questions of war and peace; examines and approves the state budget; and supervises the work of the

¹ From its inception in 1983 to 1988 the presidential post was held by veteran economic planner and state administrator Li Xiannian; since Li's retirement in 1988 the position has been occupied by Yang Shangkun, a long-time colleague of China's post-Mao reform leader, Deng Xiaoping.

State Council. On paper the NPC is thus a very potent body, although most of its constitutional powers are routinely exercised by its Standing Committee, which in turn is dominated by a small group of high-ranking Party leaders.²

In order to prevent the rise of a self-perpetuating political oligarchy—a condition widely perceived within the PRC as being among the causes of China's Cultural Revolution debacle—the 1982 constitution limits the tenure of the chairman and vice-chairmen of the NPC Standing Committee to two consecutive five-year terms. The chairman of the NPC Standing Committee is nominally the highest ranking lawmaker in the PRC.³

Although widely regarded as a “rubber stamp” parliament, China's NPC enjoyed a renaissance of prestige and authority after 1979. During the September 1980 meeting of the Fifth NPC, for example, delegates were openly permitted to interrogate ministers of state about alleged acts of corruption and mismanagement at high levels of government. At least one vice-minister was dismissed from office and several other leading cadres officially censured in the aftermath of parliamentary interrogations, which were well publicized in the nation's mass media. At the Seventh NPC, held in March 1988, open parliamentary debate and dissent occurred for the first time since the founding of the PRC. Encouraged by Party leader Deng Xiaoping's efforts to promote democratic discussion and debate within the government, individual NPC delegates voiced opposition to a variety of legislative proposals and even voted against officially endorsed candidates. In the aftermath of the bloody military crackdown of June 3–4, 1989, however, the NPC and its Standing Committee meekly reverted to form as rubber stamp bodies, unanimously and without any dissenting voices ratifying the hard-line law-and-order decisions and policies promulgated by conservative Party leaders.

² During the spring 1989 Chinese political crisis, an attempt by a liberal minority of NPC Standing Committee members to convene an emergency session of that body was defeated by conservative Party leaders, thus ensuring that China's legislature would not contravene the martial law orders issued in the name of the State Council by Premier Li Peng.

³ From 1954 to 1959 the post was held by Liu Shaoqi; from 1959 to 1976 it was occupied by Zhu De; following Zhu's death the position went to Ye Jianying, who retired in 1983; from 1983 to 1988 the post was held by Peng Zhen; it is currently occupied by Wan Li. During the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, Wan Li, who had earlier been identified as a pro-reform liberal, was coopted by the Party's conservative leadership; in June of that year he joined a rising chorus of government leaders who supported both the ouster of Party general secretary Zhao Ziyang and the campaign to eradicate “bourgeois liberalism.”

The Executive

The highest organ of executive authority in China is the State Council. The premier of the State Council is the operating chief of government. The State Council is constitutionally empowered to enact administrative rules and regulations; it also submits legislative proposals to the NPC; exercises leadership over its various ministries and commissions; draws up and implements the national economic plan and state budget; conducts foreign affairs; and administers the building of national defense. The work of the State Council is directed by the premier, assisted by several vice-premiers and state councillors, all of whom are limited by the 1982 constitution to serving two consecutive five-year terms in office.⁴

Under a sweeping governmental reorganization plan designed to streamline China's overstuffed and cumbersome state bureaucracy, the number of vice-premiers was reduced in the 1980s from 18 to 3, while the 98 existing ministries and commissions of the State Council were reduced in number through consolidation to 41. Executive sessions of the State Council are composed of the premier, vice-premiers, state councillors, and secretary general of the State Council.⁵

The Judiciary

China's judicial institutions were modeled after those of the Soviet Union. At the apex of the formal system stand the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuracy. Although the 1982 constitution calls for judicial power to be exercised "independently" and without "interference by administrative organizations, public organizations or individuals," in the absence of a doctrine of clear separation of powers both the Supreme People's Court and the Procuracy are politically responsible to the NPC and its Standing Committee.

The Supreme People's Court supervises the administration of justice by lower people's courts at all levels, while the Supreme People's Procuracy directs the work of criminal investigation and public prosecution at all levels. The president of the Supreme People's Court and the procurator general of the Supreme People's Procuracy are selected by the

⁴ From 1954 until his death in January 1976, Zhou Enlai held the premiership; from 1976 to 1980 the post was occupied by Hua Guofeng, who had been handpicked by Mao to succeed Zhou; Hua was replaced in 1980 by Zhao Ziyang, a close associate of Deng Xiaoping; Zhao held the post until 1988, when he resigned to become general secretary of the CCP; he was succeeded as premier by Li Peng.

⁵ It was Li Peng, in his role as premier of the State Council, who announced the government's decision to impose martial law in Beijing on May 20, 1989.

NPC. Overall administrative guidance of law enforcement is provided by the Ministry of Justice, which was restored in the early 1980s after having been abolished for political reasons in the aftermath of the Hundred Flowers movement in 1957.

During the first thirty years of Communist rule in China, the PRC lacked a comprehensive civil or criminal code. And when the Ministry of Justice was abolished by Maoist decree in the late 1950s, during the Great Leap Forward, the Party increasingly took upon itself the task of rendering judgments and imposing penalties in civil and criminal cases alike. This resulted in widespread abuses of authority, particularly during the Cultural Revolution, when intense factional conflict resulted in numerous cases of arbitrary and unlawful arrest, coerced confession, false imprisonment, and even execution.

In order to restore public confidence in China's legal system and to prevent a recurrence of lawlessness, the NPC in 1979 adopted a comprehensive criminal code and code of criminal procedure. The new codes specified, among other things, that people could not be prosecuted simply for holding "reactionary ideas." At the same time, the concept of "due process of law" was strengthened by new legal requirements prohibiting indefinite detention of criminal suspects, guaranteeing the right of the accused to a speedy (and public) trial, and prohibiting convictions based solely upon confession.

Reflecting the spirit of these legal reforms, the 1982 PRC constitution, building on a foundation already established by the constitutional reform of 1978, contained an expanded list of fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. Included in this list were freedom of the press, of assembly, and of association; freedom of religious belief; the right to inviolability of home and person (including prohibitions against unlawful search, seizure, and arrest); the freedom and privacy of personal correspondence; and the right to criticize any state organ or functionary without fear of reprisal. Finally, the principle that "all citizens are equal before the law," originally included in the 1954 constitution but deleted in subsequent revisions, was restored to the constitution in 1982.

Despite such liberalized constitutional principles, however, the CCP retained *de facto* the right to round up habitual dissidents and troublemakers and to sentence them to varying periods of extrajudicial "labor reform." In such cases, due process was deemed inapplicable, and the accused did not enjoy the procedural benefits of formal indictment, trial, or counsel. In addition, under a section of the criminal code of 1979 various "counterrevolutionary" political crimes were enumerated, many of which carried severe prison sentences or even, in particularly

serious cases, capital punishment. The various provisions in this section were used to arrest and imprison almost 2,000 people and to execute 27 others in the immediate aftermath of the Tiananmen debacle of June 1989.

Military Administration

As part of a general trend toward separation of Party and state functions under way since 1979, the 1982 PRC constitution called for creation of a new agency—the Central Military Commission (CMC)—to assume responsibility for overall direction of the nation's armed forces. The chairman and vice-chairmen of the CMC were selected by the NPC and were responsible to that body and its standing committee. Although the CMC was empowered to provide leadership over China's military forces, the dominant role of the Party in setting military policy was clearly reaffirmed in official constitutional commentaries, thus giving rise to a certain amount of ambiguity over the respective military jurisdictions and powers of the state and Party. Throughout the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping served as chairman of the CMC, although on several occasions he publicly indicated a desire to retire from the post.

The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

A carryover from the new democratic united front of the early 1950s, the CPPCC in 1988 counted some 350,000 members, representing 1,600 different organizations throughout the country. The CPPCC generally holds its national convention concurrently with the first session of each new NPC; at these quinquennial meetings it elects a national committee, a chairman, and several vice-chairmen.⁶

After having gone into political eclipse in the late 1950s, the CPPCC reemerged following Mao's death as part of a broad attempt to bolster the regime's sagging prestige and popularity among the Chinese masses. According to its charter, the CPPCC operates on the principle of "long term coexistence and mutual supervision" among the CCP, the democratic parties, and nonparty democratic personages. It conducts political consultations on major state policies and exercises "democratic supervision over the work of the CCP, the people's governments and other state organs" through proposals and criticisms. Its opinions and recommendations carry no binding legal authority, and for this reason it has often been regarded as politically impotent. In recent years, the CPPCC

⁶ From 1949 until his death in 1976, Premier Zhou Enlai served concurrently as chairman of the CPPCC; he was succeeded by his widow, Deng Yingchao.

has played a more visible role in Chinese politics, serving, *inter alia*, as a nongovernmental ("people to people") conduit for the expansion of China's unofficial contacts with the citizens of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao; and the CPPCC has thus emerged as a prime instrument of national policy in the campaign to promote the peaceful reunification of China's "lost territories." In the aftermath of the Tiananmen crisis of 1989, the CPPC was given an expanded (if limited) role in the government's refurbished model of "consultative democracy" promoted by Chinese conservatives as an alternative to genuine multiparty pluralism.

Local Government

For administrative purposes China is divided into 30 first-order divisions, consisting of 22 provinces (excluding the disputed province of Taiwan), 5 autonomous regions, and 3 central municipalities (Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin). The PRC's newest province, Hainan, is an island lying off the southeast coast of the Chinese mainland. Hainan was given full provincial status in 1988 to serve as a model "open province" for foreign trade and investment purposes.

In addition to China's 30 first-order administrative divisions, there are some 199 second-order divisions, consisting of 159 prefectures (previously called special districts), 30 autonomous prefectures, 1 administrative area and 9 leagues. The autonomous prefectures are organs of the central government; the prefectures, administrative area, and leagues are representative agencies of provincial or autonomous regional governments. These second-level units of government, abolished by the 1978 constitution, were restored in 1982.

Finally, China's 2,152 third-order administrative divisions presently include 2,017 counties, 69 autonomous counties, 54 banners, 3 autonomous banners, and 9 "other" administrative units at the county level.

Governmental Administration

Before the Cultural Revolution, the functional divisions of provincial and local government closely paralleled those at the national level: each province and locality had its people's congress, people's council, people's court, and procuracy. These organs were directly responsible to their counterparts at the next highest level, thus creating a nationwide, hierarchical structure of governance. Only at the most basic levels of government (rural commune, township, or urban district) were people's congresses directly elected by the population. At all higher levels (municipality, rural district, county, prefecture, and province), delegates to people's congresses were indirectly elected by congresses at the next

lower level. At each level, the people's congress selected its people's council, which was the apex of local administrative authority.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–69) provincial and local governments ceased functioning and were replaced by a system of “revolutionary committees,” in which an amalgamation of governmental functions took place. Instead of having separate people's congresses and councils, the revolutionary committees (comprised of administrative cadres, soldiers, and representatives of the local masses, all of whom were subject to prior screening and approval by higher level organs) exercised unified control over all governmental functions at each level, under the overall leadership of the Party committee at that level. This system, first introduced in February 1967, remained in operation until June 1979, when the NPC abolished the revolutionary committees and formally reinstated the people's congresses and councils (now renamed people's governments) as the basic organs of state authority at the local and provincial levels.

Also abolished under the reform program introduced after Mao's death were China's rural people's communes, a mainstay of peasant organization and administration since the Great Leap Forward. In 1982 the people's communes were constitutionally dissolved and replaced by townships as the basic-level units of local government in rural China.

In an attempt to strengthen political accountability and responsibility at the grass roots level, direct popular election of delegates to people's congresses at the county level was instituted on a trial basis in 1980, accompanied by the introduction in some areas of the secret ballot. These measures were designed to help alleviate the widespread “crisis of confidence” that had arisen among the populace during the Cultural Revolution, when constitutional procedures were widely ignored and democratic rights of citizens routinely disregarded. Despite the introduction of these electoral reforms, however, to date there has been no significant sharing of power between the CCP and any other political parties or organized groups in China; indeed, apart from a few officially sanctioned “democratic parties” that have operated intermittently as constituent elements of the CPPCC since the early 1950s, no genuine electoral competition has ever been permitted in China.

Central-Local Relations

Although the PRC is constitutionally defined as a unitary state—which means that there are no residual powers of sovereignty reserved exclusively to regional or local government bodies—there have nevertheless been serious, recurrent problems in central-local and interprovincial relations throughout the forty-year history of the PRC. One such problem

has concerned the establishment of a proper balance between centralization and decentralization in governmental decision making and administration.

In the early 1950s, China copied the Soviet pattern of highly centralized ministerial direction of all economic and administrative activity. By 1956, however, Mao had concluded that the Soviet model was overly rigid, giving insufficient play to regional policy requirements and local, grass-roots innovations. In the Great Leap Forward, Mao introduced a radical version of decentralized leadership that took decision-making authority out of the hands of central ministries and put it squarely into the hands of provincial Party committees. One unanticipated consequence of this wholesale downward transfer of authority was a rapid growth in "localism," a phenomenon wherein provincial Party secretaries, having acquired a virtually autonomous economic base, sought to create "independent kingdoms" from which they could challenge central policies and exert leverage on central leaders.

With the failure of the Great Leap in 1959–60, the Party CC adopted new measures to recentralize economic and administrative authority, thereby weakening the autonomy of provincial Party leaders; and throughout the remainder of the Maoist era (with the exception of brief periods of institutional paralysis during the Cultural Revolution in 1967 and 1968), China practiced a hybrid form of "dual rule" that combined vertical (centralized) administrative policy guidance with horizontal (local) Party supervision of policy implementation.

The post-Mao era has witnessed a strong trend in the direction of administrative decentralization in China; unlike the Great Leap, however, this new trend has not been accompanied by a revival of strong provincial or local Party control; on the contrary, local government units are now exercising substantially greater discretionary control over the allocation of resources than ever before, while the authority of Party committees has been sharply curtailed (see below).

One consequence of the radical decentralization of economic and administrative authority in post-Mao China has been an exacerbation of problems associated with the country's uneven geographic distribution of developmental resources—resources such as irrigable farmland, industrial raw materials, investment capital, and infrastructure. China's coastal provinces have in modern times enjoyed a substantial comparative advantage in resource endowment over the more barren and backward interior provinces, a situation that has led to substantial interprovincial disparities in economic growth and prosperity—and hence to intense re-

gional competition for the redistributive benefits of central government economic and fiscal policy.

Under Mao, central government policy was consciously designed to reduce regional disparities, favoring redistribution of resources and subsidies away from coastal provinces to the comparatively disadvantaged regions of the interior. Since the initiation of Deng Xiaoping's foreign investment-oriented "open policy" in 1978–79, however, China's development strategy has once again favored preferential development of the coastal regions, with their ease of access to foreign investors and tourists, their more highly educated, highly skilled labor force, and their more developed infrastructure of social overhead capital (transportation, communications, electric power). The result has been a new intensification of interregional tension and rivalry, with coastal areas generally favoring a further relaxation of central economic controls and inland provinces supporting a stronger role for the central government in promoting interregional equity in the distribution of investment opportunities, incentives, and government subsidies.⁷

A further, endemic source of strain in central-local relations is that many of the PRC's remote outer provinces and autonomous regions are populated largely by non-Han ethnic and national minority groups, including Tibetans, Uighurs, and Mongols. Although ethnic minorities comprise only about 7 percent of China's total population, they tend to be concentrated in a few strategically significant border provinces, thus posing a special geopolitical problem. Although minority rights are constitutionally protected in the PRC, substantial friction has periodically been generated by the contradiction between the central government's desire to impose a uniform political order over all territories of the

⁷ Such interregional rivalries were clearly manifested in the 1983–84 campaign to oppose "spiritual pollution" in China. The campaign was launched by Party conservatives as an indirect attack on Deng's "open policy," which primarily benefited economic development in China's coastal regions—arguably at the expense of the hinterland. In the course of the campaign, provincial leaders in inland areas reportedly hatched plans to sabotage Deng's open policy. When the "spiritual pollution" campaign fizzled out, leaders in inland provinces began to lobby the central government on behalf of their demands for greater equity in the distribution of the benefits of foreign investment. The result was a modification of the "open policy" that served to encourage greater economic cooperation between coast and interior by providing substantial financial incentives for coastal provinces to invest in inland enterprises. Nominally, the "open policy" was not affected by the bloody suppression of China's prodemocracy movement in the spring of 1989; nevertheless, it was dubious whether the "open policy" could be effective when implemented in an environment characterized by intense domestic political repression and intimidation.

republic, on the one hand, and the desire of minority peoples to retain their ethnic, linguistic, and religious identity and autonomy, on the other. Somewhat paradoxically, such friction appears to have intensified since Mao's death, partly as a result of the relaxation of central political and administrative controls. A series of violent confrontations between Tibetan Buddhist demonstrators and Chinese police in 1987–88 underlined the continuing salience of the nationalities question in post-Mao Chinese politics.

The Chinese Communist Party

The principle of Communist Party leadership over all Chinese governmental and social institutions and policies was initially spelled out in the PRC constitution of 1954 and has been reaffirmed in all subsequent constitutional revisions. With 47 million members in 1989—roughly 4.3 percent of the Chinese population—the CCP is defined in the Party's own constitutional charter (first adopted in 1956 and subsequently amended in 1973, 1977, and 1982) as “the vanguard of the Chinese working class, the faithful representative of the interests of the people of all nationalities in China, and the force at the core leading China's cause of socialism.” As such, it is the center of political power and authority in the PRC.

Party Structure and Function

Just as the National People's Congress and State Council have their functional counterparts at lower levels within a hierarchical chain of command and control, so too the CCP is organized in hierarchical fashion. At the apex of Party power stand the National Party Congress and its Central Committee, headquartered in Beijing. Like the NPC, the National Party Congress is elected indirectly by Party congresses at the next lower (i.e., provincial) level, and so on down through county, municipal- and township-level congresses to basic level Party branches in each factory, farm, mine, school, and army unit throughout the country. At each level, the Party congress (or branch) elects its own executive committee and selects delegates to the next higher level Party congress. The major functions of Party organs at the basic (grass roots) level are to carry on propaganda and organizational work among the masses, to recruit new Party members, to strengthen intraparty discipline, to promote labor discipline, and to ensure the fulfillment of local production plans.

Central Party Organs

The National Party Congress (with 1,936 delegates in 1987) is described

in the Party constitution as “the highest leading body of the Party.” The congress meets every five years, although under extraordinary circumstances sessions may be advanced or postponed. The major functions of the National Party Congress are to discuss and decide on major questions concerning the Party; to revise the Party constitution; to elect the Party Central Committee, the Central Advisory Commission, the Military Affairs Commission, and the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection; and to hear and examine reports of the above-named bodies.

The Party Central Committee (comprising 285 members and alternates in 1988) is elected for a five-year term and meets annually. The CC is charged with carrying out the decisions of the National Party Congress; it also directs all work of the Party when the national congress is not in session. The CC elects its Politburo (17 full members and one alternate in 1988), its Standing Committee (5 members), its Central Secretariat (4 full members), and a general secretary. The post of CC chairman, held by Mao Zedong from 1935 until his death in 1976, was formally abolished in December 1982, ostensibly to prevent excessive concentration of power in the hands of a single individual.⁸

The Party Central Secretariat, which ceased functioning during the Cultural Revolution when its director, Deng Xiaoping, was accused of being a “bourgeois powerholder,” was restored to prominence in 1979. The Secretariat attends to the day-to-day work of the CC under the direction of the Politburo and its Standing Committee. The general secretary is responsible for convening meetings of the Politburo and its Standing Committee and presides over the work of the Secretariat. With the abolition of the post of CC chairman in 1982, the general secretary is nominally the highest ranking official in the Communist Party. Yet ultimate authority continues to reside informally in the person of Deng Xiaoping, who continues to be widely referred to in China as the “paramount leader.”⁹

⁸ In 1987 all five members of the Politburo Standing Committee—Hu Yaobang (then 68), Ye Jianying (86), Deng Xiaoping (82), Li Xiannian (78), and Chen Yun (82)—retired from office and were replaced by significantly younger leaders: Zhao Ziyang (68), Li Peng (59), Hu Qili (58), Qiao Shi (63), and Yao Yilin (70). Following the Tiananmen crisis of 1989, the Standing Committee was once again reshuffled; Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili were removed from office, and Jiang Zemin (62), Li Ruihuan (55), and Song Ping were added, raising the number of SC members to six.

⁹ From 1978 to 1987 the post of general secretary was held by long-time Deng Xiaoping associate Hu Yaobang; Hu was pressured to resign early in 1987 amidst charges that he was too soft on “bourgeois liberalization.” He was replaced by another Deng protégé, Zhao Ziyang, who resigned from the premiership to become Party general secretary. In the aftermath of the Tiananmen crisis, Zhao Ziyang was replaced as general secretary by Jiang Zemin, former Party boss of Shanghai and reputed son-in-law of former PRC president Li

The Party's Central Advisory Commission was created in 1982 to act as consultant to the Central Committee. Its current membership of around 200 is drawn from the ranks of veteran Party cadres—defined as those over the age of 70 with more than forty years of service to the Party. Through the creation of the Central Advisory Commission, infirm and elderly Party leaders were encouraged to step aside from their official posts in favor of younger talent—without suffering an attendant loss of dignity or prestige. Previously, the absence of a formal system of routinized retirement for superannuated Party officials meant that many leading cadres retained their posts for life—or until they were purged for political reasons. As a result, the average age of Politburo members had risen to well over seventy by the end of the 1970s, a situation deemed harmful to China's modernization drive.¹⁰

In the course of the Tiananmen crisis in the spring of 1989 it became clear that members of the Central Advisory Commission, despite their formal retirement from the organs of public authority, continued to exercise enormous political power behind the scenes. It was widely reported, for example, that a cabal of Party elders—including Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Peng Zhen, Wang Zhen, and Deng Yingchao, in addition to Deng Xiaoping and president Yang Shangkun—virtually seized power in the weeks following Hu Yaobang's death on April 15, 1989, relaying their commands through younger protégés and clients on the Politburo Standing Committee, including premier Li Peng, vice-premier Yao Yilin, and Qiao Shi.¹¹

The CCP's Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC), made up of 69 members in 1987, was established in December 1978 to replace the defunct Party Central Control Commission, which ceased operations during the Cultural Revolution. The new CDIC was charged with the task of enforcing Party rules and restoring Party discipline—a task of considerable importance and delicacy insofar as the morale and working spirit of the CCP had been visibly undermined during the Cultural Revolution, when large numbers of Party members and cadres had allegedly been subjected to wrongful persecution and dismissal. One of the key tasks set for the CDIC was to review the credentials and past

Xiannian. That Deng Xiaoping continues personally to exercise ultimate authority over all major Party policies and decisions was revealed in May 1989 by Zhao Ziyang in the course of a widely publicized meeting with Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev.

¹⁰ Deng Xiaoping was named first chairman of the Central Advisory Commission in September 1982; he was succeeded in 1987 by Chen Yun.

¹¹ Li Peng is the adopted son of Zhou Enlai and Deng Yingchao. Qiao Shi reputedly enjoys the patronage of Chen Yun.

behavior of all current Party members—and to appropriately rectify those found wanting. Between 1982 and 1987, several tens of thousands of CCP members were reportedly subjected to various disciplinary measures, including expulsion from the Party. Following the Tiananmen crisis of May–June 1989, the CDIC launched a nationwide rectification campaign designed to weed out supporters of “bourgeois liberalization.”¹²

Regional and local DICs are responsible for maintaining Party discipline at each level of CCP organization. Under this system, Communist Party members who commit violations of Party rules or who engage in acts of unethical or illegal behavior are not subject to state administrative or judicial sanction, but rather are accountable only to intraparty disciplinary proceedings.

Party Operations

Under a system of organization borrowed from the Soviet Union, the CCP operates according to the principle of “democratic centralism,” whereby once a policy decision has been made, lower levels are obligated to obey higher levels and the minority is obligated to obey the majority. Under this system, full democratic discussion, dissent, and debate are permitted during the predecisional phase; but once a decision has been reached, all Party members are expected to close ranks in a show of unity and discipline.

For a brief period in the early 1970s, under the urging of the radical faction of the Party headed by the so-called Gang of Four, a provision was inserted into the Party constitution permitting individual Party members to “swim against the tide” of organizational authority in the event that incorrect or harmful decisions were made—that is, to disregard the traditional demands of Party discipline. This provision was interpreted as an open invitation to factionalism, however, and was dropped from the Party constitution in 1977, following the purge of the Gang of Four.

Separation of Party and State

In addition to assuming primary responsibility for political education, ideological guidance, and discipline, Party committees at each level have historically exercised general supervision over the work of governmental organs, administrative units, and enterprises (including schools, factories,

¹² From its inception in 1978 to 1987, the CDIC was headed by Chen Yun, himself a victim of Cultural Revolution persecution. Qiao Shi succeeded Chen as CDIC chairman in 1987.

and farms) to ensure that Party policies were faithfully executed. This system of Party oversight comprised the essence of "dual rule," under which managers and directors of all work units were held accountable not just to their administrative superiors at the next higher level, but also to the Party committee at their own level.

Because of the Party's broad supervisory powers, and because Party leaders frequently wore multiple hats (i.e., concurrently occupied dominant positions in governmental or state administrative agencies), political power at every level in China tended to be concentrated in the hands of a small group of senior Party elites—many (if not most) of whom were neither well educated nor technically proficient. Recognizing that this situation of highly concentrated power served to impede "expert" administration and management of the economy while also lending itself to abuse by unscrupulous Party officials (as happened most noticeably during the Cultural Revolution), China's post-Maoist leaders set out to create a clear separation between Party and state administrative functions and personnel. Pursuant to this policy, at the September 1980 meeting of the NPC a number of senior governmental leaders (including premier Hua Guofeng and first vice-premier Deng Xiaoping, among others) resigned their governmental posts to concentrate exclusively on their duties as Party leaders. These high-level resignations set a precedent for others to follow; and throughout the 1980s a concerted effort was made to separate Party officeholders at every level from their concurrent positions of governmental or state administrative responsibility.¹³

In line with the post-Mao regime's initial attempt to separate more clearly Party and governmental responsibilities and to give greater scope and autonomy to the latter, specialized managerial personnel and administrative "experts" were given greater authority over economic planning and management functions at every level; by the same token, local Party committees were instructed to confine their activities primarily to politi-

¹³ Such separation has apparently been more successful at lower levels of the political system than at the highest levels. Thus, a number of top-ranking central leaders continue to hold office in both Party and state bureaucracies. Examples include premier Li Peng and vice-premier Yao Yilin, both of whom serve concurrently as members of the Politburo Standing Committee; and president Yang Shangkun, vice-premiers Tian Jiyun and Wu Xueqian, NPC Standing Committee chairman Wan Li, defense minister Qin Jiwei, and education minister Li Tieying, all of whom serve concurrently on the CC Politburo. Further confirmation of the absence of a clear de facto separation of powers between Party and government was provided in the course of the Tiananmen crisis of spring 1989, wherein virtually all important decisions were made by an informal cabal whose most visible members were Deng Xiaoping, Yang Shangkun, and Li Peng.

cal and ideological work, that is, to conducting educational and propaganda activities among the masses. In theory—and as a matter of policy—local Party secretaries are no longer permitted to meddle randomly in the managerial decisions and operations of local administrative bodies and work units; in practice, however, it is clear that such prohibitions have not been fully or adequately enforced.

Communist Youth League

In addition to its regular organization, the Party maintains a nationwide youth auxiliary, the Communist Youth League (CYL). Made up of politically active, ideologically progressive youths aged 14 to 25, the CYL is constitutionally defined as “a school where large numbers of young people will learn about communism through practice; it is the Party’s assistant and reserve force.” It helps recruit and train future Party members. In 1965 youth league membership exceeded 30 million. During the Cultural Revolution, however, the league was disbanded and superseded by a new mass organization of young people, the Red Guards; and the CYL’s top leader, Hu Yaobang, was purged as a “bourgeois powerholder.” In the 1970s, following the demobilization of the Red Guards, the CYL was revived and its top leaders—including Hu Yaobang, who would later serve as Party general secretary—were rehabilitated. By 1978 the organization had expanded to 48 million members and appeared fully revitalized.

Before the advent of China’s post-Mao reforms, the CYL offered a publicly accepted, politically exclusive route to a successful career for upwardly mobile Chinese youths. For this reason, many (if not most) young people actively sought out league membership and submitted voluntarily to its regimen of ideological indoctrination and political discipline. With the advent of market reforms in the 1980s, however, and with the consequent opening of new careers and avenues of social mobility to talented young people outside established Party and state administrative channels, China’s “best and brightest” no longer flocked willy-nilly into the CYL. Indeed, by the mid 1980s the league faced a mounting recruitment crisis, as it was forced to compete with other, less ideologically orthodox organizations and activities for the attention of China’s increasingly pragmatic and materialistic young people.

National Defense

Prior to the creation of the state Central Military Commission in 1982, overall direction of defense policy in China was exercised by the Military Affairs Commission (MAC) of the Party CC, headed by the Par-

ty chairman. With the creation of the CMC, and the concurrent abolition of the post of CC chairman, there was some confusion over the relationship between the two military commissions, particularly insofar as they initially shared the same leadership.¹⁴

The apparent intent of the drafters of the 1982 constitutional amendment creating the CMC had been to place the People's Liberation Army (PLA) under central government (rather than CCP) control—for the first time since Liberation. This interpretation was challenged by old-line Party conservatives, however; and in December 1982 conservative Politburo member Hu Qiaomu asserted that the Party's MAC would continue to exercise general leadership over the PLA. At the same time, he conceded that since overlapping membership in the two commissions was possible (indeed, their leaders were virtually identical), a merger between the two bodies might occur at some time in the future. At the Thirteenth Party Congress, held in November 1987, Deng Xiaoping was reappointed chairman of the Party MAC; Zhao Ziyang was named first vice chairman; and Yang Shangkun became "permanent" vice-chairman.¹⁵

The People's Liberation Army

Dating back to the civil war against the Kuomintang, a close connection has always existed between military commanders and civilian Party leaders in China's provinces. Deng Xiaoping himself served as a ranking officer in the PLA's Second Field Army during the civil war, a position that enabled him to forge close ties with a number of China's senior troop commanders and regional Party leaders.

After liberation in 1949, military control commissions were installed as transitional organs of administrative authority throughout China, with PLA unit commanders generally doubling as administrative heads in their local areas of assignment. This close relationship between military and civilian leadership at the provincial and local levels was

¹⁴ Deng Xiaoping chaired both military commissions, while veteran military/party leaders Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, and Yang Shangkun all served concurrently as vice-chairmen of the two organizations. By 1987, however, death and retirement had left Yang the sole remaining vice-chairman of the CMC.

¹⁵ Before the Thirteenth Congress, it had been widely reported that Deng wished to retire from the MAC chairmanship in favor of Zhao Ziyang; however, opposition by Party conservatives to Zhao's imminent promotion apparently forced Deng to withdraw his resignation and remain in the post. Although Jiang Zemin was later selected to chair the MAC following Deng's 1989 retirement, in the course of the Tiananmen crisis it became clear that Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun were the key players who directed the military suppression of the prodemocracy movement in Beijing.

maintained even after the PLA withdrew from governmental administration in 1953. And throughout the 1950s and 1960s, army units generally remained stationed in their initial regions of assignment, with their commanders occupying important governmental and/or Party posts.

Under defense minister Lin Biao, a protégé of Mao Zedong, the PLA gained substantial political power and influence during the 1960s, culminating in military occupancy of over 40 percent of the seats on the Party CC in the later stages of the Cultural Revolution. Following Lin's unsuccessful 1971 coup against Mao, however, the PLA underwent a substantial diminution in its political role; and by the 1980s, major troop reductions and a general military reorganization had brought the army back under effective civilian control.

Before the military reorganization of 1984–85, China's armed forces were divided into 11 regional commands. The PLA consisted of 4.2 million soldiers, making it the largest armed force in the world. Ground forces consisted of 305 divisions (3.4 million men), equipped with approximately 10,000 tanks and 40,000 pieces of light, medium and heavy artillery; the air force comprised 415,000 men and 4,750 jet fighter aircraft; and the navy consisted of 350,000 men and a total of 1,650 ships, the vast majority of which were small and medium-sized vessels employed mainly in coastal defense. China's strategic forces reportedly included several hundred nuclear and thermonuclear devices, launchable by approximately 80 medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs), a similar number of intermediate-range missiles (IRBMs), and perhaps as many as a dozen intercontinental missiles (ICBMs), each with a range of 4,000–4,500 miles. A longer-range missile (8,000 miles) was also being developed and was reportedly undergoing firing tests.

Under the PLA reorganization plan introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1984–85, China's 11 existing military regions were consolidated into 7; overall troop strength of the PLA was reduced by almost 25 percent (with reductions coming mainly from military security, production, and construction personnel, rather than from combat forces); at the same time, almost 50,000 senior military officers were retired from active duty—approximately 10 percent of the total.

Once (under Lin Biao) considered a revolutionary “school for Mao Zedong Thought,” the PLA no longer principally employs the guerrilla doctrines of Maoist “protracted war”; instead, the PLA has, since 1979, modernized its strategy, tactics, and weaponry to conform to contemporary battlefield conditions. (The new concept is sometimes referred to as “people's war under modern conditions.”) Moreover, a substantial portion of the budgetary savings effected by the military reorganization

of 1984–85 has been earmarked for educational and technological upgrading of China’s defense forces.

Post-Mao Institutional Reform

With the death of Mao and the arrest of the Gang of Four, China entered a new stage of political development. In 1977 the Cultural Revolution was officially terminated; in that same year Deng Xiaoping was rehabilitated—for the second time.¹⁶ In his new role as vice-premier of the State Council and vice-chairman of the Party CC, Deng co-presided (along with Mao’s handpicked successor, Hua Guofeng) over the initiation of a comprehensive developmental program—the “Four Modernizations”—designed to enable China to become a major industrial and military power by the year 2000.

Key elements in this new program included decentralization of economic planning and administration; restoration of material incentives and free markets (including limited private ownership of the means of production); reform of irrational, state-controlled commodity prices; the rehabilitation and incorporation of China’s erstwhile “bourgeois” intellectuals; expansion of China’s commercial contacts and relations with the outside world, in particular with advanced capitalist countries; vigorous promotion of scientific and technological research and development, including a major program of foreign technology acquisition and educational exchange; and strengthening of “socialist democracy” and the “rule of law” in the political-legal system.

The Democracy Movement of 1978–79

Massive violations of citizens’ rights during the Cultural Revolution—and the resultant nationwide “crisis of confidence”—made the issue of political-legal reform a top priority for the post-Mao regime. The issue came to a head in the period immediately preceding the Central Committee’s landmark Third Plenum of December 1978.

In November 1978, a small number of anonymous, handwritten posters appeared on a walled compound lining Beijing’s main thoroughfare. Among other things, the posters demanded an official inquiry into the notorious “Tiananmen incident” of April 1976; the reha-

¹⁶ Deng’s first rehabilitation came in 1973, when he was rescued from Cultural Revolution ignominy at the behest of Premier Zhou Enlai. Deng’s initial comeback was short lived, however; a few months after Zhou’s death in January 1976 he was toppled from power again as a result of the “Tiananmen incident,” wherein Deng was accused by the Gang of Four of masterminding a conspiracy to discredit Mao and the radical leaders of the Cultural Revolution.

bilitation of falsely maligned Party leaders; and a general repudiation of—and redress of grievances suffered during—the Cultural Revolution.

The appearance of the wall posters was timed to coincide with the opening of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh CC. At the plenum a decision was taken to rehabilitate virtually every top Party leader purged by Mao Zedong and the ultraleftists since 1959. Also at this meeting, a series of pragmatic economic reforms was proposed that, taken together, spelled the end of Maoism as the dominant political-economic philosophy in China. Finally, in a move not unrelated to the carefully orchestrated campaign to generate public pressure for a “reversal of verdicts” on the Tiananmen incident, Party leaders approved the use of wall posters by Chinese citizens to air their personal grievances and to express their political views. Not surprisingly, this new policy of free expression received considerable support from those who had something to gain by public airing of Cultural Revolutionary dirty linen—most notably Deng Xiaoping himself.

Socialist Legality and the “Rule of Law”

As the democracy movement began to take root in China, parallel developments were taking place in the legal realm. In the aftermath of the Third Plenum, people’s courts at all levels were given the enormous task of reviewing all allegations of illegal or unwarranted legal persecution that had occurred during the Cultural Revolution. By June 1980 more than 1.1 million cases were reinvestigated; verdicts were reversed in more than 260,000 of these.

Closely related to the wholesale reversal of CR verdicts was the NPC’s February 1979 adoption of new rules severely limiting the use of police powers of arrest and detention in political cases; shortly thereafter, tens of thousands of intellectuals and others who had been arbitrarily labeled “rightists” in 1957 were categorically cleared of wrongdoing and rehabilitated by governmental decree.

Altogether, the NPC enacted seven new pieces of reformist legislation in 1979, along with a number of constitutional amendments that, inter alia, strengthened existing legal norms and reinforced the political independence of courts and the procuracy. The most highly publicized of the new laws were the criminal code and the code of criminal procedure (see above).

Even before the ink was dry on the new reformist legislation, however, a fresh series of latent political-legal contradictions began to emerge. One such contradiction centered on the government’s decision, taken in the early spring of 1979, abruptly to terminate the short-lived democracy movement and to arrest and prosecute two of China’s leading

democratic activists, Fu Yuehua and Wei Jingsheng. The imprisonment of the two dissident leaders—on charges that seemed to many observers substantially exaggerated, if not wholly fabricated—seemed to violate the regime's newly articulated norms of political tolerance, free speech, and due process of law. Notwithstanding such apparent violation, the arrest of the two Chinese dissidents presaged a new wave of officially sanctioned harassment against human rights activists and signaled the imminent closure of Beijing's notorious "democracy wall."¹⁷

The abrupt termination of the democracy movement after the spring of 1979 underlined the existence of a fundamental tension between the rule of law and the new regime's demand for social order and discipline. The significance of this latent contradiction became clearer in 1979 with the promulgation of the CCP's "four fundamental principles"—a condensed restatement of Mao Zedong's famous six criteria, initially formulated in 1957, for distinguishing between politically permissible "fragrant flowers" and reactionary "poisonous weeds." According to the four fundamental principles, constitutional rights of free speech, press, and assembly were guaranteed only insofar as they were exercised in support of socialism, Party leadership, the people's democratic dictatorship, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. Otherwise, it was asserted, they would interfere with the stability and unity of the state—and thereby impede the Four Modernizations.

In line with the new emphasis on stability and unity, in the autumn of 1979 Deng Xiaoping, in an ironic about-face from his previous position of support for free expression, personally launched a drive to eradicate the phenomenon of "extreme individualism." Defining extreme individualism as a case in which "the person in question wants absolute freedom for himself at the expense of... the freedom of others [and] the interests of the state," Deng asserted that such things were intolerable; and he warned that Chinese citizens were "not allowed to attack and slander other people at will."¹⁸ Pursuant to this exhortation Deng proposed, in January of 1980, to constitutionally abolish the so-called "four big freedoms," which guaranteed the right of Chinese citizens to put up wall posters and engage in public debates. Deng's proposal was subsequently ratified by the NPC; and the "four bigs" were deleted from the

¹⁷ Fu Yuehua and Wei Jingsheng were subsequently tried and found guilty of "counter-revolutionary crimes"; both were sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

¹⁸ Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report—China* (hereafter, FBIS), March 6, 1980, p. L23.

PRC constitution in September of 1980—less than two years after they had first been adopted.

The contradiction between democracy and discipline, between law and order, was not the only incongruity to emerge at the dawning of the post-Mao reform era in China. Another emergent issue concerned the separation of powers between the Party and the judiciary in China. Ever since the founding of the PRC in 1949, Party control over judicial administration had been the norm in China, rather than the exception. Police, prosecutors, and judges had routinely consulted with Party committee secretaries in the performance of their duties, relying upon the latter to provide guidance in judicial decision making. Indeed, throughout the trials of Wei Jingsheng and Fu Yuehua (as well as during the subsequent show trial of the Gang of Four) Party officials took the lead in demanding stern punishment; in the aftermath of these trials public debate was joined on the question of the need to strengthen judicial autonomy.

In the autumn of 1979 a number of media articles bluntly and provocatively asserted the supremacy of law over Party policy, demanding an end to CCP intervention in judicial affairs; and in August 1980 the president of the Supreme People's Court issued a call for Party officials at all levels to stop meddling in the administration of criminal justice, arguing that "party leaders at all levels...are not allowed to substitute their words for law, regard their own opinion as law, and arbitrarily require others to enforce it."¹⁹

Bolstered by Deng Xiaoping's emphatic appeal to the NPC in September 1980 to separate Party leadership from governmental administration, the principle of "necessary judicial autonomy" was explicitly asserted in the revised 1982 PRC constitution, which also contained strong language prohibiting any persons (including Party members) from "enjoying the privilege of being above the constitution and the law."

Despite such injunctions, many in the CCP apparatus clearly opposed the new "separation of functions" policy; and numerous Party cadres continued openly to flaunt their authority in administrative matters, including judicial decision making. In 1985, for example, it was officially acknowledged that Party organizations and leaders in many places "still hold onto the notion that the Party exercises leadership over everything. This has prompted them to substitute Party leadership for administration and regard their own words as law." Such an attitude of disrespect for law was said to have reached "serious proportions."²⁰ Less

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, August 27, 1980, p. L7.

²⁰ *Beijing Review* 6 (February 11, 1985):4.

than a year later China's minister of justice conceded that the Cultural Revolution's ethos of political lawlessness "has yet to be completely eradicated."²¹

One reason for the apparent intractability of the problem was the stubborn persistence of a traditional intraparty norm which held that CCP members were immune from formal judicial proceedings. Though seemingly annulled by the language of the 1982 constitution, this norm was not easily discarded in practice; and throughout the mid- and late-1980s it was standard procedure for Party members and cadres accused of breaking the law to face not judicial trial and punishment (as called for in the new constitution) but extrajudicial Party discipline only, a practice that often amounted to a mere ideological wrist slap or job transfer or, in the most serious cases, expulsion from the Party—but which rarely resulted in the incarceration of a wrongdoer.

Although CCP leaders have repeatedly called for a severe crack-down on official abuses of power and authority, the Party organization has thus far demonstrated little willingness to expose its own cadres (and their overprotected children, many of whom have been implicated in crimes of economic corruption, speculation, and profiteering) to the impersonal scrutiny of the police, courts, or procuracy. Such resistance has been a source of substantial popular alienation and disaffection in China; and a growing number of prominent Chinese "liberal" intellectuals—most notably astrophysicist Fang Lizhi and journalist Liu Binyan, both of whom were expelled from the CCP in 1987 for their support of student demonstrations—have openly demanded, among other things, an end to the Party's double standard of judicial immunity.

In the spring of 1989 the twin issues of cadre corruption and a judicial double standard for relatives of high officials surfaced once again in conjunction with the resurgence of China's prodemocracy movement. Throughout April and May, widespread popular anger over rampant profiteering by the offspring of high-level Party cadres (a phenomenon known as *guandao*) added considerable fuel to antigovernment protests in China's cities.

Vicissitudes of Political Reform

Following the initial upsurge of CCP interest in political reform from 1979 to 1982, a four-year hiatus ensued during which structural reform of the economy displaced serious consideration of further political reform as the top priority of the regime. Then, in the summer of 1986, the

²¹ Ibid., 31 (August 5, 1985): 26.

issue of political reform was joined once again with the open dissemination of a report, first issued by Deng Xiaoping in 1980, entitled "On Reforming the System of Party and State Leadership."

In his original report, Deng had launched a blistering attack on the Party's prevailing system of leadership, which was said to be marked by excesses of "bureaucratism, over-concentration of power, patriarchal methods, life tenure in leading positions, and various types of privileges."²² Re-publication of Deng's report in 1986 signaled a renewal of regime interest in addressing these outstanding problems, which had clearly not been resolved in the interim.

The State Council set up a "Central Deliberation Group for Political-Structural Reform" in September 1986 to grapple with the issues raised in Deng's report and to make recommendations for further reform. The group included a cross-section of Party and governmental leaders;²³ soon after its formation, a vigorous public debate was launched throughout the country. For a brief period it seemed that democratic reform was about to receive another major boost in China.

In the event, this expectation proved premature. Encouraged by the regime's seeming receptivity to public opinion, college students in several cities organized public demonstrations in the late fall and early winter of 1986-87 in support of expanded democratic rights, civil liberties, and social welfare. Spurred on by leading Party liberals, including Hu Yaobang and the even more outspoken Fang Lizhi, student activists soon stirred feelings of unease in the minds of moderate and conservative Party leaders who feared that student demonstrations might get out of hand and serve as a rallying point for antiregime agitation, for example, among workers and urban consumers who were known to be increasingly restive over high rates of inflation and over a reported rise in the incidence of economic corruption and nepotism within the Party. In such a situation of heightened anxiety, a crackdown became increasingly plausible.

The initial crackdown came early in 1987, with the launching of a conservative-led media campaign against "bourgeois liberalization"; when the dust settled, several of the CCP's leading liberal spokesmen, including Hu Yaobang, Fang Lizhi, and Liu Binyan, had been silenced—with Fang and Liu being dismissed from the Party as well.²⁴

²² *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975-1982)* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984), p. ???

²³ Members included Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, Tian Jiyun, Bo Yibo, and Peng Chong.

²⁴ In retrospect, these events seem clearly to have foreshadowed the sanguinary developments of May-June 1989.

With the issues of political liberalization and democratization thus shelved, at least temporarily, official emphasis shifted to the task of reforming China's system of recruiting, evaluating, promoting, and retiring government officials and administrative cadres—that is, to the creation of a true “civil service” system. It was hoped that the introduction of such a system would enable China to avoid the endemic pitfalls of factionalism, clientelism, and nepotism that had long plagued China's massive state and Party bureaucracies, leading to gross inefficiencies in the public sector and contributing to the increased alienation of China's citizenry. As a first step in the direction of comprehensive civil service reform, a new Ministry of Personnel was created within the State Council in 1988; soon thereafter China's Political Science Institute was assigned the task of reviewing various alternative plans for civil service reform and making concrete policy recommendations to the State Council.

The Tiananmen Crisis

All plans for additional political reform were put on indefinite hold when PLA tanks entered Tiananmen Square on the night of June 3–4, 1989. China's conservative elder statesmen, having previously resisted on several occasions the loss of political control implicit in the process of “bourgeois liberalization,” now acted decisively to reverse that process. A curtain of totalitarian-style repression quickly descended over China, leaving in its wake the most serious political crisis the country had faced since the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976.

The crisis was foreshadowed by a wave of student demonstrations that occurred following Hu Yaobang's unexpected death—the result of a heart attack—on April 15. Demanding expanded rights of free expression and political democracy, student demonstrators drew additional energy from mounting social frustration over uncontrolled urban inflation, rising inequities in income distribution, flagrant official corruption, and nepotism. The admixture of student protest and generalized urban discontent proved highly combustible.

Initially, Communist Party leaders wavered in their response to student demands. At first mildly tolerant and paternalistic, the official response turned decidedly hostile in the last week of April. On April 26, an editorial in the official *People's Daily* denounced the student demonstrations as a “turmoil” hatched by a small group of habitual “troublemakers” for the purpose of undermining the country's unity and stability. If the intent of the editorial had been to disarm and delegitimize the protest or to frighten its leaders, the actual impact was precisely the opposite. By refusing to credit the students' grievances and by questioning

their very patriotism, Party leaders appeared callous and indifferent; to many students—and to increasing numbers of nonstudents as well—it seemed that the authorities simply did not care about the problems and frustrations of ordinary people.

When protest demonstrations doubled in size following publication of the April 26 editorial, Party leaders, sensing that they had overplayed their hand, began to backpedal, softening somewhat their critique of the student movement. Emboldened by this apparent retreat the protesters redoubled their efforts; on the eve of Mikhail Gorbachev's long-awaited visit to Beijing in mid-May, several hundred students—encouraged by several thousand supporters and onlookers—began a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square.

During Gorbachev's visit, while fasting students and their supporters occupied Tiananmen Square and legions of foreign journalists and TV cameras recorded the scene in great detail, the Chinese government refrained from cracking down. As the Gorbachev visit progressed and daily demonstrations forced cancellation or rescheduling of a number of official ceremonies, however, the attitude of the leadership hardened. The CCP general secretary, Zhao Ziyang, who preferred to adopt a conciliatory posture toward the protesters, found himself outvoted by a hard-line faction headed by Premier Li Peng and backed by Deng Xiaoping, Yang Shangkun, and an influential group of elderly, semiretired conservatives from the Central Advisory Committee.

Following the conclusion of Gorbachev's visit on May 18, the situation in Tiananmen Square quickly deteriorated. When a last-ditch plea by Party and government leaders failed to persuade striking students to leave the square, martial law was declared in Beijing by Premier Li Peng on May 20. Like the April 26 *People's Daily* editorial, however, the declaration quickly backfired. Instead of damping the flames of social protest and dissent, the government's action galvanized public support for the students. When troops of the 38th army attempted to enter central Beijing en route to Tiananmen square, huge crowds composed of students, workers, housewives, elderly pensioners, and other local residents halted the advancing columns. Faced with such broad popular resistance, the military pulled back, leaving the students and their new-found urban allies in effective control of the square.

With a virtual stand-off in effect, toward the end of May the ranks of the hunger strikers and their supporters slowly dwindled as exhausted, unwashed, hot, thirsty students began to return to their campus dormitories. Facing the prospect of defeat by attrition, movement leaders sought to inject new life into the demonstration. On May 30, a thirty-

foot-high “goddess of democracy” was erected in Tiananmen Square as a symbol of the movement’s hopes and aspirations. Outraged by this final act of student defiance, Party hard-liners resolved to end the student occupation of the square as quickly as possible, using whatever means necessary. The stage was now set.

In the predawn hours on Saturday morning, June 3, squads of unarmed soldiers and police moved to reoccupy Tiananmen Square. Once again, crowds of local residents—students and nonstudents alike—stopped them and forced them to turn back. The government’s second such humiliating defeat in two weeks was apparently more than Party hard-liners could bear. On the evening of June 3, they resorted to naked force. In the twilight and early evening hours, elements of several army groups, armed with automatic rifles and fixed bayonets and supported by convoys of tanks, trucks, and armored personnel carriers (APCs), left their encampments at the outskirts of Beijing and marched toward Tiananmen Square—under orders to retake the square at all costs, under threat of severe military discipline for failure to obey. In the ensuing assault, chaos and confusion spread quickly. At several different locations around the city, enraged citizens set fire to advancing army trucks and APCs, physically attacking crew members and ultimately dismembering at least one soldier. Several soldiers were beaten; at least two were doused with gasoline and set afire; one was hanged. Around midnight on Sunday morning, June 4, troops advancing toward Tiananmen on Beijing’s main thoroughfare, Changan Boulevard, opened fire, randomly and seemingly without clear military purpose, on crowds of citizens—students, workers, and bystanders alike, the vast majority of whom were unarmed. Some analysts and eyewitnesses describe the events that followed as a wholesale military riot. Although the number of killed and wounded can only be estimated, it is probable that as many as 1,000 people died, including several dozen soldiers. Total casualties reportedly exceeded 9,000.

In the wake of the army’s assault on Tiananmen, an electric atmosphere gripped Beijing. Troops took up positions throughout the city and for the next two days continued to fire sporadically on protesters and bystanders alike. Confronted with signs of a split in the military and the sudden disappearance of many of China’s senior leaders, Western experts and newsmen feared the worst, believing that China might be on the verge of civil war. Within four days, however, it had become clear that a major confrontation had been averted through behind-the-scenes negotiations. On June 9, the leadership reappeared—minus the purged liberal Zhao Ziyang—signaling the initiation

of a full-scale campaign of suppression and intimidation against all those deemed responsible for inciting, aiding, or abetting the so-called counter-revolutionary rebellion. In the weeks that followed, security police and military units made sweeping arrests, and a shrill political and ideological propaganda campaign was launched of a sort not seen in China since the Maoist era. By the end of June, 27 people accused of participating in violent attacks on soldiers and security personnel had been executed and some 1,800 others had been arrested.

Observers were divided as to the likely long-term effects and ramifications of the Tiananmen assault. Was political reform totally dead in the water? Would there be recurrent urban civil disorder and violence, possibly triggering new—and possibly even more brutal—military repression in the future? Or would the reform process begin to gather momentum again after a decent interval had elapsed, perhaps after the CCP's arch-conservative elder statesmen had begun to pass from the scene? No one could be certain. In view of the sheer scope and ferocity of the government's crackdown on liberal critics after June 3, however, the odds on renewed institutional reform at any time in the foreseeable future seemed long indeed.

Conclusion: The Limits of Institutional Reform

The assault on Tiananmen Square highlights the continued existence of a series of political and institutional problems and contradictions in post-Mao China. These contradictions center upon the fundamental question of political power—Who governs? More concretely, they revolve around the lingering issues of entrenched political privilege, arbitrary authority, and impaired free expression.

Historically, entrenched Party elites in Communist systems have proven highly resistant to challenges to their monopoly of power; thus, each time China's post-Mao reformers have edged toward greater political and ideological pluralism and permissiveness, there has followed a potent backlash of conservative criticism and retrenchment. The wave of political repression that followed the Tiananmen assault is just the latest—if by far the most violent and catastrophic—of these episodes.

The Tiananmen crackdown clearly sobered those Western analysts—the present author included—who had previously expressed the belief that further progress toward political pluralism in China was inevitable, simply a matter of time. Nevertheless, and despite the prevailing mood of pessimism and despair that enveloped the PRC on the eve of its fortieth anniversary, there remained at least a glimmer of hope for the future.

In the first place, although the CCP has remained firmly entrenched in power, permitting no significant organized opposition to gain a foothold (e.g., through truly competitive elections), the nature and complexion of the Party have undergone substantial alteration in the 1980s. As a direct result of Deng Xiaoping's campaign to recruit younger men and women of talent to take the place of superannuated leading officials, from 1984 to 1986 an elite group of approximately 1,000 well educated, technically proficient cadres in their forties and fifties were promoted to positions of political and administrative responsibility in central and provincial organs of power. Below this top-level group another 30,000 talented young and middle-aged cadres were selected for special grooming at the prefectural and municipal levels, with an additional 100,000 chosen at the county level. Collectively, these new elites are known as the "third echelon."²⁵ In training, talent, and disposition the leaders of the third echelon are considerably more pragmatic and cosmopolitan than the elderly, generally more conservative and parochial cadres that preceded them.²⁶

In 1987 the Thirteenth Party Congress elevated more than 130 third echelon leaders to the Central Committee, including seven who were elected to the CC Politburo. This massive infusion of relatively young, well-educated Party leaders lowered the average age of all CC members to 55 and raised to 73 percent the number of college-trained members of the CC. Also in 1987, for the first time an establishment-nominated candidate for the CC—veteran conservative ideologue Deng Liqun—was actually voted down by the full membership of the Party congress.²⁷ Thus, notwithstanding the recent political resurgence of a

²⁵ The first echelon consists of surviving members of the elder generation of pre-Liberation Party leaders, men now in their late seventies and eighties, including such veteran Party stalwarts as Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun. The second echelon comprises the generation of cadres recruited immediately following Liberation; this group, made up of men currently in their sixties and early seventies, includes Li Peng, Zhao Ziyang, and the late Hu Yaobang.

²⁶ More than 85 percent of third echelon members reportedly have a college education; more than 50 percent have either received advanced training abroad or traveled extensively overseas; and almost half are reported to speak at least one foreign language.

²⁷ Deng Liqun (no relation to Deng Xiaoping) had spearheaded the conservatives' 1983 campaign to halt the spread of "spiritual pollution" in China; and in 1987 he was the conservatives' first choice to occupy a seat on the new CC Politburo. Reportedly, Deng Xiaoping had endorsed his candidacy. However, under new rules of procedure adopted by the Thirteenth Party Congress, the number of available nominations for the CC exceeded the actual number of available seats; and with voting conducted by secret ballot, the stage was set for Deng Liqun—known to be widely unpopular among younger, moderate-to-liberal congress delegates—to be excluded from both the CC and the Politburo.

small handful of elderly CCP arch-conservatives, time, generational change, and actuarial statistics all seem to be working to favor an eventual resumption of the reform process—at least in the long run.

Second, the introduction of a greater variety of open channels of social communication in the 1980s has served to foster an incipient information revolution in China. Stimulated by Deng Xiaoping's "open policy" for hastening the transfer of Western science, technology, management methods, and capital into China, this incipient revolution has fostered the development of a more complex, information-based society while at the same time spawning a host of new societal demands for even greater openness and even freer social communications. In this connection, it is highly revealing that in the days following the nationwide blackout of official news sources that accompanied the declaration of martial law in Beijing on May 20, 1989, the vast majority of urban residents in China's major cities had easy access to the Voice of America for news about developments in the nation's capital. Even more significant, less than one week after the June 4 Tiananmen massacre, Deng Xiaoping, at a meeting of central military and political leaders, spoke in defense of China's ongoing information revolution, arguing that in lieu of such a revolution China would be "no better than a man whose nose is stuffed and whose ears and eyes are shut."²⁸ Acknowledging that China "still doesn't have a good flow of information," Deng reaffirmed the importance of his "open policy" toward the outside world, stating that "we should never change China back into a closed country. Such a policy would be most detrimental. We should never go back to the old days."²⁹

Third, the emergent process of sociopolitical pluralization in China has been lent additional impetus by various economic reforms initiated since 1978. The introduction of "responsibility systems" in agriculture and industry, the shift away from centralized planning in industry and commerce, the introduction of a substantial (if not yet fully robust or mature) private economic sector, and the sending of large numbers of Chinese students and scholars abroad for advanced training have all combined to create new opportunities for Chinese entrepreneurs, managers, urban youths, intellectuals, and suburban peasants to begin to exercise greater discretionary choice and initiative in an increasingly competitive socioeconomic marketplace. By the late 1980s, such opportunities had already begun to generate significant (albeit hardly over-

²⁸ *Beijing Review* 28 (July 10–16, 1989):16.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

whelming) popular demand for the introduction or expansion of competitive markets in other spheres as well—including markets for political ideas (and ideologies), institutions, and even for alternative leaders. It was precisely this type of rising political demand that deeply disturbed Party conservatives in the spring of 1989, leading them to launch the great political crackdown of May–June. Yet in the aftermath of the crackdown, Deng’s “open policy” was not vitiated; if anything, it was even more strongly reaffirmed.³⁰

Although the phenomenon of rising sociopolitical expectations has thus far been confined to a relatively narrow stratum of the urban/suburban population (spearheaded, predictably, by China’s higher intellectuals), and although the events of May–June 1989 have clearly dampened the short-term prospects for the further institutional reformation of the Chinese polity, there is good reason to believe that societal pressure for expanded political and ideological reform will resume again before too long. In anticipation of this resumption, although we now mark the passing of the PRC’s fortieth anniversary with sobriety and restraint, we continue to entertain at least a modicum of hope for a brighter future.

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³⁰ Note, for example, Deng’s speech of June 9, 1989, in which he asked: “Is there anything wrong with the basic concept of reforms and opening up? No. The positive results of ten years of reforms must be properly assessed even though there have emerged such problems as inflation.... If there is any inadequacy, then I should say our reforms and opening up have not proceeded adequately enough.” Ibid.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Forty Years of Chinese Socialism

BENJAMIN WARD

Forty years ago China had a very large, impoverished, and relatively short-lived population and a now-disrupted, now-stagnant economy raddled by inflation and essentially uncontrolled from any central place. Just coming to power was a new leadership enthusiastically committed to institutional transformation, economic development, and even the “transformation of man.” Today China has a far larger population, but one that is relatively healthy and long-lived; a modern industry that is one of the world’s ten largest; and a now-disrupted, now–rapidly growing economy raddled by inflation and under limited control from Beijing. The process that generated these changes has been dramatic and erratic and at times very costly in terms of human lives, but a substantial move in the direction of affluence, if not stability, cannot be doubted.

In the present chapter I survey and appraise this transformation process, first discussing the legacies from the past that formed the starting point for the new regime in 1949 and the commitments that the Communists brought with them as they came to power in China. The institutions that were set up to control economic activity are then described, followed by an appraisal of China’s performance under those institutions. Finally, I discuss the decade of economic reform, together with a final word on post-Tiananmen China.

Legacies and Commitments

Revolutionaries do not come to power in a vacuum. They are both aided and constrained by the nature of the land they have conquered and its history. In the case of China forty years ago, a half dozen features stand out.

Geography: China is a heartland power with a weak tradition of commitment to sea trade or to relations with distant places. Heartland powers require well-developed inland transport; aside from its great rivers in the south (the Yellow River is navigable for only a small por-

tion of its length), China's mountainous terrain and modest railroad development sharply constrained these interior lines of communication.

Treaty ports: Incursions by Western powers and the Japanese over the previous century created a substantial isolation of China's leading seaports from the rest of the country; however, there was also substantial economic development in these cities, resulting in a powerful economic dualism. In the interior, China remained a heartland nation, but with the coastal cities and their hinterlands constituting a sort of rimland subeconomy with strong external economic relations.

The overseas Chinese: Many millions of Chinese had emigrated to other East Asian countries and to North America and had established themselves economically in their new homelands. Many of them, however, preserved their ties to China through relatives, and preserved those connections, when possible, through remittances or visits. Most important among the emigrants were those in Hong Kong and Taiwan, each with its very different de facto political situation.

Manchurian industry: During its Japanese occupation a fairly large-scale heavy industrial development occurred in Northeast China. To the extent that machinery had not been removed during the brief postwar occupation by the Soviet Union, a substantial initial base for the development of modern industry was created.

The Mandarinate: China has a two-thousand-year-old tradition of national government administered by a literate bureaucracy. Its traditions, which include meritocratic examinations, strong family ties, and local economic autonomy, were deeply embedded in Chinese culture.

The Kuomintang: The predecessor government was not only defeated in battle, but left a heritage of inflation, corruption, and governmental incompetence. This legacy complicated the initiation of new economic policies, but provided the initial advantages associated with replacing an unpopular predecessor.

War devastation: The Japanese war and the civil war did not bring substantial destruction to China's main cities. Parts of the countryside were more seriously affected, but the relatively low levels of economic activity and the limited economic integration of the country restricted the impact of this destruction. Also, villages tended to recover relatively rapidly from the effects of wartime disruption.

The new regime, led by Chairman Mao, his associates, and a large corps of dedicated Communist Party cadres, was committed to revolutionary change. Just what that meant in terms of an initial set of policies for the economy was by no means clear, as the vagueness of current statements and the later history of factionalism and disagreements testi-

fy. Nevertheless, there was a sort of common vision of a new world, and this produced at least some tendencies in the thinking and policy making that was to follow. Among these tendencies, three stand out as important and distinctive.

Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism: Mao confessed to Edgar Snow in the late 1930s that he had not read *Das Kapital*, which had not then been translated into Chinese. But the general thrust of Marxist thinking, as expressed in Marx's shorter works and in the writings of Lenin and Stalin, clearly provided important guidelines to thought. Perhaps more important were the experiences of the Soviet Union; the Soviet advisors, who arrived in China early on in the hundreds and then thousands, were armed not only with a proposed structure for the new economic order but even with blueprints in the form of manuals and sample forms for bureaucrats to read and fill out in the course of their administration of the economy. Among the principal ideas were the notion of a "big-push" modernization drive emphasizing heavy industry, central planning as a substitute for the market, and the collectivization of agriculture.

"Revolutionary economics": A product of the revolutionary experience is a distrust of those whose education was gained in prerevolutionary times. After all, the conventional wisdom had consistently denied the feasibility of revolution—and had been proved wrong. Marxism taught that many apparent constraints on the provision of a decent life for all were built into the institutions of capitalist society, and these were now being systematically dismantled. Even engineers, though admittedly expert, might not be trusted fully if they were not also "red." This test applied all the more strongly to economists, whose caveats with respect to policies under consideration might easily be suspected of being the product of a "bourgeois" analysis that failed to appreciate the potential in a new economic system staffed by committed socialists.

Anti-imperialism: China's relation to the world was believed to be that of a half-colonial, half-feudal society whose institutions and economy had been grossly distorted by unacceptable imperialist interventions. Furthermore, the tendency toward such intervention was believed to be an integral part of capitalist society. The implication was clear: China should be very careful to keep its distance from that exploitative capitalist world, making sure that no interactions would be accepted that compromised its independence in economic policy making.

Establishing the Institutions

Agriculture

There have been so many changes in Chinese agricultural organization, apparently fundamental changes following upon one another often with time lags of only a year or two, that one might question whether China has ever had a set of Communist agricultural institutions. For the word "institution" implies the development of a set of habitual patterns of behavior, which is hardly consistent with such a pace of organizational change.

Even so, there has been some continuity, some policies that were effectively implemented and continued over a period of many years, even while others were changing rapidly. Central place among these must be accorded to physical output targets for essential agricultural commodities. In this procedure the central government laid down quantitative targets for the delivery of the commodities to the state. These targets were passed down to lower levels of government and disaggregated until each agricultural production unit had received its quota—for example, in the form of so many tons of rice to be delivered to the local procurement station. The Communists began using this system of direct procurement from very early in the regime, well before collectivization was begun. Direct procurement was consistent with Soviet practice, but it may have been inspired more by the absence of effective alternatives in the confusion of the transition years and in an economy whose markets had just been through a runaway inflation. The system developed into a dual extraction process, partly of taxation in kind and partly of payment at fixed (generally low) prices for the required deliveries. The basic crops, in particular grain and cotton, were subject to this system from the early 1950s until well into the 1980s.

However, there was a dramatic change in the lower-level agencies that were the recipients of these demands. At first the new government seemed content to move in short steps toward organized cooperation among peasants. After the initial recovery of the economy, however, grain deliveries to the state grew slowly, so, perhaps with some encouragement by Soviet advisors, the collectivization process was undertaken in earnest. Over a period of two years, 1955–56, almost all peasants were at least formally organized into agricultural cooperatives that bore a strong resemblance to the Soviet type of collective farm, with an average of about two hundred families per farm. The peasants worked the collective farmland together, being required to contribute a minimum number of days per year to this work; for this labor they received work points. They also had a small home plot, occupying around

3 percent of the land, where they could grow crops or fatten animals for their own use or for sale at rural markets. At the end of the year, after costs of production and state deliveries had been deducted and a minimum allocation of grain made to each member of the collective, the residual income from the collective farm was divided among the families on the basis of the number of work points they had earned working the collective land.

Though subject to occasional dramatic shocks and frequent changes in organization and rules for distribution, this system remained in effect in its basic elements for more than a quarter of a century. There have been changes in the organization of rural health, welfare, and education services, particularly with the transfer of these responsibilities to a new level in the farm hierarchy, the commune, around 1958. There have been changes in the level of the basic unit whose residual income was to be divided among the peasants, such as the widespread shift to the team (often amounting to a single village) in the early 1960s. And there have been changes in the rules governing the assignment of work points, such as the mandated shift toward greater equality and greater use of political tests rather than economic productivity considerations in assigning work points in the later 1960s. There have also been changes in procurement rules for some commodities, such as the relative roles of family and collective in dealing with the fattening of hogs and the rights to both the meat and the fertilizer that raising them generates. But the basic rules described in the last two paragraphs survived, at least in principle, all of these changes, until recently.

But in agriculture perhaps the single most important change was change itself, in the sense that behind the constant flurry of new policies there lay not only the considerable continuity that has just been described, but other continuities with deep roots in the past. For example, the old village remained the basic social unit, after the family. Collectivization changed the relations among families within a village, substantially reducing within-village income inequalities. But villages were still led by villagers, and family relations were important in determining who performed which work and how rewards were parceled out. Then, too, it does not appear that collectivization had a major impact on between-village income distribution, which seems to have been rather similar in 1978 and in the mid-1950s, suggesting that factors other than collectivization, such as nearness to town and the richness of the soil, were the determining ones.

Another factor that may have been given considerable impetus by all this formal change was *de facto* village autonomy. Disruptions from

above produced adaptations from below. For example, it appears that there was a large-scale increase in the amount of land brought under cultivation, probably beginning during the difficulties of the Great Leap, land that remained off the books of the procurement agencies until it was rediscovered via satellite photography in the late 1970s.

Industry

The Chinese Communist goals for industry were more straightforward from the beginning: nationalization and forced-draft industrialization. Although essential control of large-scale industry had been obtained several years earlier, nationalization was completed by 1956, by which time rapid growth of output was already being achieved, with heavy industry, especially iron and steel and machinery, being given the highest priority.

The organization of industry and the control of its activity was a rather close copy of that to be found in the Soviet Union, and it was in this area of the economy that most Soviet advisors were to be found. A series of plans was made, of which the two most important were for five years and one year ahead. The five-year plan was essentially a list of approved investment projects whose fulfillment would create the industrial structure desired by the leadership for the end of that period. The annual plan represented a step along the road to that structure, but it was in fact much more than that. The annual plan and its supporting institutions constituted the institutional substitute for the market. It was in this plan that output targets and input requirements for each industry and each major product group were developed by the central planners. These were then disaggregated at the intermediate levels of the economic hierarchy until each enterprise had received its output targets and input allocations for the coming year. The enterprise manager's job then was to fulfill these goals and if possible to do even more than was mandated by the plan.

The process sounds very similar to the setting of procurement targets for basic agricultural commodities. In fact, it was a far more difficult problem. Even in the 1950s, Chinese large-scale industry was producing hundreds of thousands of distinct products. Each factory was unique, with its own production processes and needs and capacities. Furthermore, the Chinese suffered not only from a shortage of trained managers and planners, but also from inefficient telecommunications together with the difficulty of communicating vast quantities of information in written Chinese. On the other side of this ledger were at least two important advantages for the planners: (1) Chinese modern industry

was mostly concentrated in three areas (Northeast China, Shanghai, and the Wuhan area), allowing industrial planners' attention to be more focussed regionally, and (2) the Soviet advisors had brought with them a detailed blueprint of a functioning planning system that only needed adaptation to China's specific features.

The institutional product that emerged in China was indeed very similar to that in the Soviet Union. A modest number of material balances were developed in Beijing, representing the sources of goods from producing factories, from imports, and from inventories on one side of the balance and their uses in production, capital construction, consumption, and export on the other side. The annual plan comprised only a few hundred product groups before the disaggregation process began. Despite this drastic simplification of the planning problem, once the system was in operation, constructing the next year's plan was not so difficult, because the current year provided a fairly good forecast. One might think of the heart of planning in an already functioning economy to be the command: next year produce this year's output plus x percent and with y percent saving in inputs per unit of output. With reasonably good information on current performance, it does not take much effort to concoct that sort of instruction set, leaving planners free to devote special attention to a few priority sectors.

With these simplifications, constructing a national plan turns out to be less difficult than might seem at first glance; getting good results in the form of goods actually produced and delivered is the really difficult task. In the Chinese case several types of problems have been persistent features of the planning system.

1. Planners know their plan is pretty ad hoc, so that they really do not have a clear idea of the economy's potential. Consequently, they tend to be optimistic in their production plans. This "tautness" in turn puts pressure on the enterprises to get the goods out and to pay less attention to costs. It also leads to pressures to exaggerate reported performance and to give little attention to quality whenever better quality interferes with more quantity.

2. There were far too many small firms to be planned effectively from the center, and the Chinese soon left most of them to control by provinces and even lower-level entities. But small firms generally use at least some inputs that are under national control, most particularly oil or coal. So these firms were in fact under the control of two largely independent masters, a situation that produces substantial uncertainty and almost certain inefficiency.

3. The uncertainties inherent in the planning process inevitably led to uncertainties in the delivery of inputs to the factories. When enterprises responded to this uncertainty by hoarding stocks of needed inputs, even more inputs were needed to produce a given level of output. Problems getting spare parts led enterprises to create their own repair shops, a duplication of facilities that constituted a considerable waste of scarce investment resources.

4. Socialism was supposed to mean the transformation of society, of which modernization was an essential step. But the incentives at the enterprise level tended to discourage innovation. A factory manager was too pressed to meet his short-term goals to be willing to undergo the periods of testing and learning that always accompany significant innovation. Also, the rigidities in the planning system left little room for product innovation, since the particulars of a product's design were, in principle at least, controlled by higher authorities.

5. Incentives for higher productivity within the enterprise were somewhat unconventional. There were wage differentials, but they were modest by international standards and were awarded often for reasons other than productivity. Seniority was probably the single most important factor, but at times political reliability or enthusiasm played a large role. Workers could not be dismissed except under unusual circumstances. Overall, the enterprise environment did not seem conducive to longer-term commitment by workers or supervisors to intensive, creative effort and skill development.

Although the system had many problems, it did function. Indeed, it became strongly institutionalized throughout industrial China and has shown far greater resistance to change than has been true in the agricultural sector. Even today in "reformed" China, the central elements of this industrial system continue to operate.

The problems with planning and controlling small firms mentioned above suggest that this would not be a major growth area in the Chinese economy. In fact, that suggestion is only half true. Ideology turned out to be even more important than the planning system in determining the relative size of the smaller-firm sector of the economy.

Most of the service sector is classified by Marxist analysts as unproductive, meaning that material goods are not directly produced by the sector. This belief led to a strong bias against many service activities, which was amplified by the control difficulties mentioned above. Furthermore, a decentralized distribution sector (that is, wholesale and retail trade) was felt to be morally reprehensible, since it involved buying goods at one price and selling them, without processing, at a higher

price. This was called "speculation" and was unacceptable to Marxist-Leninists since only one of the prices, no doubt the lower one, could represent the true labor value of the good. The planners thus kept most of the activity of distributing goods under state control with fixed prices for deliveries.

Banking and finance is a part of the service sector, and both money and banks have existed in China throughout the past forty years. They were tolerated because they were found to be indispensable. However, they were under firm state control, and their influence on the economy was much reduced since most allocation decisions were being made within the planning system. An important feature of state control was the separation of money circulation into two quite distinct compartments. Workers received their pay in the form of currency and bought goods in the state stores with that currency. But enterprises could not use currency in their dealings with one another. More than anything, prices were accounting categories within the planning system, serving as a convenient weighting system for combining the output of similar types of goods or the products of a single enterprise into a single measure of the amount produced. When goods were delivered from one enterprise to another, the payment was recorded in the bank accounts of the two enterprises. Thus no money changed hands, only the sizes of the bank accounts of the two firms changed. If at the end of the year a firm had earned more revenues from deliveries than it had paid out for its inputs, the difference, which we would call profits, was turned in to the state budget. Those who ran nominal losses were generally subsidized. Thus the banking system kept track of what was going on in the planning system, but had little control over actual firm behavior.

A major experiment of Chinese communism involved small-scale enterprise. This experiment was an attempt to match the factor proportions of a firm (the relative amounts of capital and labor used in production) to the Chinese relative scarcities. With the world's largest population China was rich in labor, but it had very little capital per worker. Most modern industry uses quite a lot of capital and not so much labor; thus China had an economic mismatch. In the late 1950s the Chinese attempted to deal with this situation by developing a large number of small, labor-intensive factories that produced such goods as cement, fertilizer, and even iron and steel; that made and repaired farm machinery; and that generated electric power. These factories, which economized on that scarce commodity, capital, were to be developed under local initiative and to be scattered about the countryside and in the small towns,

where they would provide supplies of key goods that the central planning system could not provide.

The program lasted for two decades and underwent several basic transformations. One of its problems was that the absence of a service sector meant that the products of these firms could not be distributed efficiently or competitively, so that the administrative system of allocation protected firms against production of poor quality goods. Another problem was that such factories were often starved of key resources, particularly energy. Some of the goods were simply of unacceptable quality. This was discovered early in the case of iron and steel; but in the case of phosphate fertilizer, hundreds of these small plants operated for fifteen years, using scarce resources and producing almost useless fertilizer before being shut down. There were some plusses from the small industry program; it was after all based on the sensible idea of adjusting production techniques to the available factors of production. But there were too many minuses, including the fact that in many domains, such as iron and steel and fertilizer, large plants were so much more productive that the small-scale operations ended up actually wasting resources. Had the distribution sector been allowed to develop more normally, these problems would have been recognized and dealt with much earlier.¹

A final area in the distribution sector is foreign trade. By 1956 foreign trade had become a state monopoly, though as with other sectors control over most trade had been achieved much earlier. Trade was carried out by a set of public corporations, each of which was restricted to exporting or importing a particular class of goods. Each year a foreign trade plan was made as an adjunct to the annual economic plan. The policy rule was that exports were only made with a view to obtaining imports, and imports were to be used only to further the five-year modernization plans. This system separated the buyers of foreign goods from the domestic users of the goods and the sellers from the domestic producers. As a consequence, negotiations often were very time consuming and the results far from optimal from the point of view of the Chinese producing enterprises. On the other hand, the tight system of control meant that smuggling was kept to a minimum and imports strongly oriented toward economic development rather than the luxury consumption goods that were major imports of Third World capitalist economies.

¹ For the rural small-industry story, see Christine Wong, "Intermediate Technology for Development: Small-scale Chemical Fertilizer Plants in China," *World Development* 14:10/11 (1986): 1329-1346.

One novel feature of the Chinese foreign trade system was the annual (later semiannual) Canton fair. Foreign traders brought their wares to a Canton hotel, where they met their Chinese counterparts and negotiated a considerable fraction of the deals for the next year or so. The fair provided a means of relatively easy communication between foreign traders and the Chinese trading corporations while preserving the separation of the foreigners from Chinese society that was a major goal of the Communist leadership.

Performance

Economic Growth

The modernization of the Chinese economy has been a central goal of the Chinese Communist leadership. Although other goals have at times been more salient, none has been pursued as persistently over the past forty years as modernization. The change in the amounts of goods and services produced are obviously crucial in appraising success with respect to modernization. But not just quantities are important. The changed structure of production is also central, as is the quality of the output.

Economists put a lot of effort into the quantitative analysis of economic growth, but even so it remains an art, and a controversial one at that. Problems of measurement abound, and they are even more difficult in the Chinese case, where the statistical basis for appraisal by foreigners is still rather weak. The foreigners' limited access to China also inhibits appraisal of the quality and appropriateness of the quantitative changes. Even so, the change in the capacity to produce goods that has occurred in China under communism has been so great that basic facts of growth are both undeniable and quite impressive. Following are some major points relevant for appraising the Chinese growth experience.

As the figures in table 1 indicate, China has achieved some really high annual rates of production of basic goods. The output of commodities such as steel, coal, and cement provides a profile of an economy whose basic industrial production is now one of the largest in the world, among the top ten. The growth rates for these commodities over the past thirty-five years are also extraordinary—and perhaps unique among Third World countries. India is a natural for comparison with China, having achieved full independence at about the same time, having the world's second largest population, and having started with an economy of comparable size. The last two columns of table 1 show the extent to

Table 1
Indicators of Chinese Economic Performance

	1952	1987	Growth rate	China/India Ratios	
			(percent)	1952	1987
Population (mln.)	575	1,035	1.7	1.53	1.35
Commodities (mln. tons)					
Steel	1.4	56.3	11.0	1.4	7.2
Coal	66	928	7.8	2.0	5.7
Cement	2.9	186	13.0	1.1	5.5
Grain	164	407	1.0*	1.4*	2.0*
Consumer goods					
Cloth (bln. m.)	3.8	13.7	2.7*	0.7*	1.4*
Sugar (mln. t.)	0.45	3.8	5.8*	0.1*	0.4*
Bicycles (mln.)	0.08	28.6	17.0*	0.7*	5.3*
TV sets (mln.)	0	19.3	—	—	—

Indexes of Output and Productivity Growth

	1953-85	1976-85
Net material product	5.6	8.8
Factor productivity	1.4	3.8

Rural-Urban Consumption per Capita

	1957	1978	1985
Rural/urban ratio	.36	.33	.43
Rural growth rate	1.9	9.7	

NOTES: * indicates per capita growth rate or ratio. Net material product excludes many services and so is not strictly comparable with other countries. Factor productivity measures the growth of output after increases in "standard" capital and labor have been accounted for.

SOURCES: Various years of the Chinese and Indian statistical yearbooks; *The Economist*, *The World in Figures*, 1988 ed.; and Dwight Perkins, "Reforming China's Economic System," *Journal of Economic Literature*, June 1988.

which China's industry has outdistanced India's over the long post-World War II period. For example, in 1952 China produced only about 40 percent more steel than India; in 1987 it produced more than seven times as much.

There is also tremendous variability in growth patterns among products. Note that grain output has increased at only 1 percent a year on a per capita basis, and that is starting from a very low annual rate of production. Basic consumer goods, such as food and clothing, grew much more slowly than basic industrial goods, such as coal and steel. Even so, the comparison with India remains favorable to China. In the one unfavorable case in the table, sugar, the commodity is not unequivocally a "good," being associated with the production of sweets and liquors—but there also, China has been catching up!

A qualification is in order with respect to these figures. Many of the goods whose production grew rapidly are not final products but are inputs to the production process. For example, most steel must be further processed into beams and wire and machines before it finally leaves the factory. Because of the weak tests provided by the central planning system of the suitability of the final products for their intended uses, this measurement of performance in terms of rates of growth of inputs may considerably exaggerate the real value of the industrial sector's output, when compared with the output of market economies.

A unique dualism results from the fact of China's having by far the world's largest population: although its industrial plant is among the world's largest, output per capita is at the level of the world's poorer countries. The problems suggested in the last paragraph do weaken this contrast somewhat and indicate that for most purposes China should be classified among the poorer of the countries of the Third World.

Over the thirty-two years 1952–85, the overall growth rate for the Chinese economy was 5.6 percent per year, as the figures in the second panel of table 1 indicate. Though this figure is not strictly comparable with conventional measures of output growth, it is close enough to suggest a growth performance that is at least high average as compared to other Third World economies, particularly because it has continued over such a long period.²

² Net material product (NMP) is derived from Marxist notions of economic accounting. Its major difference from the Western concept of gross national product (GNP) is in its omission of many service activities, from passenger travel to shoe repairing. Since services grew relatively slowly in China before 1978, one might expect GNP growth to be lower than NMP, but, at a guess, by less than a percentage point. For a discussion of Chinese net material product and the notion of factor productivity, see Dwight Perkins, "Reforming China's Economic System," *Journal of Economic Literature* 26:2 (June 1988): 601–645.

The same segment of table 1 indicates a substantially higher rate of growth of the economy during the last decade than in preceding years. However, the growth remains quite good even if these years are eliminated from the calculation; in other words, performance during the period of collectivization and central planning was not bad. On the basis of the available data, one could not call this economic system a failure; indeed, it too was a high average performer in terms of overall economic growth.

China differs from most other Third World countries in its emphasis on industry. Its industrial growth has been extraordinarily rapid (but remembering the above qualifications), while agricultural growth has been relatively laggard.

Also unusual is the role of capital. Already in the mid-1950s the Chinese were putting around a quarter of their available resources into investment, and this later rose to almost a third. These are extraordinarily high figures for a growth sustained over three decades. And, of course, industry received an unusual share of total investment, often nearly a half.

However, the productivity figures in the middle panel of table 1 tell a different story. These are estimates of the growth of productivity after one has deducted the impact of the increased amounts of labor and capital. Thus, it is an indicator of the effects of innovativeness, increased skills, and other qualitative changes in the economy. Except for the first few years of the planning system, when there were still some recovery gains to be made, overall productivity was disappointing, well below the usual performance of successfully developing Third World countries. Partly this was due to the emphasis in that system on very rapid increases in the capital stock, which may well have been contributing less and less to growth as capital was added without much emphasis on innovation. But as we have seen, the weak innovativeness and weak incentives were themselves inherent parts of the planning system. The productivity figures are major signals that some institutional changes were needed by the 1970s.

Consumption and Welfare

An ultimate goal of any economy is to make feasible appropriate consumption levels and activities for all the citizenry. How such vague phrasing is translated into policy goals and then transformed by what is feasible into results varies from system to system. We will not try to specify the Chinese goals systematically but will focus on the results achieved, beginning with the period of collectivization and central planning, that is, from the early 1950s to the later 1970s.

Urban workers were a major concern of the Chinese as of Communist leaderships generally. There was a substantial increase in their real wages during the First Five-Year Plan; however, increases from that time to the mid-1970s seem to have been modest. Housing grew slowly in most of the large cities. Diets improved somewhat, but most workers spent most of their salaries on food. Even by the mid-1970s, discretionary income was minimal.

Industrial wage differentials were kept at a relatively low level, the ratio of highest to lowest wage in a factory often being in the range of three or four to one. A more affluent worker might own a wristwatch, radio, bicycle, sewing machine, or camera as principal material badges of success.

The success of the Chinese revolution had depended more on the countryside than the city, and this fact was reflected in consumption policy. In most developing countries the per capita income of the rural population tends to decline sharply relative to that of urban workers. Despite the enormous size of China's peasant population, however, over the planning period the rural to urban income ratio varied, but overall did not decline by much. The bottom panel of table 1 provides indicators of these changes. Rural consumption per capita grew at close to two percent per year in the two decades preceding the reforms, while urban growth grew enough faster to reduce the rural:urban ratio by about ten percent. During in the past decade (1979-89) there has been a dramatic increase in both absolute and relative rural income per capita. This represents an important and rare achievement of consumption policy in a Third World country. There were, however, substantial differences among peasant families. As noted above, the regional income disparities that existed in the early 1950s have persisted. The more fortunate peasants lived close to cities, where they were able to benefit in various ways from the varied demands and the relatively low cost of transport to the urban market. The poor peasant in China has always been very poor indeed.

China's "Cellular Economy"

An early student of the Chinese economy, Audrey Donnithorne, characterized it as a "cellular economy." Of course there was a central plan, a national system of money and finance, and a substantial transport and communications system. However, when compared to other economies, there were a number of ways in which various groups in the Chinese population were sharply separated from one another. We have already mentioned the high degree of regional concentration of larger-

scale modern industry. Other policies produced other kinds of separations.

Beginning in the late 1950s, the Chinese imposed very strong controls over the mobility of the population. The major purpose was to keep peasants from pouring into the cities in the search of better paid (and less physically demanding) jobs. There were also controls on movement within the countryside. For example, peasants often required permission from the authorities to travel from one commune to another.

A counterpart to that restriction occurred in the city. Factories generally had some responsibility to provide housing for workers. Following prerevolutionary practice, this often meant that factory and workers' housing were situated together behind a common wall. Since canteens and even stores were often also behind the walls, and since outside the wall amenities available to workers were limited, it was not uncommon for workers and their families only rarely to leave the compound.

There was essentially no national welfare system during this period. The commune in the countryside and the enterprise in the city were mainly responsible for welfare basics. In the countryside each member of the commune was entitled to a minimum supply of grain, and the commune also provided basic health, educational, and cultural facilities. In the city the firm provided the pension (partly subsidized by local government) and often also granted a retiring worker the right to turn over his or her job to a son or daughter. The firm also controlled the worker's mobility—for example, by refusing to agree to transfer pension rights if the worker moved.

This decentralized, "cellular" economic system seems to have worked very well by the welfare standards of typical Third World countries. Perhaps the single most useful indicator of the situation of the poorer segments of a population is the infant mortality rate; it works better than monetary measures of consumption because it relates closely to the achievement of basic needs by the poor. By this standard China has performed strikingly well. China's infant mortality in the early 1950s, like India's, was high: close to a fifth of the children born alive did not survive to their first birthday. India has since halved that rate; but a decade ago China's rate was about half India's current rate. Today China's infant mortality is among the very lowest of those of the world's poorer economies.

Unfortunately, that is not the end of the welfare story, for the Chinese people have been the victim of an extraordinary catastrophe. The population pyramids of figure 1 provide a graphic indicator of the cost of the Great Leap Forward. That tragic event is described elsewhere

in this volume; we will focus on the casualty count. Figure 1 shows the population by age for each of three years. The first line of each graph shows the number of males (measured to the left of the middle vertical axis marked 00) and the number of females (measured to the right), both as percentages of the respective total population who are in their first year of life for the given year. The next line up measures those in their second year of life for that year, and so on.

Notice the gaping hole on each side of the chart for 1964. This shows an extraordinary drop in the number of children who survived the "bad years" of the Great Leap, in particular the period 1958–62. Notice also that this great gap is still clearly visible in the chart for 1982, when the survivors are in their early twenties. Clearly, the Great Leap was demographically a very dramatic event.

Chinese population figures show that there is a forty-million-person deficit in the population between 1959 and 1961; that is, if the population had been growing according to the trends before and after those years, there would be forty million more people in 1961 than the estimated population. This difference represents a mixture of excess deaths beyond the normal death rate and a birth deficit. The famine and other disruptions of the period clearly are the main cause of the catastrophe. Excess deaths can only be guessed at, but they may well be in the range of ten to fifteen million. And the non-births are a strong sign of the very poor health of much of the population who were in their reproductive years during that period.³

The full human story of the Great Leap catastrophe has yet to be told. Notice that there is nothing comparable in the 1953 population profile. The disruptions of imperialism, war, and revolution seem never to have produced a catastrophe of this magnitude. If the above information is correct (it was taken directly from published Chinese sources) the Great Leap was the world's greatest nonmilitary catastrophe of the twentieth century.⁴

Notice yet one more thing in figure 1: the 1982 population chart slopes inward for the youngest dozen years' age groups. Nothing like this occurs in the other two figures, and such a sharp turnaround is very

³ For a discussion of Chinese demography and the effects of the Great Leap, see Judith Banister, "Implications of China's 1982 Census Results" in *China Looks Toward the Year 2000*, vol. 1, *The Four Modernizations*, ed. John B. Hardt (for U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986).

⁴ For these figures see the English edition of the *Statistical Yearbook of China 1985* (Hong Kong: Economic Information & Agency and the China Statistical Information and Consultancy Service Centre), pp. 185, 198.

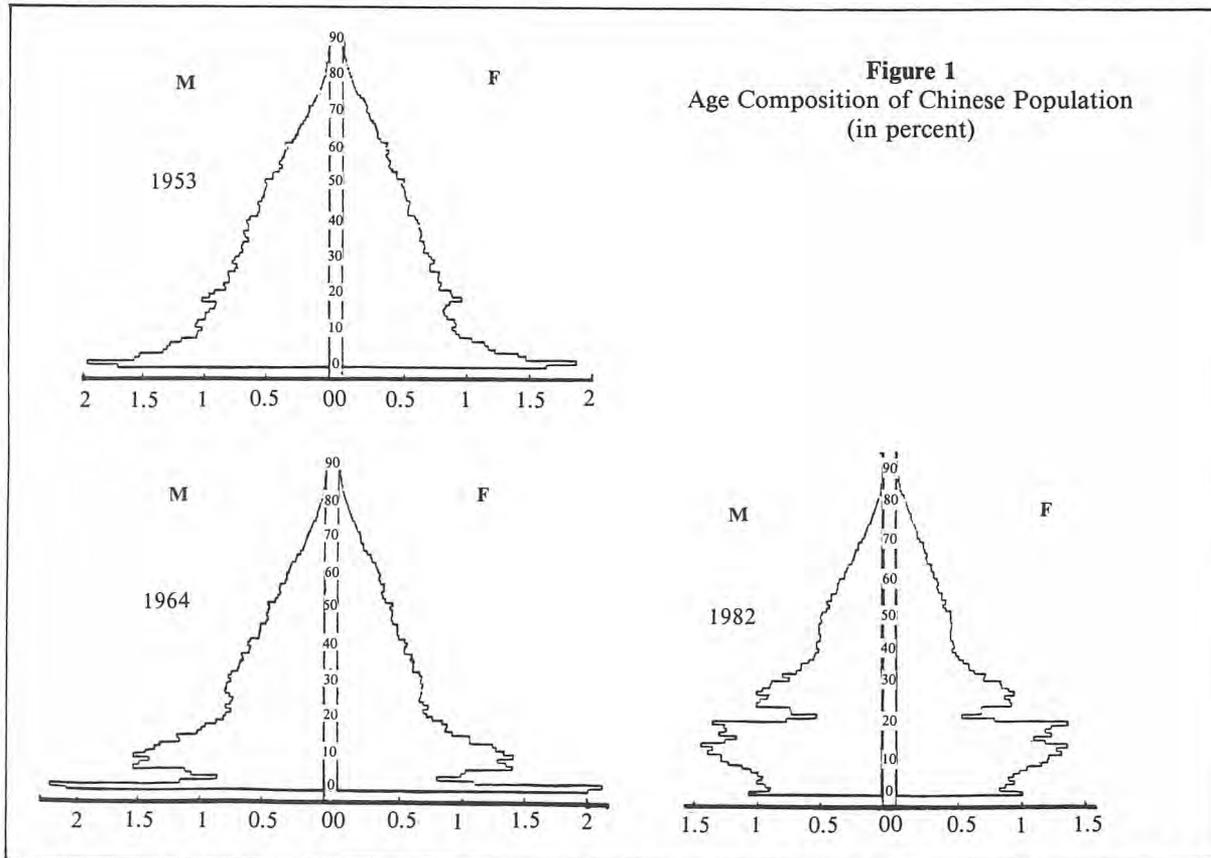


Figure 1
Age Composition of Chinese Population
(in percent)

SOURCE: State Statistical Bureau, PRC, comp., *Statistical Yearbook of China, 1985* (English edition) (Hong Kong: Economic Information & Agency, 1985), p. 198.

rare for any country. This is a reflection of the one-child-per-family population policy introduced in the early 1970s. Clearly the policy has worked: far fewer children are being born than would otherwise have been the case. The welfare implications of this extraordinary policy are well worth pondering.⁵

Another major disruptive event is often mentioned together with the Great Leap: the Cultural Revolution of 1966–69 (with echoes down to the mid-1970s). But as figure 1 indicates, the demographic effects (look at the 14–15-year-olds on the 1982 chart), if any, were certainly less severe than those of the Great Leap. There was, during the Cultural Revolution, much disruption, and many thousands of people died. Perhaps three years of economic growth were lost. But the major economic effect may well be a longer-term one. The virtual shutting down of the educational system for varying periods (universities hardly functioned for a decade) has had a serious effect on China's stock of "human capital," reducing the numbers of its scientific and technical personnel and creating tens of millions of functionally illiterate adults. The effect cannot be measured but will be felt one way or another for at least a decade or two.

Economic Reform

Over the last decade China has become, economically speaking, a very different place. The process of change has been complicated, but even so can be well characterized by a single word: "marketization." For someone familiar with the history of socialist thought, this is an astonishing development; certainly it was not widely anticipated. But, after the fact at least, one can discern some of the considerations that played a role in bringing about this dramatic alteration of China's economic structure.

Legacies and Commitments

As with the rise of the administrative economy in the 1950s, there are both legacies and commitments that helped structure the reform process, among the most important of which are the following:

As we have noted, there were some serious problems with the economy, which were very obvious to the leadership by the late 1970s. Despite good overall growth, the basic component of the Chinese diet remained grain (only about half of which was rice), and grain production

⁵ For further information on the one-child policy and on Chinese health and welfare, see the chapter by Joyce Kallgren in this volume.

had been growing only at a slow per capita rate. In addition to being important as food, grain is an important indirect input to improved diet, for example, as a fodder for animals, so the slow growth of grain production was problematic.

The capital-intensive growth process was showing strong signs of petering out. Given the high investment rate, further additions to capital were not producing much additional output. At the same time, urban workers were growing restive. They had seen only a little in the way of reward for their effort because the investment program, in both size and structure, was achievable only at the expense of popular consumption.

The quality of goods was becoming a major problem. High technology and innovation were not notable features of the economy, and as time went on these were becoming relatively more important as compared to sheer quantity.

But if the economy's problems were making the need for change more urgent, there were elements of the experience of the previous quarter century that tended to point the way toward change. As compared to other socialist economies, China already had some experiences of economic decentralization. The most important of these have already been mentioned: The "cellular economy" meant considerable local autonomy in dealing with firms and communes; the administrative decentralization of 1958 produced a level of provincial responsibility quite unusual in a Soviet-type economy; the Great Leap and its aftermath provided a period of relative autonomy to many production units; and the Cultural Revolution, with its attacks on the legitimacy of Party and ministerial hierarchies, also led to some loss of control by the central authorities and an increase in the power of lower units of government.

The leadership that came to power after the Cultural Revolution had every reason to reject the policies and orientations of their predecessors. And they did; it seems that their past humiliations conspired with their current analyses of the Chinese economic situation, leading them to one overwhelming conclusion: there must be another way.

As the Chinese leaders looked about them in the second half of the 1970s, they were confronted with one of the most powerful demonstration effects since the nineteenth century incursions of Western capitalism: the extraordinary economic performance of neighboring Japan and the "our little tigers" (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore). And the success of these countries was clearly associated with two basic features of their economies: (1) the use of markets as the primary resource allocator and (2) openness to the trading environment of the international economy.

In one respect the Chinese leadership seems to have held on to a major aspect of the socialist belief system: the use of organizational change as the major instrument of economic policy. Capitalist economies have increasingly used indirect instruments, such as fiscal and monetary policy, as devices for controlling their economies. Socialist economies have been notable for their persistence in the use of organizational change; even in places like Yugoslavia, where markets play a larger role and central planning a smaller one than in any other socialist economy, this remains true. This commitment remained as an important part of the new leadership's orientation in developing a program of economic change.

The New Institutions

The agricultural reforms began in 1978 with some state-sponsored experiments with alternative forms of sharing of responsibility and reward for carrying out production tasks. By 1981 the shifting of basic responsibility and reward to the household rather than the production team had become the main thrust of the reforms. By 1983 the government was recommending that households be permitted to rent plots of land from the commune for periods of fifteen years. By 1984 attempts were under way to reduce and eventually eliminate the procurement quotas and taxes in kind, combined with moves toward eliminating price controls on farm products. The period 1986-88 saw some backing and filling with respect to price controls, but nevertheless an unequivocal acceptance of the basic lines of the reform.

The government began the reform process with plans for modest, step-by-step movement. But within two or three years, actual practice in many areas was far more advanced than the formal regulations prescribed. The collective ceased to exist as an organizer of agricultural production, although it continued for a while to be a collection point for the delivery of quotas. Instead, the household took over full responsibility for crops from the preparing of fields to planting and weeding and harvesting. Land not under quota cultivation could be allocated to whatever crops the peasant family thought profitable.⁶ And the peasant fami-

⁶ Both the farmers and the authorities wanted to avoid the costs and delays that would have been caused by a complete resurvey of China's arable land. Consequently, collective fields tended to be allocated to families by rows of crops. Thus a family might acquire the right to cultivate, say, the third and fourth rows in a thirty-row field, with each row being 50-100 yards long. As a consequence, there must still be substantial cooperative effort among families during cultivation and harvesting. Even so, there is a big difference between cooperating and following orders.

lies were encouraged to make this sort of choice because markets where peasants could freely sell their produce swiftly grew up in both town and country. The long-term lease became the norm in increasing portions of the countryside, giving the peasant some incentive to improve the property. And the right to cultivate rented land was being bought and sold by increasing numbers of farm families. Laborers, often migrants from less productive communes, were even being hired to perform some of the tasks.

At least as striking was the transformation in small-scale industry and trade, especially in the countryside and smaller towns. These units were freed up from the direct control of provincial and county authorities, and start-ups of new firms were permitted and even encouraged. The preferred form was the "collective," a form of cooperative, but tens of thousands of small private firms emerged as well. Often affiliated with the lowest unit of government, the *xiang* (the commune's new name but with most of its former production responsibilities eliminated), these firms produced everything that might produce a profit, from preserved fruits and vegetables to toys and leather goods and fans. Many of them had connections with overseas Chinese businessmen and were in fact producing for the Hong Kong market or for shipment around the world.

These activities generated a lot of income for the farmers, for the new entrepreneurs and their workers, and for the local governments, whose tax revenues were increasing dramatically. Much of this new money went for consumption, and goods from televisions to motorcycles became commonplace in many rural areas. But a great deal of it went into investment, not just into new firms but into housing and roads and farm buildings. To a "before and after" observer it seemed that many parts of the countryside had suddenly exploded into dynamic life. Statistics support the foreigners' glimpses, for in the first eight years of the reforms, output in the countryside reportedly doubled.

An important aspect of the reform was the opening up of China to foreign trade. This too occurred in a piecemeal way, but the decade after the official 1978 starting point for economic reform produced dramatic change. Many large state enterprises were now able to deal directly with foreign buyers and even to retain some portion of the foreign exchange they earned to spend on modernization of their factories. To encourage foreigners to invest in China, the government established more favorable licensing procedures and a joint ventures law and granted national and even provincial agencies permission to issue bonds. Borrowing from abroad became almost routine for trading agen-

cies. The results here too were spectacular. By 1987 exports and imports had doubled as a percentage of gross national product (GNP).

The reform of larger-scale industry came more slowly and has gone less far. Price controls still are a major inhibitor to freedom of action for these firms, and key commodities are still under a substantial system of rationing. Even so, the changes that have occurred are important. For example, a considerable portion of the output of many large firms can be sold on the market at higher than state-set prices, provided the production plan is met; for many of these firms this amounts to half or more of their total production. At any rate, output has been growing rapidly in industry as well.

Problems with Reform

Overall, China's economy may have set the world record for rapid economic growth during the past decade. That would seem to be justification enough for the reform. But serious problems have emerged in this process and may, if they are not corrected, put a damper on future progress. Among the most important:

Though growing rapidly, China's economy has been volatile over the past decade. There have been three cycles of stop-go, in which the government has been forced to clamp down on economic activity, including contracts already signed with foreigners, until available goods and demand have returned to some sort of balance.

Inflation has become worse in recent years; informal estimates for 1988 put the rate of price increase at 30 to 50 percent. This has led to some panic buying and has produced real hardship for some segments of the population, including government officials; the purchasing power of their salaries has been seriously eroded.

The investment boom has been a major cause of the inflation, which in turn is a product of letting markets, that is, interaction among a large number of individual economic agents, determine what is produced and at what price. Oddly enough, the uncontrolled portion of the investment boom is partly due to government. Provinces, counties, and *xiang* have the autonomy that comes from revenue sharing, both with the national government and with the businesses within their territories. This autonomy no doubt played a major role in the rapid extension of the reforms; but now it is posing a very serious problem in macroeconomic control for the central government.

Government announcements with respect to the opening up of China's coastal cities are encouraging forces that are built deeply into China's economic and resource structure. Clearly, allocation of funds to these areas will tend to be more productive, on the whole, than sending

resources inland where demand is lower, foreigners are farther away, and infrastructure must often be built before resource exploitation can begin. But this will also increase China's already substantial regional income disparities, and it is a move toward the kind of distribution of economic activity that was being attacked only a decade or two ago as a product of imperialism. It may also not sit too well with the inlanders themselves.

The Chinese authorities re-thought their military-strategic situation in the mid-1970s and apparently concluded that they could afford to hold the line on military spending for the medium term. Since then, except for a brief surge during the 1979 battles with Vietnam, military spending has been almost constant, and so defense spending has fallen substantially as a share of GNP. To the extent that these resources have been transferred into investment in economic growth, this has been a contributor to the accelerated growth of the reform period.⁷

How much of the recent success is a one-shot phenomenon, based on the release of energies resulting from the demise of the system of collectivization and central planning, and so not repeatable? Unfortunately, the question cannot be answered at present. We do know that much of the increase in agricultural output was the result of good weather and a substantial increase in agricultural inputs, especially high-quality chemical fertilizer. And we know that despite the dramatic increase in foreign trade, China's relative position as an international trader among East Asian Third World countries has changed only modestly—almost all of East Asia is caught up in an economic boom, and one that is not guaranteed to continue indefinitely. But we also know that much still remains to be done with economic reform, especially in industry, so that there may be a good deal more repressed energy to be released. And finally, we know that much of the change that has occurred is a part of what has become the normal process of economic development, so that with wise policies and a bit of luck it can continue.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, the political disruptions and conservative crack-down that marked Chinese communism's fortieth anniversary add a

⁷ A very rough calculation suggests that by 1982 this defense policy may have generated as much as one percentage point of growth and that the contribution might have doubled by 1988, with total output up by perhaps 30 percent more than would have been the case if military spending had been kept at a constant share of output. For a recent defense estimate, see Ed Parris, "Chinese Defense Expenditures, 1967–1983," in *China Looks Toward the Year 2000*, vol. 2, *Economic Openness in Modernizing China*.

large measure of uncertainty tinged with pessimism to the economic outlook. The previous leadership had already in 1988 instituted a program of economic austerity; however, by June of 1989 this program had produced little in the way of tangible results. The new regime strengthened the policy; by the time of this writing it had achieved some success in reducing the rate of inflation. The price paid for this short-term success, however, has been heavy: The economic growth rate has declined substantially; new foreign investment has slowed to a trickle; real incomes have fallen; many smaller private and cooperative firms have gone out of business; unemployment has grown substantially; and the government has been forced to pay some farmers and workers in a form of IOU instead of usable currency.

One might think of the above measures as the price that had to be paid in order for the government to get the economy back on an even keel after the volatility introduced by the reforms. But there are early signs that the current leadership plans to put reform on hold for years and perhaps even to abort major portions of it. The economic cost of such a policy would probably be high, since it would discourage foreign investment as well as domestic innovativeness. In such an environment unconditional forecasts for the short or medium term are of little value.

In appraising China's longer term prospects, three factors should be borne in mind: First, China has come a long way, not just during the decade of reform, but over the past forty years; substantial economic development has occurred under quite different economic regimes. Second, one must not forget China's extraordinary dualism: China is at once one of the world's great powers in terms of its level of economic output (as well as in terms of its considerable stockpile of nuclear weapons) and yet one of the world's poorer countries in terms of its level of output per capita. Other countries show this discrepancy (India, for one), but not to the extent that China does. And finally, there are the extraordinary qualities of the Chinese people and civilization: words like "pragmatism" and "adaptability" and "creativity" certainly apply, and they are very positive traits when it comes to economic progress. Such a unique environment provides few secure hooks on which to hang a longer-term forecast. Success is certainly not assured; but then neither is failure, and on balance China's economic history is reassuring.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Party-State versus Society in China

THOMAS B. GOLD

The exhilarating events of April and May 1989 in Beijing and elsewhere revealed the degree to which civil society has begun to emerge in communist China. The ruthless smashing of autonomous activities and organizations beginning June 4 and the subsequent ferreting out of their participants revealed the degree to which powerful leaders at the top of the Communist Party are unwilling and incapable of accepting the reality of nascent civil society in China.*

The history of the communist movement in China can be seen as a dialectic between two poles of restriction and liberalization of the Party's control over the state and of the Party-state's control over society. Utilizing the concept of civil society under socialism, this chapter explores this dialectic of Party-state–civil society relations since the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. After discussing concepts central to the paper, I focus on two key periods: the immediate post-Liberation days when the newly victorious Chinese Communist Party (CCP) restructured Chinese society in an effort to eliminate all autonomous spheres of activity and the period since the December 1978 Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, when the CCP initiated a process culminating in the tentative emergence of civil society, a consequence that the Party's gerontocrats can neither understand nor tolerate.

Civil Society under Socialism

Marxist-Leninist Parties and Totalitarian Aspirations

Marxist-Leninist parties are predicated on a fundamental mistrust of the masses.

* I wish to thank Gary Hamilton, Marc Garcelon, Elizabeth Perry, Steven Stoltenberg, and Andrew Walder for comments on an earlier version of this paper.

Their *Marxism* infuses such parties with a specific objective and with claims to scientific legitimacy. Party members supposedly believe Marx proved the inevitability of communism, which is achieved after societies pass through a revolutionary process involving the destruction of capitalism and then an intermediate stage of socialism. Communism is the endpoint of historical development, a utopia of abundance when there will be no classes, states, or exploitation. Marxists believe themselves obliged to lead their societies to this socialist-communist future.

Their *Leninism* gives these parties organizational principles enabling them to seize and maintain state power and to transform society.¹ Leninist parties are vanguard parties. They select members through a rigorous process. Members must be willing to submit to iron discipline, to accept the principle of democratic centralism—implementing Party policies once they are determined by higher levels, no matter what one's own views might have been, or still are. Parties are organized on the basis of a hierarchy of cells and a need to know. Out of power, they operate conspiratorially in order to undermine the constituted state and to position themselves to seize power. In power, they maintain the same structure as well as a conspiratorial mindset. They remain vanguard parties, as becoming mass parties would undermine the discipline necessary to mobilize and lead society.

Members of Marxist-Leninist parties constantly study the works of Marx and orient their policies to winning state power in order to transform society to eliminate all vestiges of capitalism and to build socialism in preparation for communism. Because these social vanguards relentlessly study Marxism, they believe that they have a higher consciousness than their fellows. Party members contend that they understand the laws of historical development and what is in the best interest of society as a whole, even though it might not be in the immediate interests of particular social forces. According to Leninist doctrine, the masses, left to their own devices and bereft of this higher consciousness, inevitably make choices based on narrow personal interests, unmindful or uncaring about the loftier demands of social progress. It is thus absolutely necessary that well-indoctrinated, highly disciplined Party members lead all organizations of state and society in order to ensure that policy decisions, large and small, are correct, that is, facilitate the achievement of socialism. It is believed that this will bring about a better life for the majority of citizens in the long run, even if they themselves lack the vision and foresight to recognize this scientific fact.

¹ See Philip Selznick, *The Organizational Weapon* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960).

Marxist-Leninist parties, then, aspire to totalitarian control; that is, they aim to dominate all aspects of economic, political, and superstructural life (including education, norms, values, culture, the media, religion, and the like).² They operate outside and above the law. This is not power for its own sake, they claim, but a necessary measure in the march toward the bright communist future. In spite of an organizational make-up designed for totalitarian control, none of them has yet achieved such control in practice for reasons discussed below.

Civil Society in a Socialist Context

Since the beginning of the 1980s, fundamental changes have been sweeping through the societies ruled by Marxist-Leninist parties in the face of profound legitimation crises climaxing in the stunning collapse of Eastern European Leninism in the second half of 1989. Even the more successful self-styled socialist countries failed to provide a standard of living or quality of life comparable to that in successful capitalist countries.³ The ruling Marxist-Leninist parties have had to assume the blame for failing to create systems that produce or motivate or permit their people to produce sufficient quantities of even the barest necessities of daily life to say nothing of luxury items. They denied their people control over their own economic as well as political lives and large chunks of their social activities.

In spite of totalitarian structures, citizens retained private spheres. Sometimes they organized on their own to recapture some control over aspects of their lives and to express dissatisfaction with the systems they lived under. Such organizing culminated in the emergence of formal mass associations such as Poland's Solidarity and Czechoslovakia's Civic Forum. Scholars observing this phenomenon, concentrating almost exclusively on Eastern Europe and the USSR, labeled it the emergence of civil society.⁴ The term originally referred to a wide range of self-

² I realize that "totalitarianism" is a loaded term, long in disrepute. But I have not found a better one to describe the orientation and organizational commitment of Marxist-Leninist parties. "Authoritarianism" is not total enough. For criticisms of the term "totalitarianism," see David Stark and Victor Nee, "Toward an Institutional Analysis of State Socialism," in *Remaking the Economic Institutions of Socialism*, ed. David Stark and Victor Nee (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 1-31; and Andrew G. Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), chap. 1.

³ See the tables in the appendix to Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989).

⁴ For instance, James P. Scanlan, "Reforms and Civil Society in the USSR," *Problems of Communism* 37:2 (March-April 1988): 41-46; Andrew Arato, "Civil Society against the State: Poland 1980-81," *Telos* 47 (Spring 1981): 23-47; Vaclav Benda et al., "Parallel Po-

determining social spheres that emerged in medieval Europe. Their members chose their own boundaries and entered into a variety of autonomous contractual relations with others. They were self-conscious concerning their purpose and constituents. They functioned as *pouvoirs intermediaires* between society and the state. Such groups may themselves evolve into or be replaced by more formal political institutions.⁵

As Marxist-Leninist parties attempt to assert total control over their societies, they monopolize the organization and activities of all social groups; civil society as such has no legitimate place. The Party-states eliminate or coopt such civil society as existed in the prerevolutionary society and prevent its reemergence. Marxist-Leninist parties themselves originated as self-constituted groups conspiring to overthrow the government in their particular countries. Not surprisingly, once in power, the Marxist-Leninist Party automatically assumes that any other self-determining group has a similar purpose. Why else organize outside the enlightened leadership of the Party?

For actually existing socialist societies, "civil society" refers to the sphere of independent activity outside the structure of the state and the Party, although Party and state functionaries may participate in it in their capacity as private citizens. The existence of civil society under socialism is not a dichotomous variable but a continuum spanning family life, private business, discussion groups, religious congregations, journals, and formal organizations such as voluntary associations and political parties. In orthodox Leninism, such formal organizations do not enjoy legal standing or protection; one sign of the transition to what is now being temporarily called (for want of a better word) "post-Leninism" is the Party-state's permission for groups such as Solidarity or Civic Forum to participate in social and especially political life.

Because the CCP attempted to assert totalitarian control over Chinese society, to eliminate autonomous organizations, and even to

lis, or An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe: An Inquiry," *Social Research* 55:1-2 (Spring-Summer 1988): 211-46; Elemer Hankiss, "The 'Second Society': Is There an Alternative Social Model Emerging in Contemporary Hungary?" *Social Research* 55:1-2 (Spring-Summer 1988): 13-42; John Keane, ed., *Civil Society and the State* (London: Verso, 1988).

⁵ This formulation draws on remarks by Philippe Schmitter at a faculty seminar he organized during the 1988-89 academic year at Stanford and Berkeley. See also Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), esp. pp. 141-54. Z. A. Pelczynski distinguishes "civil society," concerned mainly with material self-interest, from "political society," the realm of public affairs. See "Solidarity and 'The Rebirth of Civil Society' in Poland, 1976-81," in Keane, ed., *Civil Society*, pp. 361-80.

penetrate the family, the use of the term “civil society” in the sense many analysts employ it for Eastern Europe is entirely appropriate when speaking of China today.

The Shou-fang Dialectic

Chinese communist rule has been far from static. Chinese people view the history of their country under communist rule as a recurring shift between two poles, which they refer to as *shou* (restrict) and *fang* (liberalize). Sometimes they see this movement as similar to that between yin and yang—when things reach an extreme of one, they shade off into the other in circular fashion. Subsequent to the reforms that began in 1978, however, some Chinese believed that despite the periodic recurrence of *shou* policies, the general trend was toward increased openness.

What causes lurches from one pole to another? Some leaders manipulate the environment as a tactic in power struggles. Also, although “the Party” as an organization is by definition infallible, not all members submit to democratic centralism in practice. Even the leaders, often the Party’s founders, frequently operate outside the structures they themselves built. Many Party members subvert the Party’s policies because they disagree with particular policies or with the entire line that informs them. They err in the direction of overstrictness or overliberalization in implementing policies. They may agree with the Party’s general goals at a particular time but not with the tactics for attaining them; they may also disagree with the goals as well, believing they violate the Party’s sacred mission of building socialism, at least as they understood it when they joined up. They may lack confidence in the durability of policies so they prefer to do little to avoid criticism when the line changes. Many cadres obstruct policies that threaten their power and privileges.

Although Party members putatively represent the will of the proletariat and follow the mass line, in fact they come from a variety of different backgrounds. In spite of decades of Marxist-Leninist indoctrination, many of them cannot completely shed the skin of their old social status. Most of them work not in Party organizations, but in social units. In some cases they adopt the position of the unit itself, neglecting the big picture. These narrow sectarian views lead them to subvert policies.

Shifting situational factors inside the country and in the international environment also influence *shou* and *fang*. Policies succeed or fail, the masses resist mobilization, the masses seize an opening and exceed official limitations (such as decollectivization of agriculture), there are natural disasters, global alignments shift, the international communist movement

cannot unite—all of these situations have potential repercussions for domestic politics. The exigencies of modernization require loosening up in some spheres.⁶ Party members need to constantly reassess the internal and external situation to determine what the immediate and long-range tasks should be. Struggles over defining the objective situation influence the degree of *shou* and *fang*.

Shou and *fang* do not take hold uniformly. There are differences, for example, between Beijing and the rest of China; between urban and rural areas; among cadres at various levels of the Party-state bureaucracy; among economic, political and cultural spheres; and between Hans and minority nationalities.⁷

One of the main disagreements since 1949 has been over the issue of the extent of direct Party leadership (*shou*) versus a measure of autonomy for some or all social institutions or forces (*fang*). In the 1950s, the newly victorious CCP, with Soviet assistance, set about establishing a Stalinist-type totalitarian system in China, eliminating real or potential opposition, reorganizing the masses into new Party-led associations, and removing from them the resources to mount autonomous activities.

The Great Leap Forward (GLF; 1958–60) was a period of intensified direct Party control over society, emerging in the wake of the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1956, a *fang* interlude during which intellectuals criticized excessively tight Party-state control. The famine and related disasters of the GLF brought about another spell of relaxation. The decade of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR; 1966–76) represented a renewed policy of *shou*. The credo of the GPCR asserted that “the Party must lead everything,” eliminating even the fiction of a somewhat autonomous state, although the era’s chaos had the unintended consequence of providing openings for the reemergence of civil society. Following these two disasters, the 1978 Plenum initiated another period of *fang* in the economy, arts, scholarly inquiry, religious belief, personal relations, and contacts with the outside world. Within this general trend there have been three periods of *shou*—the 1983–84 Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign, the 1987 Campaign Against Bourgeois Liberalization, and the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre and subsequent witch-hunt.

⁶ This is the core argument in Richard Lowenthal, “Development vs. Utopia in Communist Policy,” in *Change in Communist Systems*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 33–116.

⁷ I wish to thank Yu Bin for pointing this out. See also Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1988).

The *shou-fang* dialectic is not synonymous with the fate of civil society. In China, during a *fang* period, individuals are allowed more scope over some aspects of their lives, such as research, making money, artistic expression. But in the leaders' minds, this must occur within Party-led organizations, through the Party-run media, subject to Party approval. It potentially could lead to autonomous activities and organizations, but the CCP has made every effort to ensure that it does not and to limit its effects. In the second half of the 1980s, the boldest moves since 1949 were made to establish autonomous associations during the extended *fang* era, acts of defiance the Party countered with brutality.

The next two sections examine relations between the Party-state and civil society at two crucial post-Liberation periods.

Liberation: The Party Conquers Society

Upon achieving national power, the CCP moved deliberately and forcefully to restructure the state, economy, society, and superstructure in order to consolidate and maintain its control in the name of leading China toward socialism. It simultaneously moved at macro and micro levels to reshape the social environment, the structure and content of organizations and their interrelations, interpersonal relations, and ways of thinking. It tried to eliminate all non-CCP-led organizations and non-CCP-mediated interactions (that is, civil society), as well as the opportunities to establish them or even conceive of them.

The discussion so far has examined Marxism-Leninism in ideal/typical terms. But Marxist-Leninist parties must contend with the historical and cultural legacies in the societies where they operate. Chinese tradition offered many areas of affinity with the Leninist organizational strategy, facilitating the CCP's consolidation and extension of power down to the basic levels of Chinese society.⁸ Most important was the absence of a sense of tension between the individual and the state. In addition, Chinese political culture legitimates rule by ideologically indoctrinated "superior men" who exercise power as exemplars of ethical ideals. These men supersede laws. There is an intolerance of heterodoxy and political power outside the formal governmental structure. Chinese

⁸ The following draws on Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), esp. chap. 3. These sweeping national character generalizations are not immune from criticism, but they cannot be avoided entirely. See also Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 2d ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), esp. chap. 5.

political culture also emphasizes hierarchy extending from the emperor to the family, and a deep aversion to disorder.

Certainly there were also bases for civil society within Chinese tradition, in particular, the family and the extensive commercial networks and merchant associations, which became increasingly complex during the Republican Period, 1911–49.⁹ There were also heterodox sects and popular religious bodies outside the state,¹⁰ although no institution as central or powerful as the Catholic Church in Europe. But China's political culture offered stronger support for pervasive and deep authority than it did for autonomy. For instance, although merchant associations constituted a shadow government in many cities, unlike their Western counterparts they did not seek autonomy from or confrontation with the authorities. Rather, they facilitated official governance. Likewise, as Andrew Nathan points out, advocates of democracy in modern China have by and large sought to work within the power structure, seeking broader participation rather than radical transformation.¹¹

In addition to Leninism influencing Chinese institutions, China's traditions and particular circumstances also shaped Leninism. Examples would be the emphasis on the peasantry and the mass line in Chinese Leninism (that is, Maoism).

The Communists' near miraculous victory over the U.S.-backed Nationalists granted them popular legitimacy, which also facilitated their consolidation of power. In much of Eastern Europe, by contrast, the people never granted comparable legitimacy to their Communist parties, which had been implanted and transparently propped up by the Soviet Union.

The experience of governance during the Yanan Period gave the CCP an advantage most other revolutionary parties lacked. But with a shortage of trained and ideologically committed personnel (4.5 million Party members in a total population of 541.7 million), a devastated economy, and severe external pressure from the United States and Kuo-mintang (KMT), the Party faced a daunting array of new tasks demand-

⁹ See, for example, Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1973); Joseph Fewsmith, *Party, State and Local Elites in Republican China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985); Gary G. Hamilton, "Regional Associations and the Chinese City: A Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21:3 (July 1979): 346–61; William T. Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society in a Chinese City, 1796–1889* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1984).

¹⁰ For example, Daniel L. Overmeyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University press, 1976).

¹¹ Andrew Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, passim (New York: Knopf, 1985).

ing immediate attention. The Party was bolstered by the battle-hardened and superbly disciplined People's Liberation Army (PLA) and a population exhausted by decades of war and willing to give this new, apparently different kind of political force a chance to prove itself. China's Communist leaders had lived through decades of chaos that had weakened the nation but also provided an opening for the rise and victory of their movement. They believed that by eliminating chaos, anarchy, and blindness they could introduce order, stability, and rationality, helping China to stand up and achieve wealth and strength.

They used violence and terror relatively selectively against "counterrevolutionaries," some members of the KMT regime, criminals, and so on. Positive means predominated. Three pre-Liberation speeches by Mao Zedong provided the ideological justification for bringing the largest number of citizens into the fold of "the people" who would be welcomed in assisting the CCP in creating the new order.¹² "The people," "at the present stage," included

the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. These classes, led by the working class and the Communist Party, unite to form their own state and elect their own government; they enforce their dictatorship over the running dogs of imperialism—the landlord class and bureaucrat-bourgeoisie, as well as the representatives of those classes... Democracy is practiced within the ranks of the people, who enjoy the rights of freedom of speech, assembly, association and so on.¹³

The "Common Programme," promulgated by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (a broad-based body led by the CCP), in September, 1949, codified much of this definition and served as the PRC's first constitution. For actual administration, the CCP relied to a large extent on bureaucrats held over from the KMT regime.¹⁴ It began to recruit and train new cadres to replace the holdovers. The Three-Anti Campaign of 1951, aimed at eliminating corruption, waste, and bureau-

¹² Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy" (January 1940), in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 2 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), pp. 339–84; "Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China" (March 5, 1949), *Selected Works*, vol. 4 (1969), pp. 361–76; "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" (June 30, 1949), *ibid.*, pp. 411–24.

¹³ Mao, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," *Works*, vol. 4, pp. 417–18.

¹⁴ Detailed studies of government transformation include Harry Harding, *Organizing China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1981); and Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization*. Chap. 2 of Ezra Vogel's *Canton under Communism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971) details the process for Canton.

cratism, provided a means to get rid of pre-Communist officials as well as new cadres who had succumbed to various vices. The campaign won wide popular support, as it demonstrated to the populace that this Party was sincere in its goal of introducing an entirely new form of government and society to China.

In the urban economy, the new regime confiscated the large industrial, financial, and commercial enterprises owned by KMT bureaucrat-capital and expropriated foreign-owned operations as well. But it adopted extremely supportive measures toward the national capitalists, whom it included among "the people." On the one hand, it supplied working capital, raw materials, and utilities to them to facilitate immediate recovery. Its unions suppressed worker demands in the larger interest of reviving production. On the other hand, through its increased control over supplies, capital, and markets, it became the largest supplier and purchaser of the private sector and in this way began to assert control. Following the Three-Anti Campaign, the Party and state launched a Five-Anti Campaign nominally to root out the poisons of bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts, and stealing state economic information rampant among capitalists. This 1952 campaign traumatized the bourgeoisie. Some committed suicide; most had to pay crushing fines. In any event, the result was to subordinate them even more to the state at all stages of business.¹⁵ This paved the way for the formal 1953–56 socialist transformation of private industry and commerce and the collectivization of the petit bourgeoisie.¹⁶

The CCP had experimented with land reform over the course of the Party's evolution, and after seizing national power, it moved quickly to reward its main social base, the peasantry. Here, too, it employed terror selectively against landlords, divided up land among the rest of the peasantry, and then moved to progressively freeze out rich peasants, unite poor and middle peasants, and initiate a step-by-step process of gradual collectivization.¹⁷

¹⁵ On the Five-Anti Campaign, see A. Doak Barnett, *Communist China: The Early Years, 1949–55* (New York: Praeger, 1969), chap. 12, pp. 135–71; John Gardner, "The Wu-Fan Campaign in Shanghai: A Study in the Consolidation of Urban Control," in *Chinese Communist Politics in Action*, ed. A. Doak Barnett (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 477–539; Kenneth G. Lieberthal, *Revolution and Tradition in Tientsin, 1949–52* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1980). Zhou Erfu's four-volume novel *Shanghai di zaochen* (Morning in Shanghai) provides a thinly fictionalized account of the entire process.

¹⁶ Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jingji yanjiuso, *Zhongguo zibenzhuyi gongshangye di shehuizhuyi gaizao* (The socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce in China) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1978).

By the mid-1950s, the CCP had through these methods consolidated its power over the state, removed the material bases of the old class structure, and asserted the state as the premier economic actor. In Marxist terms, the state is an instrument by which one class exercises dictatorship over other classes. Through its seizure of state power, the CCP had, by definition, overthrown the classes that had formerly controlled the state and substituted itself, as the self-styled representative of the workers and peasants, as the leading political force. The formerly downtrodden workers and peasants now had the highest social status as well.

While raising the status of workers and peasants, the new regime also began to suppress the traditional elite, China's intellectuals. Beginning most decisively in the autumn of 1951, Party officials entered the universities and other institutions where intellectuals congregated and embarked on a program of thought reform, teaching the new values and suppressing old ways of thinking. Many leading intellectuals had been educated in missionary schools in China or had studied in the West and so were vulnerable to criticisms of holding ideas potentially harmful to the new society, if not being downright secret agents for the imperialists. Intellectuals working in the arts had to redirect their efforts to glorify the new era, chastise the old days, and mobilize Chinese to support the regime's goals. Literary cadres selected particular works and their creators for criticism, sending a message to the rest of the community about the guidelines for art in the new era.¹⁸ Intellectuals generally tried to accommodate themselves to the new regime, some actively seeking positions, others adopting a critical stance.¹⁹

Organized religion and religious beliefs also came in for criticism and remolding. Christianity, with its foreign ties, underwent reorganization to produce a Chinese church. Popular religions such as Buddhism and Daoism were restricted. In 1951, Beijing reached an accommodation with the Dalai Lama, Tibet's theocratic leader. But a rebellion in 1959 resulted in tighter CCP control in the region. Because China needed to pacify its borders and to win support from Islamic Third World nations, Muslims, many of whom were minorities living in border areas,

¹⁷ Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization*, chap. 7.

¹⁸ Perry Link, "Introduction," in *Roses and Thorns*, ed. Perry Link (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 1-41.

¹⁹ Merle Goldman and Timothy Cheek, "Introduction: Uncertain Change," in *China's Intellectuals and the State: In Search of a New Relationship*, ed. Merle Goldman with Timothy Cheek and Carol Lee Hamrin (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, 1987), pp. 1-20.

could practice their religion more freely than others. Secret societies, powerful among lower classes, were singled out for suppression.²⁰

Through its control over the state and economy and elimination of alternatives, the Party could control the careers of China's people.²¹ Through its reform of the educational system, which included penetration by Communist cadres and a new curriculum, it could track people from childhood, rewarding those who best embodied (at least through visible behavior and expression) the new norms and values in a system Shirk calls a "virtuocracy."²² Outside the classroom, extracurricular activities dominated by the Young Pioneers and Communist Youth League ensured that the children spent even their free time in Party-supervised group activities.

The Party also moved to revolutionize the superstructure. It monopolized the media as well as the content of education, using this power ceaselessly to criticize old values and propagandize new ones. It promoted socialist role models such as the soldier Lei Feng, who embodied complete selflessness, and Ironman Wang, the Stakhanovite who worked himself to death. Cutting off access to Western media and restricting foreign cultural imports to those from fraternal countries in the Soviet bloc, the CCP reoriented the intellectual world of the Chinese. It created a new form of language ("newspeak" in George Orwell's parlance), which also functioned to restrict the range of thought.

Individuals were channeled into a variety of Party-led organizations. These removed opportunities for individual initiative and control over one's own life by making everyone more or less dependent on the Party and state. The most powerful such organization was the state *danwei* (unit), which provided not only a job, but also housing, medical care, day care, education, recreation, and coupons for rationed or scarce goods. State jobs were the most desirable in terms of guaranteed income and benefits (the "iron rice-bowl"), but the womblike all-encompassing nature of the *danwei* also imposed a crushing weight of Party supervision and dependence on its members. Promotions and access to the better things in life depended on one's manifest behavior (*biaoxian*), literally one's performance. Party officials enjoyed tremendous power over the subordinates in their *danwei*, be they manual workers, office personnel,

²⁰ Lieberthal, *Revolution and Tradition*.

²¹ Lynn T. White III, *Careers in Shanghai* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978).

²² Susan L. Shirk, *Competitive Comrades* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982); Jonathan Unger, *Education under Mao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

doctors, university professors, or whatever. They established clientilistic ties with activists ("principled particularism," in Walder's terms²³).

Not all urbanites were able to gain employment in a state *danwei*. Peasants and many urban-dwellers were members of collectives, but Party officials were in charge of these, too. The collectives provided only limited benefits, and wages varied with the income of the collective. Few provided housing, so urban employees lived scattered throughout the city, and their work unit was thus less of a totalistic organization. Private enterprise was severely restricted.

In addition to employment and educational affiliations, Chinese were also channeled into mass organizations of peasants, unions, students, women, writers, scientists, and so forth. These likewise were led by Party members, who controlled, monitored, and propagandized the members of the organizations. Urban living patterns—characterized by a chronic housing shortage, extreme difficulty of moving, a rigorous household registration system, and the use of neighborhood activists (mostly retirees and snooty old ladies) to monitor daily behavior—performed many of the same functions for those who did not hold jobs.²⁴

At work, in school, in the neighborhood, and in prison, Chinese had to participate in small groups organized from above. Led by Party members or activists, these groups monitored behavior and thought (at least, checking that everyone knew to say the correct thing), transmitted and studied official doctrine, checked up on one's progress at remolding one's world view, and compelled people to criticize each other and themselves publicly.²⁵ This ongoing Party-state intervention into social life intentionally created distrust between former friends and relatives. The Party hoped in this way to break former allegiances and submit the populace instead to CCP leadership in all things, remolding people to see their fellows not as particular friends but as comrades engaged in the same mission.²⁶ The CCP monopolized the definition of reality. A

²³ Gail E. Henderson and Myron S. Cohen, *The Chinese Hospital* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984); Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism*.

²⁴ Martin King Whyte and William L. Parish, *Urban Life in Contemporary China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

²⁵ Martin King Whyte, *Small Groups and Political Rituals in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974). For the most extreme version, see Robert Jay Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963).

²⁶ Ezra F. Vogel, "From Friendship to Comradeship: The Change in Personal Relations in Communist China," in *China under Mao: Politics Takes Command*, ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1966), pp. 407–21.

Chinese was supposed to achieve individual fulfillment through doing what the Party told him or her to do in Party-led organizations. The expression of alienation from these arrangements was officially inconceivable; if it happened, it met with severe punishment and curtailment of opportunities.

The CCP also penetrated the basic unit of Chinese society, the family. As can be seen so far, it usurped many of the traditional family's functions: it eliminated private ownership of the means of production, including land. Compulsory education removed children from the home for five and a half days a week and intensively socialized them into the new values, teaching them to love the Party more than their mothers and fathers. A system of state job allocation removed the family's prerogative of formulating a family strategy. The transformation of the class structure encouraged many children to denounce their parents and draw a clear line between their family and themselves if they hoped to ascend the ladder of success. Official units granted permission to marry and divorce.

Liberating Chinese women from their status as property of men ranked at the top of the CCP's revolutionary agenda, and the PRC enacted the Marriage Law in May 1950 as its first piece of legislation. A wave of divorces ensued, splitting apart many families, although emphasizing "the family as the basic unit of socialist development."²⁷ By encouraging women to enter the work force, the CCP further weakened the family's hold over its members.

In sum, the CCP erected a multilayered system designed to transform Chinese social structure; supervise as many aspects of peoples' lives as possible; remove alternatives; make people dependent on Party-led units for their livelihood, basic necessities, and perquisites; and restrict geographical and occupational mobility. To enforce control and channel popular energies into officially sanctioned activities it used a combination of terror, intense social pressure, positive incentives for activists, and removal of alternatives. Autonomous organizations were unthinkable, and, as time went on, the level of interpersonal distrust became so high that it precluded the existence of such associations and prevented the emergence of autonomous, spontaneous social movements.

Between 1949 and 1978 China witnessed several mass movements in which citizens vented their frustrations at particular social groups such as intellectuals, landlords, capitalists, bureaucrats, and so on whose

²⁷ Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), p. 177.

ranks were then purified. These movements tapped into genuine grievances in Chinese society, but none of them began spontaneously. Party leaders initiated, manipulated, and terminated them to eliminate real or supposed enemies in society and their supporters within the Party. Although Liu Shaoqi and other leaders characterized China as a state of the whole people, adopting an inclusionary approach, Mao Zedong and others continued to stress contradictions within "the people" and between "the people" and various enemies who needed to be struggled against vigorously. These movements intensified Party control after periods of seeming chaos. Behavior became increasingly ritualized as Party members operated outside the law and without accountability, instilling terrible uncertainty within the populace at large about what was correct at any particular time.

One great paradox of the latter stage of Mao's life was that, while exclaiming that "the Party must lead everything," the GPCR in its most violent phase (1966–69) and its consolidation phase (1969–76) opened interstices and vacuums that provided an initial foundation for the civil society that evolved in the 1980s.

For instance, students and workers often formed Red Guard groups spontaneously without waiting for a Party activist to mobilize them. (The Party branches and committees were frequently not functioning.) In traditional Chinese fashion, they acted to purify the Party-state of bad officials so it could do a better job, but participants had tasted the experience of self-organization.²⁸ They formed various sorts of networks extending across vast geographical distances, and they traveled extensively, frequently unsupervised. The excesses of the GPCR and especially the sudden downfall of Mao's erstwhile comrade-in-arms Lin Biao brought about an unprecedented disillusionment and crisis of faith among youths in particular. "Seeing through" the system and its continued unpredictability and arbitrariness provided a new foundation for self-action, which exploded in the Tiananmen protests of 1976 and again in the demonstrations and unofficial publications of the 1978–79 Democracy movement.

Civil Society after Mao

Ever since the reforms that began in 1978, the major trend in Chinese society has been the retrenchment of direct Party-state control

²⁸ Autobiographies of former Red Guards that reveal a great deal about the era include Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1983); and Gao Yuan, *Born Red* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987).

over peoples' lives. Individuals have recaptured some degree of control over their own lives.

When I went to China as a student in February 1979, during the Democracy Movement, I was struck by the ways in which Chinese society functioned unofficially in spite of the totalitarian structure and practice the CCP had been trying to implement for three decades. This naturally raised doubts as to how total its control, penetration, and remodeling had ever been in fact.²⁹ The subsequent ability of foreign scholars and experts to reside in China, conduct fieldwork, and engage in daily relations with ordinary Chinese; the published memoirs by Chinese; and a new openness in literature and discussions with the thousands of Chinese who have gone abroad have all provided tremendous insight into the ways in which people learned to cope with the gargantuan yet incompetent system that had been inflicted on them. For years, skeptics had refused to accept the reality of life in China as related by refugee interviews conducted in Hong Kong; my extended residence in the PRC confirmed the veracity of much of the data gathered in this way.

Deng Xiaoping realized that the CCP in the form it existed in 1978 was incapable of leading the nation to achieve the Four Modernizations of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense. First, it would be necessary to purge many of the nineteen million members who had joined during the GPCR primarily through their demonstrated redness and no particular other expertise, and to replace them with more technocratic, less dogmatic people. The Party and state had to separate organizationally with a clear division of labor between them. A meritocratic civil service was to be created and the rule of law established to prevent continuing abuses by unaccountable Party cadres. Deng pushed for social inclusionary policies and a virtual end to class struggle, removing labels from former class enemies and rehabilitating most intellectuals.

Although these political reforms were central to his project, Deng most strongly emphasized economic liberalization. The experience of Japan and the East Asian newly industrializing economies (NIEs—Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore), with economic liberalization under an authoritarian political system, offered an appealing model.

²⁹ Thomas B. Gold, "After Comradship: Personal Relations in China since the Cultural Revolution," *China Quarterly* 104 (December 1985): 657–75.

The Party and state began to retrench from direct control over the economy. People were permitted and even compelled to assume personal responsibility for their economic lot. A slogan popular in 1986 urged, "Stimulate the initiative of the individual!" Income inequality would be an acceptable temporary consequence as it would motivate others to catch up and would have "trickle down" benefits.³⁰ In the countryside, peasants took the initiative in dismantling collectivized agriculture and replacing it with a responsibility system where individuals, families, or groups sign contracts with the government to sell a stipulated amount of a particular good (primarily grain) at a fixed price. Everything they produce above that, including sideline products, they can sell to the state at a higher price or on the newly reopened and vastly expanded free markets. Many peasants began specializing in certain crops, while others abandoned agriculture as much as possible for ventures in trade, services, and manufacturing. In general, they could still not totally leave the countryside and gain official urban residence. At best, they moved to the expanding county seats and former commune headquarters; nonetheless, millions did flock to large cities as temporary laborers or entrepreneurs. As a consequence of the reforms, the rural family reasserted itself as the fundamental unit of production and consumption. It regained the power to impose a career strategy over its members,³¹ although the stringent one-child family policy kept the Party involved in family affairs.

In the urban areas, the state economy remained dominant, but here, too, the policy was to compel enterprises to assume more autonomy and responsibility for their own profit and loss, substituting taxes for total dependence on the state as the scope of the market expanded and that of the plan receded. Collective enterprises and smaller state enterprises were subcontracted to their managers or to outsiders. The managers paid taxes to the government and enjoyed power to distribute the profits, while also assuming responsibility for losses, including the threat of bankruptcy. Enterprises of all types entered into horizontal contractual arrangements (i.e., dealt with each other directly, not through the ministries in Beijing), and competed for survival. The imposed pursuit of profits by increasingly autonomous enterprises undermined the

³⁰ Martin King Whyte, "Social Trends in China: The Triumph of Inequality?" in *Modernizing China: Post-Mao Reform and Development*, ed. A. Doak Barnett and Ralph N. Clough (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1986), pp. 103–23.

³¹ William L. Parish, ed., *Chinese Rural Development: The Great Transformation* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1985), esp. Victor Nee, "Peasant Household Individualism," pp. 164–90.

government's efforts to manage the economy,³² although how far any of the above policies was actually implemented is problematic.

Individuals also assumed more personal responsibility, like it or not. The state began to replace the job assignment system with a labor market and the possibility of switching jobs. To "smash the iron rice-bowl," the state tied workers' rewards to their effort—bonuses for exceeding quotas, penalties for failing to meet them. (In practice, factory managers gave everyone pretty much the same amount to reduce resentment and prevent possible disruption.)

In another radical departure from Maoist economics, the Dengist reformers created a legal urban private sector. The overriding rationale was to absorb many of the millions of young school graduates for whom there were no jobs in state or collective enterprises, as well as the surplus workers in state enterprises. It could also provide work for other hard core unemployables: ex-prisoners, former Red Guards, the handicapped, and pensioners eager to supplement their incomes. In addition, private businesses could fill in the gaps that the other sectors could not fill, especially in services. These individual operations required no state investment and provided a new source of revenue for government coffers. As part of its general thrust of developing a corpus of laws and institutions, the Dengists promulgated numerous statutes protecting private business. By the end of 1987, there were 3.38 million registered individual enterprises (*getihu*) in the urban areas employing 4.92 million persons, although these numbers greatly understate actual participation in private business by family and friends. Some workers quit state jobs for the private road, claiming that this would give them at last the chance to bring their talents into full play, outside the stifling Party-controlled *danwei*. After extended ideological battles, an additional 225,000 private enterprises (*siren qiye*) (those with more than seven employees) attained legal status, with more than 3.6 million employees.³³

These various economic reforms granted increased scope for management and ownership of resources and capital, access to information, decision making, linkages to foreigners, travel in China and abroad, and foreign ways of thinking. Party secretaries lost some power without receiving clear guidelines as to what they were supposed to be doing.

³² Dwight H. Perkins, "The Prospects for China's Economic Reforms," in *Modernizing China*, pp. 39–61.

³³ Thomas B. Gold, "Urban Private Business in China," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 22:2–3 (Spring–Summer 1989): 187–201.

Tremendous numbers of activities were occurring outside their control and without their knowledge.

In an effort to buy off discontent and win support from young people, the retrenching Party and state also permitted more diversity. The appearance of colorful and stylish clothing and other adornments and numerous ways to spend money through consumption and recreation reflected this trend.³⁴

These policies were experimental and improvisational. At times, as in the rural sector, the CCP could only formalize practices the people themselves had initiated. Retroactive ideological justification came in two slogans—"socialism with Chinese characteristics" and "preliminary stage of socialism."³⁵ These catchall concepts appeared to legitimize this broad range of activities as well as further forays into unexplored socialist reform territory.

This post-Mao *fang* was clearly evident in the cultural realm, which achieved a degree of autonomy. Beginning with so-called Literature of Wounds in 1978—which exposed the wounds Chinese people, youth in particular, had suffered in the Cultural Revolution—fiction, drama, reportage, poetry, songs, plastic arts, and film all explored hitherto forbidden realms through a myriad of forms. Works labeled as poisonous weeds in the Anti-Rightist Movement of 1957 were allowed to bloom once more; and one of the most prominent victims of that era, the journalist Liu Binyan, took up his pen again to expose corruption and arbitrariness in contemporary China.³⁶

But most of the artists were fresh faces. Some expressed themselves through Chinese idioms and forms, while others experimented with Western aesthetics. Examples of the latter are modernist, abstract poets such as Bei Dao and Gu Cheng and popular song writers such as Cui Jian, whose provocative 1987 song "I Have Nothing to My Name" was quintessential rock and roll nihilism.³⁷ Films received the greatest

³⁴ Orville Schell explores this in two books: *To Get Rich Is Glorious* (New York: New American Library, 1986) and *Discos and Democracy* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

³⁵ Deng Xiaoping, *Build Socialism with Chinese Characteristics* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1985); Zhao Ziyang, "Advance along the Road of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," *Beijing Review* 45 (November 9–15, 1987).

³⁶ See examples in Perry Link, ed., *People or Monsters? and Other Stories and Reportage from China after Mao by Liu Binyan* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

³⁷ Many works have been translated into English. For some representative collections, see Geremie Barme and John Minford, *Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1988); Helen Siu and Zelda Stern, *Mao's Harvest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Jeanne Tai, *Spring Bamboo* (New York: Random House, 1989); and Link, *Roses and Thorns*.

response abroad, with works such as Chen Kaige's *Yellow Earth*, Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum*, and Wu Tianming's *Old Well* winning acclaim at international film festivals. Wu, director of the Xian Film Studio and the patron of Chen, Zhang, and others, fended off attacks from conservative literati who detested the films' portrayals of poor peasants as superstitious, promiscuous, and deeply traditional in violation of Party myths about their inherent revolutionary zeal. With publishing houses, film studios, and art troupes responsible for their own profits and losses, many turned to blatant commercial appeal to boost their incomes. A disco Party became a de rigueur scene in any show as did a certain amount of bare flesh. State-run television featured kung-fu epics and song-and-dance extravaganzas indistinguishable from others of those genres common in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

China's obsession with its traditional culture and failure to modernize took center stage in the summer of 1988 with the airing of a controversial six-part television documentary *River Elegy* (He Shang). It singled out the Yellow River, the dragon, and the Great Wall as symbols of China's conservatism, earth-rootedness, acceptance of authoritarianism, and self-deception. Written by Su Xiaokang and Wang Luxiang with counsel from the economist Li Yining, the scientist Jin Guantao, and others, the film pleaded for an end to the waste of China's intellectuals and urged a new orientation—to the blue sea. *River Elegy* was one of a number of works using stark barren images and ruins in a search for China's cultural identity.

Over the course of the reform decade, conservatives in the cultural bureaucracy and the Party as a whole attempted to reimpose *shou* on the liberalized atmosphere, first in the cultural field, then in the economy and in social relations. In 1981 they attacked Bai Hua's film *Unrequited Love* for asking the question "You love the motherland, why doesn't the motherland love you?" which expressed the angst of countless victimized intellectuals. In 1983–84 they attacked "spiritual pollution" and in 1986–87, "bourgeois liberalization," catchall labels for whatever particular figures found offensive.³⁸ Both movements ended abruptly with their supporters widely ridiculed. Initially, the targets of the movements had worked independently, but once they were labeled together, they began to develop some consciousness of themselves as part of a phenomenon.

On their own, some intellectuals organized "salons," opportunities to gather for seminars, concerts, and exhibits. In 1986, George Soros, a

³⁸ Thomas B. Gold, "'Just in Time!': China Battles Spiritual Pollution on the Eve of 1984," *Asian Survey* 24:9 (September 1984): 947–74; and Schell, *Discos and Democracy*.

Hungarian-American businessman, established The China Fund, with Zhao Ziyang's blessing, to support a range of autonomous intellectual activity. Soros set up similar funds in Hungary, Poland, and the USSR. *The Chinese Intellectual*, a New York-based journal edited by Liang Heng, published two issues on the mainland in 1989 before June, although the second was confiscated and destroyed. Increased knowledge of the democratization under way in Taiwan after 1986 (much of it transmitted by the 600,000 people from Taiwan who visited the mainland after their government legalized such trips in November 1987) also provided a model for Chinese intellectuals.

In a highly ideologized society such as China, all of these cultural developments have political significance. But Chinese writers generally steered clear of dissident political activity, unlike their Eastern European counterparts.

The social sciences benefited greatly from these reforms. Researchers at social science academies, think tanks, universities, and state and private public opinion polling units conducted numerous surveys to gauge the popular mood on a range of subjects.³⁹ The authorities acknowledged that different social groups held varying views and interests and that, as modernization proceeded, China's social structure and values would become increasingly pluralistic.

Having experienced so much political turmoil, most Chinese were eager to avoid political activity, and the CCP appeared to make few demands on them during the 1980s, certainly compared to the previous two decades. Although the earlier "political movements" had tapped into genuine popular grievances, the movements had not been spontaneous; they had been initiated and manipulated from the top to achieve particular goals determined by leaders. But by the mid-1970s, spontaneous expressions of social discontent erupted into public political activity and began a trend of various groups of people seizing the initiative to press for reforms and continued opening.

The precursor was the 1976 Tiananmen Incident when thousands of citizens marched to the square carrying wreaths to memorialize Zhou Enlai, who had died in January and was suspiciously undermourned by his comrades. Citizens read poems and expressed their grief as ways of venting their displeasure with the radical Gang of Four then in power. The police moved in on April 5 to suppress the demonstrations with unknown casualties.

³⁹ Stanley Rosen, "Public Opinion and Reform in the People's Republic of China," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 12:2-3 (Summer-Autumn 1989): 153-70.

In the fall of 1978, Beijing citizens, led by workers (many of whom were former Red Guards), began to write wall posters demanding democratic reforms. The subsequent Democracy Movement spread to other cities and university campuses, with young people as the most active force.⁴⁰ They were joined by thousands of ex-Red Guards who, settled in the countryside, had returned to the cities, using some of their organizational skills to demand permission to stay in the urban areas.⁴¹ The participants demanded a reversal of the verdict of the 1976 Tiananmen Incident (from counterrevolutionary to patriotic), as well as the redress of grievances for cases of injustice dating back to the 1950s. Democracy advocates sensed the dawn of a new era after the Maoist nightmare. The movement appears to have begun spontaneously, but it was subsequently manipulated by Deng Xiaoping and others to discredit Hua Guofeng and other Maoist “whateverists” then in power. Deng initially proclaimed that the demonstrators were correct, but when his political purposes had been achieved, he turned on the movement. In April 1979, he promulgated the Four Basic Principles,⁴² then began a witch-hunt of the leaders, some of whom remain in jail.

In December 1986, another series of demonstrations erupted, this time led by students, mainly in Hefei and Shanghai.⁴³ The students were expressing frustration with the quality of life on campus as well as the lack of democracy within society. They drew particular inspiration from the writings and speeches of Fang Lizhi, the astrophysicist serving as vice president of the Chinese Academy of Science and Technology in Hefei, Anhui Province, as well as those of Liu Binyan, the scathing journalist. The Party general secretary, Hu Yaobang, appeared sympathetic with some of the demands, and Deng sacked him. Thus ensued a period of *shou* that focused on the criticism of “bourgeois liberalization” (vaguely defined as rejection of CCP leadership) and Fang’s slogan of “wholesale Westernization.” This movement and the 1983–84 Anti-Spiritual Pollution drive, enjoyed virtually no popular support, and both were terminated when foreign investors and Chinese intellectuals abroad voiced concern about China’s stability and future.

⁴⁰ Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard, “The Democracy Movement in China, 1978–79: Opposition Movements, Wall Poster Campaigns, and the Underground Journals,” *Asian Survey* 21:7 (July 1981): 747–74; Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*.

⁴¹ Thomas B. Gold, “Back to the City: The Return of Shanghai’s Educated Youth,” *China Quarterly* 84 (December 1980): 755–70.

⁴² Leadership of the CCP, the socialist road, Marxism-Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought, and the People’s Democratic Dictatorship.

⁴³ Schell, *Discos and Democracy*, passim.

In September 1987, September 1988, and March 1989, Tibetans demonstrated against Chinese (Han) occupation and severe restrictions on the practice of their religion-based culture. The armed forces suppressed the actions, and in March 1989, Beijing imposed martial law over Lhasa.

The events of spring 1989 carried forward the momentum of the previous movements and revealed the extent to which civil society had emerged across the country. During my visit to a university campus outside Beijing in April 1989, a student described the mood as “a dormant volcano.” In the relatively open environment, students frequently discussed their frustrations with the system in dormitory bull sessions. They were upset about their living conditions, the poor quality of their education, and Party supervision while in school. They complained that job assignments were based on connections or corruption, having little to do with actual merit. Intellectuals’ incomes were lower than those of most private entrepreneurs and were being continuously eroded by 30 percent inflation. Poorly educated, jealous Party secretaries restricted their professional activities as well as attempted to control their lives in general. The students complained that the leaders were out of touch with reality and made their decisions in secret. The students—and this was on the eve of the Gorbachev visit—wanted *glasnost*, translated into Chinese as *gongkaihua* (openness) or *toumingdu* (transparency), as well as genuine (not manipulated, as with the “eight democratic parties”) input into the decision-making process. Profound pessimism had replaced the optimism of 1978–79. This pessimism and desperation drove them to exploit a *fang* period and organize on their own.

The death of Hu Yaobang on April 15 gave students a pretext to vent their frustrations in Beijing and elsewhere. During his lifetime, Hu had been regarded as something of a buffoon, although respected for rehabilitating intellectuals after 1979 and for trying to limit the anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign. To an unprecedented degree, the students began to organize after Hu’s death, setting up campus groups and the Beijing Autonomous College Student Federation in the capital as well as similar groups throughout the nation. They tried to use democratic elections to choose leaders. They sought out reform intellectuals, such as the political scientist Yan Jiaqi, physicist Li Shuxian, and literary critic Liu Xiaobo to advise them and their Democracy University. They organized their activities in the square with a discipline learned from lifetime participation in CCP-led associations.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Craig Calhoun, “‘Democracy and Science’ 1989: A Report from Beijing,” *Transaction/SOCIETY*, September/October 1989, pp. 1–27.

Workers in Beijing and elsewhere established independent unions such as the Capital Workers' United Autonomous Association and joined the demonstrations. They also resented the inflation, arbitrary job assignments, and perceived inequity of the system under which Party members enjoyed all sorts of privileges unavailable to workers, the putative masters of the country.⁴⁵ This nascent formation of the same type of coalition that had led to the disintegration of the authority of the Polish Communist Party in the 1980s frightened the leadership. In a speech on April 25, Deng Xiaoping explicitly warned against making Polish-type concessions to the demonstrators.

People from a broad spectrum of urban society joined the protests, including those from the Central Party School and Party members from a variety of units. It is a measure of their desperation and belief that they could effect change that middle-aged people who feared a revival of Cultural Revolution-style chaos would join such a spontaneous movement led by youths without memory of the GPCR. A variety of motives brought them to the streets. Participants did not share a single vision of an alternative system. They expressed solidarity with students (especially after the hunger strike began) and their personal unhappiness with inflation, corruption, inequity, inequality, and lack of freedom. Shanghai's *World Economic Herald* was especially vociferous in demanding press freedom, culminating in the removal of its editor, Qin Benli. Even the official *Beijing Review* demonstrated press freedom. Its May 29, 1989, issue included four pages of colored photos of the demonstrations as well as a sympathetic cover story. Some private businessmen also participated, providing such logistical support as food and blankets and running messages on motorcycles. Wan Runnan provided a range of support through his company, the Stone Corporation (lauded as "China's IBM") and its related think tank. After the suppression and subsequent witch-hunt, some dissident figures who fled abroad established a Chinese Democratic Front in Paris, and other similar organizations began to appear.

The sum total of these activities is nascent civil society. The decade of reforms had created several bases for autonomous activity that constitute the foundation of civil society. Of prime importance are commercial networks and organizations. These include private as well as state-collective enterprises and cadres and their families running state en-

⁴⁵ Martin King Whyte, "The Politics of Life Chances in the People's Republic of China," in *Power and Policy in the PRC*, ed. Yu-ming Shaw (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1985), pp. 244-65.

terprises as their private businesses. Controlling resources and information, businessmen engage in multifarious activities motivated by self-interest increasingly outside Party-state control. So far, few rural entrepreneurs appear to have translated economic autonomy or power into political muscle, although there have been reports of tax revolts and the revival of religious sects with charismatic leaders.

Scholars have debated the linkages between economic and political liberalization.⁴⁶ Some Chinese reformers had advocated “neauthoritarianism” on the Japan-NIE model, believing the two liberalizations could be separated, at least for a time.⁴⁷

Under the reforms, China’s economic, political, social, and cultural systems began to differentiate from each other in the classic modernization mode. The old means of coercive and ideological control and integration became increasingly ineffective. Students and intellectuals created an autonomous sphere for themselves in the face of continued Party impotence and incompetence. Think tanks; salons; the ability to express cultural introspection; participation in global communications networks through telephones, telex, and fax machines; and the internationalization of the Chinese intelligentsia through foreign travel, scholarship, and experts all contributed to creating bases for civil society that continued to expand and evolve. Surely the economic policy of openness to the outside created an unintended base for this.

Finally, political liberalization and democratization have swept China’s referent societies, both the East Asian NIEs and, more importantly, the East European socialist countries. They present a powerful model for motivated Chinese.

The reaction of the CCP old guard to all of this, similar to that of its Polish comrades in 1981, grew out of its Leninist inability to acknowledge the legitimacy of spontaneous expression or organization, reinforced by the cultural legacy of Confucian ageism and fear of change. In addition to these more abstract reasons is the specific fact that these “revolutionaries of the older generation” could not bear to see the collapse of what they saw as their historical mission. If the open economy that many of them had opposed all along could not be shut down entirely, then war had to be waged against autonomous activities elsewhere in

⁴⁶ For example, Charles E. Lindblom, *Politics and Markets* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

⁴⁷ For a summary, see Xiao Gongqin, “Checks and Balances by Authority: The Only Way to Success in China’s Reform,” *Shijie jingji daobao* (World economic herald), March 13, 1989, p. 11, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report—China*, March 24, 1989, pp. 40–43.

society, with force and with incessant ideological indoctrination, just as in the old days.

After four decades of inconsistent policies, power struggles, instability, absence of institutions, and unaccountability, the CCP elders have made it impossible to reproduce either an elite in their own image or a social structure they believe can reflect their ideals. The opening that some of them supported and others obstructed has resulted in a more complex social structure for China and an increased ability of citizens to deal with each other outside Party control for economic, cultural, social, and, sometimes, political ends. The *shou* of 1989, based purely on tanks and guns, cannot prevent the continued evolution of civil society.

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CHAPTER SIX

The PRC Intelligentsia: A View from Literature

RUDOLF G. WAGNER

The conflict between the intelligentsia and the Communist Party in China, so strikingly brought to the world's attention by the events in Beijing during May and June 1989, is a structural and strategic conflict with deep roots. It did not begin in spring 1989. And the events in Tiananmen Square did not end it.

Historically, the Party cadre in China claimed political "virtue," *de*, as his legitimation for power; the intelligentsia, professional "talent," *cai*. With the latter becoming more important in the process of modernization, the Party fended off the constant threat from the intelligentsia with measures ranging from exclusion from leading positions to mass deportation, rigid control of all printed matter, selective violence, neglect of education, social ostracism, and the recruitment of mediocre and obedient characters in preference to those better qualified.

In the process, the PRC has wasted one generation after another of its brightest talents and has politicized the entire intelligentsia to the degree that most of the humanities and social science research as well as much of the literature written after 1949 can more properly be analyzed in terms of the political struggles of the times than in terms of a scholarly or literary discourse.

The Historical Framework

The Chinese term for "intellectuals" is *zhishifenzi*. Before 1949 the term connoted people with higher education engaged in such intellectual professions as scholarship, teaching, and writing. With the founding of the PRC it has become an administrative term filled with the content of a Soviet word, *intelligentsia*, which refers to all people with a higher (normally university) education working in jobs that call upon their training and skills, whether they are teachers, engineers, poets, managers,

censors, or planners. Each member of the intelligentsia belongs to a given rank within this group; at the top are the university professors or chief engineers; at the lower end are primary school teachers.

Every Chinese citizen has identification papers which until the beginning of the 1980s in addition to noting name, birth place, and age, defined the bearer's class status. After the 1949 revolution, class status for each citizen was fixed, from "landlord" and "capitalist" to "lower-middle peasant" and "worker." To these concepts drawn from the orthodox Marxist inventory others were added—"revolutionary martyr" for the dependents of people who had died while in the Communist armies, for instance, and "bad element" and "counterrevolutionary" for people who defied the Communist leadership although they might in other respects possess immaculately "good" class background. With land collectivization and the nationalization of industry, the bases for the allocation of these class definitions would seem to have disappeared. In fact, however, they remained—and were even handed on to children and grandchildren of those to whom they had originally been given. In the various political movements since the early 1950s, quotas for the number of "counterrevolutionary elements," "rightists," "right opportunists," and the like to be purged were assigned to each unit. People with "bad class status" were most likely to be singled out for purging, in order to fill the quota.¹

"Intelligentsia" was not defined as a class in its own right. Instead it was considered part of the "petty bourgeoisie," a segment of the population thought to be wavering between the "bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat." It should be noted that these "classes" are not analytical categories based on empirical investigation, but administrative concepts. China had neither a "proletariat" nor a "bourgeoisie" nor anything else corresponding to European Marxist concepts, but the Party leadership used these notions to establish a rationale for the distribution of scarce goods and privileges.

Between 1949 and 1956, the main contradiction in the society was defined as that between the "bourgeoisie" (the capitalists in the cities and the landlords in the countryside), who were thought to oppose the transition to collective and state ownership, and the "people," consisting of the workers, the middle, lower-middle, and poor peasants, led by the Communist Party. The intelligentsia was considered an ambivalent factor in this struggle, and thus essentially unreliable. Intellectuals—at first

¹ See R. K. Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

non-Communist, eventually Communists like the literary critic Hu Feng—were singled out for criticism and charged with being “counterrevolutionary.” During the period members of the upper echelons of the intelligentsia did not qualify for Party membership, nor were they considered sufficiently reliable to be entrusted with responsible positions. In practice, this meant that all decisions—including highly technical ones—were either made by or required the approval of the respective Party secretaries, most of whom had made their careers in the army during the war and lacked the qualifications possessed by the intellectuals.

In January 1956 Prime Minister Zhou Enlai delivered a speech “On the Intelligentsia” in which he redefined the status of intellectuals. They were, he said, a “part of the working people.” The “working people” (hitherto the workers and poor and lower-middle peasants) were considered the ruling classes of the country, exercising their “dictatorship” through the Communist Party, which represented their “objective interests.” The intellectuals’ improved status was signaled by a Party recruitment drive aimed at this segment of the population and accompanied by substantial salary increases and by clamors to entrust “specialists” with “leading positions” hitherto held by Party cadres possessing political (“red”) rather than professional (“expert”) qualifications.

At the Eighth Party Congress in September 1956, bureaucratism in the Party and government apparatus officially replaced imperialism and sabotage by class enemies as the main obstacle to economic progress. Members of the intelligentsia therefore began to enjoy—at least temporarily—a certain legitimacy and limited license to criticize bureaucrats. Indeed, they were even encouraged to do so with the slogan “let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend.” The “hundred flowers” symbolized a greater variety of literary and artistic styles within the confines of “socialist realism,” and the hundred schools a greater variety of thought—although Mao Zedong himself made it clear that these “two times one hundred” were to function within the confines of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parameters.

This intellectual springtime was short-lived. In June 1957 the Chinese leadership moved to a *de facto* restoration of the old definition of the main contradiction of class struggle by restoring the pre-1956 class status of the intelligentsia. From this new—or rather reinstated—perspective, the previously encouraged criticism of Party bureaucratism by intellectuals was now interpreted as a planned conspiracy directed against the Party and the socialist system. About 550,000 intellectuals were declared “rightists” by their superiors, and some of their colleagues

hastened to fill the quota of those to be purged with others to avoid being selected themselves. Such newly elected "rightists" were dismissed from their jobs, evicted from the cities, separated from their families, and sent for reeducation to remote state farms. Many were finally "rehabilitated" only in 1978 or 1979.

During the subsequent years of the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961), the Party leadership attempted to replace "unreliable" intellectuals with a "proletarian intelligentsia" trained in part-time schools and on the job during the frenzied upheavals of those years. After this attempt at rapid modernization had landed the country in famine and economic disaster, measures were undertaken in 1961 to restore the economy. This necessarily required a stronger reliance on the intelligentsia and a return to a highly stratified system of higher education with a few elite schools and universities set up to train the children of high cadres and of the higher intelligentsia as the future leaders of the country.

With respect to intellectuals the Cultural Revolution lasted ten years. While most aspects of struggle had run their course by 1972, a few issues remained focal points for battles until 1976. The big battles were fought between various groups of intellectuals linked to various factions in the political center. All sides tried to win over members of the intelligentsia as spokesmen and propagandists, while denouncing their opponents as bourgeois and antisocialist elements. A number of intellectuals, many of whom had denounced their younger colleagues as "rightists" a decade before, were in turn persecuted and jailed, mostly at the instigation of their younger colleagues. The ideal of the proletarianized intelligentsia, which had first appeared during the Great Leap, was restored during the Cultural Revolution, and an educational system evolved that claimed to combine political and professional education, technical training, and practical production experience to create a new type of intellectual intended to be both "red" and "expert."

In December 1978, the Third Plenum of the Communist Party's Eleventh Central Committee, which marked the beginning of reform policies, returned to the main contradiction as it had been defined in 1956. With the establishment of the Four Modernizations (of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defense) as the new main goal, the intelligentsia was again redefined in the very terms that had been used by Zhou Enlai in 1956, that is, as "part of the working people." Since then, members of the intelligentsia have been permitted to join the Party, thereby qualifying in principle for responsible positions, and have again been allowed a certain latitude in criticizing Party bureaucratism without thereby being necessarily labeled counterrevolutionary. Again the educa-

tional system was revamped along the old lines with a renewed emphasis on scholarship and intellectual discipline.

These changes have not been instituted without resistance in the political center. Significant elements in the reform leadership under Deng Xiaoping have continued to push for economic modernization while maintaining a rigidly authoritarian political structure. Therefore the position of the intelligentsia, although greatly improved, has nonetheless remained precarious. The leadership continued to view the intelligentsia with distrust and to set unmistakable boundaries to the range of intellectual activity. Thus in March 1979, repeating the 1956 pattern when Mao Zedong had defined the limits for the "flowers" and the "schools," Deng Xiaoping established the "four basic principles." These principles require every citizen, whether Communist or not, to advocate the leading role of the Communist Party, the "socialist system," Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" over "counterrevolutionaries" and other "class enemies." To underscore their primacy these were written into the new Chinese constitution. Since that time, an uneasy truce has prevailed between the Party bureaucracy and the intelligentsia, punctuated by nearly annual campaigns against "spiritual pollution" or "bourgeois liberalization" undertaken by the conservatives and growing manifestations of a new self-assertiveness on the part of the intelligentsia, which has increasingly included younger Party cadres. This truce was broken in the student-led demonstrations of May-June 1989 when, in answer to the intellectuals' demands for political reform and legal guarantees of human rights, the Party leadership replied with tanks, arrests, imprisonments, and executions, and an attempt at a replay of the antirightist campaign of more than thirty years ago that brought the Hundred Flowers period to such a brutal end. The new leadership had kept this option open by declaring in its official PRC history that the antirightist campaign had been basically correct but the number of people affected had been "too large."

Since its founding in 1949, the PRC has experienced no dearth of political campaigns. Given the regional diversity of the country, the variety of the economic and social problems with which it is faced, and the complexity of issues in a society attempting to revolutionize traditional political institutions and habits of thought and behavior that have become entrenched over very long periods of time, one would expect the inevitable political conflicts to surface at many different points. In many of the political campaigns since 1949, however, members of the intelligentsia have been the primary targets, and literary works, be they novels, short stories, films, or drama, have provided the battle ground for any

political controversy—witness the criticism of the film on Wu Xun (1951), the criticism of Yu Pingbo's work on the novel *Dream of the Red Chamber* (1953), the Campaign to Purge the Counterrevolutionaries (which was directed against the critic Hu Feng) (1955), the Campaign Against the Rightists (1957), and the campaign against the writers of historical drama that foreshadowed the Cultural Revolution (1965), not to mention the numerous campaigns or calls against spiritual pollution or bourgeois liberalization that have surfaced in recent years and whose apex was the June 1989 military crackdown.

This brief background serves to establish the context in which literature operated in post-1949 China. As they have been throughout China's history, literature and politics are inextricably intertwined. The cultural intelligentsia, including writers of fiction, officially comes under the control of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, which directs the relevant government ministries as well as the provincial and local propaganda committees and cultural bureaus in their daily work. In the strict sense of the word, the work of this entire section is intended to be propaganda for current government policies. The Party exercises the widest range of control over all cultural products. In the case of literature the Party defines the purpose for which the work of fiction is to be created, establishes the physical and intellectual conditions within which the author works, scrutinizes the cultural content of each work, censors any work that fails to meet the prevailing political requirements of literary production, and holds a total monopoly over all means of publication. Such nearly total control over the cultural intelligentsia is a measure of the importance that the Party attaches to their products as propaganda. Writers of fiction, artists, journalists, historians, philosophers, and social scientists, although they occupy perhaps the most rewarding positions within the intelligentsia, have also been the most frequent targets of campaigns inspired by the conservatives in the political center. The dips and turns experienced by the cultural intelligentsia is a political weathervane: the measure of intellectual license allowed them has frequently been an indicator of the leeway to be allotted to other intellectuals, especially the technical intelligentsia.

The potential for conflict between the cultural intelligentsia and the Party leadership was realized early in the Communist movement. After 1949, however, the situation became more complex as the divisions within the leadership deepened while opportunities for the public discussion of issues decreased. With the triumph of the revolution, the relatively simple dichotomy which pitted the Party against the Japanese or the Kuomintang rapidly lost its relevance. Moreover, the transition from

an impoverished fighting army to a civilian government responsible for running a huge country created deep divisions in the Party's political center. The leaders who had led the revolution to its triumphant conclusion had excelled in mass mobilization, discipline, and endurance during hardship, but were these the qualities and experiences needed to run a steel mill, a city government, or a Five-Year Plan? However, if a different set of qualifications was needed for the "building of socialism," their careers might be ended; the governing elite which won the revolution would hand over power to a group of intellectuals of questionable class backgrounds and untrustworthy political commitment.

The Leninist and Stalinist tradition in which the Chinese Communist Party has been groomed has made the unity of the Party a primary ideal. The myth of political unity has been more or less successfully superimposed over the factional reality of central Party politics (see Baum and Dittmer chapters), thereby endowing the Party-dominated national institutions—including cultural institutions—with a remarkable political tension and instability. In particular, the imposition of a false unity over a complex political system of great natural diversity had direct and far-reaching consequences for the intelligentsia. When other avenues of political debate closed down, the indirect forms of political expression offered by literature, art, or film opened alternate areas for veiled political conflict. Every faction in the political center sought to use its influence with the cultural intelligentsia to disseminate its own views. The somewhat arcane diversity characterizing Chinese literary, artistic, and social science products is mostly due to the fact that the conflicts in the political center are debated here in indirect form. The fragmentation of the center by factional struggle is reflected in literature; whichever faction manages to assert its temporary hegemony seeks to unify Chinese cultural output under its exclusive guidance, while the momentarily muted opposition attempts to contest its dominance within the very same realm.

For the cultural intelligentsia, this has required difficult choices. One single agreed-upon official line maintained by each faction that seizes control has been that "literature should serve politics." This formula extends to the activities of all other sections of the cultural intelligentsia. Thus if a campaign is for collectivization, against corruption, for the overthrow of the "bourgeoisie within the Party," or against bureaucratism, the cultural intelligentsia is expected to flesh out these skeletal slogans using their special skills. Historians will find earlier instances of the people's loathing of bureaucratism or will discover that utopian longings for the establishment of communal lands animated ear-

lier popular movements or (if land is being individually distributed again) will unearth instances of their deep affection for their traditional family plot of ground. Journalists will select appropriate news items to demonstrate that the current policies are perfectly in tune with the people's aspirations, or at least that they are objectively necessary and only opposed by a few weak-minded or outright reactionary individuals. Philosophers might show how this or that policy exactly corresponds to the teachings of the classics of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, citing appropriate quotes, while novelists will use the technique of "realist" depiction to show appropriate heroes and villains in the process of heroically implementing policies or treacherously contesting them.

After the Third Plenum of 1978 the slogan "to serve politics" was broadened to "to serve socialism and the people." Within the narrow constraints of the "four basic principles" this simply meant that the intellectual endeavor is now to serve policies different from those of the Cultural Revolution, and in fact in May 1979 a commentator in the *Guangming ribao* wrote that the abandonment of the old slogan only meant that "literature was not to serve ultra-leftist policies any more" but instead the policies of the reform group headed by Deng Xiaoping. In obedience to the myth of unity and the strict requirements of an assignment literature, the intelligentsia were not free to explore their own views and interests, even had they wanted to do so. However, since the enactment of any given policy always involves compromises between various factions, there has always been enough ambiguity within the official political line to permit a veiled exploration of different possibilities. Though censorship has always existed, variations in its application and effectiveness have also occurred, and the exceptions are as important as the central theme. Thus modern Chinese literature reflects, although in an indirect and complicated fashion, the social and political realities of the country as perceived by the different factional groupings and becomes, in the absence of better material, a prime source for the study of modern Chinese social and political history, including that of the intelligentsia.

When we read Chinese literature for signs and portents of the intellectual's political, social, and existential conditions, we stand on firm socialist ground. Engels himself claimed, for instance, that the insights on the social and political history of nineteenth-century France provided by Balzac's monumental *Comédie humaine* were more substantial than those to be gleaned from all the sociological studies ever written, and this estimate of Balzac may be applied to Chinese fiction even more emphati-

cally. Chinese readers themselves scan much of their literature as an important source of information on top-level political struggle or study it as the only form of social investigation and documentation available. Indeed some writers, like Liu Binyan, have explicitly urged their colleagues to help make modern Chinese fiction into the collective Balzac of the PRC.

But works of fiction, even when overtly propagandistic, still employ literary techniques. Such texts cannot therefore be immediately used as sociological raw material. They first have to be subjected to a literary analysis. In the case of China, strict rules govern the craft of writing, censoring, and reading. Within the framework of the doctrine of socialist realism accepted throughout the socialist camp, the Chinese leadership opted for the most rigid variant. It had been formulated by Lenin in 1905 in an article entitled "On Party Organization and Party Literature" and requested "literature" to become a "cog and screw" in the revolutionary machinery. This statement developed into an elaborate if informal code defining everything from genre to plot and character in fairly politicized terms. The literary texts written in this context cannot be taken as raw social data or political information. They have to be deciphered by means of this informal code, and this is exactly the manner in which we will study the history of PRC literature with regard to the status and role of the intelligentsia.

The Chinese Intelligentsia after 1949 as Depicted in Fiction

Mao Zedong's Yan'an Talks established that Chinese literature existed to "serve the workers, peasants, and soldiers." In view of the kaleidoscopic mutability of Chinese politics, this seems less a statement about whom literature is to serve than a statement about whom it is not to serve, namely the intelligentsia. Mao's directive for the writers, which was expanded into a policy governing all intellectuals, obliged them to become "cogs and screws" in the Party propaganda machinery and to "accept reeducation" from the workers, peasants, and soldiers or, less obliquely, to accept the authority of the organization "objectively" representing proletarian interests—the Communist Party.

The texts singled out for criticism during the Yan'an Rectification Campaign had an intelligentsia perspective and, in most cases, intelligentsia protagonists. After the Yan'an Talks, intellectuals no longer qualified as chief protagonists in fiction, that is, as role models for the readers. The new heroes in such model pieces of the late 1940s as *Hurricane* by Zhou Libo or *The Sun Shines over the Sanggan River* by Ding Ling (both available in English translations) are cadres of "worker/

peasant/soldier" origin, and intellectuals—always easily identifiable by their oversized eyeglasses—enter the stage as caricatures: impractical; obfuscating; unintelligible to the masses; mouthing big, empty-sounding slogans. The new ideal is embodied in Zhou Libo's narrator, who obliterates his persona to function as something like a camera following the land reform team into a village, seeing all things through the team's Party perspective. He has indeed become a "cog and screw" of the revolutionary machine, and the book scored a Stalin prize, second category.

The first short stories and novels dealing with economic construction after 1949, exemplified by Cao Ming's *The Moving Force* (an imitation of Gladkov's *Cement*), adopt a similar narrative posture in response to the requirements of ideology. The two engineers in the small hydroelectric plant that is the story's setting are Japanese-trained. Their reactionary ideology prevents them from applying their knowledge in any positive way. In fact, they sabotage the very generator that they themselves rebuilt. The workers are at length obliged to put the engineers under rigorous supervision, forcing them to explain and teach the workers each step, thereby appropriating their knowledge—and thus their intellectual credentials—with the expected success. This is a standard development: until 1955 the intelligentsia was represented in both political campaigns and in literature as a type of bourgeoisie—often in its most virulent, "reformist" aspect. There were no intellectual heroes in any piece of fiction. Senior intellectuals qualified neither for Party membership nor for any other than nominal positions of leadership. The criteria used for admission to the Party—the entrée to any responsible post—centered on the slogan *laolao shishi fucong dang de lingdao*, "honestly and obediently follow the leadership of the Party." Independent thinking, original perspectives, or innovative proposals were denounced as "individualistic," "careerist," and "lacking in organization spirit and Party discipline." Intellectuals, whose professional stock in trade depends so heavily on just such "defects," have made up a large part of the quota of "bourgeois" "antisocialist" elements in the political campaigns since the early 1950s.

Literature in the "Hundred Flowers" Period (1955–1957)

The First Five-Year Plan (published in 1955, but in actual operation since 1953) depended for its success upon the active participation of the intelligentsia. Because the collectivization of agriculture a few years after land reform was opposed by many cadres, including leaders in the political center, Mao Zedong, looking for potential supporters and activists in the service of a rapid collectivization drive, discovered young

intellectuals from the Youth League (then under Hu Yaobang). The acceptance of the intelligentsia as a potentially positive force was predicated on two specific contributions expected from them: they were to be production enthusiasts in industry, speeding up development against the foot dragging of middle-level Party bureaucrats; and they were to be effective propagandists for the collectivization drive.

Nonetheless, the position of Chinese intellectuals was never secure, even when their skills were most urgently needed. Such ongoing anti-intelligentsia campaigns as the “purge of the counterrevolutionaries (*sufan*)” that began with the purge of the Communist Hu Feng obliged the Chinese advocates of better standing for the intelligentsia to seek cover behind their Soviet intellectual colleagues. Between 1953 and 1955 literary reportage, novels, and short stories by such Soviet writers as Nikolayeva, Ovechkin, Sholochov, Troepolski, and Tendriakov appeared in Chinese translation, and the most outspoken Soviet anti-bureaucratic production enthusiast, Ovechkin, traveled and lectured in China (he became the real life model for Liu Binyan). All of these Soviet texts were widely read and discussed; indeed some, like Nikolayeva’s *The Newcomer*, were mandatory reading for intellectual members of the Chinese Youth League late in 1955.

Early in 1956 the Youth League launched a campaign to “learn from Nastya,” the obstinate heroine of Nikolayeva’s book, an agricultural engineer whose heroic deeds consisted largely of outspokenly rejecting the inane orders of her incompetent superiors, but who nevertheless became a national role model because she alone had the wit to “anticipate” the essentials of Khrushchev’s new policies. (The story was of course written after these policies had been formulated.) Coming as they did from the Soviet Union—the “big brother”—these texts enjoyed an immunity in China that was completely lacking for their Chinese counterparts, and they enhanced the prestige of a political option that still had a dissident ring in China.

With the drive for further agricultural collectivization and industrial production in 1955, new criteria for leadership recruitment could be advocated. In October, the Youth League periodical *China Youth* carried a story about a young doctor in Heilongjiang who defied his superior’s orders and took a dangerous road through the forest to save a critically ill man. In the same month the *Beijing Daily* serialized a story by Qin Zhaoyang, the editor-in-chief of the most important literary magazine, *People’s Literature*. Entitled *Two District Secretaries*, it described a young and relatively educated district secretary who fought his superior for a speed-up of the collectivization—with the fervent sup-

port, needless to say, of the "poor and lower-middle peasants." In both cases a sort of socialist idealism legitimized their defiance of their superiors. New words like "daring" or "outspoken" entered the legitimate vocabulary of Youth League discussions.

Zhou Enlai's January 1956 speech "On the Question of the Intelligentsia" dramatically improved the status of this segment. It was a conservative speech, mainly geared toward the old intellectuals and completely lacking in encouraging words for the young, who often had their own problems with the outdated ideas and feudal ways of their elders. But with their reclassification among the "laboring classes," the intelligentsia lost the stigma of the bourgeoisie. Simultaneously, the Youth League campaign to "learn from Nastya" was reflected in the bitter criticism of elderly bureaucrats in many young readers' letters to the editors of Youth League-affiliated newspapers and periodicals. The cadres, however, had been assured that, while they would be in for some healthy criticism, their positions were basically secure, and they faced their young challengers with this assurance. As the campaign to "purge the counterrevolutionaries" continued, the cadres branded the young using the vocabulary of this campaign. As the cadres had both power and security, the efforts of the young to bring about change were frustrated time and again.

Liu Binyan came out with his first story, "On the Building Site of the Bridges," in March 1956. In this story, the Youth League hero, a daring and popular engineer bent on doubling the production norms, is easily outmaneuvered by his cynical superior, a proverbially ineffective bureaucrat whose only concern is "not to make mistakes" and whose best way to achieve this is to do nothing. The engineer is criticized and eventually transferred elsewhere to a lower job. In Wang Meng's story of September 1956, "The Young Man Who Only Recently Joined the Organization Department" sets out to "learn from Nastya" in his new job, but again the slick opportunist in the office is eventually promoted while the "young man" is duly frustrated.

The Eighth Party Congress in September 1956 targeted entrenched bureaucratism as the main obstacle to progress, and it thus became legitimate to criticize bureaucrats. However, since "class struggle" was now reduced to the secondary role of fighting unrepentant bad elements of the old society, its violent methods, like dismissal or persecution, were not to be used against the bureaucrats. All the needling notwithstanding, they knew they were secure in their positions and contented themselves by compiling blacklists of their young critics that would come in handy when the political winds would turn again. For their part, the intelli-

gentsia, frustrated by their inability to effect the changes they sought, began to characterize their cadre opponents with ever more provocative terms, including epithets such as “parrots,” “echo insects,” and “yes-men.” The cadres responded in kind. For some weeks in May and June 1957, the intelligentsia had a loud voice in the press, but it was a desperate outcry before the antirightist onslaught began.

The Anti-Rightist Movement and the Great Leap Forward, 1957–1961

Unknown to the intellectuals, the Party leadership had let them have their say for a while in order to draw them out. Those who had spoken out were “sitting ducks,” easily brought down by the Anti-Rightist Movement, which began on June 8, 1957. An entire generation of relatively educated young people was stripped of its most daring and outspoken members, who were now classified as “anti-Party” and “anti-socialist.” The critics and denouncers, fellow members of the intelligentsia, willingly cooperated in the hope of securing or even enhancing their own positions.

The new political reality was immediately reflected in literature. Intellectuals vanished again from the list of candidates for heroic roles, on which they alone had figured during the preceding twenty months. In their place, the cadres and the “working class” were back in force, in both literature and reality assuming positions of responsibility commonly thought of as the prerogative of the intelligentsia. They wrote the poetry, provided the heroes (and presumably the readers), they built the backyard steel furnaces, the big reservoirs, and the fledgling industries of new China. Independent thought now suffered the worst press ever, and anyone who exercised it incurred the risk of being branded a “rightist.” The establishment of the People’s Communes in 1958, which represented a further speed-up in collectivization, installed the rural cadres in positions of absolute power over all aspects of life of the peasants under their jurisdiction. The absence of independent legal protection made it difficult to get redress for abuses. The combination of these factors eventually led, during the misnamed Great Leap Forward, to the largest man-made famine of the twentieth century.

The cadres who made it into the Party during the early 1950s had been selected primarily for their willingness to obey orders from above without asking questions, as we know both from articles in the Party press of the time and from criticisms made during the Hundred Flowers period.² The ensuing deterioration of the quality of the Party cadres was

² See Rudolf Wagner, “The Challenge of the Young Man,” in *Inside a Service Trade: Studies in Contemporary Chinese Prose*, ed. Rudolf Wagner (Cambridge: Council on East

accompanied by the growth of a vicious anti-intelligentsia attitude, fed by the sting of remembered criticism and the fear of its renewal should the political climate shift once more. Such fear led Party bureaucrats to weave dense networks of patronage relationships with each other for mutual protection and promotion and to depend upon such networks to the growing exclusion of legitimate channels. This "invisible machine," as Liu Binyan called it in 1981 in the title of a story, was always mobilized in reaction to critical attacks by some segment of the intelligentsia. In this sense the intelligentsia, even when excluded from positions of influence and barred from even quasi-independent expression, exerted a persistent if unacknowledged influence on the course of developments.

During the hard years of the Great Leap, while the public was constantly accosted with surrealistic scenarios of worker/peasant/soldier heroes smiling at phantasmagorical bountiful harvests, indomitably engaged in the task of disposing of this endless imaginary wealth, a few of the senior drama and essay writers were employing the time-honored devices of the allusive essay, *zawen*, and the historical drama as they had been used before 1949: for political remonstrance. Using this device, these authors implied what the condition of the country actually was and spelled out through historical parallels through whose fault the catastrophe had come about. And they began to envision the hero who could speak out to rectify the situation.

In the works of Tian Han, Wu Han, Zhou Xinfang, Ma Shaobo, and others, the present of the audience is reflected in the mirror of the time in which the play on stage is set. It is characterized by famine resulting from the expropriation of land and imperial neglect, by lack of legal redress due to the control of the courts by the personal favorites of the emperor (i.e., chairman), and by bureaucrats trampling over people "as if they were grass."³ Speaking up for the people are courageous intellectuals like the playwright Guan Hanqing or "pure [if lowly] officials" like the Ming dynasty official Hai Rui. Intelligentsia heroes were back on center stage—this time in historical costume.

In these works the intelligentsia heroes often don the oversized coat of a Qu Yuan, the poet and minister of Chu who, during the Warring States period, used his poetry to remonstrate with his king and eventually committed suicide. These heroes are not concerned with production goals or socialist slogans; they personify the aspirations of the nation, are

Asian Studies, in press).

³ See Rudolf Wagner, *The Contemporary Chinese Historical Drama: Four Studies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

endlessly correct in their analyses of the causes of the present misery, and refuse to submit to intimidation even under the threat of death.

They are very self-righteous and oblivious to the opportunism and weakness manifested on other occasions by the intellectual class of which they are the prototypes. Tian Han himself, for example, was in charge of the Anti-Rightist Movement in the Drama Association and in this capacity had branded his fellow playwright Wu Zuguang as an “enemy of socialism,” a charge that landed Wu for years on a state farm in Heilongjiang. Yet in early 1958, Tian Han wrote *Guan Hanqing*, a play that set the stage for a similar historical drama highly critical of the suppression of public opinion and the absence of legal guarantees in China.

This style of historical drama—and its author—benefited from the self-critical mood then current among sections of the Communist leadership, which translated into a minor phase of liberalization during the period 1960–62. The status of the intelligentsia was also enhanced by the sudden abandonment of the Great Leap–style of education for proletarian intellectuals in part-time schools. A fairly rigid system of elite schools and universities was reestablished, with selection criteria stressing knowledge instead of political attitude.

The Cultural Revolution

In 1962, Kang Sheng, the secret police chief and Maoist ideologue, announced the discovery of a plot to challenge the 1954 dismissal of two Politburo members through a depiction of their historical merits in the novel *Liu Zhidan*. The famous phrase by Mao Zedong “it is a great invention of our time to use novels to make counterrevolution” is now said to have come from Kang Sheng.⁴ After the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Party Central Committee in September 1962, where Mao warned the Party “never to forget class struggle,” a persecution team under Kang Sheng interrogated thousands of persons, imprisoned many, and shot one. Kang Sheng, Mao’s wife Jiang Qing, and defense minister Lin Biao secured control over the opera stage in 1964; a year later they attacked critical historical drama as “anti-Party, antisocialist.” At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the authors of and actors in such plays were locked up; many did not survive. With them, the words and values associated with the intelligentsia heroes also went to prison for a decade, and many of them did not survive either.

⁴ Li Jiantong, preface to *Liu Zhidan* (Beijing: Gongren Press, 1979).

It should not be imagined, however, that intellectuals as a group were systematically identified, isolated, and persecuted by entirely non-intelligentsia Party cadres. On the contrary, from the beginning a large number of young intellectuals joined in the Cultural Revolution and took part in the attacks on their elders—indeed, sometimes even on their parents. Such intellectuals were active on every level up to and including the political center. It is in fact remarkable that the so-called Gang of Four, eventually accused of having fostered the virulently anti-intelligentsia propaganda and policies of the Cultural Revolution, included three members of the intelligentsia. Jian Qing, Mao's wife, was an actress; Yao Wenyuan, a literary critic; and Zhang Chunqiao, a music critic. The most vituperous attacks against intellectuals were often written by intellectuals from the same cohort. There seemed to be a frenzy of self-hatred among intellectuals who loudly proclaimed their desire to be transformed and reeducated by the very worker/peasant/soldiers whom, but a short time before and with the utmost disdain, they had regarded as uneducated rabble.

On the literary stage, especially the revolutionary Peking Opera, the reinstated cadre heroes reveled in their moment of glory. The Peking Opera and its dependent genres rejected the notions that the technical and managerial problems of modernization were the greatest challenge to the country and that technologically trained specialists were the best people to deal with such problems. Instead, the new China faced only one crisis worthy of dramatization on stage: class struggle. It needed only one heroic type to defeat the reconstituted, demonized Class Enemy: the newly deified Young Revolutionary Cadre. The revolutionary fervor that illuminated these oversized figures was their only qualification for office and, indeed, their only characteristic. This led to an interesting dilemma of repertoire. The intense mythologizing of such heroes rendered them almost nonsensical as role models for everyday life, and thus revolutionary Peking operas were for the most part obliged to dramatize pre-1949 "revolutionary history." The near absence of any references to the day-to-day life of postrevolutionary China on the Peking Opera stage is perhaps the clearest indication of how far the thinking of the leadership had traveled from the days when Mao had directed writers and artists to serve the immediate needs of the people.

By 1969, many of the activists of the Red Guard movement had become disillusioned. They took to literature. The underground manuscript, *The Open Love Letters*, signed with the pen name Liu Qingfeng (for Liu Lili) was written around 1970; it is populated almost exclusively by young scientists discussing their aspirations and hopes and claiming

an important role for their cohort in China's future development. Among the "characters" in this thinly disguised "fictional" work is Jin Guantao, today a historian of science, editor of the influential collection *Toward the Future*, and advisor to the team filming the TV series "Heshang," which visualizes many of the arguments proffered in his *Behind History's Back*, a book that describes China as a superstable society, incapable of generating change out of its own cultural dynamic and dependent for its development on inspiration from abroad. Unsurprisingly, in June 1989 Jin's name appeared on the government's blacklist of intellectuals accused of slandering Chinese culture and subverting the Party's rule. Other underground novels of the early 1970s, such as *The Second Handshake*, were also written from an intelligentsia perspective and were populated by intellectual heroes and heroines.

By 1972, the Cultural Revolution policies were shifting. Universities were reopened (although graduate training was not restored, nor was the exam system reinstated); scholarly journals reappeared; and many large-scale research projects, such as the monumental Chinese Cancer Atlas, were begun. In all of the texts appearing at this time, however, a point was made of attributing ultimate insight to the spontaneous wisdom of the "masses," and many articles were written by people without formal training. The school experiments of the Great Leap were taken up again with an emphasis on integrating theory and practice, studying and "productive work." In the officially published literature, however, there was no sign of an intellectual hero.

The Reform Period, 1977–1979

After the 1976 removal of the "Gang of Four" from power, the gates quickly opened for a flood of literary accusations against them. The new genre, christened the "Literature of the Wounded," emphatically rejected the principles of the Cultural Revolution by elevating the intellectual once more to the status of heroic protagonist—generally of the purest and most patriotic kind—while the once lauded figure of the worker/peasant/soldier vanished almost entirely, making rare guest appearances in the role of the sincere but ignorant dupe whose lack of sophistication rendered him an easy target for brainwashing by unscrupulous political hoodlums. As in the historical drama of the late 1950s, some twenty years earlier, in these texts there is no trace of a critical self-reflection. All blame for society's ills is heaped upon the Gang of Four; the eagerness of many Chinese intellectuals to join in any campaign to denounce their intellectual peers or opponents passes without mention. The message of such works was clear: in this new literary

myth a brighter future is envisioned for the intelligentsia; as it was the intellectuals who suffered most from the persecutions of the Cultural Revolution, they alone were to be invested with authority to lead the new crusade for the Four Modernizations.

This comfortable conceit was not entirely in tune with the times. The cadres who had been dismissed during the Cultural Revolution had been returned to their former positions. Understandably, they were reluctant to reinstate the "rightists" whom they had earlier sent to the camps. But by 1978, the reshuffling of the leadership in the center had reestablished the 1956 pattern including most importantly Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang, who worked for the rehabilitation of the "rightists," most of whom had been in the Youth League under Hu's direction; economic modernization became the new official policy. To reach this goal would require using the technical and managerial skills of the intelligentsia; bureaucratism again replaced the class enemy as the main obstacle but, as a bow to the vested interests of the rehabilitated cadres, the new conflict was again to be viewed as a "contradiction among the people," which meant that nothing would happen to people accused of bureaucratism.

In the wake of the reinstatement of the intelligentsia as a "part of the laboring classes," a curious literature appeared that mapped out, in highly symbolical form, the daydreams of the intelligentsia. It was science fiction. Long an instrument for propagating the virtues and the interests of the science intelligentsia in such socialist states as the Soviet Union, Poland, and East Germany, science fantasy stories were relatively new in China. Written by scientists, they envisioned the complete inversion of the situation that had prevailed during the Cultural Revolution, in which the intellectual was obliged to "learn from the workers/peasants/soldiers," had to come from a w/p/s background and not from intellectual parents, was required to subordinate his professional interests to the development of productive forces and, in general, submit to the cadres in all personal and professional matters, including the scientific.

In this new science fantasy genre, which began to appear in 1978, the worker/peasant/soldier was transformed into the Asimovian robot, fully subservient to his intellectual master. The science community in these works is rigorously self-sufficient and self-generating. Scientists are inevitably married to other scientists, and their offspring provides the next generation of scholars. The science communities imagined in these narratives are hermetically sealed islands—isolated in research communities on earth or in space stations—in which self-governing, patriotic Chinese scholars, possessing limitless funding for basic research and

development, completely freed of their bondage to industrial development and cadre interference, create the foundations for a new, utopian China through the free exercise of their intellectual faculties. In this radical rejection of the equally radical Cultural Revolution literature, one senses some of the intellectual disdain toward the laboring classes that led political leaders like Mao Zedong to accuse the intelligentsia of harboring "antiproletarian" sentiments and of criticizing political cadres on the basis of "bourgeois" assumptions.

With the consolidation of the new policies against Mao's chosen successor Hua Guofeng, the surviving "rightists" were rehabilitated in 1978. After Hu Yaobang took control of the Party's propaganda machine in 1978, Youth League writers from the 1950s were back in force in a matter of weeks, and with them the old heroes, villains, and conflicts. They all were twenty years older now, and aging had hardened them. The villains were now seasoned bureaucrats, who had added corruption to their original repertoire of vices and had learned during the previous decade that ruthless suppression of challengers and extensive networks for mutual protection were the best guarantees of their survival.

The heroes in these works are often rehabilitated "rightists" like Liu Binyan himself, intellectuals no longer driven by socialist idealism but by patriotic devotion to the nation and by a grim determination to survive in the face of political adversity. They have considered suicide and rejected the option. They possess both professional and technical qualifications to meet the challenges of a new China, and they embody a commitment to decent if traditional values. Both professionally and morally they are hailed as legitimate aspirants for political office, while their bureaucratic opponents continue to hold power but lack both the professional and the moral qualifications for legitimacy.

The work of Jiang Zilong is a good example of this trend. This younger author who had made his career during the last years of the Cultural Revolution with a new kind of "manager fiction" is well known for his story with the programmatic title "Manager Qiao Assumes Command." Qiao, the protagonist, trained in the Soviet Union during the 1950s but not branded a "rightist," had been sent down during the Cultural Revolution. After the beginning of the reforms, he comes back to his former position and takes over with a vocabulary and methods copied straight from the Soviet manager fiction. The Party neither controls him nor does it intend to do so.

Like the fictional Qiao, the author Wang Meng also came back. Wang continued his critical yet conciliatory line confronting the cultural

intelligentsia with representatives of the new, post-1978 Party leadership in whom the greater ends of society are vested, but which now needed some pushing and needling by powerless (and now middle-aged) intellectuals to stay in shape. The post-1978 texts show Wang Meng with all his critical acumen and satirical wit as the author devoted to the defense of a political line and leadership associated with Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang.

In the stories of Liu Binyan and Jiang Zilong, a new heroic type appears. Typically a man of integrity and intelligence battered since the late 1950s by the antiintellectual political campaigns, he has stuck to his principles through many hardships that might include lengthy terms in prisons and labor camps; he reemerges at the end of the Cultural Revolution ready to make the best of the new opportunity to rid the country of evil plotters and bring it back to the right path. He is not a mouthpiece for socialist values. Instead, his dynamic energy springs from a Chinese patriotism and traditional morality. He is neither a stereotyped nor a facile character, and certainly no mere embodiment of the current political line. Nevertheless, his central motivating force remains substantially political, with the main change of emphasis being from socialist idealism to patriotism.

Although the intelligentsia of the 1980s enjoyed a freedom of thought and action that exceeded earlier limits, still their position lacked any guarantee of permanency, and they remained devoid of any power to institute changes. Moreover, the economic reforms undertaken during these years tended to undermine the position of the intelligentsia, especially the cultural intelligentsia. In China, teachers, journalists, writers, and professors are paid by the state fixed salaries frozen at a relatively low level. The severe inflation of the mid-1980s struck them with particular severity. They enjoyed neither the benefits of a market economy nor the opportunities of a corrupt bureaucracy. Peasants might sell their products for cash, cadres might bestow favorable decisions for bribes, but neither option was available to the intellectual.

Economically squeezed by inflation, politically nullified by a Party leadership that tolerated them as propagandists but loathed them when they spoke with their own voices, and bypassed by the shift of public values toward the acquisitions of money and consumer goods and away from education and culture, the intelligentsia of this period felt their position steadily eroding and struggled in vain to articulate an effective response to their increasing isolation and powerlessness.

In the literature of this period there may be observed an increasing retreat from the heroism of action that characterized earlier works. The

protagonist, facing a world that no longer rewards positive social activity, finds meaning instead in his increasingly individual response to society's conflicts. The first cohort of intelligentsia heroes during the years 1979–1981 still took on the nation, the Party, the bureaucrats, and the future. They showed high political and moral values, and they spoke out for the masses like the “pure officials” of old. The enthusiastic audience response of these years showed that with such works, authors had hit a significant public nerve. But this grand environment, with the oversized characters who populated it, was soon overwhelmed by the overpowering triviality of materialistic pursuits that increasingly occupied both readers and writers.

During the following years, it was mostly women writers like Dai Houying, Zhang Xinxin, and Zhang Jie who carried out the most interesting and controversial exploration of the intelligentsia in this threatening new environment. We will sketch a few of their novels and stories, since they provide the best evidence for the self-perception of the intelligentsia during this new period.

Dai Houying, an activist during the Cultural Revolution, reversed her ideas in her 1980 novel *Human, ah, Human* (translated into English under the title *Stones of the Wall*). The novel rejects the proposition that each human being has a “class nature” and claims instead that above all he or she has a “human nature.” Each of the protagonists has a chapter to tell his or her own thoughts and feelings in an individual voice. The writer abandons the perspective of the omniscient and omnipotent narrative authority and enters the text as one of the characters, “the writer,” whose essential duty is to recount what goes on. By leaving each character (even the abhorred and self-serving Party secretary) his or her “authentic” voice and complexity of motives, Dai Houying finds a formal means of expressing a humanist respect for each individual, as well as her willingness to understand rather than to judge.

The protagonists in *Human, ah, Human* are all “intelligentsia”—not a single worker/peasant/soldier makes it into the text. The novel is set at the end of the Cultural Revolution, in about 1978 or 1979. The plot focuses on the relationship between Sun Yue, a divorced woman Party official with a daughter, and He Jingfu, a man who had been branded a “rightist” in 1957 and who, after many years in camps and on the road, has been reinstated to a job in the university. Sun Yue and He Jingfu had in fact been in love since their student days, He Jingfu openly, Sun Yue secretly and without admitting it to herself. Although nothing now seems to stand in the way of marriage, their relationship is dragged into the political arena by the publication of He

Jingfu's book, which argues that humanism is the original impetus of Marxism. Sun Yue is eventually forced by the Party secretary to "educate" He Jingfu to the wisdom of not publishing the book. The years have left their mark on Sun Yue, and she cannot make up her mind to live up to her feelings.

The text shows some new concepts built upon the ruins of socialist realism, and uses some of its bricks. The characters come on stage with the traditional tellingly symbolic names. Sun Yue (written with different Chinese characters) means someone who has "lost happiness"; her daughter is called "Regret"; the Party secretary Chen Yuli (written with different characters) is "Mr. Chen who profits from others' conflicts," while his rebellious son Xiwang, like manager Qiao's nephew, enters the narrative as "Hope." The inner life of the protagonists deftly presses for outward manifestation. A character who has made a big mistake in life and regrets it quickly grows white hair, while the reader is cued to the sadness welling up in the hearts of the protagonists by copious tears flooding nearly every page. Each character represents a different mode of reaction to the experience of the past decades; the text thus follows the rule of typicality demanded by socialist realism.

The actual hero of the story is the "old rightist," He Jingfu. He bridges the gap between the two generations presented in the novel. A generation is learning hope from him, and he provides the new guiding doctrine for the future—humanism—which alone can prevent the recurrence of past tragedies. Within the novel he alone lives up to the high standards of his humanist philosophy. The other protagonists vent their spite in the pages allotted to them. Humanism, as the text makes clear, is not the natural attitude of the story's inmates. They have to learn it more or less successfully from He Jingfu, the only protagonist who has not transformed his bitter experiences into vindictiveness or fear.

Like Dai Houying's novel, Zhang Xinxin's short story "On the Same Horizon" (1981) focuses on a personal relationship and its fate. In the humanistic mode, the author gives both protagonists their say in their own authentic voices in separate segments of the text. Both characters freely vent their spite against each other in a rationally ordered stream of reflections and memories. The story tries to overcome the stylistic constraints of the realistic mode through devices such as dreams or symbols to form this Chinese variant of "stream of consciousness." These features made the story an object of criticism in the same campaign that took on Dai Houying—the 1983 campaign against "spiritual pollution."

The two protagonists of "On the Same Horizon" are widely different in character. The woman married the man at a moment when one further examination would have qualified her for entrance to the university. This is the beginning of their conflict: resisting her husband's entreaties, she has no children, and eventually takes her last chance to get into the Film Academy. This step away from him is accompanied by an abortion and a request for divorce.

The woman's narrative deals with the thrill of her first film assignment, her pondering the deterioration of her marriage due to her husband's fierce pursuit of his career as a painter, her lingering regret at the disappearance of the art-loving, nature-oriented person she once loved, and her attempt to understand him. In the end she realizes that both of them are operating within the same horizon of heightened life expectations in a heavily competitive world and that because of this very commonality, they have to remain apart.

Zhang Xinxin's story deals as Deng Xiaoping had demanded in 1979, with the reform period and its protagonists. But in the process both the environment and the protagonists undergo a substantial metamorphosis. Where Dai Houying's protagonist He Jingfu is an idealistic harmonizer in an environment marked by personal and factional strife, Zhang Xinxin offers new and outlandish images for both protagonists. The man is a tiger painter. Tiger paintings indeed have become the fashion in China since 1980, and newspapers might reproduce tiger paintings any day. The story thus develops an image already firmly established in the public imagination. The tiger, hunting its prey with cunning, speed, and strength, symbolizes the materialistic young man going after the goods during the reform period. The political and social environment becomes a jungle, populated by fierce and powerful crocodiles and elephants against whom the Bengal tiger has to struggle for existence. Zhang's image of China's social jungle does not contain a formal accusation: instead, it is a natural habitat, innocent and value-free in its factuality. Nor does Zhang criticize the man's obsession with cultivating the right connections to important bureaucrats in lieu of focusing on his painting. None of the protagonists hankers after the "iron rice-bowl" of state-managed socialism. Still, read in the light of official doctrine, this story certainly rejects any idea about the "superiority of socialism." Instead, the emphasis is on competition. The narrative environment forges the protagonists' peculiar adaptive skills: both the man and the woman have set their minds on surviving in this jungle, and on surviving well.

Zhang Jie's "Arch" (1982) also employs such now familiar narrative devices. Each of three women sharing an apartment in Beijing gets a section to tell her story in her own voice. They are all intelligentsia, they have the obligatory symbolical names and dreams, they confront the leadership's attempts at control and censorship of works of art. One of them makes long political speeches. However, the text preaches no new political or social values. The women simply live in the modern jungle, reacting to it in various ways and trying to cope with it.

The story is set in about 1980. Zhang Jie ironically refers to Dai Houying's appeals for a harmonious humanism, rejecting it as inappropriate for the type of society her characters face, the more so because they are women. The story's author character muses that rather than *Human, ah, Human*, she should write a book *Dog, ah, Dog*. The female film director is not the first-year student of Zhang Xinxin's story, but a middle-aged woman trying to work her way through the interstices of interlocking political and patriarchal censorship. There are no descriptions of the process of breakdowns of relationships or of obstacles in the way of new beginnings. For Zhang Jie's protagonists married life is already over, and its passing has left them emotionally burnt out. Two are divorced; the third, separated from her husband, has spared her father, a high official, the loss of prestige incurred by having a divorced daughter. In matters of love, each has given up hope. Each has settled into her single life and battles to make it tolerable in a society that regards single—and in particular divorced—adult women as a threat to stability and order.

The honeymoon phase of the economic reforms was over by late 1986, and with its passing the themes of inflation and corruption replaced that of the acquisition of more expensive consumer goods as the most prominent topic of conversation. The public climate was changing quickly. The benign authoritarianism of Deng Xiaoping's early reform years had brought for many a more prosperous and (unintentionally) less monitored life. But now the pace of economic growth slowed and in some cases even reversed itself and, as the saying goes, the stones show when the water level is down. The population explosion; the rapidly widening technological gap between China and the rest of the industrializing world resulting from insufficient government investment in education, science, and basic research; the contempt and distrust in which scholars were held in elite Party circles; the threat to agriculture posed by the new quick profit mentality of peasants who distrusted long-term government policy; and the sense of impending political instability threatened by the transfer of power from the first generation of old ca-

dres to a new and younger leadership showed the country to be in a critical situation. With the political center deadlocked in constant infighting and maneuvering, the leadership's incompetence to deal with these pressing problems had become obvious to all, and people had begun to doubt the Party's capacity to deliver or, indeed, even to keep the social fabric from falling apart. Clamors for political as well as economic reform became louder, with a growing number of prominent intellectuals being among the most outspoken critics of Party policies.

Pressed by his conservative colleagues to respond to this mounting social unrest, Deng Xiaoping stepped up his pressure for rigid controls over the avenues of public discussion; and the greater and more intractable the problems of public policy became, the more rigidly he insisted on such controls. With the crisis approaching, the intelligentsia, which had lost much of the self-confidence and the aura of glamour that had characterized it during the preceding years, was again assuming a pivotal role. It was they, after all, whose function it was to investigate the actual conditions of the nation, to articulate demands and suggest remedies, and generally to influence public opinion.

In literature, the texts most read by the cultural intelligentsia between 1986 and 1989 were no longer fearsome self-portraits of intellectuals as tigers or toughs painted with the techniques of modern Western literature, but social documentaries. As depicted in literature, the cultural intelligentsia were slipping back into the more satisfying and less controversial role of the "pure official" who, out of his courageous sense of high purpose, details the crisis with the expert's eagle eye, suggesting daring solutions.

The crisis that faced the nation was facing the intelligentsia perhaps even more squarely. For several years they had been demanding a greater diversity and independence of institutions and insisting that some practical steps be taken to stake out new freedoms. But although there had been talk of strengthening the legal system and enhancing the role of the People's Congress and even of the press, no actual change was ever made. Both formally and in fact, these institutions remained under the leadership and control of the Party. In a crisis they would not be able—and had never been intended—to mediate between the government and the people. Traditional institutions such as the Central Committee and the State Council were reduced to shadows when, in 1987, the Party decided to "refer" all important matters to Comrade Deng Xiaoping who was not constitutionally entitled to such a role. This dismantling of the fledgling institutional framework of government was Deng Xiaoping's preparation for the conflicts to come.

Hu Yaobang had succeeded Hua Guofeng as Party secretary. Although himself not an original thinker, he surrounded himself with independent spirits and protected them. A substantial part of the middle-aged leading cadres had grown up under his direction in the Youth League and (still) were a potential political power group in the ongoing succession debate. Hu never envisaged a multiparty system in China or a truly independent press; but as Party secretary he protected even those who advocated such ideas. By late 1986, Deng Xiaoping stepped up his campaign against “bourgeois liberalization”; Deng’s actions meant the elimination of Hu Yaobang and his protégés. The wave of student demonstrations late in 1986 were in part attempts to counter the increasingly conservative language of the political center. Deng advocated a heavy crackdown including a possible use of the military, but Hu Yaobang refused to act and was dismissed as Party secretary in January 1987. Some of the most outspoken advocates of political reform—Liu Binyan, Wang Ruowang, and Fang Lizhi—were also dismissed from the Party and lost their jobs. However, they were not at this time further mistreated.

If we look at this reality from the literature point of view, we see Hu Yaobang in the center in the role of the “pure official” protecting the upright scholars below; with his fall the “avenues of talk” were closed, and the people had no redress from the abuses of corrupt officials. In the literary tradition, the upright scholars would throw in their lots with the people, maybe dying in the process; after the inevitable vindication of history, they would receive their eternal glory. In this analogy, the government, having shown its true face and increasing its guilt with each new act of suppression, had landed itself in the unenviable role associated with the “bad last emperors” of the past dynasties.

Zhao Ziyang, the new Party secretary chosen by Deng Xiaoping, seemingly had few interests beyond the esoterics of economic reform. Nevertheless, he continued essentially along the lines mapped out by Hu Yaobang. While Deng Xiaoping elevated the old guard into the role of “advisors” well beyond their retirement age, Zhao Ziyang elevated a number of leading reform intellectuals into advisory positions. Already as prime minister he had built up such “think tanks” as the Research Institute on Rural Reforms under Ren Wanding and the Research Institute on the Reform of the Political System to help him formulate policy and substantiate it with data and arguments; he kept control over these institutions even after he became Party secretary.

Although these institutions were politicized, their founding marked an important inroad for some intellectuals into the inner circles of the

decision makers. It implied that the professionals to be called upon when deciding policy were not old political cadres, but often young social scientists. It is debatable whether social scientists have a better grasp of the dynamics of a society than politicians, but the social consequences of the establishment of these institutions were substantial because they greatly improved the conditions for a debate about the qualifications of the actual leadership and the necessary qualifications of modern leaders.

On another level, such people as Jin Guantao (one of the young protagonists in the "Open Love Letters" who had close connections to Zhao Ziyang's office and research institutes) provided the ideological underpinnings for advocating the necessity for a radical cultural change in China to be based primarily on Western experiences. It was he and his school of thought that described China as a "superstable" society characterized by the inability to bring about any major changes out of its own dynamics. The sacred cows of Chinese culture from the Great Wall to the Yellow River, from the imperial administration to the development of science, became evidence for the landlocked backwardness of Chinese culture. Jin's ideas found a powerful expression in 1987 in the television series "Heshang." The title is a pun on a line by the ancient poet Qu Yuan who had served as a role model for intellectuals throughout Chinese history. As we have seen, Qu had proudly remonstrated with his king, his advice had been rejected, he had committed suicide, and the state that he had served had disintegrated exactly as he had predicted. Qu used the term *shang*, "to die young," together with "the state" or "the nation." In this sense *he shang* means "the early death of the [Yellow] River [and the "yellow" culture associated with it]." The enormously popular and controversial TV series, written by Su Xiaokang, another documentary journalist of renown, took up Jin's arguments (Jin was an advisor), denounced China's "yellow," landlocked, walled-up, and dusty culture, and suggested in clear terms that only by becoming (through the reform policies) a "blue" sea-, exchange-, and export-oriented culture through intense contact with the West was there a serious chance for modernization. The series rejected the simplistic line of argument that advocated taking Western technology but rejecting its cultural concomitant. Each segment ended with a fervent appeal to support the reform line. Zhao Ziyang is reported to have protected the series against heavy opposition from others in positions of power and to have recommended it to foreign visitors.

Within the line of thinking adopted by "Heshang," the traditional Chinese bureaucrat does not provide new answers but only generalizes

and radicalizes peasant thought. Since peasant mentality held China back, and since both traditional and Party bureaucrats were heavily under the influence of peasant mentality, the only positive innovative force was to be found in the cultural intelligentsia, many of whose members had imbibed some foreign influence.

Some had been influenced during study abroad. Although the policy of opening up was controversial, nevertheless a fair number of young students and scholars were permitted to go abroad. The number of returnees at any given time was rather low—an estimated 20 percent. The young men and women abroad began to play a major role in the formation of public opinion. They lived and worked under the democratic laws of foreign governments and had access to a wide range of information and ideas not easily available in China itself. They began to hold the discussions and form the groups and organizations outlawed as “illegal” in the PRC. They clamored for a wider range of democratic institutions, wrote articles for the Chinese press that were similar in their freedom of thought and expression to articles in the Western press, and set up their own journals such as *Zhongguo zhishifenzi* (The Chinese Intellectual), in which they provided information and argument not commonly heard in the PRC. In this they were supported by much of the Chinese intelligentsia residing abroad. Just as many had supported Sun Yat-sen and other Chinese reformers in generations past, the overseas Chinese intelligentsia began again during the 1980s to play an important role in the conflict between the Party bureaucrats and the “people” in China itself, quite apart from keeping the West better informed about Chinese developments.

Reacting to such developments, the top leadership around Deng Xiaoping pushed ever more strongly for a deinstitutionalization of democratic structures because they felt these institutions would only become instruments in the hands of the intelligentsia; the intelligentsia used the leeway created by the diffusion of political power to expand the options of intelligentsia institutions. Thus were the conditions for the confrontation in 1989 set.

In rapid succession reporting in the newspapers became more open, publishing houses came out with entire volumes of Chinese works (not only Western translations) that explored new avenues of political thought and were unabashedly critical of many aspects of one-party rule, private and public discussions became less restrained, and efforts began to establish the first forms of “people administered” independent institutions. Study societies blossomed; independent, economically “private” academies were set up; Li Shuxian and her husband, physicist Fang Lizhi, estab-

lished a "Democratic Salon" to which they invited Zhao Ziyang's consultants (Ren Wandong, for example), student leaders (Wang Dan), foreign scholars, and even people from foreign embassies.

The dynamics of power struggle in the political center have their own rules. All sides began to make use, for their own power interests, of the public movement for more democratic institutions that had begun with demands by students and intellectuals. One side argued that these contests were disruptive and threatened the stability of the country; the other side charged that in line with China's needs, Chinese public opinion, and the international climate, the changes demanded were rational and reasonable, and that only by negotiating those demands could the Party retain some credibility.

The institution of martial law in Beijing and the subsequent bloody Sunday when the military opened fire on people opposing their occupation of the capital are just a stage in the growing and increasingly bitter contest between the cadres and the intelligentsia in China. The measures taken after the crackdown are indicative of the ways in which the ruling faction of leadership saw the conflict. The demands were put forth, they argued, by "counterrevolutionaries" under foreign influence. Police posted search warrants for intellectuals who had had a strong influence on public opinion during the preceding months—people like Su Xiaokang, Yan Jiaqi, and Fang Lizhi; for people who had dared to set up independent student, worker, and intelligentsia associations along the lines of Poland's Solidarity; and for people who were thought to have taken part in actions against the military after the bloody crackdown. In the view of the Deng Xiaoping leadership, the movement threatened the ideological and organizational hegemony of the top leaders as well as their monopoly of violence.

By way of countermeasures, extensive efforts were made to strengthen controls over all three realms. Deng's "four basic principles" were elevated into the very fundamental concepts of the state and in particular fundamental to education and to propaganda work to be carried out by papers and publishing houses. A rigid ban on any organizational grouping outside the Communist Party's immediate control was declared; and by way of reducing the number of potential opponents, the number of new students to be enrolled in the prestigious Peking University for the fall 1989 was cut by more than half, with most of the social sciences not getting any new students at all. To provide proper education to the first-year students, they were sent to a military school in Shijiazhuang for the entire first year. Finally, the monopoly on violence was

restored by quick and reckless death sentences against people supposedly involved in burning military vehicles and the like.

Prospects

The conflict between the political cadres and the cultural intelligentsia in China has transformed both sides. It has prompted the network of the old leaders to use ever more desperate forms to preserve their hold on their revolution. In the process, disaffection has grown among the general populace, among the intelligentsia, and among younger political cadres. In their efforts to retain control, the center has for decades pursued policies that have transformed the country both intellectually and organizationally into much of a wasteland. What was possible in most of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union all persecutions notwithstanding—the development of a sophisticated and politically experienced stratum of challengers of the old order who could step forth in a critical moment and have the popularity, the moral legitimacy, and the sophistication to take over—has been radically and effectively prevented in China. The Chinese intelligentsia has flattered itself to continue the old role of the scholar-official while in fact their social status and political clout have gone from bad to worse. They have not freed themselves from the traditional accoutrements of the scholar-official, namely, the blind loyalty to the “dynasty,” the equally blind commitment to the unity of territory and thought in the country, their aloofness from other relevant sectors of the population (namely, workers and peasants), and finally, their ignorance of and substantial disinterest in the rest of the world, as expressed in the common ignorance of foreign languages and the shocking lack of inquisitiveness beyond the pale surface of the fashion of the day. They have not managed to open up other resources of information, debate, and organization that would have enabled them to be a serious intellectual and public challenge to the powers that be. They have missed their chance to become a modern intelligentsia and have permitted the center to make use of their skills for purposes altogether beyond their control. The ruthless persecution of independent opinion and organization by which the center has exacerbated but not created a situation is all the more tragic, since it leaves the country adrift in times of crisis when it would desperately need a Solidarity or Charta 77 to guide it out of the desert. It remains to be seen whether the Chinese intelligentsia abroad will be able to use the unique chance of a forced sojourn abroad to modernize itself in a lively and intense contact with Western forms of institutions and behavior.

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Goldman has been for twenty years a major American commentator on the role of intellectuals and particularly the relations between the intellectuals and the Party or government. Her analysis includes both a historical account and an assessment of the attitudes of intellectuals and the dilemmas of the Chinese leadership. *Literary Dissent* focuses on the pre-Cultural Revolution period, *Advise and Dissent* on the Cultural Revolution; *Intellectuals and the State* is a compilation of essays based on a conference held at Harvard with major emphasis on the recent decade.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Social Change and Choice in China on the Eve of the 1990s

JOYCE K. KALLGREN

Chinese society at the close of the decade of the 1980s seemed buffeted by developments in both the international sphere and the political domain. Observers routinely spoke of China as governed by a political leadership seemingly immobilized by a power struggle. Economic development was characterized as “on hold” or drifting while the Chinese Communist Party tried to agree on a set of priorities with respect to growth. Finally, the changes in the international arena caused the authorities to consider China’s response and as well its possible vulnerability to the political upheavals and pressures that racked Eastern Europe.*

Important as these developments might be, this chapter looks to matters remote from the international sphere. The focus returns to the micro-level. Here the effort is to assess the quality of life for most of China’s increasingly depoliticized rural families and individuals who have adjusted over the forty-year history of the People’s Republic of China to wide swings in politics and equally changing permissible social conduct. In 1989, the peasantry received conflicting signals: Encouraged to continue reform and production, they were often forced into more collective endeavors. Promised rewards for hard work, they were occasionally compelled to accept “chits” for payment rather than money. Extolled to

* An earlier draft of this paper was delivered at the colloquium held the University of the Saarlandes, Saarbrücken, Federal Republic of Germany, in July 1990 on post-Tiananmen China. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Shi Leiyu, Fernando Cheung, Nancy Chen, and Zhang Xiulan for assistance in rural interviewing work in China in 1987 and 1989 as well as the cooperation of colleagues in the Ministry of Civil Affairs in Beijing and their local counterparts in Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Hunan. I am also grateful to L. Bickart for her organization of some survey responses that underpin my observations about rural family relations.

accept a limited, smaller family, they were given tasks that rewarded larger families with more labor power. In sum, the indecision that characterized aspects of political life, economic development, urban life had counterpart manifestations in the countryside.

The student and scholar, however, should not be misled by the turmoil of ongoing development nor the tendency to focus solely on the last decade of development. It is understandable to lay stress upon the post-Mao decade, because so many of the Maoist instructions, values, policies, and penalties seem to have been set aside. A visitor to China might wonder at the changes that pervade various aspects of daily life: injunctions to make money, to break the iron rice-pot; the emergence of ten-thousand-yuan families, of opportunities to study abroad; the springing up of small enterprises that produced everything from bricks to motorcycle helmets, that provided transportation, repaired houses, and offered good meals for an occasional dinner out. In the light of the conventional picture of the Maoist era these changes injected variety into life in both the city and the countryside, addressed small local needs, and gave evidence that entrepreneurial skills are still alive in the PRC.

Setting aside for a moment the variety of work and goods available to citizens and the developing problems that have accompanied many of the changes, it is useful to commence with certain realities of life in China often ignored after forty years. Enormous improvements have been made in daily life for the vast majority of Chinese citizens. According to some measures China has moved closer to the characteristics of a developed state. This progress is, at least in part, responsible for the serious policy difficulties that confront the leadership. A few examples will indicate the scope of changes. The life expectancy of a woman born in China in 1985 was 71 years and for a man 67.¹ The mortality rate for infants per thousand had dropped from approximately 200 per thousand to between 34 and 32 per thousand.² The maternal death rate had fallen from 50 per ten thousand estimated in 1975 to 20 per ten thousand in 1985. Children were growing taller and weighing on average a half a kilo more in 1985 than they did ten years earlier. Additional information about the quality of life for individuals, that is, income for families in rural or urban settings, goods they are likely to own, and other background data can be found in the 1988 *Statistics Abstract*. It suggests

¹ Ministry of Public Health, *Health Statistics in China, 1988* (Beijing: Ministry of Public Health, 1988).

² *Ibid.*, vols. for 1988 and 1989.

movement toward a somewhat more productive society and more consumer goods.

Yet Ward notes in his chapter the dilemma in assessing Chinese achievements. Although the total amount of a given commodity produced in China may be the highest in the world, the per capita share is often the lowest. While there has been substantial growth, the problems that have emerged, especially in the rural sector, reflect both the achievements since 1949 and the heavy burden that size and population places upon the economy and its leaders.

Despite China's being a relatively healthy and progressing society, the implications of these developments lead to policy problems. With respect to the PRC the dilemma of whether or not the glass is half full or half empty is the core question for those making an assessment. This is particularly true with respect to many aspects of social development and must remain in the background of all value judgments.

The progress in raising the health and general well-being of many Chinese over the forty-year period has brought the PRC face to face with some serious issues that will grow more pressing in the next two decades, placing on a collision course the needs and requirements of two sectors of Chinese society. The problems are (1) the increasing saliency of "aging" as a fact of life and therefore a matter of concern to the government and society and (2) the current conflict over educational policies at virtually every level of society. The resolution of these matters will require increased funding linked to administrative programs of a very complex nature. The problems center on specific segments of the society and their families. Resolution will require long-term planning, painful allocation choices, and rigorous discipline to insure the implementation of state and societal decisions.

The matters of education and population policy linked to the aging issue impose on the young very different life chances when they commence their lives and are likely to result in quite different outcomes as they conclude their lives. Matters of education and care of the aged involve basic choices for a society of scarcity and make likely a conflict between the interests of society and state.

Conflict between the needs of the old and the young are not unknown in the political arena of nation-states. In most situations the elderly are politically stronger and therefore more likely to win benefits. Whether or not that is the case in China remains to be seen, but the issues and choices involved in attending to the needs of the young and preparing for the needs of the aged are especially compelling in their complexity as well as important for social peace and stability. Their

management and effective resolution would reflect effective political leadership and levels of industrialization.

Statistical Data and Policy Assumptions

For almost forty years, judgments about the status of policies and their influence on the life of Chinese citizens has been a hazardous matter because of the data limitations. Since accuracy and reliability are essential for making viable state choices, especially in centrally directed economies, the State Statistical Bureau could have played a key role in Chinese modernization. For the initial decade after the establishment of the PRC, it did so. The publication *Ten Great Years* was often used by non-Chinese scholars in their assessment of the first decade under the Chinese Communist Party.

In the late 1950s the statistical system was destroyed, and it became dangerous for Chinese cadres to report unfavorable results.³ So for a number of years, indeed even in the 1980s, there has been some hesitancy with respect to the reliability of Chinese data. A relatively recent example of this problem is found in support of the short-lived economic plans of Hua Goufeng.

But fear and political allegiance alone cannot account for difficulties in determining the actual state of economic programs, social policies, political development. For one thing, some Chinese political leaders accepted claims of progress toward social and agricultural goals, the fulfillment of targets, or media endorsements of specific policies without looking carefully at the source of the information. Their limited educational background often led to quite simple views with respect to data projections. For others, enthusiasm for Maoist aims and ideology took them beyond reasonable interpretations of data provided.

The problem of data quality for predictive purposes was compounded by respondent efforts to give the "correct" answer to survey interviewers. The reality of trying to separate fact from fiction became especially obvious when it was possible to visit China and to interview individuals about events, especially those occurring during the Cultural Revolution. Many residents did indeed believe what they said, did accept Party statements and reports of the leaders and other individuals in positions of authority. It is also true that a prudent Chinese citizen would understand that discretion was a virtue when meeting foreigners.

³ Li Choh-ming, *The Statistical System of Communist China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962).

So from many perspectives there have been hazards in taking reports and visits, documents and statistics at face value. In the past decade commentators within China and outside have become more sophisticated in dealing with these matters. Chinese investigative reporting has developed, even if subdued after June 1989. The society is much more open than during almost all preceding decades. Data from industry, census reports, trade figures both with respect to foreign and domestic flows have become more common and are considered to be increasingly reliable. Published studies of the past five years are more solid and rigorous.

It is important to understand the problems of interpretation and the limitation of data because they have an important effect on any assessment of social problems. Estimates of social development, for example, mingle data on population growth, literacy, standards of health, and the like with judgments about personal preference. The point is not only to query the reliability of the data used to answer policy questions but also the ability to link this data to the unique ways in which individuals and families develop their strategies to maximize choices, minimize losses under any given policy, whether it be the single child family (SCF), educational opportunities, or other matters.

A central premise of this chapter is that preferences and demands evolve from people's most urgent needs and problems. Basic desires, are, of course, affected by specific government policies as well as by larger social and economic realities. When some group of the population sees its basic need or goal in conflict with the authorities, whether national or local, it will try to resolve that conflict.

The government for its part may be sensitive to issues that impinge very directly on important aspects of the lives of its citizens and yet may be determined to alter conduct. It may have to moderate its policies or procedures for some segments of the society or develop effective ways of achieving goals for others. The interplay between central authorities and local cadres is always important. At the micro level, though, the basis for judgments is the actual condition. This is true for matters of health or employment or education or family planning.

In the discussions that follow it will become clear that during the past forty years the progress of the government has brought with it a series of new, different, but nonetheless urgent problems for both the young and the old. This chapter outlines some acute dilemmas and difficult choices that plague Chinese local leaders and the citizenry.

While the chapter attempts to avoid duplication of topics discussed earlier in the Gold segment, some overlap is unavoidable. For the most

part, discussion here centers on matters in the rural sector and addresses only briefly issues of the urban areas.

China's Educational Dilemma: Problems for a Developing State

Students of development have come to recognize the central importance of education for the achievement of industrialization and the improvement of national standards of living. However one accounts for the success of the newly industrializing countries (NICs) of East Asia—that is, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea, and Hong Kong—a key contribution was made by the educated work force plus the flexible and up-to-date group of college graduates able to enter into and participate in the adaptation of new science and technological development to social and state purposes.

Consequently, virtually every government in the world seeks to educate its citizens. This is true in post-1949 China. But in a developing state, given limited resources, educational programs can be available to only a portion of the eligible population. The overriding question becomes how the educational needs of the state should be met, especially in view of infrastructural costs. For whom should education be available? What are its costs? What rules govern its allocation during periods of scarcity?

In China a bulging population had to be organized, made productive, and a portion accustomed to industrial discipline. In both the Maoist period and the reform decade of the 1980s achieving this task posed some difficult choices for the leadership. A major question centered on where the emphasis should be placed: upon mass literacy needs or on investment in a highly trained elite? This conflict has never been resolved, although there are repeated efforts to try to do so. On the one hand, in the immediate post-1949 period and for the past decade and today, there has been an emphasis on and investment in the tertiary level of education. On the other hand, local programs are encouraged; indeed, local officials are exhorted to insure universal literacy for the youngsters and progress toward the goal of nine years of education.

The data on full-time student attendance are clear about current trends. There has been ongoing progress in raising attendance at the primary level, although the numbers have been declining as the population itself declines. Second, the percentage continuing to lower middle school seems to hover at about 70 percent. The significant statistical drop in attendance is between lower and upper middle school, where about one-sixth proceed to upper middle school and then one-fourth to university.⁴

⁴ Deborah Davis, "Chinese Welfare Policies and Outcomes," *China Quarterly*, Sep-

These facts lead to some important outcomes: (1) higher education, which is increasingly important in China, serves to sharply divide the society and (2) the division is especially prominent in the rural-urban difference—urban children more commonly continue in school; rural children do not. This fact translates into important differences in determining life chances.

Because the responsibility for meeting most educational costs rests in the local communities—the county and villages—the financial constraints of the countryside play an important part in effecting this outcome. But there are other reasons that account for a decline in the admission to senior middle school beyond the constraints of funding. The SCF places increased emphasis on the labor of children or teenagers. Reality dictates that boys and girls join the work force. The cohort born in the early years of the SCF policy will shortly be fifteen, and the need for their participation in rural labor will weigh heavily on the choices of whether to continue their education.

In addition, there is also the objective reality of the cost of attendance at upper middle school for each family. It is not only work foregone but also the costs of books, food, and lodging at a distant town since upper middle schools are often in urban centers some distance from the homes of the children. In a recent series of interviews in the countryside that I conducted, the costs of education were reported to be quite low (in contrast to the views of D. Davis, cited above). Certainly at the primary and lower middle school levels this was true. But in the few cases where the student was studying in an upper middle school, the costs jumped substantially. In one village visited in 1987 the local cadres reported with pride that they maintained a scholarship fund for any student admitted to senior middle school, a technical school, or the university. Nevertheless, only one or two had been admitted to senior middle school and one to a technical school; no one yet had been admitted to a university.

At the macro level how does the state reconcile elite education and mass needs? Resolution is difficult because of a third problem, specifically, the matter of recruitment and retention of teachers.⁵ Where will the primary, lower middle school, and upper middle school teachers of the countryside be found? In the coming decade this looms as a serious and very important task whose resolution is, as yet, unknown.

tember 1989 (special issue: *The People's Republic of China after Forty Years*), pp. 582–583.

⁵ Ruth Hayhoe, a scholar and author who studies educational developments in China and currently is attached to the Canadian embassy in Beijing, stressed this problem to me in June 1990.

The difficulties are threefold. First, teaching has had no readily available group from which to recruit. Since incomes have been tied to the agricultural responsibility system (ARS), rewards for work come from land, from contracts for skill tasks, or from enterprises employment. The better educated customarily seek jobs in these areas. Teaching ranks low. A second aspect of the problem has been how to train the teachers, that is, to provide them the knowledge beyond that gained in primary school or lower middle school. Upper middle school graduates are difficult to recruit for teaching because they see better opportunities elsewhere. Finally, there have been substantial obstacles to repairing or improving the infrastructure necessary for effective schooling with no readily available source of funds to undertake the work. Visitors to the countryside note the spartan conditions, the lack of books, writing utensils, paper. In the Maoist period modest efforts to address the problem could be made based upon welfare funds routinely withdrawn from monies earned in the harvest. In the post-Mao period this option is not readily available.

What are the consequences of the current situation? First, the rural-urban division guarantees a more limited level of education in the rural setting and within that group very restrictive opportunities to send individuals to the upper middle school. Second, the circumstances cannot be modified without a new fund source or a reallocation of local monies, both to improve the infrastructure and, most likely, the quality of teaching. Such a reallocation of priorities would seem to be in conflict with the need for funding and planning for the aging, which will be discussed shortly.

There is an urban side to the dilemma mentioned above—found in the educational outcomes for those who do complete work in this system. In the pre-Cultural Revolution years and during the Cultural Revolution itself the Maoist slogans called for a reduction and eventual abolition of the social distinction between urban and rural life. (This effort, though perhaps best illustrated in China, is a common problem for developing societies in the transitional period of their industrialization effort.⁶)

⁶ I have learned a great deal from reading Doctor Suzanne Pepper's study with respect to the history of this problem and the various Chinese efforts to address the difficulties briefly summarized in this manuscript. See Suzanne Pepper, *China's Education Reform in the 1980s: Policies, Issues, and Historical Perspectives*, China Research Monograph 36 (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1990).

Thus the clash between elite and mass education has not been avoided in China. Its manifestations are readily apparent in the efforts to sustain local schools with local resources yet make the special funding and assistance available to key point schools. The conflict may have been softened when there were state efforts to place so-called educated youths in rural and semiurban schools to raise the local standards. (The reluctance of youth—and their parents as well—to take these assignments on any long-term basis is well known.)

Even within the educated cohort there is a “we-they” confrontation commonly based on the distinction between those afforded the opportunity to study abroad and those not so fortunate. Moreover, foreign universities for their part often enhance this distinction by their tendency to admit candidates from select Chinese universities. Key universities and foreign foundations and universities try to maximize the use of scarce fellowships and other training opportunities. The growing network of connections, introductions, and the like among China academics and foreign scholars, leavened occasionally by the serendipity of chance meetings at conferences, results in graduate training and related opportunities being channeled for the most part to the key universities and colleges in China, the leadership in them, and their students.

A final consideration related to these education issues is the management and the potential contribution and utility of those who have had access to modern science and technological training by virtue of having been trained abroad. As the Tiananmen events seemed to illustrate to some Chinese leaders, reabsorbing graduates of foreign programs into Chinese society carries risks. Students trained as engineers and physicists seemed also to have learned and espoused political goals unacceptable to Chinese leaders.

This is not a new problem nor one peculiar to post-1949 China; it has been endemic to Chinese education throughout the century. Since the early 1900s, when significant numbers of Chinese began to study outside China, there have been continuing difficulties in effectively integrating and using the scarce talents represented in these highly educated men and women. Patriotic Chinese returning to China to contribute their skills at home encountered difficulties in fitting their training or work to opportunities at home. Doctors and engineers and researchers have worked in cities rather than in the countryside at least in part because urban settings allow them to use their skills more fully.

The organization and administration of the medical profession serves to illustrate the problem most clearly. Specialists are concentrated in urban medical centers at least in part to facilitate an efficient distribu-

tion system. Referrals permit better utilization of their training. During the Cultural Revolution, it is true, specialists were distributed to the countryside in an effort to make certain their political viewpoint was as modern as their medical training; but even then the allocations were, for the most part, temporary. Similar examples can be provided in other scientific fields.

From the leadership perspective the issue is how to utilize control and direct the educated youths, especially the college graduate or the upper middle school student. Despite sporadic efforts, students have rarely been free to find their own jobs but rather have been assigned them. This has resulted as much from the anxiety of students as from the fears of the administrative cadres. The events in June 1989 reenforced the problem of assignment. The Chinese authorities remained concerned about the development of an educated elite who mixed tainted values, goals, and concerns with their contribution to the ongoing Chinese socialist modernization process. Just as the issues of *ti* ("essence") and *yung* ("use") of the late nineteenth century divided scholars and officials, so today with the late twentieth-century version phrased in the concern that economic achievement is followed by efforts to install a political system unacceptable to the present leadership. On one hand the Chinese leadership announced that those students trained abroad but apprehensively delaying their return could return without fear of retribution or penalty for their activities and statements during the June 1989 events.⁷ At the same time the Chinese leadership sought to sanitize the youngsters selected for higher education by periods of military training. In addition, domestic regulations to increase the age of those likely be sent abroad together with many new financial provisions to ensure that those abroad returned or paid very high fees and penalties for not returning have been devised and widely publicized.

The procedures reflect Chinese efforts to reclaim their investment in human capital. Until June 1989 there was general cooperation between the Chinese and foreign governments, who also agreed that national interest required that the trained specialist return to make a contribution to his or her home country. (This policy is by no means limited to China; many national governments mount efforts to reclaim their educated youth.) It has become a topic of more public discussion in the United States because of the events of June 1989.

The discussion thus far should make clear important aspects of education development that have been part of the politics of China since

⁷ *China Daily*, June 11, 1990.

1949. The Chinese leadership accepted in the early years the idea that an educated work force is an essential component of modernization and therefore sustained efforts to raise the education standard throughout China and to maintain it. Though the purpose of that education effort might differ between Maoist and post-Maoist periods, it is nonetheless a continued thread in Chinese efforts. It has been reconfigured, though, as financial constraints and social recognition of the purpose and importance of an educational elite have been reaffirmed. In a sense the Chinese have tried "to walk on two legs." The effort to extend and solidify education programs together with the selection of an elite has characterized the last decade, but success in the effort has been constrained by ongoing cost limitations. Moreover, the somewhat different purposes of the national plan into which the education elite is recruited and the local goals where a more limited education seemed appropriate work at cross purposes. At the local level there has been potential conflict between family and individual; at the highest level, between state and individual.

These internal contradictions are properly viewed as a problem of a developing society rather than of a socialist one. What has made them somewhat more difficult to manage has been the absence of other avenues to power. Class no longer plays so central a role in the allocation of special opportunities, and the army is not the overwhelmingly accepted choice (for rural youth) that it was in the 1960s and 1970s. Education remains, therefore, both essential for the state as a whole and a key means for new life chances for the individual. In the near term its accessibility is likely to be largely confined to the urban areas. The youth in rural China are more likely to be found in the lower ranks of the state cadre system or following the directions of their rural parents, who seek to keep them at home.

An Aging China: Modernization and Family Planning

The Chinese population totaled slightly over 1.1 billion in 1990, when the Chinese commenced another census to further update the totals and gain information about other aspects of their population. They are well persuaded of the need for accuracy as part of their economic planning. The strict warnings to people to reply when questioned and the detailed instructions given to the millions of census takers sound vaguely familiar to similar injunctions in the United States. Fears of undercounting (what about migrants who lived in the cities without appropriate documents?), of missing key segments of the population (how to locate nonregistered infants), and the role and number of the men and

women in remote areas (counting the Tibetans began one month before the national census had commenced) characterized the Chinese concerns. The problem of the floating population was a major focus in Chinese cities; the consequences of the SCF was a key element to be investigated in the countryside.

Policies about population, although absolutely crucial components for modernization and development, alternated during the first two decades of the PRC. Some stability has characterized the period since 1970. But concern about family planning does not seem at first glance to imply problems of "aging." Indeed, some might query whether or not such an issue is actually relevant in a social system with many other more immediate and pressing difficulties such as pollution, environmental dangers, and the social difficulties implied by education that have been outlined above.

These immediate and pressing issues for the Chinese government do indeed receive substantial attention and are given some priority by the leaders. But the magnitude of the problems of aging that are visible on the Chinese horizon have come to draw the attention of the leadership for a number of reasons. At least in part the issue has become salient as the revolutionary generation has itself aged and now is passing from the scene. This socialist concern is reinforced by the strong cultural ethic of concern for the aged that is a well-known component of Confucian values further reinforced by the economic problems or contributions of the aged. Thus as education is a contemporary—current—concern, the generation of men and women marching through life has come to be of increasing concern to the leadership as a time bomb for the future.

Some portion of the so-called aging problem is intimately related to the matter of the SCF. Exactly what circumstances caused the Chinese leadership to adopt the SCF policy, a policy that on the face of it runs counter to a fundamental aspect of Chinese culture? A part of the answer is relatively straightforward. By 1970 the government and Party had rejected the idea that an unlimited expanding population would be a benefit to China. Instead, the government had commenced a policy vigorously urging delayed marriage, better spacing, and fewer children. Evidence shows that a decline in births was under way when the PRC adopted the SCF policy in 1978–79. This acceleration of family planning efforts is commonly linked to computer projects in Beijing that predicted alternative population scenarios if families continued to have two, three, or more children.⁸

⁸ Carol Lee Hamrin, *China and the Challenge of the Future* (Boulder, San Francisco,

The computer models included an estimate of costs for state-provided services. The outcomes of different assumptions all apparently persuaded the top leadership that extreme efforts had to be undertaken to reduce even further in a rapid manner the number of children born. This policy and the experimentation with various incentives and penalties are well known. What was apparently not so clearly appreciated by the leadership was certain consequences or side effects that would accompany the policy. Now, ten years into the policy's administration, some worrisome side effects are becoming more evident.

The possible implications of the SCF have varied in seriousness. One worry for some parents has been the "little emperor" syndrome. Parents, especially in the cities where the SCF policy is most effective, have focused all their energies, hopes, and aspirations on the single child. This has resulted in an occasionally spoiled child that sees itself as the center of the universe. The child is overindulged. Newspaper columns constantly admonish parents to avoid such an unfortunate outcome to child rearing. The mirror of this problem is that the child is subject to intense parental pressure to achieve. Cases of child abuse are occasionally reported. Other problems related to the SCF but less clear as to scope and consequences have been reports of growing numbers of unmarried men together with regional male-female ratios that are sharply tilted toward male children. They suggest that the conservative preference for male progeny may result in abortions or in less care for female babies. The skewed ratios will lead to some very difficult problems some fifteen or twenty years later when marriage becomes important. As the 1990s commence, there are therefore some short- and middle-term difficulties more or less manageable and a very important long-term problem.

That long-term problem, a serious by-product of the SCF, is the accelerating aging of Chinese society,⁹ with certain dangers that few recognized when the SCF family policy was adopted. Moreover, the phenomenon has become more complicated as it has been linked with the ARS. Another problem is the potential interaction and possible conflict between the goals of the SCF and the ARS, conflicts that were not immediately apparent. With respect to this matter it is important to recall that the SCF was adopted while the ARS was developing. The ARS placed a premium on labor power that encouraged large families

and London: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 41, 48.

⁹ Toshio Kuroda, "Salient Features of Population Aging in China," paper prepared for International Conference on Aging in China sponsored by the Population Research Institute, December 2-4, 1989, Beijing. See Table 1.

and more children whose early entry into the labor market would enhance the wealth of the family. There have been various efforts to resolve the obvious contradiction between the goal of a single child or perhaps two children and the pressure and economic rewards from more children in the current economic system. The economic advantages of children were less apparent in the urban areas than in the countryside and SCF penalties were more effective there. For this reasons, policy makers, using birth planning targets and contracts linked to agricultural goals, specifically fashioned disincentives for agricultural families. In the early 1980s, less commonly now, sterilization and abortion campaigns were conducted.

What is meant by the term *aging*, and can it possibly be a real problem? Commonly the term refers to the fact that over time there will be an increase in the percentage of the total population that is age 65 or older. (There is some discussion about the appropriate age. In China many reports use 60 as the onset of aged years since it is the date when workers commonly retire).¹⁰ This segment of society will inevitably become dependent, requiring assistance of a most basic sort, while because of their age, being unable to produce the goods and services necessary to pay for these services. Some, of course, may have accumulated savings to pay for some costs; others will receive pensions; but many, especially in the countryside, will have no resources to manage in their aged years, and the state or society will have to intervene to support them until death.

The word *problem* is commonly applied to this experience when the percentage of aged increases markedly in comparison to the total number of workers able to provide assistance, a figure of between 9 and 11 percent. In the Chinese case some twenty to thirty years in the future for the country as a whole and in some of China's cities at the present time, a significant portion of the population is or will soon be composed of the aged. This phenomena is due in part not only to improved medical and health facilities but also to the SCF policy. The aged live longer, and because of the SCF there will be fewer individuals to support them.

A further explanation of the problem and its importance requires consideration of three matters: (1) the change in the population make-up, (2) the consequences that may be expected as a result of this change,

¹⁰ Liu Feng, "Research on the Trend of China's Population Aging and Policy Formulation," paper prepared for International Conference on Aging in China, sponsored by the Population Research Institute, December 2-4, 1989, Beijing.

and (3) the policies or options available to the nation-state or society for the solution of the problems.

With respect to the age composition of the Chinese population, the distinguished Japanese demographer Toshio Kuroda has argued that Asia has been the most successful region of the world in reducing its fertility.¹¹ In this effort China is a prominent example. The Chinese achievement in moving from a situation of a high birth rate and high death rate to a low birth and death rate is notable for the speed of the change.

Two features of the decline in mortality are of special note. First, the Chinese seem to be following the Japanese by about two decades. According to Kuroda, Japan commenced its most recent population decline in 1947, Hong Kong after 1961, Singapore after 1964, and China commencing in 1969. These prior experiences may shed some light on the expected developments for the Chinese. The second aspect that should be noted is that the three cases mentioned are highly urban. China is not. For Singapore and Hong Kong there was never a real urban-rural dichotomy. China, on the other hand, was and still remains an agricultural society, and the changes achieved have been made in that setting. The implications of this fact for policy options will be discussed shortly. Before considering that issue, though, it is necessary to address in somewhat more detail the implications of the demographic transition.

It is readily apparent that the demographic transition must bring about changes in the age composition of a population. In general, the assumption is that developing nations experience an improvement in the birth rates and a decline in the mortality rates of the largely young population as more children survive infancy and commence their lives. This leads to an increase in the younger population, that is, those 0-14 years old. In these circumstances, the proportion of aged will of course decrease.

As industrialization proceeds, families presumably seek to have fewer children, and slowly over time the population total declines. In due course the pyramid structure of a national population will even out, possibly even becoming smaller overall.

What has happened and is happening in China is somewhat different or more complicated. The trend of a decline in the mortality of the young is supplemented by an extension of the life span. This development is only now receiving attention in China, but it is a matter

¹¹ "Population Aging in Japan with Reference to China," paper prepared for the Second Conference Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, September 23-25, 1987, Beijing, p. 1.

of some concern. The phenomena is certainly the focus of attention in the United States and Japan, where the fact that an increasing number of people live to their seventies and beyond has resulted in a further refinement in the classification of the aged into the old, the old-old, and the very old. There are important implications for the state and individuals with respect to health and the continued ability to care for oneself and to work for those classified as the old-old or very old.

Along with an extended life span we can find some estimates in the age/sex composition of the aged Chinese population in 1987 as set forth by Professor Tian Xueyuan,¹² who reports that the mid-figure for the aged, that is, those above 60, is 67.6.

If the changes in China mirror to a large extent the Japanese experience of some twenty years earlier, there may be a possible similarity between the age composition ratio of Japan in 1955 and China in 1982. The available information seems to confirm this expectation. Thus the results in Japan with respect to the extent of dependency may foreshadow a similar experience in China some years later.

The ratio of workers to dependents in Japan in 1970 and China in the year 2000¹³—indeed, into the twenty-first century—suggests a “period of grace,” that is, an interval of thirty years of low dependency allowing time for preparation to handle the “aged problem” that will become much larger while the population to support the aged grows smaller in size and moves toward middle age and then their own aged years.

Planning is now under way, but there are divisions between experiences for the urban aged and rural aged. The needs of the aged in an urban setting and the means for addressing these needs seem manageable if difficult. The necessity of attention to and development of financial support programs is recognized, and urban communities are trying to build or refurbish facilities. Local leadership accepts the fact that the unit for financial assistance must be larger than the work place. Imbalances among the percentage of retiring workers in differing units has required a higher governmental level to collect and administer pensions than the enterprise, which served this purpose in the 1950s. Since 1984, pension funds have been collected citywide. There is also some experimenting with a plan for worker contributions to a retirement fund as an acceptable, even desirable, alternative. At present this practice is limited to

¹² Tian Xueyuan, “The Status and Characteristics of China’s Aged Population,” paper presented to the International Conference on China’s Aging Population, December 2–4, 1989, Beijing, p. 2.

¹³ Kuroda, “Population Aging in Japan.”

contract workers, but it may be expanded in the decade ahead. In sum, there has been abandonment of the socialist prescription that regards social welfare costs as totally born by the state/enterprise. "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" now has accepted the need for two- and possibly three-way participation in developing a successful financial protection program.

Assistance and the meeting of needs in the countryside is quite another matter. Here the state does not expect to assume the burden. Rather, the options are closely tied to the family and the individual. Far behind are the contributions of the collective and the state. Why should this be so? Although individual need is great, the capabilities of the government to meet the need are limited unless investment in modernization projects is to be curtailed.

The current and historical sources of assistance are the family and, of course, the individuals themselves. The needy aged parents and relatives recognize the role of the family. During interviews in the countryside in 1987 and in 1989, rural respondents, when asked upon whom they would rely, listed themselves, their families, and only occasionally the collective or the state.¹⁴ While knowledgeable about sources of help, the respondents favored family ties.

How has assistance been provided? For the urban resident the assistance is commonly on a cash basis together with some subsidized (at least in 1989) service and family assistance. Years of productive labor are rewarded by a pension. In the countryside there is self-help and reliance on the family.

The trade-off in the countryside is as follows: Exchange does not become operative until age, illness, or infirmity ends the capacity to live alone and work. "Work until death," said two respondents. There are no formal administrative rules, although the Chinese constitution does include the requirement for children to assist their parents. As the capacity of the aged slowly declines, the family becomes more central in meeting needs. In a survey of the interaction of the elderly and the children, a picture emerges of the services and assistance each provides the other. The expectation of assistance from the parents, the assistance rendered to the parents vary according to the health, capacity to work, and specific needs. Real advantages accrue to a family from the parents who

¹⁴ In 1987 and 1989 I collaborated with the Minister of Civil Affairs in China to interview selected families in villages in Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Hunan provinces. My comments here are based on those interviews. This work was generously supported by a Pacific Rim grant from the University of California.

live with them. The contribution of the aged (looking after the children, taking care of the home, sometimes cooking) are important.

This arrangement is, of course, already changing, and the rate of change may accelerate as more rural people become mobile. Husbands and sons now move, even if only temporarily, to the cities. The cadres seek young, skilled workers who can participate in modernization projects. The state may be concerned about nonfarm work, but the nonfarm laborers contribute to retirement funds and assist individual families in raising their standard of living. People will not easily abandon these opportunities. On the other hand, in the villages, when fertilizer or agricultural investment is limited, then reorganization of labor—that is, getting people to form groups to work the land—becomes more important. Some villages may increasingly be composed of the older, the women, and the children. A June 1990 *China Daily* editorial inveighing against the rising numbers of individuals engaged in nonfarm work represents one response to the 1980s phenomena.

In this setting the very needy are provided small subsidies similar to the five guarantees of the 1960s and 1970s, when the village was able to make these allocations. The responsibility for the aged needy without relatives rests with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. In the past five years, there have been concerted efforts to build or renovate small homes for the aged to provide a haven for those without relatives or means of survival.

For the smaller but average family the situation is currently satisfactory and quite traditional. The parents, or perhaps the mother (after the death of the husband), lives with the youngest or only son. In the future, however, the reduction in family size will jeopardize the capacity of a young couple to assist both themselves and the long-lived elderly. The services provided to the elderly are those that cannot be replaced by cash.

Experiments have been under way for five years to provide alternate assistance for people when aging parents become too great a financial burden for the single child. For the most part, the experiments are based on local community resources and occasionally the county or districts. The leaders try to accumulate funds from local enterprises, establishing local savings programs for disaster help and caring for the aged. So far the major obstacle is the difficulty of achieving a sufficient level of savings.¹⁵

¹⁵ Ministry of Civil Affairs, Social Security Newspaper and Rural Society Security Group, eds., *Exploring Rural Society Security* (Beijing: Hunan University Publishing House, 1987).

If Kuroda's projections are correct, the Chinese have a twenty-thirty-year interim period during which they have a chance to get ready for the rapid growth in the percentage of rural aged. For the present, though, despite some promising experiments, there is a long way to go before effective funding programs can be established. The need for service is more difficult to address. Who will carry the heavy bags of rice, help with laundry, accompany the aged parent to the medical center? Here the family remains the essential unit. The relationship that has led a person to willingly provide assistance and care to ill or feeble relatives in rural China rests on a personal relationship, culture, and economic exchange.

Summary

Throughout this discussion of microsocietal needs and the choices the Chinese have adopted to meet them, there is the ongoing theme of conflicting claims for scarce resources. This conflict is well known throughout the world. In the developed countries, the demand for better education more equitably provided seems ubiquitous. Concerns about the care of the aged are common on the pages of Japanese newspapers, in the legislatures of European countries, and in the Congress of the United States. The uniqueness of the Chinese experience is at least in part derived from the fact that China remains after forty years largely an agricultural state with policies that will not alter this fact until well into the twenty-first century.

The efforts to accommodate the requirements of the rural society will have to be undertaken in circumstances where conflict between the needs of the young and the aged seem unavoidable. There is little experience with such difficulties on the scale and diversity of a country such as China nor with the circumstances where the leaders seek to address so many difficulties at the same time.

The success of the Chinese in ameliorating the hardships of rural life and their progress in lengthening the life span and improving the quality of life of the rural sector is certainly praiseworthy. This achievement will not suffice, however, to lessen the complaints nor meet the demands of younger Chinese who lack the historical memory of their elders and are certain to focus more on current difficulties.

Viewed from the macro level, the shifting demands and responsibilities between the state and society suggest an ongoing development and accommodation that has yet to be fully formalized. At the micro level in villages, the more traditional collectives of families, the continued reliance on relatives, of children on their parents and then parents on their

children at least in part results from the default of the state as well as from social custom. Whether the family will remain able to meet these needs remains to be seen.

Whatever the long-term outcome two assessments seem clear. First, the Chinese achievements over forty years in terms of living standards and quality of life are praiseworthy whether compared to other nation-states or in terms of the domestic obstacles that these efforts have had to overcome. Second, the competing demands among social segments, whether it be the young and the old, the rural and the urban, the educated and those less so, will sustain an ongoing disequilibrium in the Chinese nation-state that the leadership will ignore at its peril.

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