

**THE QUEST FOR DEMOCRACY:  
INTELLECTUALS AND THE STATE IN  
CONTEMPORARY CHINA**

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by

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## ABSTRACT

The world was shaken by the June Fourth Massacre which erupted in China in 1989. It is abundantly clear that the cause of the pro-democracy movement with widespread support from different walks of life lies primarily in the despotic rule of state socialism. The present study observes that most people who supported the student demonstrations in 1989 did so because they considered what the students demanded was consistent with their wishes. Feeling discontented with the intense social problems in China, many people thus offered their support to the student movement. Despite the tragic nature of the massacre, the significance of the incident is a deeper "awakening" among Chinese intellectuals. After the massacre, many Chinese intellectuals have become more conscious of their independence, considering professional autonomy as fundamental right to intellectual life. Rethinking their social role, they strove to restructure a new relationship with the state. Some of them go along the path of working outside the state apparatus and some even step on the way of "anti-establishment".

The present study first establishes a framework for examining sociologically how ideas are formed with particular reference to the examination of Chinese intellectuals' conceptualization of democracy. The basis for this framework is K. Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, together with A. Gramsci's sociology of intellectuals and P. Bourdieu's notion of intellectual field. Deriving the insights from these scholars we hope to establish a more coherent conceptual framework for the analysis of intellectual production.

With this framework in hand, the next step was to determine a reasonable approach to the examination of the ideological formation of Chinese intellectuals. The source of information for the study came from the first-hand intensive interviews with the selected intellectuals. Besides, the present study also scrutinizes the works of these intellectuals whose works have spanned the years especially from the May Fourth Movement (1919) to the June Fourth Incident (1989). Their perceptions of democracy, freedom and human rights provide vital clues for determining the complete picture of the evolution on the idea of democracy in contemporary China. No one intellectual has managed to suggest what democracy is, but using the theoretical framework and examining the interviews, writings and speeches of these intellectuals over a period of several years have allowed this researcher to develop a systematic and a more integrated view of democracy as formulated by Chinese intellectuals.

In the process of analyzing the ideological production of Chinese intellectuals, this writer has also discovered the emergence of new and different relationships which have developed between Chinese intellectuals and the state. At the same time as they have become more independent, the nature of their critique has changed. In the past Chinese intellectuals criticized only the corruption of government and never the system of government itself. But post-Mao intellectuals have thrown off the fetters of their predecessors and turned their attacks on the system of their repressive Communist regime. Those who, in an earlier era, were fiercely loyal to the Communist ideals now speak only of the myth of a Communist utopia. Their criticism of the crises in China and their critique of state socialism reveal not only their scepticism of socialist praxis but also their wishes to make China more democratic. One point which deserves special attention is that the present

research finds that the sixth generation of intellectuals has become more conscious about their independent role, rethinking a new relationship with the state and they have distinguished themselves from the establishment.

The most significant finding of the present research is the fact that the ideological formation is greatly affected by the social location, the educational orientation and generational location of intellectuals. More importantly, a deeper understanding of how Chinese intellectuals conceive the ideas of democracy is significantly determined by the particular socio-historical and socio-cultural contexts in which the ideas are formed. The present study also observes that intellectual radicalism is greatly constrained by the socio-economic and political opportunities that intellectuals have access. With different social locations and socio-economic-political opportunities to which intellectuals access, they may adopt different strategies in coping with the state. After the June Fourth massacre, many Chinese intellectuals with critical thinking were forced to exile overseas. The writer also finds that these exiled intellectuals have deeper reflection of democracy and also their relationship with the state especially when their socio-political circumstances have changed. Adding these observations together, it is highly indicative to us that Chinese intellectuals have struggled for a more autonomous social position and endeavored to have a new relationship with the state.

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Where I am aware of such intellectual debts, I have tried to acknowledge them in the notes. Inevitably, many indirect influences have not been acknowledged. I have attempted to repay these scholarly debts in the most appropriate coin by trying my best to write this thesis. I dedicate it to all those who have tried to enhance our understanding of the politics and sociology of intellectuals in China.

K.H. Mok  
March 1994  
Hong Kong

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Bibliography

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

In the present research, the author has visited different places to interview some prominent Chinese intellectuals. It is suggested by Cheek (1986) that most Chinese intellectuals are "establishment intellectuals", working either directly under state administration or closely associated with the establishment. In addition, it is a well-known fact that Chinese intellectuals have not really distinguished themselves from the establishment especially when they were restricted by their dependent social location. Thus, we too regard most Chinese intellectuals as "establishment intellectuals" working for the state and they a part of the state apparatus no matter what forms they took.

After the June Fourth Movement of 1989 many intellectuals, particularly those with critical and dissident views, went abroad. The present study examines this group of Chinese intellectuals with particular reference to the relationship between their changing socio-economic and political situations and social location and their ideological formation. The researcher is based on a series of interviews in Princeton and Arizona in the United States of America; Holland; London and Paris. The interviews were conducted in July 1992 and June to July 1993.

One word concerning these interviews that should be stated here is the author conducted the following interviews in Mandarin and Cantonese and which materials were recorded in Chinese. In the present study, the author translates these interviews and reports them in English. When citing or using the interview materials, the author shall state clearly where and when the interviews took place. A list of the interviews conducted follows.

### Interviews conducted in 1992

1. Yan Jiaqi, Paris
2. Ran Runnan, Paris
3. Linda Lui, Paris
4. Sun Xiaobin, Holland
5. Chinese scholars, London



### Interviews conducted in 1993

1. Su Xiaokang, Princeton
2. Chen Yizhi, Princeton
3. Fang Lizhi, Arizona
4. Liu Binyan, Princeton
5. Su Wei, Princeton
6. Kong Jisheng, Princeton

### NOTES ON TRANSLATIONS

In this thesis, I do all the translations of materials from original Chinese into English, except the quotations adopted from the English source. The present study uses Pinyin System to translate names of provinces, cities, and places, except **Hong Kong** and **Taiwan**. Most of the names of people are translated according to Pinyin System, except some names which are adopted from Taiwan source remain in its original system. For example, Chow Tse-tsung, Chang Hao and Chaing Chen-chiang are still cited according to the original system.

## INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, intellectuals have become more powerful and significant, influencing the politics and formation of society.<sup>1</sup> Intellectuals, nowadays, have to come to grips with the questions of to which class (if any) they belong and to which political current they adhere. The sociology of intellectuals is concerned primarily with the intellectuals and their roles in society, especially the examination of the social, political and economic factors which affect their social location and relationship with the state.<sup>2</sup> Central questions in the sociology of intellectuals, simply stated, are: (1) What is the relationship between their social location and their ideological formation? (2) Have the intellectuals formed a special class, or an independent stratum, or rather, do they just belong to different classes? (3) Do their ideas represent their own class interests, or the interests of other classes separately, or rather, a reflection of complex interests of different classes? Answers to these questions have aroused waves of debate in different settings, among different schools of thought, and in different socio-historical and socio-political contexts.

Another controversial issue is the definition of intellectuals. Traditionally, intellectuals have been defined in terms of their particular function or role in society, considering them as a group of people who earn their living with their minds (Coser, 1965). In addition, many American sociologists define intellectuals as "producers of culture" (see, for example, Lipset & Dobson, 1972). Marxist-inspired analysts have interpreted intellectuals as bound by the "relations of production", regarding them as carriers of "cultural capital", and have argued that intellectuals have become more dominant in modern society (see, Bourdieu, 1984, 1988; Gouldner, 1979). In discussions of social movements, intellectuals have been considered an important part for they are

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<sup>1</sup>For the discussion on the increasing influence of intellectuals in the modern world, see, for example, Konard and Szelenyi (1979; 1991); Bell (1974); Gouldner (1979); Habermas (1971) and Bourdieu (1971).

<sup>2</sup>The discussion of the development of sociology of intellectuals as a sub-field in sociology is clearly presented in Gella (1976). This book gives a detailed discussion on the formation of the sociology of intellectuals and its scope of studies from an international view. See also Bourdieu (1969 & 1985: 11-24).

professionally engaged in the production of ideas or manipulation of symbols, contributing to the development of the collective identity of social movements (see, Eyerman & Jamison, 1991). Some scholars go far beyond such discussions, suggesting that intellectuals have become a new class to further their own interests (see, Konrad and Szelenyi, 1979 & 1991). Gouldner (1979) also argues in a similar fashion that intellectuals are to be united by "newer forms of new class' ideology", characterized by a "multi-science character" as ideological framework. Other analysts have just put emphasis on the experts and scientific practitioners but ignored the critical or "public intellectual" (Jacoby, 1987) in their discussions of intellectuals (see, for example, Ben-David, 1971). In most of the foregoing accounts, from whichever vantage points they chose, one dimension consistently has been ignored, that is, the relations between the particular context of social movements and formative influences on intellectual life.<sup>3</sup>

Paraphrasing Gramsci, we can argue that while all activists are intellectuals, all activists do not serve the function of intellectuals in social movements.<sup>4</sup> In this light, we believe all intellectuals emerge in some particular context, implying that no one is born an intellectual. Rather, intellectuals are formed during the process of interaction, especially when they carry out intellectual activities in particular social settings.<sup>5</sup> Following Eyerman & Jamison (1991), we consider social movements primarily as processes through which meaning/knowledge is constituted. Apart from analyzing instrumental and strategic actions of movement praxis, we attempt to study the cognitive side of these movements, that is, the interaction between the formation of collective identity and the social, political, economic and historical contexts in which ideology is

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<sup>3</sup>This line of reasoning is adopted from Eyerman and Jamison (1991). For discussion on the different definitions of intellectuals, see, for example, Huszar (1960); Pipes (1982); Eisenstadt & Graubard (1973).

<sup>4</sup>Gramsci (1971: 121) writes that "[a]ll men are intellectuals, one could therefore say; but all men do not have the function of intellectuals in society".

<sup>5</sup>This line of thought is influenced by the work of Eyerman & Jamison (1991) on social movement. They propose to study social movements from a cognitive approach, that is, examining the formation of ideology or collective identity of social movements. In particular, they suggest investigating the ideological creators (movement intellectuals) of social movements with special reference to the interaction between ideological formation and the particular socio-historical context.

formed. Against such an intellectual background, the principal goal of this study is to examine the relationship between the ideological formation of intellectuals and the socio-historical as well as socio-political contexts of social movements supporting democracy and human rights in contemporary China.

In order to explore ideology/knowledge of these movements, the vertical line of the present research will concentrate on scrutinizing how "movement intellectuals" conceptualize ideology/collective identity for the movements. Horizontally, the particular socio-historical and socio-political contexts of different social movements will be examined. Putting the observations on the interaction between both vertical and horizontal lines we hope to depict a contextual and sociological framework for understanding the ideological production of Chinese intellectuals.

## **HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

Early in the May Fourth Movement,<sup>6</sup> the Chinese intellectuals began to look into what they pictured as a cultural enigma. Confronted with a total disintegration of the socio-political and the socio-cultural as well as socio-moral orders in their time, the May Fourth scholars were forced to find an alternate path to fill the "vacuum" set in this particular historical stage (see, Lin Yusheng, 1979). Having internalized the role of intellectuals, as the gatekeepers and sources of legitimacy and interpreters of cultural values (Cheng, 1990: 68-70), the May Fourth scholars began to look into the Western ideas of "democracy" and "science", trying to find another set of ideas to restore the

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<sup>6</sup>In the May Fourth Movement, the intellectuals not only fought against the unequal treaties imposed by Japan and other Western countries but also sought democracy and science to save the nation from bankruptcy. Concerning the definition of the May Fourth Movement, scholars have divergent interpretations. Some identify the entire movement with the new culture movement, considering it as a phenomenon of the intellectuals; and even some of them regard the movement as "Chinese Renaissance" or an "intellectual revolution in modern China". In contrast, some scholars, especially the communist writers, interpret the movement as directly caused and directed by the Russian Revolution. J. Chen (1971) suggests that the focus on purely cultural or political aspects of the movement only falls into over-generalization and distorts the nature of the movement. Having such a belief, Chen proposes to interpret the movement in light of its social and historical settings. He therefore suggests that the May Fourth Movement (MFM) and the New Culture Movement (NCM) should not be seen as the same. For Chen, the MFM is primarily a patriotic movement for direct political action, and its "collaboration" with the NCM rendered an invaluable service to the final dissolution of Chinese tradition and the quest for modernity. Contrary to Chen, Chow (1960) defines the MFM in a far broader sense, considering both cultural and political aspects of the movement. In this research, I adopt the definition from Chow (1960) to analyze the movement in light of a broader scope. For details of the definitional issues regarding the MFM, see, Chow (1960); J. Chen (1971) and Chang Hao (1989).

cultural order (see, for example, Fairbank, 1983: 374-450; Cheng, 1990: 71-76). The challenge of modernity began to confront the Chinese people in general and the intellectuals in particular. They were forced to disentangle the unresolved dilemma between tradition on the one hand and modernity on the other (see, for example, Lin, 1979 and Li Zehou, 1990a). Both the intellectuals and the students have been engaging in various social and intellectual movements, struggling for freedom, human rights and emancipation of individuals since 1919 (see, Fairbank, 1983; Cheng, 1990; Nathan, 1990). 'Democracy' was the central theme and 'catchword' constituting the core ideology of the 1919 May Fourth Movement, the democracy movement in late 1970's, the 1986-87 student demonstrations and the 1989 Tiananmen pro-democracy movement (see, for example, Nathan, 1985, 1990; Ferdinand, 1991; Womack, 1991; Wasserstrom, 1992). It is therefore necessary to examine how the movement intellectuals conceptualize democracy in response to different historical contexts.

In addition, it has been observed that post-Mao Chinese intellectuals have become more conscious of intellectual independence, becoming more critical and more willing to assert their rights. In particular, the post-Mao intellectuals have become more critical and bold enough to confront the state (see, for example, Cheek, 1986; Goldman et al. 1987 & 1993). Their critique and dissidence are not confined only to private meetings but have been expressed in the public arena. Discussion groups and salons were popular in the late 80's, indicating an emergence of a relatively free public sphere (Gold, 1990 and Rosen, 1992). In addition to these observations, my previous research also confirms that Chinese intellectuals are rethinking their role in Chinese society with particular attention to considering their relationship with the state (Mok, 1991). From this vantage point, it is intellectually stimulating to further study their conceptions of democracy, their relationship with the state, and their role and function in society.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

Recent studies have suggested that there is a continuity in the concept of democracy between the May Fourth scholars and the contemporary intellectuals, (Wasserstrom, 1990: 3-24; Yu Yingshih, 1991: 243-257; Cheng, 1990: 71-76; Israel, 1992; Schwarcz, 1992) while some researchers argue that the interpretations of democracy have been varied in respect of different socio-historical settings (Duke, 1989: 48-68; Calhoun, 1989: 116-119; Krauss, 1989: 294-315; C.P. Chang, 1989: 3-4; Lin Yusheng, 1989: 62-81, 214-240; Israel, 1992). In this research, I confine my study to examining the group of movement intellectuals and the student demonstrators who have become more open to Western thought and liberal thinking. I hope to scrutinize how they interpret and develop the ideas of democracy at different points of time.

One point which deserves emphasis here is that this study is not a work on history of ideas but a sociological study of ideological formation. To be more specific, particular attention is given to a contextual examination of how Chinese intellectuals conceptualize democracy in different social movements. In order to grasp a sociological understanding of their ideas, the present study is going to investigate how their social locations or social origins have influenced their diagnosis and conceptualizations of democracy. In addition, this research also investigates the interaction between intellectuals' political ideas and their educational orientations. To sharpen our analysis, the present study also examines the influence of different generational locations on their intellectual lives, that is, the relation between their upbringing, spirit, virtues and limitations and their thought processes. Equally important, intellectual radicalism is suggested to be facilitated and constrained by the economic and political opportunities to which intellectuals have access (Brym, 1980, 1987). In other words, this study will explore how the political opportunity structure to which intellectuals have access has influenced their radicalism and political strategies.

Another objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the state

and the Chinese intellectuals in the post-Mao era, whether the undertaking of socio-political changes in the present regime have enhanced the growth of intellectuals in relation to their social and political positions. It is my hypothesis that the contemporary Chinese intellectuals have immense power in the cultural domain, exerting their influence in the cultural and political hegemony. In this regard, I hope the present study can elucidate whether or not the contemporary Chinese intellectuals have become a more critical and independent social group, occupying a more strategic position in Chinese politics with more influence upon the civil society than in previous periods.

Such examination may make significant contributions to understanding the social transformation of Communist China in general and the roles and social positions of intellectuals in particular. The present research would have far-reaching significance for the political sociology of intellectuals and sociology of knowledge with particular reference to the development of democracy in modern China. After this general introduction, I am going to discuss the specific research questions, the conceptual framework of the study and the methodology of the present research.

### **SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To deal with the first objective, I am going to investigate the following questions: How do the intellectuals interpret and conceptualize the ideas of democracy? How do their peculiar social locations and educational orientations influence their thinking about democracy? Are there any particular characteristics of the concept "democracy" at different points of time since the May Fourth Movement? How do the generational locations influence their political thoughts? To what extent does their access to economic and political opportunities affect their political orientations? What is the relation between their concept of democracy and their particular socio-historical, socio-cultural and socio-political contexts? How significant is the concept of democracy in understanding the Chinese state and intellectuals? How is the idea 'democracy' developed in, and what are its implications for, modern China? Is there any continuity of

the concept 'democracy' from the May Fourth scholars to the intellectuals in post-Mao China?

My hypothesis here is that there is a continuity in the concept of democracy between the May Fourth scholars and the post-Mao intellectuals. I am convinced that the prominent intellectuals, but not the student demonstrators in the post-Mao era, developed a clear notion of democracy than that of the May Fourth scholars (see, for example, Calhoun, 1989; Wasserstrom, 1992; Unger, 1991). It is thus my main interest to validate the foregoing stated hypothesis.

Under the second objective, I would investigate such questions as: Do the ideas of the intellectuals express their own interests or represent the interests of others? How do they perceive their role, function and social position? Are there any changes taking place in their social origins as compared with those of their forerunners, the traditional literati? It is my hypothesis that the contemporary Chinese intellectuals have become more dissident and critical and independent in thinking. Unlike their forerunners, the traditional literati, they not only complain about maladministration within the emperor's "approved boundary" but also attack the political system and even the official ideology. Their critical outlook is reflected in their level of critique and intensity of dissidence. I hypothesize that the Chinese intellectuals in the post-Mao era have emerged as a relatively independent social group rather than only relying on their political patrons as the establishment intellectuals did in the Mao era. I hope the present study will validate the hypothesis of a changing relationship between the post-Mao intellectuals and the state.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

In order to understand contextually the ideas of democracy as perceived by the intellectuals, the present research will examine the works of Mannheim, Gramsci and Bourdieu to establish an original analytical framework in light of their ideas on knowledge and intellectuals. These scholars have suggested different ways to study



ideas. The present study attempts to compare and contrast their works in order to develop my own perspective in viewing ideological formation.

The central notion of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge deals with the interpretation of ideas and nature of meaning, in a more specific sense, the interpretation of thought. What Mannheim has proposed is not a causal relationship between the ideas and social environment, or a kind of socially determined knowledge. In another words, the notion of relatedness between the socio-historical context and ideas can be adequate both to the historicity and to the autonomy of thought (Mannheim, 1936, 1952). Mannheim believes that the deeper understanding of ideas can only be a kind of reflective self-awareness at which the sociology of knowledge is aimed. He has highlighted the importance of the social location and group affiliation of intellectuals in shaping their ideas. I hope that the conceptual tool borrowed from Mannheim can provide a contextual understanding of man's ideas and give a concise picture of the social origin of democracy in China.

In order to have a contextual understanding of democratic thoughts of Chinese intellectuals, the present research will follow Gramsci's sociology of intellectuals. I am going to examine, first, the social origins of intellectuals; and second, the group character of the education that they have received and the political socialization of intellectuals, especially their political and occupational ties to a variety of social groups. In essence, the present research will look into the complex process of social affiliation and disaffiliation (Gramsci, 1971). Aside from their social origins, the present research also examines the relationship between their socio-economic and socio-political opportunities and their intellectual radicalism (Brym, 1987). It is also suggested that the political environment in general (Eisinger, 1973) and political opportunity structure in particular (Tarrow, 1989; McAdam, 1988) have significant impact on ideological formation. This study is going to integrate this literature to sharpen our analysis.

In addition, the study of ideas is related to the field of intellectual history. The

contemporary discussion of the "intellectual field" has enhanced our understanding of intellectual thought (Ringer, 1991; Bourdieu, 1969). This research will deal with the sociology and history of intellectuals as a field concerning a configuration or a network of relationships (Ringer, 1990: 269-278). The main focus lies in the relationship between the intellectuals and their social connections in the field (Bourdieu, 1969: 89-119, 1985: 11-24). It is believed that the intellectual field is influenced by the concerns and conflicts of the larger society, but its logic is its own. According to Ringer and Bourdieu, ideas are never totally separable from their ground in institutions, practices and social relations but intimately relate to a broader academic background. Following this reasoning, I have to see belief systems as mixtures of good reasons with inherited conventions and the orientations perpetuated by institutions, practices and social relations; and with intricate aggregates of rational, traditional and ideological elements. In this view, ideas or beliefs are so complicated that the examination of them is by no means simple and straightforward. The analysis of intellectual thought then becomes multi-dimensional, involving investigation from different perspectives and upon different levels.

The sociology of knowledge, the sociology of intellectuals and the intellectual field provide three intellectual paths for this research. They are not isolated but complementary to one other. An analytic framework built from these three intellectual standpoints may result in a more coherent and comprehensive understanding of Chinese democracy. In brief, the present research is going to examine, first, the particular socio-historical, socio-political and socio-cultural contexts in contemporary China; second, the social origins of the intellectuals; third, the institutional factors, their social networks and educational orientations; fourth, the effects of their generational location on their ideological formation; and last, the relationship between intellectual radicalism and the economic and political opportunities of the intellectuals. This study will attempt to examine how these variables interact with one another producing their peculiar interpretations and meanings of democracy.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Although there are different opinions regarding the extent of the May Fourth period, I shall adapt the view of Professor Chow Tse-tsung; namely, that the May Fourth period extended from 1919 to 1921.<sup>7</sup> Contemporary China is the period 1978-1989, in which various pro-democracy movements took place. The present study will focus on how the intellectuals have conceptualized the ideas of democracy throughout these movements.

Based on the criteria of typicality and representativeness, I have selected as our targets for study, particular intellectuals who are more open to liberal thought from the West. They have been prominent and influential in their fields. Most important of all, the selected intellectuals for study are "movement intellectuals" who have contributed to the intellectual development of collective identity/ideology in different movements. Even though they may not play an active role in organizing the movements, their spiritual and intellectual leadership deserves emphasis. They have distinctive ideas and lines of argument on China's current situation, revealing also their orientations and representing their own intellectual realms. The most prominent intellectuals in the May Fourth scholars, Chen Duxiu and his closely associated magazine *Qing Nian* (Youth), Hu Shi and Lu Xun.<sup>8</sup> Their ideas on democracy and emancipation of individuality are worth examining.

Among the post-Mao intellectuals, various typologies can be identified. To start with, borrowing typical Chinese categories, there are (1) the natural scientists and technical workers; (2) the social scientists, advisers to government and party reformers; and (3) the literary intellectuals including journalists and writers. Aside from these

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<sup>7</sup>Different scholars may have different notions of the May Fourth era. I adopt Professor Chow Tse-tsung's definition, since his work is the most representative one in the field and most people agree with it.

<sup>8</sup>For most of the studies relating to the May Fourth Movement, the attention is given to the ideas and works of Chen Duxiu, Lu Xun and Hu Shi. Therefore, the present research also follows this 'tradition'. See, for example Chow Tse-tsung (1960); Lin Yusheng (1979, 1989); Zhou Y. S. (1989) & Tu Weiming (1987).

categories, the present study will add one more type of intellectuals, namely, the cultural critics who have become more prominent in the intellectual discourse of post-Mao China. Each of these groups has its distinctive social and institutional base. The natural scientists have their audiences at Beijing University, the Chinese University of Science and Technology and other universities while their basis is firmly rooted in these same universities. The social scientists are based especially at the Chinese Academy of Social Science, though some are also scattered through Party and quasi-private think tanks. The literary intellectuals and the cultural critics are sometimes on the faculties of universities or housed in institutions like the Academy for Chinese Culture, but they are most distinctively writers for increasingly open newspapers and magazines, including a host of new, substantially independent publications and book series. They also engage in an effort to develop a sort of coffeehouse and salons culture outside of the official institutions of Beijing. Each of these groups also has its own distinctive ideas and lines of argument on China's current situation, though sometimes these discourses overlap. The categorization of these intellectuals, simply put, is solely based on their different sets of ideas and their different orientations.

#### Personal Interviews

This research is based partly on some intensive interviews with the most representative intellectuals from different fields. I went to Paris, Holland, London, mainland China and the United States to meet different Chinese intellectuals, discussing their recent views of their social roles and their relationship with the state. These are other questions that I asked them during the interviews: Do they think that the intellectuals have become more independent in the post-Mao era? Do they believe the Communist Party (CCP) can reform itself from within? What are their views on democratization in Chinese politics? What do they think about the U.S. and U.K. models of democracy? Are they applicable to China? Which kind of model of democracy do they adhere to? What are the elements in their conception of democracy? Do they think

that their notion of democracy is a continuity of that of the May Fourth Movement? Why? In what aspects are their ideals of democracy more progressive than those of the May Fourth intellectuals? How do they conceive the traditional mentality of the literati? Do they adhere to this mentality? and why? How do they see the future of intellectuals in terms of their social positions and roles in China? I think the foregoing stated questions can sharpen our analysis on the evolution of democracy in China and the roles and positions of Chinese intellectuals. Hopefully, intensive interviews explore their ideas from various angles and clarify their ideas. Additional insights come from analyzing their written works.

### *1) Scientists/Technologists*

I identified key intellectuals and scholars for the interviews: In the group of natural scientists, I selected the most prominent Astrophysicist and democrat, Fang Lizhi, who was the former vice-president of the Keda in China until his purge in 1987 after the 1986-87 anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign. Fang has been most outspoken, criticizing the government and advocating total westernization. He also declared the death of socialism in China (Brugger and Kelly, 1990). His writings and works have tremendous influence especially on the 1989 pro-democracy movement in China. Fang has been regarded as the most representative democrat, the spiritual and ideological leader, the spokesman for democracy; and he has been called the Chinese Sakharov (*The Nineties*, Aug. 1990; Calhoun, 1991).

### *2) Social Scientists*

Among the social scientists, Yan Jiaqi is the most representative one for he headed the Institute of Political Science at the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS). Yan was closely associated with the former Party general secretary, Zhao Ziyang, having been a member of Zhao's think tank. Yan had been enthusiastic in advocating the political structural reforms and democratization in China. His ideas of democracy are influential in intellectual circles (Calhoun, 1991; Wasserstrom, 1992).

Yan was the leader of the pro-democracy movement in Paris (1990-1991), fighting for democratization in China. I chose Yan Jiaqi because I believe he can reflect the general conception of democracy among the social scientists.

### 3) *Literary Intellectuals/Journalists*

For the literary intellectuals, the most influential one is Liu Binyan since his reportage literature has been well received by the general public. He has revealed the way the people live, deeply touching the hearts of the people in mainland China. Liu Binyan has been regarded as the 'mouth of the people', playing the role as 'doctor of socialism' and 'social conscience' (Goldman, 1987; Schell, 1988). Liu, consciously harking back to the Confucian self-definition of intellectuals and playing the role as a censor, produces writings which always maintain the value of the people. Having been a member of the CCP since the 1920's, Liu experienced the anti-rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution, being attacked and purged several times; but still he maintained his faith in the CCP until the mid-80's. His relationship with the CCP can be a good illustration of the relationship between the state and the intellectuals under the present regime. His recent attack on the present regime and his support of democracy can enhance our grasp of the thoughts of those people who had been close and loyal followers of the CCP but finally abandoned their trust in the Party (*The Nineties*, July, 1991; Goldman, 1987; Cheek, 1992). The magazine *The Nineties* claimed that the changes of Liu's thoughts are also shared by many literary intellectuals in China (*The Nineties*, April 1991).<sup>9</sup>

### 4) *Cultural Critics*

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<sup>9</sup>In the 50's, many Chinese intellectuals followed Mao Zedong faithfully, seeing Mao as always correct, the only faults were rooted in themselves. Having the dreadful experiences in the Cultural Revolution, many of these intellectuals recognized the fact that the major causes of China's social and political problems lied with the dictatorial rule and distorted socialist praxis. In the post-Mao era, many Chinese intellectuals began to reconceptualize their role and restructure their relationship with the state. Many of them have become conscious of intellectual independence and academic autonomy. In the 4th meeting of the National Writers' Association held in 1985, most participants generally agreed that freedom in creative writing is fundamental to literary intellectuals. Along this line, Chinese journalists have been proposefully breaking the "restricted zone" of press and publication. It is observed that many writers and journalists have attempted many times to exert their autonomy and independence from state control. Baihua's *Unquited Love*, the discussion of socialist alienation and the publication of *Economics Herald* in Shanghai are some examples to demonstrate how Chinese intellectuals have strived to develop a new relationship with the state. It is against such a socio-cultural and socio-political contexts that we argue that Liu Binyan's deep reflection of his role as writer and journalist as well as his changing relationship with the state is also shared by other literary intellectuals and journalists. For details, see, for example, Goldman, et al. 1993 and 1994) and my discussion in chapter 7.

In the literary and cultural realm, Liu Xiaobo is one of the most critical and radical critics. His cultural iconoclasm not only attacks Chinese tradition but also criticizes the political structure and the people. His call for repentance and self-examination is indicative of the intellectual foundation necessary for us to understand the newly emerged and younger intellectuals in the post-Mao era. Unlike other cultural critics, Liu adopts a direct way to attack tradition and the existing socialist regime. His criticism is not confined only to corrupt bureaucrats, autocratic rulers and authoritarian political structure but extends also to the national character of the Chinese people. His vehement attack and sharp criticism also go to himself. The deep repentance and reflection makes him conscious of the social responsibility of the people for causing despotic rule in China. His rejection of socialist regime and his role detached from the establishment indicate his consciousness of intellectual autonomy. Putting all these factors into account, I believe the examination of Liu's political ideas can illuminate the new relationship between the state and intellectuals in the late 80s. In addition, the selected intellectuals come from different generational locations. The present study examines how influential of their different generational locations on the ideological production of intellectuals. Apart from that, the present research will discuss different groups of intellectuals whether they are categorized as "establishment intellectuals", "non-establishment intellectuals" or even "anti-establishment intellectuals" in order to develop a fuller picture of the political thought of Chinese intellectual circles.

In addition, I have also contacted some scholars who have been either participants or witnesses in the Tiananmen Incident of 1989 or researchers of the Chinese democracy. In England, Holland, Hong Kong, and the United States, I have interviewed some scholars who have been doing the research on the Chinese pro-democracy movement of 1989. The discussion with these scholars from different countries has sharpened my analysis and offered me various perspectives in examining the ideas of the Chinese intellectuals. Additional interviews of some student leaders and participants in the 1989

Tiananmen Square Incident were also conducted, which renders us with views on the movement and different notions of democracy.

### *Library Research*

The present study relies not only on interviews of the selected intellectuals and scholars but also on the writings and speeches of these prominent intellectuals. Much of this material comes from Chinese periodicals, Party and non-Party newspapers and the books written by them; and different journals and magazines published in Hong Kong and the U.S.A. closely associated with the pro-democracy intellectuals. The main focus of this study will be the speeches and writings of these selected intellectuals particularly as they refer to the concept of democracy. In addition, by investigating their personal histories such as their letters, life histories and diaries, I hope to have a deeper understanding of their ideas. The library research has provided me with good sources of materials covering Chinese democracy, such as *Minzhu Zhongguo*, a journal to which many pro-democracy intellectuals contribute their articles, expounding their thoughts on democracy; *World Economic Herald*, a relatively independent newspaper run and supported by a private organization in mainland China, which highlights the issues concerning the political reforms and democracy; *Dushu* and *Zhishifensi*, two journals in which many articles reflect the current thoughts on democracy in China. I also have reviewed some journals such as *Research on Political Science*, published by the CASS; *The Nineties*, and *Zhengming*, current journals published in Hong Kong discussing the development of Chinese democratic thoughts. Finally, other materials employed in the present study include the social science frameworks for the study of intellectuals and ideology, especially in relation to the sociology of knowledge, the sociology of intellectuals and intellectual history. Combining the published books, articles and the speeches of the intellectuals, I think the material is adequate to develop a clear understanding of the evolution of democracy in contemporary China.

In the next chapter, I am going to discuss the theoretical framework of the



research. Chapter two will concentrate on the May Fourth Movement, especially a contextual analysis of the democratic thoughts of the May Fourth scholars. Chapter three will be a brief history of various pro-democracy movements in contemporary China. The main task of chapter four is to analyze contextually the reasons for the uprising of the 1989 pro-democracy movement. Chapters five to eight contain the discussion of the selected intellectuals and their democratic thoughts. Chapter nine will be devoted to the discussion of the changing relationship between the intellectuals and the state. The last chapter is the conclusion of the research summarizing whether there is continuity in the concept of democracy from the 1919 May Fourth Movement up to the 1989 June Fourth Incident.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

The principal goal of this chapter is to propose an analytic framework for the examination of ideological formation of intellectuals. A better understanding of political ideas of intellectuals is closely related to the realms of sociology of knowledge, sociology of intellectuals and the intellectual field. What I suggest here is a contextual analysis of ideas and thoughts. Thus, the spotlight is put on the relationship between ideas and the socio-historical and socio-political-cultural contexts where intellectuals live.

The ideas of Mannheim, Gramsci and Bourdieu have tremendous influence on the analysis of ideological formation. I am going to draw light from their works to develop an analytical framework for the present study. It is the objective of this chapter to contrast and compare the ideas of these scholars with particular reference to their conceptions on ideological production of intellectuals. There is the intention neither to prove nor disprove their theories. I hope, by comparison of their works, to develop a more coherent and comprehensive framework for the present research.

Mannheim, Gramsci and Bourdieu have proposed different ways to analyze the formation of political ideas of intellectuals, but they have some common points in the interpretation of ideological production. They consider not only the social locations or social origins of intellectuals to have influenced their political ideas but also the educational orientations and the institutional networks to have significant impact on the formation of intellectual ideas. In addition, they have also emphasized the importance of a contextual analysis of ideas. Their proposed ways to study ideas rest not only on the structural, cultural and historical constraints to the construction of ideas but also on the relational and positional attributes of ideas.

## SOCIAL LOCATION OF INTELLECTUALS AND IDEOLOGICAL FORMATION

### Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge

Mannheim has recognized that there are many factors influencing the ideas of people, suggesting that it is necessary to analyze the concrete social situations in which thought takes place and intellectual life is carried on (Mannheim, 1936: xxix). Mannheim highlights the significant impact of the social location of intellectuals on ideological formation. To Mannheim, there is plurality of groups developing different sets of knowledge, which make up the structure of the "social". In Mannheim's mind, ideas can be seen as a collective experience. Mannheim adds,

"[the sociology of knowledge] as a discipline explores the functional dependence of each intellectual standpoint on the differentiated group reality standing behind it, and which sets itself the task of retracing the evolution of the various standpoints". (Mannheim, 1953: 190)

In addition, Mannheim has sought to point out that ideas of people are not merely based on personal experience but rather shaped by social group and social-historical situations (Mannheim, 1936: 2-4). The normal method or approach to intellectual history is to study isolated individuals or groups based on the assumption that they are in some way "typical" or "representative" of the whole society. But such a method results in little more than impressionistic evidence.<sup>1</sup> To Mannheim, individuals are members of a social group in which the ideas of individuals are shaped especially when they share a common social location. The personal experience of Mannheim further confirms his brief of the relationship between the social location of intellectuals and the production of ideas.

In the 1920's, Mannheim discovered that different political groups with various positions in Europe had produced corresponding orientations, which expressed the social and political situations of particular social groups and also shaped their political and social values. Having such an observation, Mannheim begins to hypothesize that the

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<sup>1</sup>I draw this line of argument from Ringer (1990). For details of intellectual history, see, for example, Ringer (1990), Shils (1972) and Scheler (1992).

understanding of people's ideas should trace back to their social locations. Mannheim thus concludes that the social structure has put different individuals into various social locations, which in turn, generates common modes of thought and shared experience (Longhurst, 1989: 27-28). Recognizing the influence of class upon ideas, Mannheim suggests a more inclusive concept "commitment", to replace Marx's concept of 'class', thereby defining social groups by their commitment to world aspiration. Highlighting the conflicts inherent in the social relation, Mannheim points out different social locations which imply a particular potential for experience and action. Central to Mannheim's ideas of social location, competition constitutes the structure of the "social". He argues that the emergence of social locations and classes is an historically contingent phenomenon, in which the relationship between these groups is structured by the competitive nature of social life (Longhurst, 1989: 27-28).

In his essay on "Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon", Mannheim makes it amply clear that there is competition among different groups. To him, group competition is fundamentally a political phenomenon. As Mannheim states,

"Every historical, ideological, sociological piece of knowledge (even should it prove to be absolute truth itself), is clearly rooted in and carried by the desire for power and recognition of particular social groups who want to make their interpretation of the universal one." (Mannheim, 1952: 191)

Thus, Mannheim has indicated the centrality of the **competitive** nature in the interpretation of the world. To take his position a step further, Mannheim argues that competition is the base of the human associative life, for he believes that competition has greatly determined the production and structuring of ideas. Mannheim adds,

"The point I want to make is that process of change in the deepest strata of world interpretation, modification of the categorical apparatus itself, can to a large extent be explained in terms of competition." (Mannheim, 1952: 211)

The inherent existence of competition and struggle in social life has set the stage for the emergence of antagonism among different social groups, producing different patterns of thoughts or systems of ideas and reflecting the interests of various social

groups. Following the competitive nature in the heart of human associative life, it is analytically logical to argue that different groups draw upon and create forms of knowledge to defend their positions in society's hierarchy (Mannheim, 1936; Longhurst, 1989: 33). Hence, we inevitably confront conflicting views in the conceptualization of the world by the intellectuals. The idea of competition is not only central to Mannheim's sociology of knowledge but also parallel to Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony. In short, the conception of the social, to Mannheim, is a fundamentally competitive sphere made up of different social groups.

Having these lines of reasoning in mind, Mannheim has sought to trace the specific connection between actual interest groups in society and the ideas and modes of thought which they espoused. Louis Wirth makes it clear that the sociology of knowledge seeks to throw light on the question of how the purposes and interests of different social groups come to find expression in certain theories, doctrines, and intellectual movements (Mannheim, 1936: xxx). Therefore, in order to have a more coherent conception of ideas, the analysis of the shifts in social relationships and social institutions where the intellectual activities have taken place becomes significant.

On this view, we should draw out the relations that exist between knowledge and the social groups or system that apprehend that knowledge. In a word, Mannheim proposes that ideas can be understood sociologically. Sociology of knowledge is thus a perspective to examine the various 'world-views' or value orientations as contingent on the experience of particular social groups.

#### Mannheim's Free-floating Intellectuals

Mannheim's analysis of intellectual ideas inevitably links with his conception of intellectuals. According to Mannheim, sociology of knowledge is mainly concerned with those persons in society who are the bearers of intellectual activity, namely, the intellectuals. He holds that the composition of this group, their social and class background, the method by which they are recruited, their organization, the rewards and

prestige they receive, and their participation in other spheres of social life, all constitute some of the more crucial issues in the sociology of knowledge (Mannheim, 1936).

Despite the fact that Mannheim recognizes the significant position of intellectuals in the realm of sociology of knowledge and his suggestion of a link between the social location of intellectuals and their ideas (Mannheim, 1952), he postulates the existence of objective criteria for integrating and synthesizing the different intellectual views by arguing that the intellectuals are classless and "socially unattached" (Mannheim, 1956). He maintains that intellectuals belong to a social stratum which is to a large degree unattached to any social class (Mannheim, 1979: 139).

Or, put differently, it is

"a stratum with no roots, or at least few roots, to which no position of class or rank can be precisely imputed". (Mannheim, 1953: 127)

In his various writings, he consistently regards intellectuals as socially classless, and characterizes them as "free-floating intelligentsia" (*freischwebende Intelligenz*) (Mannheim, 1982: 269; 1979: 137; 1956: 106). With the classless aggregates, according to Mannheim, intellectuals are able to synthesize the conflicting historical situations and provide an interpretation of the world in which they live (Mannheim, 1956). Mannheim's argument that the political ideas of intellectuals are independent of their social position to me is contradictory to his argument that ideas are the result of a collective experience (Mannheim, 1936: 2-4).

In *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim conceives that the contemporary intellectuals are neither a class nor part of a class but a "relatively classless stratum which is not too firmly situated in the social order" (Mannheim, 1955: 154). This group of intellectuals, in this sense, may be and generally are recruited from various social classes. In Mannheim's eyes, unlike the workers and entrepreneurs whose ideas may be determined by the class positions of their adherents, the intellectuals are immune to such a determination since they have participated in a common educational milieu in which their

class differences and the variations in outlook tend to be suppressed (Mannheim, 1955: 157). He believes then that intellectuals are capable of breaking out of the constraints imposed on their thinking by their class origins. He also claims that intellectuals themselves do not form a class since "they [the intellectuals] are too differentiated" (Mannheim, 1955: 155) or *heterogeneous* in their political views to be regarded as such (see Brym, 1980: 56).

Under this rubric of thought, a question is thus raised concerning how the political attitudes of intellectuals are simultaneously heterogeneous and homogeneous. How can intellectuals be relatively classless and socially rootless when their ideas are embedded in their social positions. If we carefully look into Mannheim's line of thought, we can see that Mannheim has suggested clearly that the ideas of intellectuals are in some way and to some degree shaped by their social locations. It is therefore ironic to argue that intellectuals are classless and socially rootless. As Brym (1980: 56-57) concisely asks, "For if the intellectual is situated in no particular position in the social order, and therefore has no socially derived interests, how can his ideas be socially determined?" It is at this point that we can see the self-contradiction inherent in Mannheim's argument.

Brym explains Mannheim's faults as the products of the "hunger for wholeness" which prevailed in Weimar Germany, in Mannheim's time. Under this particular socio-historical context, Mannheim wished the intellectuals especially the elites could establish a total orientation and synthesis. With compassion toward the political synthesis, Mannheim thus romantically envisaged the intellectuals as politically homogeneous persons, whose coherence and cohesiveness could contribute to the formation of "social wholeness" (Brym, 1980:56-58). It is against such a background that the thesis of "free-floating intellectuals" was postulated.

If we empirically test Mannheim's argument, we can accept only the relative classlessness of intellectuals, that is, their ideas are less class-determined than the ideas of others (House, 1977). But it is absolutely clear that intellectuals are socially-bound and

class-bound. Even Mannheim himself is also aware of the problem regarding his "free-floating intellectuals" in his later works. A few years after the publication of *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim tried to modify his free-floating intellectuals thesis after seeing other scholars' exaggeration of his notion of classless intellectuals (see, for example, Caute, 1964 and Avineri, 1957). He began to tone down his argument, suggesting a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between intellectuals' social mobility patterns and their ideological orientations (Mannheim, 1956: 142).<sup>2</sup>

The foregoing discussion has indicated that the intellectuals are not simply socially detached and classless. Bottomore makes it plain that "the intellectual elite, in most countries and at most times, is one of the least homogeneous or cohesive of elites, and displays a considerable variety of opinion on cultural and political questions" (T. B. Bottomore, 1966: 75). There followed a series of scholarly debates on whether the intellectuals have formed a distinct social class (see, for example, A. Gouldner, 1979; Djilas, 1957; and Konrad & Szelenyi, 1979).<sup>3</sup> The main thrust of these debates is to analyze how the social stratification of intellectuals has influenced their political orientations and, in turn, their influence on the state and society. Among different scholarly works, Gramsci is the first theorist to propose the study of intellectuals in terms of their role in the process of development of specific historical hegemonic systems (Salamini, 1981). Gramsci well recognizes that the political orientation of intellectuals has to do with their unique social location.

### Gramsci's Organic Intellectuals

The study of Gramsci's analysis of the formation of ideas is closely related to his notion of "organic intellectuals" (Gramsci, 1971). Gramsci has recognized the complexity and malleability of intellectuals' social-structural ties and their influence upon the ideological outlook of these intellectuals. By contrast most Marxists have either

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<sup>2</sup>Mannheim modified his notion of classless intellectuals by saying that intellectuals are relatively classless. He also acknowledged the complex ways in which the social position of intellectuals has influenced considerably their political ideas. For details, see, for example, Brym (1980) and Mannheim (1956).

<sup>3</sup>The debate on the rise of the "new class" as formed by intellectuals has been influenced by the classical elite theorists, Pareto, Mosca and Michels; see also the forth-coming discussion in chapter 9.



located intellectuals in the working class or regarded intellectuals in capitalist society as petit bourgeois in terms of their social position and their outlook. Gramsci conceives that different social groups will develop and create their own set of intellectuals, recruited from and therefore "organically" tied to these groups. According to Gramsci, all men are intellectuals since all work requires "a minimum of creative intellectual activity" no matter how degraded and mechanical the job is (Gramsci, 1971: 8). Along the same lines, all men are intellectuals since all men operate in a network of social relationship (Gramsci, 1971: 9). Gramsci says,

"[every man,] outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of taste, ... therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, this is to bring into being new modes of thought". (Gramsci, 1971: 9)

Though Gramsci sees all men as intellectuals, he also points to the fact that not all men have the function of intellectuals in society. The criterion of distinction lies with the function, that is, the "general complex of social relations" (Salamini, 1981: 104). The analysis of the functions of intellectuals should be understood in terms of the socio-historical context where the intellectuals live and the dynamics of their class relations.<sup>4</sup> The function of intellectuals, according to Gramsci, is not confined only to the cultural realm. We must understand the organizational functions of intellectuals in the widest sense. Gramsci rejects the traditional and vulgarised notion of intellectuals as including only the man of letters, the philosopher and the artist; he therefore extends his definition of intellectuals to all those who have the function of organizers in all spheres of society. Putting his position a step forward, Gramsci distinguishes between "organic intellectuals" and "traditional intellectuals". Gramsci consistently maintains that every class has its own "organic intellectuals", he says,

"coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields". (Gramsci, 1971: 5)

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<sup>4</sup>I draw this insight from Salamini (1981).

In this sense, organic intellectuals are directly related to the economic and political structure and thus to the class which they represent. It is apparent that they are far from an autonomously classless stratum. Unlike Mannheim's notion of free-floating intellectuals, Gramsci does acknowledge intellectuals as bound by their social locations or social positions. Gramsci also urges us to recognize that intellectuals are socially mobile through the social structures. At the same time, we have to acknowledge that the social structures are in a constant state of development. This leads us to conclude that the structural properties (class position) of intellectuals are dynamic, being in a state of flux. In a more specific sense, intellectuals may be connected to various social groups to varying degrees and their political ideas are certainly the products of these connections (Gramsci, 1971).

Similar to Mannheim's notion of "competition", Gramsci also maintains that these organic intellectuals, eager to influence the ideological realm, must also confront the existence of "traditional intellectuals" who are recruited from the older dominant class and who also exert ideological influence over the entire population. Gramsci suggests that the organic intellectuals will struggle "to assimilate and to conquer 'ideologically' the traditional intellectuals." (Gramsci, 1971: 10). Instead of speaking of competition, Gramsci proposes the idea of "hegemonic control". His emphasis upon ideological hegemony, consciousness, and totality has led him to devote considerable attention to the role of intellectuals whose function is to conquer the ideological hegemony or consciousness in the revolutionary process. Gramsci also suggests that any revolutionary struggle is merely an ideological process, which involves an organic fusion of the "personal", "cultural" and "political" realms. In this regard, it is a total transformation of the old order. The establishment of a new socio-political order, according to Gramsci, is accomplished not merely by means of force or coercion but by a process of ideological construction, that is, to develop a new kind of culture --- ideological hegemony as an integral part of a total revolutionary process (Gramsci, 1971 and Boggs, 1980).

On my reading, Gramsci has described the ideological allegiance of intellectuals squarely in terms of power over various classes and social groups. To Gramsci, the opportunity structures are shaped by relative power of these classes and groups that contend for hegemony. He has highlighted the notion that neither do intellectuals freely choose their allegiances without any constraint nor are their partisan loyalties mere mechanical and static responses to their current class and other group locations. Instead, their loyalties are the product of their mobility patterns. In this way, we must trace their paths of social mobility with particular reference to their social origins and social destinations. Additionally, Gramsci urges us to be aware of the political socialization of intellectuals during or after their formal education especially their political and occupational ties to a variety of social groups (Gramsci, 1971; see also Brym, 1980, 1987). In essence, the examination of political ideas of intellectuals lies at the heart of the complex process of social affiliation and disaffiliation. All in all, we may logically claim that there is certainly "competition" inherent in the process of the conquest of hegemony. Under this rubric of thought, we can grasp the intimate relationship between political ideas and social location of intellectuals. It is therefore important for us to construct a more refined, structural theory of intellectuals' political affiliations (Brym, 1980; 1987).

### Bourdieu's Field of Forces

Like Mannheim and Gramsci, Bourdieu also considers the understanding of intellectual thought to be not independent of their social origins. He proposes the concept of "intellectual field", whose emphasis is to study intellectual ideas and texts as a configuration or a network of relationships rather than an aggregate of isolated elements (Bourdieu, 1969).<sup>5</sup> Bourdieu sees intellectual field not as the study of individual discrete cases but as a field at a given time and place, made up of agents taking up various intellectual positions. It has been suggested that what Bourdieu calls the field is not "to

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<sup>5</sup>Ringer has presented Bourdieu's ideas of the intellectual field succinctly and my argument follows closely that of Ringer (1990), see also, Craig Calhoun (1993) and Jenkins (1992).

be considered as a field with a fence around it, or in the American sense of domain." What he really means is a "field of forces" (Harker, et al. 1990: 8). According to Bourdieu, intellectual field is not only a partially autonomous field of forces, but also a field of *struggle* for positions within it. Hence, it is common to see intellectuals in the field in conflict with each other. These struggles can be interpreted as a means to transform and conserve the field of forces (Bourdieu, 1983: 312). Positions of intellectuals in the field are determined merely by the capital that they possess. In this way, the conflicts and struggles in the field have basically to do with the power relation among the intellectuals (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). By virtue of this unique view, we can conclude that what Bourdieu has suggested is the positional and relational attributes of ideas.

Besides, Bourdieu also acknowledges the competition in defining ideology and interpreting the world. He makes it plain that there is a close relationship between the educational system and class relations. He proposes to study sociology of education in light of a wider field which is concerned with power, inequality and social order (see, Bourdieu, 1979). Furthermore, he also points out that the habitus of each group is generated by their contrasting positions within the "objective structures" of society. In this regard, people are not free from the constraints of the social structures but instead are socially determined by diverse interests of different social groups. Bourdieu adds that people have no choice if they continue playing the game. He writes,

"[people have] no other choice than to struggle to maintain or improve their position in the field, thus helping to bring to bear on all the others the weight of the constraints, often experienced as intolerable, which stem from antagonistic coexistence."(Bourdieu, 1990: 193)

This reasoning clearly highlights "power relations" in the "ideological war" among different intellectual fields, pointing out the competitive nature in the process of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977).

Furthermore, relationships in the field must be considered as a dynamic process

since different alliances or relationships are formed at different points of time. Intellectual field, according to Bourdieu, is a system of agents, typified by forces of differing strength either in opposition or combination to structure the field at any specific moment. Unlike Mannheim's notion of free-floating intellectuals, Bourdieu believes that intellectuals are not autonomous enough, but constrained by their intellectual milieu and social location. Ringer reiterates the idea of field clearly:

"[t]he elements in the field are not only related to each other in determinate ways; each also has a specific 'right' or authority, so that the field is a distribution of power as well ... They compete for the right to define or to co-define what shall count as intellectually established and culturally legitimate. The participants in the field may be individuals; or they may be small groups, 'schools', or even academic disciplines." (Ringer, 1990: 270)

Ringer also points to the fact of conflicts and alliances among the intellectuals in the field. He says,

"[w]e almost habitually perceive certain groups of ideas in our own culture as intellectually allied, and affinities of this sort have been thought to exist in other historical contexts as well. But even more remarkable is the degree to which opposed positions within an intellectual field condition each other; their interaction is dialectical in the strictest sense of that term." (Ringer, 1990: 270)

With this reasoning, I wish to assert at this point that it is apparent that conflicts and competition are inherent in the field. Hence, the study of intellectual field has to do with the intellectual position, charting its complementary or oppositional relationship with other elements in its intellectual field. Bourdieu holds that an intellectual within a field is influenced by the concerns and conflicts of that particular social class and is also mediated by the position he holds within the field. The relative autonomy of intellectuals rests upon their openness to outside influence. Up to this point, we can conclude that fields thus identify areas of struggle (Bourdieu, 1984: 222ff; 1985: 195ff). It is, therefore, advisable for us to examine the dynamic power relation among intellectuals. Besides the impact of social position of intellectuals on their political orientations, their educational orientation is also regarded as another force in shaping their political orientations.

## **EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION AND IDEOLOGICAL FORMATION**

### **Binding Function of Education**

When discussing the variables shaping political ideas of intellectuals, Mannheim not only sheds light on the significant impact of the social location but also highlights the effect of education. Though he has not directly stated the impact of education on ideological formation, he has implied the close relationship between intellectual ideas and educational orientation. He makes it abundantly clear that education has the unique function of binding intellectuals together.

"Although they [intellectuals] are too differentiated to be regarded as a single class, there is one unifying sociological bond between all groups of intellectuals, namely education, which binds them together in a striking way. Participation in a common educational heritage progressively tends to suppress differences of birth, status, profession, and wealth, and to unite the individual educated people on the basis of the education they have received." (Mannheim, 1955: 155)

According to Mannheim, the amalgamation of intellectuals rests mainly on the common sharing of educational milieu through which the differences and variations in outlook tend to be suppressed (Mannheim, 1955). Though we may not agree that education can really unite and bind all intellectuals together as a homogeneous group, it is an undeniable fact that education does play a significant role in shaping ideas of intellectuals. What Mannheim has ignored here is that there are differing educational orientations, though not necessarily opposite to each other. The "unified version" of educational orientation seems to be more a romanticized notion rather than a social reality, especially in an advanced pluralistic society. Thus I do not wholly accept the concept that education can unite intellectuals, or even enhances their synthesis of the conflicting world views. However, I am not thereby saying that we have to abandon totally the assertion that education has considerable influence upon ideological formation. To the contrary it seems clear that intellectuals have been influenced by various educational orientations through which different political orientations are produced. Concerning this matter, Gramsci has his own words.

## Education and Ideas

In understanding the ideological outlook of intellectuals, Gramsci pays particular attention to educational institutions through which the political orientation and consciousness of intellectuals is shaped. He also believes education has considerable impact on the outlook of the class to which it is attached. Gramsci states clearly that,

"The complexity of the intellectual function in different states can be measured objectively by the number and graduation of specified schools: the more extensive the 'area' covered by education and the more numerous the 'vertical' 'levels' of schooling, the more complex is the cultural world, the civilization, of a particular state". (Gramsci, 1971: 10-11)

It suffices for us to realize that education has tremendous influence on the development of culture and civilization and thus of the ideas. In the same vein, Brym argues that educational institutions do exert significant impact on ideological formation among intellectuals. He points to the stratified school systems practised in Britain, Germany, Russia, Canada and the USA in which students from different classes and strata are channelled through different types of educational institutions. It is through such educational institutions various types of class consciousness have been imprinted (Brym, 1980: 59).

## Schooling Effects on Cultivated Habitus

Bourdieu's idea of "intellectual field" also points toward the effects of educational institutions and practices as well as the content of education on the production of ideas. Education is seen to have exerted tremendous influence on the value orientations, transmitting implicit as well as explicit aspects of the cultural heritage. According to Bourdieu, institutionalized education plays an extremely important role in reproducing the conditions of their own existence, making themselves as distinct fields. Institutionalized education, in the mind of Bourdieu, is a process of inculcation to produce a habitus and the emphasis is put on pedagogy/education (Bourdieu, 1977: 31). As a "habit-forming force", the educational system inculcates socially differentiated types of thought. It is what Bourdieu calls the "cultivated habitus" of the highly educated

(Ringer, 1990: 275).

In understanding ideological formation, Bourdieu pays a great deal of attention to the relationship between schooling and the intellectual life from an historical perspective. In his "Systems of Education and Systems of Thought", Bourdieu tries to investigate whether school culture and thought have replaced the role of religion in socializing people. He concludes, "[t]he school is the fundamental factor in the cultural consensus in as far as it represents the sharing of a common sense which is the prerequisite for communication" (Bourdieu, 1967: 341). Bourdieu maintains,

"In all cases ... the patterns informing the thought of a given period can be fully understood only by reference to the school system, which is alone capable of establishing them and developing them, through practice, as the habits of thought common to a whole generation". (Bourdieu, 1967: 342)

No matter what, Bourdieu speaks of "intellectual field" or "habits of thought" and "the cultural unconscious", which is subsequently incorporated into the concept of *habitus*. The formation of *habitus*, according to Bourdieu, is closely related to the educational institutions which directly bear on those who actually attend schools. No matter how divided the school organization, its influence is still diffused throughout the whole society by means of its forms of symbolic domination (Honneth et al., 1986, see also Harker, 1990). It is against such a background that we have to examine how "the school" has actively generated the *habitus* or shaped the "schemes of beliefs".<sup>6</sup> In addition we must analyze the formative impact of social location and educational orientation on intellectuals' ideological production, a fuller understanding draws us to examine also how the unique context in which intellectuals live has influenced their ideas.

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<sup>6</sup>Ringer (1990) echoes the view of Bourdieu, putting forward the notion that education has created its own academic culture, a significant segment of the wider socio-cultural system. He conceives that an academic culture is "a network of interrelated and explicit beliefs about the academic practices of teaching, learning, and research, and about the social significance of these practices" (Ringer, 1990: 279).



## CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF INTELLECTUAL IDEAS

### Cultural-sociological Knowledge

Mannheim contends that the main concern of sociology of knowledge is an analysis of ideas in relation to historical-social situations:<sup>7</sup>

"the main task consists in specifying, for each temporal cross-section of the historical process, the various systematic intellectual standpoints on which the thinking of creative individuals and groups was based". (Mannheim, 1952: 189)

What Mannheim proposes here is a contextual analysis of ideas, relating closely to his ideas on "Cultural-Sociological Knowledge". Besides, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge cannot be separated from his earlier works on sociology of culture and historicism, which emphasize the social-historical-cultural orientations of knowledge. In brief, Mannheim argues that there is a strong relationship between people's ideas and their world view.

For Mannheim, sociology of knowledge involves a reflection on the possibilities of sociological understanding in general rather than a reduction of 'knowledge' to any epistemological criteria<sup>8</sup> (Tim Dant, 1991). Mannheim's concern, simply stated, is to understand the various 'world-views' with special reference to the social and historical situations of particular social groups. Mannheim does not support the notion that there is 'truth' and only one kind of 'knowledge', instead, he proposes the sociology of knowledge as a perspective to interpret thoughts and ideas in terms of a 'totality', that is, a contextual analysis of ideas.

"On the one hand, it [sociology of knowledge] aims at discovering workable criteria for determining the interrelations between thought and action. On the other hand, by thinking this problem out from beginning to end in a radical, unprejudiced manner, it hopes to develop a theory, appropriate to the contemporary situation, concerning the significance of the non-theoretical conditioning factors in knowledge." (Mannheim 1936: 237)

It is clear then that the sociology of knowledge is an enquiry into the relationship

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<sup>7</sup>For a more detailed discussion of the nature of the sociology of knowledge, see, Simonds (1978: 23-48); Curtis and Petras (1970) has a detailed discussion on the sociology of knowledge which deserves attention.

<sup>8</sup>For details of the discussion on how Mannheim deals with the epistemological issues, see Woldring (1986); Remmling (1975) and Loader (1985).

between thought and action, differing from the psychological and philosophical approaches which are mainly concerned with the immanent development of knowledge or thought (Tim Dant, 1991: 12).<sup>9</sup>

As the prime concern of the sociology of knowledge is the relation between the ideas and the social settings, the following discussion will be divided into three different levels, namely, the social, knowledge, and the relations between the two.<sup>10</sup>

In the discussion of the relation between the social and knowledge, Mannheim introduces the term "correspondence" for he believes the sociology of knowledge is a form of thought produced in a specific constellation of factors. To understand fully the ideas, it is desirable to look into the whole set of factors involved in shaping ideas. Mannheim says, "...the aspiration [is] to make this relativization total, relating not one thought or idea, but a whole system of ideas, to an underlying social reality" (Mannheim, 1952: 144).

In addition, he is not interested in the intrinsic side of thought, rather, Mannheim relates the intellectual content to the outside world to see the relationship between them. In his work on *Historicism*, he makes it plain that the process of change in thought is the result of changes in the development of history (Mannheim, 1952). To Mannheim, the changes in a society greatly influence the total outlook and thinking of any social group. He argues "we can understand the transformation of the various ideologies only on the basis of changes in the social composition of the intellectual stratum corresponding to them" (Mannheim, 1952: 186). Here, Longhurst extrapolates two important implications of Mannheim's observations. First, the relationship between society and knowledge lies in how the development of thought correlates to, or corresponds with, the development of society and history. Second, this relationship is evident in how ideologies and styles of

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<sup>9</sup>There has been discussion on the differences between Mannheim's sociology of knowledge and the philosophical and psychological approach to knowledge. It is also argued that Mannheim's knowledge fails to deal with epistemological issues. Mannheim was well aware of the problem of epistemological issues in knowledge, tried to offer another alternative to seeing knowledge from a social-historical dimension. For details, see example, Woldring (1986) especially part III; and Loader (1985).

<sup>10</sup>Such a classification is adopted from R. K. Merton's work on discussion of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge; see R. K. Merton (1968) and Longhurst (1989).

thought have reflected the different interests of social groups (Longhurst, 1989: 48-49). In this way, historicism is an intellectual labour that provides a worldly basis or worldly perspective for grasping the meaning of people's thoughts and actions.

Unlike the Marxist view of sociology of knowledge, Mannheim argues that the relation between the social and knowledge is not solely economically determined. Instead, he proposes to analyze the complex linkages between different aspects of the social structure and thought. His prime concern is social change and historicity. As Longhurst observed, "a sense of history and of dynamic development are important aspects of his [Mannheim's] thought" (Longhurst, 1989: 53). Under the rubric of social change and historicity, Mannheim has put a great deal of weight on the competitive nature of the human social world. This explains why Mannheim believes that the understanding of social conflicts and competition among different groups helps one also to understand different degrees of "committedness" to their interests in particular and their social locations in general. It also sheds light on the notion that competition is the central theme in Mannheim's discussion of historicity and dynamic development of society. In short, Mannheim has strived to examine how socio-historical changes influence the ideas of people.

The above discussion has so far recapitulated the central ideas of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge. His proposal to study ideas from a contextual framework has directed us to analyze the socio-historical and socio-structural factors in the formative influences on intellectuals. Gramsci's conception of intellectuals is similar to those of Mannheim (Salamini, 1981: 104). His conception of the functions of intellectuals and his conception of the praxis of philosophy have demonstrated his view on the importance of contextual and historical analysis.

### The Importance of Historical Process

Gramsci has proposed the functions of intellectuals in terms of the dynamics of historical processes. He is regarded as the first theoretician suggesting the examination of

the role of intellectuals in terms of the process of development of specific historical hegemonic systems (Salamini, 1981: 103). The unique position of the organic intellectuals, according to Gramsci, has to do with their dialectical relationship with the elite and the masses in an historical development leading to the ideological and political formation of hegemonies. The rise of organic intellectuals and the conquest of hegemonic control must be understood in light of the whole historical context. In a more specific sense, the gradual development of the intellectual stratum is an historical development from a negative condition characterized by partial, determinate class-based economic interests to a condition in which it turns into the instrument of new ethical-political forms. It is clear then this development is precisely a cathartic process from economy to politics, signalling a transformation from economism to political consciousness. The development of a new culture, the new ideological hegemony being integral to the whole revolutionary process, must be interpreted in terms of the whole historical process. The significant role of intellectuals in the midst of a war of position and the conquest of the hegemonic control, and thus of their success in correcting the false consciousness of the mass, have not only shed light on the complex relationship between the structure and superstructure but also unfolded the dynamic interaction between the social transformation and the historical context (Gramsci, 1971).<sup>11</sup> Up to this point, the understanding of Gramsci's sociology of intellectuals must deal with the "problem of identifying the group which, in varying historical contexts, exercises the intellectual function" (Salamini, 1981: 107).

Gramsci's emphasis on historical bloc and contextual analysis rests not only on his discussion of intellectuals but also on his belief in the historical importance of philosophy.

"A great deal of research and study on the historical significance of different philosophies is utterly sterile and fanciful because it fails to take account of the fact that many philosophical systems are exclusively, or almost exclusively, individual expressions and that part of them which can be called historical is often minimal and

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<sup>11</sup>My discussion here draws light from Boggs (1984) and Salamini, (1981).

swamped in a complex of abstractions whose origins are purely and abstractly ratiocinative." (Gramsci, 1971: 346)

Having seen such a situation, Gramsci therefore suggests,

"If it is true that every philosophy is the expression of a society, it should react back on that society and produce certain effects, both positive and negative. The extent to which precisely it reacts back is the measure of its historical importance, of its not being individual 'lucubration' but 'historical fact'." (Gramsci, 1971: 346)

Defying the "form of anti-historicist abstraction" that dissolved history into an inert series of concepts and categories, Gramsci states further,

"It has been forgotten that in the case of a very common expression (historical materialism) one should put the accent on the first term --- 'historical' --- and not on the second, which is of metaphysical origin. The philosophy of practice is absolute 'historicism', the absolute secularization and earthiness of thought, and absolute humanism of history. It is along this line that one must trace the thread of a new conception of the world." (Gramsci, 1971: 465)

All in all, Gramsci has highlighted the historical importance in understanding all ideas, of whatever consciousness, philosophy or ideology. Gramsci makes his position more explicit.

"We know reality only in relation to man, and since man is historical becoming, knowledge and reality are also becoming and so is objectivity, etc." (Gramsci, 1971: 446)

### Cultural and Intellectual Force of Habitus

Bourdieu, drawing from the work of Panofsky (1967), has suggested that the main thrust of the intellectual field also participates in a broader cultural field characterized by a cultural unconsciousness (Bourdieu, 1969: 91). Bourdieu repeatedly asserts that history and sociology are inseparably linked (for example, Bourdieu, 1990: 42; Wacquant, 1989: 37; and Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 90-99). It is note-worthy that Bourdieu's conception of intellectual field also draws attention to the cultural preconsciousness of the texts (somewhat parallel to Mannheim's *Cultural-Sociological Knowledge*). In his earliest attempts to explicate the meaning of habitus, Bourdieu (1971: 192-3) refers to it as "a set of basic, deeply interiorized master-patterns", constituting a cultural unconsciousness, which "may govern and regulate mental process without being consciously apprehended and controlled". Habitus, then, is a force

governing consciousness which force is itself unconscious (Bourdieu, 1971: 181). Bourdieu amply states that people's thinking is greatly influenced by the habitus, "a common meaning already established" under which ideas are formed. He also points out the close link between society and culture, seeing ideological production as a pedagogic work of the education system. To Bourdieu, institutionalized education is not only a process of cultural reproduction but also social reproduction revealing class relations within "objective structures" of society. Throughout the process of ideological production, the influence of the habitus is significant; people are exposed to "the common source of themes and forms which define the cultural tradition of a society and an age" (Bourdieu, 1971: 183). In order to develop a more coherent framework of ideological formation, we must analyze one's thinking contextually. Bourdieu also writes,

"The habitus is a system of durable, transposable dispositions which function as the generative basis of structural, objectively unified practices". (Bourdieu, 1979: vii)

These unconscious categories or principles can be interpreted as neither apprehended nor apprehensible, and it is reasonable to say that they may structure and determine what can be apprehended.

What Bourdieu has highlighted here is a set of dispositions, created and reformulated through the conjuncture of objective structures and personal history. Bourdieu believes that dispositions are acquired in social positions within a field, implying a subjective adjustment to that position. Moreover, his ideas of the intellectual field, social space and habitus go hand in hand, suggesting the "forces" which have shaped people's ideas and value orientations.<sup>12</sup> Following the ideas of "mental habit" and of a "habit-forming force" from Panofsky (1967), Bourdieu puts it differently and suggests habitus as "structuring structure". To Bourdieu, habitus is one of those entities that are never observed directly but he regards it as the cultural pre-conscious in its active form. He maintains that habitus is shaped and transmitted by the social and institutional

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<sup>12</sup>I draw this line from Harker et al., (1990: 9-12).

environment, especially through the educational institutions, and by the practices and traditions of a culture. The "cultivated habitus", put in this way, can be interpreted as a "force" governing and regulating the thought of people, engendering particular schemes in the realms of thought. In brief, the understanding of the intellectual ideas or texts must investigate not only how the text speaks for itself but also how it is related to an intellectual field. This may involve historical and cross-cultural comparisons. I believe that the notion of "habitus" is similar to Mannheim's idea of "world-view". The habitus or "the cultural unconscious" of Bourdieu, the world-view or "cultural-sociological knowledge" of Mannheim and the stress of historical importance of Gramsci, taken together, put emphasis again on the contextual analysis of ideas.

#### **SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE: PROBLEM OF STRUCTURE AND AGENCY**

In the previous sections, we have attempted to develop a framework for the analysis of the social-political ideas of specific Chinese intellectuals. The foregoing discussion has presented the ideas of Mannheim, Gramsci and Bourdieu with particular reference to their notions of knowledge production. Three scholars generally agree that knowledge can be understood only in its relation to its socio-historical location. No matter what Mannheim's stress on historicism, Gramsci's historical process and Bourdieu's habitus, they commonly believe that knowledge production is related to the unique socio-historical context in which knowledge is produced. In addition, these scholars also point out the "competitive" nature of knowledge because of different social locations of intellectuals, with which divergent social and political ideas are formulated. No matter what notions of "competition" (Mannheim), "war of position" (Gramsci) or "strategising" (Bourdieu) they propose, these scholars are well aware of positional and relational attributes of knowledge. In short, as intellectuals change from one location to another their ideas change also.

Analyzing along the foregoing discussed scholarly line has enhanced us to

develop a more coherent understanding of production of knowledge. However, the central problem of the sociology of knowledge remains unresolved, that is, the tension between social structure and social agency in general and how ideas are formed as they are socially and culturally bound on the one hand; and individuals act differently in response to their unique environments on the other. Despite acknowledging the external constraints imposed upon individuals' formation of ideas, Mannheim also considers that individuals do have autonomy to think freely and creatively but this freedom operates within constraints because of the social location/position of the individuals. This line of thought also explains why Mannheim rejects "over-deterministic" nature of knowledge and considers the relationship between social context and knowledge production as "social connectedness" (see also Simmonds, 1978 and Tim Dant, 1991). Well aware of the fact that cognition is not totally determined by socially given presuppositions, Mannheim points it out plainly that the degree of determination from the external environment varies with the sociality of the object of knowledge. As Dant writes, "[Mannheim's] sociology of knowledge proposes that both the individual knowing subject and some of the contents of thought are determined by the specific social and historical existence of the individual. Mannheim leaves intact the immanent process of thought to the extent that knowledge is determined by 'theoretical' (ie. cognitive) antecedence" (Dane, 1991: 22). In short, Mannheim conceives knowledge as formed in a concrete social basis while leaving some, relative, autonomy to the cognitive processes of individuals. Society, in this sense, does not exert total control on people's thought but renders a "world-view" or "reference" which influences ideological formation. Despite the fact that Mannheim acknowledges individual's' relative autonomy in ideological production, he has not provided any conceptual tool to describe the interactive process of structure and agency. It is at this point Mannheim's sociology of knowledge is criticized for being too its general and broad, and at times the relation between thought and society defined mechanistically. Following the same logic, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge



gives the impression that individuals simply respond passively to the social context, define their ideas and change them when the social context changes. This line of inquiry may have ignored the dynamic between social structure and social agency.<sup>13</sup>

### Bourdieu's Strategy and Strategising

In order to resolve this problem, Bourdieu's notion of "strategy" and "strategising" is useful here. Like Mannheim, Bourdieu believes people are influenced by their unique environments and culture. As we pointed out before, Bourdieu's notion of habitus (like Mannheim's world-view) penetrates people's social life since primary social experiences, no matter you like it or not, have a disproportionate weight. However, Bourdieu does not see people as so passive that they are just controlled by the external forces. He makes it clear that:

"Habitus is what you have to posit to account for the fact, without being rational, social agents are reasonable --- and this is what makes sociology possible. People are not fools; they are [sic] much less bizarre or deluded than we would spontaneously believe precisely because they have internalized, through a protracted and multisided process of conditioning, the objective chances they face. They know how to 'read' the future that fits them ..." (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 130)

Rejecting a deterministic nature of knowledge production, Bourdieu believes "habits is not the fate that some people read into it" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131). Instead, it is the product of history, an open system of dispositions that varies according to individual experiences. He also acknowledges the complex nature of the constitution of habitus but he makes it plain that people are not immune to the influences of habitus, a relative irreversible process, in which ideas are constructed by prior experiences. Having said that, Bourdieu also qualifies his argument by showing that habitus reveals itself only in reference to a definite situation. Amply put, discourses or practices are related to certain structures that habitus produces. Regarding social agents as the product of history, of the history of the whole social field and of the accumulated experience within any sub-field, Bourdieu also maintains that social agents actively determine the situation that determines them. He states clearly that "social agents are

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<sup>13</sup>I draw this light from Dr. Alan Swingewood, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Sociology, London School of Economics.

determined only to the extent that they determine themselves" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 136).

Dissatisfied with the static description of social practice as functionalism and structuralism suggested, Bourdieu argues that "habitus may very well be accompanied by a strategic calculation of costs and benefits which tends to carry out at a conscious level the operations which habitus carries out in its own way ..." (Wacquant, 1989: 45). Disagreeing with the view that agents' expectations necessarily and mechanically replicate their objective opportunities, Bourdieu makes his position clear that variations are common because individuals retain a certain amount of autonomy in choosing different strategies reacting to the external environments. Bourdieu makes it explicitly clear that:

"the tendency to preserve in their being that groups owe, among other reasons, to the fact that the agents who compose them and endowed with durable dispositions capable of surviving the economic and social conditions of their own production, can be at the basis of maladjustment as well as adjustment, of revolt as well as resignation. It suffices to evolve other possible forms of the relationship between dispositions and conditions to see in the anticipated adjustment of habitus to objective conditions a 'particular case of the possible' and to avoid unconsciously universalizing the model of the quasi-circular relation of near-perfect reproduction which is completely valid only in the case where the conditions of production of habitus are identical or homologous to its conditions of function" (Bourdieu, 1990a: 62-3, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 132-3)

It is in this light that we can argue that the internalization of objective chances in the form of subjective hopes and mental schemata plays an important part in Bourdieu's analysis of social strategies. His theoretical move "from rules to strategies" demonstrates that Bourdieu is conscious about the dynamic of social practice. According to Bourdieu, actors do have goals and interests, they are also desired to locate the source of their practice in their own experience of reality (their practical sense or logic). Jenkins (1992) suggests that Bourdieu's model of strategy and strategising have two separate but intimately related dualisms. First, social interaction is characterized by a mixture of freedom and constraint; and second, practice is a product of processes which are neither wholly conscious nor unconscious. Having conducted anthropological studies, Bourdieu

finds that people adopt diverse strategies reacting to their socio-cultural environments. In his analysis of the Kabyle sense of honour, honour-related behaviours are not rule-governed but a diffuse and generalized "sense of honour". He also discovers that the understanding of the Kabyle honour-related transactions only made sense over time and understood in the proper context of an ongoing family strategy (Bourdieu, 1960 and 1965).

Opposing to rational choice theory, Bourdieu interprets social practice as an ongoing result of the interaction between the dispositions of the habitus and the constraints and possibilities which are the reality of any given social field. Jenkin (1992) points out that Bourdieu's notion of strategising is an important link between the notions of practice, habitus and field. By strategising, Bourdieu means calculation of costs and benefits against a context of constraints especially to do with resource allocation. Seeing human beings not as conscious and rational as such, Bourdieu is therefore very critical of those social science models depicting that human behaviour as intrinsically rational & calculative.<sup>14</sup> Putting the foregoing observations together, we reach the conclusion that there is tension between social structure and social agency. We can therefore argue that though individuals are structurally and institutionally bound, they still maintain a certain level of autonomy to choose how to respond to the external stimuli or threats. Following the same logic, individual variations are common since different people may have divergent interpretations or perceptions of their socio-political environments. Therefore, knowledge production should not be analyzed too mechanistically, avoid also reducing it as passivity of human beings in relation to their social structure.

## **GENERATIONAL LOCATION AND IDEOLOGICAL FORMATION**

In addition to the foregoing proposed perspectives on the analysis of ideas, the present research is also interested in exploring how intellectuals' different generational

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<sup>14</sup>For details of Bourdieu's notion of strategy and strategising, see, for example, (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 128-131; Jenkins, 1992: 38-45 and chapter 4)

locations affect their conceptions of democracy. Mannheim has suggested the momentous impact of the generational location on the ideas of intellectuals. For generational location, Mannheim means a particular experience and a special way of looking at the world. As Mannheim says,

"The fact of belonging to the same class, and that of belonging to the same generation or age group, have this in common, that both endow the individuals sharing in them with a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limit them to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience and a characteristic type of historically relevant action". (Mannheim, 1952: 291)

In the same vein, Julian Marias also points out the interconnection between generational succession and historical change (Marias, 1970). Both Mannheim and Marias have proposed a methodology which begins with identifying a collective identity for a group of intellectuals who have been brought up in a similar historical context or affected by certain key, transforming events through which their ideas were formed. Following the assertion of generation location, each generation is endowed with its own special style and character, shaped by its own upbringing, its own spirit, its virtues and its limitations. With such exploration the range of potential experience and the characteristic mode of thought and experience will become more specific (Mannheim, 1952). Li Zehou and Schwarcz (1983/84) also emphasize this:

"In modern Chinese history, *political events* seem to be the most important influence in distinguishing and shaping the social life of various generations. These political events may be seen as symbols of a generation's identity, especially for those intellectuals who were involved in these events". (Li and Schwarcz, 1983/84: 45; emphasis added.)

Li Zehou and Schwarcz have also proposed a generational overview of intellectual ideas. They suggest a scheme involving six generations of modern Chinese intellectuals. Our examination of different generations of contemporary Chinese intellectuals, each generation having its own way of confronting issues and each facing different treatment from the state, should elucidate the link between their ideas and their socio-historical/socio-political contexts. Chang Hao (1987) when studying ideological formation of the late Qing scholars, suggests that the particular environment where

intellectuals live should have influenced their ideas. Equally important, Chang points out that the study of "existential" situation, that is, typical situations of human life as perceived by different intellectuals, must be informative when studying people's ideas. Holding such a view, Chang thus suggests that only when we can develop a more coherent picture of their thought can we analyze people's ideas in the context of their different life courses. One point which needs to be addressed here is that though the notion of generational location enhances us to develop a more comprehensive understanding of ideological production of intellectuals, this analytic tool also has its limitations. First, it fails to explain why some intellectuals, with similar generational experiences, have different interpretations of social reality. Second, it is difficult to locate intellectuals in different generations as the classification of which is somehow arbitrary. When using the generational location as a conceptual tool to examine intellectuals' knowledge production, we must be conscious that what people make of their experiences depend on their personal strategies and the context of organizations they are in. In this sense, we must be aware of the tension and dynamic in which ideas are formed in relation to generational location and personal choice. Thus, personal uniqueness and biography of individual might have also affected how people interpret and conceptualize their ideas or ideologies.

In addition, the present research will also examine the relationship between intellectual radicalism and the socio-economic and socio-political opportunities to which intellectuals have access.

## **POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE AND INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM**

Brym suggests that intellectual radicalism is closely related to political and economic opportunities. He also maintains that whether the intellectuals adopt a radical stand greatly depends on the number of intellectuals, the level of group organization of the intellectuals and the resources that they possess. We can see that although there may

not be a definite causal relationship between the alienation of intellectuals and their radical acts and ideas, they are closely related.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, it is advisable to investigate carefully how such a "mechanism" influences the political ideas of intellectuals.

The present research also attempts to unravel how resources that the intellectuals can mobilize (Brym, 1980) and their political opportunity structure (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991; and McAdam, 1982, 1988) have influenced their political stance. The theory of social mobilization has suggested that the mobilization of massive support and the access to resources should have influenced the success of social movements (see for example, Tilly, 1978 and McCarthy & Zald, 1987). Unlike the three most dominant approaches in analyzing social movements,<sup>16</sup> the resource mobilization approach stresses both societal support and constraints of social movements. Questioning the commonly shared belief that there is a causal relationship between preexisting discontent and grievances, generalized beliefs (loose ideologies) and uprising of social movements, the resource mobilization approach suggests the study of social movement in terms of the variety of resources available to the participants, the linkages and networks of different groups of activists, the external support to the movement. One of the representative scholars in this approach, Charles Tilly argues that social movements flow directly out of a population's central political processes rather than a momentary expression of discontents within a population (Tilly, 1973; see also Snyder & Tilly, 1972). McCarthy and Zald (1987: 18), along this line, suggest that "there is always enough discontent in any society to supply the grass-roots support for a movement if the movement is effectively organized and has at its disposal the power and resources of some established

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<sup>15</sup>Some scholars have proposed that there is a strong relationship and even a causal relationship between the alienation of intellectuals and intellectual radicalism. See, for example, R. Michels (1932); C. Brinton (1938); W. Kotschnig (1937), etc.

<sup>16</sup>In the literature of social movement, different scholars may have diverse interpretations. Some scholars assume a close link between the frustrations or grievances of the participants and the rise and decline of movement activity. In this regard, they propose to study social movement in terms of the social psychology of the participants (see, for example, the *Critical Mass Bulletin*, 1973-74). Questioning such a theoretical centrality concentrating on psychological explanation, some scholars view social movements from a distinctly structural perspective, considering how structural strain, generalized belief and deprivation have shaped the course of movements (see, for example, Heberle, 1951, 1968). Dissatisfied with above notions of social movement, the theories of activists suggest investigating how the infrastructure of society and movements, problems of mobilization, the manufacture of discontent and tactical choices have affected social movements. Ron Eyerman & A. Jamison (1991) have a very good discussion on social movement, suggesting studying the subject-matter from a cognitive approach, that is, how ideological formation influences the course of social development.

elite group". Such an assumption has also led them to investigate the dynamic of social movements in terms of support base, strategy and tactics and relation to larger society to which the participants have access. The review of research and theory about social movements in the preceding part may hopefully enhance our understanding of intellectual radicalism in the post-Mao era. The ability to mobilize intellectuals' resource may have influenced the extent of their radicalism and eventually shaped the relationship between the state and the intellectuals.

The resource mobilization approach, however, was challenged by other theoretical and empirical findings in the 80's. Instead of considering only "resources" in social movements, some scholars point also to the political environment in which the social movements arose. "Political opportunity structure" has been suggested by various scholars as a means for gaining a better understanding of the rise of social movements (see, for example, Eisinger, 1973; Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991; McAdam, 1982, 1988; Kitschelt, 1986). Eisinger affirms a relationship between political environment and its particular structuring function in "political opportunity".

"Political environment is a generic term used variously in the literature of political science to refer to, among other things, aspects of formal political structure, the climate of governmental responsiveness, social structure, and social stability ... In short, elements in the environment impose certain constraints on political activity or open avenues for it". (Eisinger, 1973: 11)

It is clear then the political environment has facilitated and constrained political activity. Eisinger continues,

"The manner in which individuals and groups in the political system behave, then, is not simply a function of the resources they command but of the openings, weak spots, barriers, and resources of the political system itself. There is, in this sense, interaction, or linkage, between the environment, understood in terms of the notion of a structure of political opportunities, and political behaviour". (Ibid)

The political opportunity structure, in this way, is under tremendous influence of the political environment. Scholars have also suggested a cluster of variables structuring political opportunity (see, for example, Tarrow, 1989 and McAdam, 1988). In our present study, the spotlight is put on the availability of powerful positions within the

formal political institutions and the extent of support for and anticipated opposition to their political actions (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991 and McAdam, 1982, 1988).<sup>17</sup> The relevance of the literature on social movement and political environment to our present research is twofold. First, the analysis of the political opportunity structure may hopefully shed light on understanding the relationship between the extent of radicalism and the bargaining power of the participants in the movement. Second, the examination of the political opportunity structure and the political environment from a wider context can enhance our understanding of the power relationship among different groups through which different strategies and ideologies are formed.

This line of inquiry corresponds to Brym's suggested investigation of the relationship between intellectual radicalism and the economic and political opportunities to which the intellectuals have access. More interestingly, this idea again points to the fact that a better understanding of ideological formation is not isolated from the complex and dynamic power relations among intellectuals, which repeatedly shows the positional and relational attributes of ideas. In addition, it is also observed that the structural changes in society, together with bureaucratization of intellectuals, have led to a decline in intellectual criticism. McCarthy and Zald (1987) also suggest that intellectuals will become more critical of the society at large or of specific institutional-professional arrangements as they acquire more education. Alongside this, they also consider professionalization of intellectuals and change in occupational structure (expansion of the service sector), combined with a relative degree of autonomy in modern organizational settings, have contributed to intellectual radicalism. According to this reasoning, the extent of intellectual radicalism can be predicted by intensive calculation and evaluation of the intellectuals' resources and political opportunity structure.

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<sup>17</sup>The focus on these two variables is because they have been commonly discussed by most scholars in this particular field.



## THE ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Despite the common beliefs that Mannheim, Gramsci and Bourdieu share, there are some differences among them. Gramsci's "war of position" from capitalist to communist hegemony is a totalising hegemony based on class struggle. The notion of ideological war or conquest of hegemony, according to Gramsci, involves moving from economism to political and cultural consciousness through which a new world-view and a new philosophy would be formed. In spite of the totalising nature of Mannheim's project, what he has suggested is not based on class struggle as such. Though Mannheim acknowledges the competitive nature of knowledge production, he rejects Marx's notion of class determinism of ideology. For historical transformation, Gramsci's is a revolutionary praxis, whereas Mannheim's is one of understanding or at most of comprehending conflicts and arbitrating them empirically. In addition, Gramsci suggests a critique of knowledge and of civil society but there is no such hint in Mannheim's work. Unlike Gramsci and Mannheim, Bourdieu's habitus is far more micropolitical and structural despite the fact that it also concerns the means of reproducing class relations.<sup>18</sup>

The discussion of the sociology of knowledge, the sociology of intellectuals and the intellectual field in the preceding part has defined our focus for the scrutiny of ideological formation. The conceptual framework developed here closely follows these intellectual paths, for they are not isolated but complementary to one another. Though many of the concepts discussed in the previous sections are not directly applicable to modern Chinese conditions. In this study, we are going to derive and modify some of the discussed concepts as our analytic tools to examine how Chinese intellectuals conceptualize their notions of democracy with particular reference to how socio-historical context and social location have affected their ideological formation. Following Mannheim's notion of social location, it would help if the relation of the intellectuals to social group is worked out especially as the ideas developed by an individual relate to the

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<sup>18</sup>I draw this light from Dr. Stephen Feuchtwang, Reader of the City University, London.

collective social forces at work within the "social location". With this conceptual tool in hand, we hope the following study would illuminate how did Chinese intellectuals develop their specific radical ideas. Was it simply an intellectual response to the context in which they lived or was it an interactionist relationship? The examination of knowledge production in the light of "social location" may hopefully show us the dynamic between social structure and social agency.

In addition, the present study attempts to contextualize the socio-political ideas of a selected sample of contemporary Chinese intellectuals in terms of Bourdieu's idea of "field". Despite the fact that there is no sense of field as such in China as Bourdieu suggests, the idea of "field" is of particular value in this research. In the post-Mao era, Chinese intellectuals have been trying to expand the public sphere and exert their intellectual autonomy and professional independence. As the CCP has lost control over the ideological realm after the death of Mao Zedong, it inevitably creates room for the intellectuals to redefine and reconceptualize their own ideologies. Following Bourdieu's contrast between "apparatus" (dominant values) and "field" (autonomy of values), it seems that Chinese intellectuals have persistently attempted to develop their own "fields" in contrast with the "apparatus" (see chapter 4 and the following case studies). Acknowledging the fact that there is not such conflicts and struggle between different intellectual fields in mainland China as her western counterparts do, the notion of striving for autonomy of values (field) as Bourdieu suggests is insightful to our present study. It is in this particular light that Bourdieu's notion of "field" is helpful here to demonstrate how the selected sample of Chinese intellectuals have endeavoured to control the public sphere and eventually to develop a civil society in China. We only use Bourdieu's field concept within such limits. However, it is note-worthy that Bourdieu's idea of habitus is difficult to conduct empirical study in this research as it is not a study of ethnology. Though the general discussion of habitus is highly illuminative to us that how people are not immune to the dispositions of habitus, it is empirically difficult to prove in this

study. For this reason, we have no intention to directly apply this concept in this research. In order to investigate the interactionist and dynamic nature of knowledge production, the present study will adopt Bourdieu's idea of "strategy" and "strategising" to see how different intellectuals react to the similar socio-historical context but with different access to socio-economic and socio-political opportunities. In this conjuncture, we can bridge the idea of "political opportunity structure" and Bourdieu's idea of "strategy" together, exploring how Chinese intellectuals select different approaches and strategies in response to their external stimuli or threats. Acknowledging the fact that individuals are structurally, institutionally and personally bound, the present study attempts to demonstrate how different Chinese intellectuals interact with the external constraints and find their coping strategies. Up to this point, we can see that though we cannot totally and directly apply Mannheim's and Bourdieu's concepts in the study of Chinese reality, we can adopt and borrow some of their ideas as analytic tools in this study.

For Gramsci, his classification of organic and traditional intellectuals are highly indicative to our understanding of the role of intelligentsia but we have to admit that we cannot apply Gramscian concepts in our present study directly. Despite the usefulness and insights that we have drawn from Gramsci in the general discussion of intellectuals and ideological production, it is empirically difficult to make use of his ideas in China. What Gramsci suggests involves moving economism to political and cultural consciousness and which is also a totalising hegemony based on class struggle from capitalist to communist hegemony, the direct application of Gramsci's ideas seem not to be appropriate to socialist China. More specifically, Gramsci's "war of position" is problematic given the weakness of Chinese civil society and failure to develop autonomous institutions separate from the state. The same constraint also applies to the use of Bourdieu "field" notion. Therefore, we should not directly apply these concepts without modification. Putting these observations together, it suffices to us that the

sociology of knowledge is of particularly complicated nature. It is extremely difficult to make these connections directly and produce a perfect case to link the theoretical logic and empirical fact together. Having said that, it is still worthy to conduct a research on Chinese intellectuals in terms of sociology of knowledge. This study will use their insights where possible to the Chinese context.

The following chapters will analyze the formation of intellectual ideas involves the examination of four elements: (1) the particular socio-historical, socio-political and socio-cultural contexts which the thinkers inhabit; (2) a historical perspective on the social location or social position and the generation location of the intellectuals; (3) the institutional factors, their educational and occupational orientations and social networks; and (4) their economic and political opportunities, to see how these variables interact with one another to produce their particular interpretations of the world in general and the political thoughts in particular.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE MAY FOURTH SCHOLARS AND THEIR DEMOCRATIC THOUGHTS

Advocacy for democracy and protection of human rights is far from a newly aroused agenda in modern China. Early in the May Fourth Movement (MFM), the Chinese scholars began to look into the concepts of 'democracy' and 'science'. The principal goal of this chapter is to chart the social and historical contexts of the MFM and to analyze the ideas of democracy and political thoughts of Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi and Lu Xun in light of our theoretical framework.<sup>1</sup> In order to understand the nature of the MFM, we have to examine the particular socio-historical and socio-political contexts under which the MFM erupted.

#### SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS OF THE MFM

Late in the late Qing period, the collapse of the traditional cultural-political order created intense nation-wide ideological and legitimation crises. In the past, the Chinese scholars merely trusted and closely followed Confucian thinking. Confucianism, being the most dominant idea before the MFM, guided the behaviour of people and regulated the social formation, setting the standards for social life. In traditional China, the political and socio-cultural realms were integral. Weber considers the establishment of a centralized bureaucratic state since the Qin dynasty as a very important political structural factor for a unified empire. In addition to the structural factor, cultural unity has a decisive impact on the nature of the patrimonial state (Weber, 1951). In the Han dynasty, Confucianism was elevated to the status of a state ideology, thus the Confucian cultural system was fully integrated with the political structure. King (1990) labels such a cultural-political structure as "Institutionalized Confucianism". He also points out the

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<sup>1</sup>The MFM was supported not only by students and intellectuals but also by other walks of life. Unlike the communist writers who mainly consider the MFM as a mass movement supported by the working class, Chen (1971) and Ikeda Makoto (1952) the MFM as a people's movement supported not only by working class but also by merchants, urban people, labourers and national capitalist class. In this regard, the MFM can be interpreted as a popular movement rather than merely a movement organized by intellectuals and student masses.

fact that the Imperial Chinese state system was based on not only Confucian ideals but also a legalistic doctrine. Karl Burger highlights a similar idea as he writes in another context.

"We can no more speak of 'Confucian law' in China than we can speak of a 'Confucian state'. All dynasties since the Qin have retained the fundamental principle of the legalist." (Quoted in Schram, 1987: 227)

In this regard, the state system since Qin can be interpreted as a mixed product of Confucianism and legalism. King (1990: 7) also maintains that "it was the Han's amalgam of Confucianism and Legalism which constituted a cultural-structural basis for the imperial rulership of the successive dynasties". Confucianism acted as the ultimate source of legitimacy for the imperial rulership for the successive dynasties. Thus, the relationship between Confucianism and the imperial rulership "was an institutional-cultural complex including the imperial institutions, patrimonial bureaucracy and Confucian cultural values" (Ibid). Such a cultural-political unity of the patrimonial state was prone to the disintegration of both socio-political and cultural-moral orders whenever any part of them was threatened.<sup>2</sup>

To understand the Chinese Imperial history, one point which must be noted here is that the ultimate authority rested in the hands of the emperor. Schwartz argues that the dominant shared Chinese cultural orientation is "the idea of a universal, all-embracing socio-political order entering in the concept of a cosmically based universal kingship" (B. Schwartz, 1985: 413). The universal king was entrusted with the Mandate of Heaven, and as the proprietor of all territory. Being the highest sovereign over all people, he also acted as the link between the cosmos and the people. In the minds of Chinese people, the

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<sup>2</sup>Li Zehou (1990a) and Jiang & Liu (1990) also consider the political and cultural orders of traditional China as integral. Such an "integration" rendered China a relatively stable social and political order. Along this they also suggest that the contemporary social and political structure is similar to that of the traditional one. Socialist ideology has been used as an integrative mechanism to consolidate the CCP's rule. Besides, the CCP also controls the society by means of party organization and mass organizations. Lucian Pye (1985) argues in the same vein that the CCP developed a particular type of ideology or guiding principles to legitimize its rule. According to Pye, such an ideology differed from orthodox Marxism but was a unique integration of traditional Chinese values and Marxist-Leninist principles, together with Mao Zedong's thought. Pye calls it "Leninist-Confucianism" and it is this "value" system which consolidates the foundation of the CCP. Ogden (1992) also suggests that the CCP, like other parties in developing countries, develops its own ideological basis upon an integration of both a traditional value system and "imported" values. Putting these observations together, I can claim that the social and political structure of the CCP is similar to that of traditional China. With such a cultural-political unity, the CCP is also prone to be threatened whenever its ideology is losing support, see also (Schurmann, 1968).

Son of Heaven (Universal King) was not only a ruler but also the agent of Heaven on earth to maintain the cosmic harmony. Having such a unique and sovereign position, the universal king exercised not only political but also religio-spiritual authority. Through the proper performance of his ritual and non-ritual duties, the King mediated between both the human social order and the sacred cosmic order. Thus, the Son of Heaven was regarded as "a sort of cosmological linchpin functioning at the centre of the world and radiating a universal authority on earth" (Chang Hao, 1987:5).<sup>3</sup> In regard to these observations, the bureaucratic authority was "only derivative, coming directly from the emperor" (Yu, 1976: 50).<sup>4</sup>

The preceding discussion has so far highlighted two important points. First, the incorporation of an elaborate organismic cosmology (the ideas of *yin-yang*) into Confucianism institutionalized and reinforced the notion of universal kingship, consolidating the socio-political and the cultural-moral orders and made them an integral whole. Second, the integration of the socio-political order and cultural-moral order made the political-cultural structure much more rigid, creating the possibility for the total collapse of both orders when any part of the system was threatened. When cosmological kingship lost its ideological hold on the minds of Chinese intellectuals, a new crisis of consciousness inevitably emerged, cumulating in a crisis of order. Universal Kingship acted not only as the institutional foundation of China's socio-political order but also constituted a universe of meaning for Chinese people, it became an orientational symbol to maintain coherence of the socio-cultural order. The dissolution of the cosmological Kingship inevitably caused the breakdown of the socio-cultural order. Such observations

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<sup>3</sup>In addition, from the Han Dynasty onwards, Confucianism incorporated the yin-yang and "five elements". Lin (1979: 12-16) regards such a development as a facilitator to the establishment of the Chinese empire. Incorporating Confucianism and the ideas of yin-yang together, the position of universal king was further consolidated because he was regarded as yang. The relationship between the people and the king was characterized as yin and yang. Under this rubric of thought, universal kingship was also believed to have been the link between the cosmic order and social order since the yang would always exist in the cosmos while the universal king would rule over the world. For details of the cosmological symbolism in relation to the Chinese concept of Kingship, for example, see Lin (1979) and Chang Hao (1989: 33-78).

<sup>4</sup>Contrary to this line of reasoning, Y.C. Wang argues that the authority and power of emperors in Imperial China was limited since the bureaucracy headed by the "prime minister" was more influential. See, Wang (1966, especially introduction) and Tu, (1991: 103-138).

indicate to us why the attack on the political structure in the late Qing dynasty led to the downfall of the cultural-moral order.<sup>5</sup> One point must be stressed here is that Confucianism itself went through several convulsions. Even though there is continuity of Chinese culture and polity, the official ideology of different ideology had diverse interpretations. For instance, scholars modified Confucianism in Sung and Ming and even in Qing dynasties. It is in this light we argue that we should not overstress the rigidity and continuity of Chinese culture and polity.<sup>6</sup>

It is against such an disintegration of the political-cultural order that an identity crisis was created for the May Fourth intellectuals. Being the interpreters of official ideology, the intellectuals were expected to be standard-bearers of morality, preserving traditional ethical values. They had been playing the role as gatekeepers and source persons of ideas and ideologies (Cheng, 1990), engaging in the scrutiny of the received ideas and assumptions of their milieu (Yu, 1987: 84-112).<sup>7</sup> Wang (1966) suggested that Chinese society would have had a different structure and no scholarly class without Confucianism.<sup>8</sup> From the late Qing to the May Fourth period, the intellectuals confronted a dissolution of hope, realizing the cold reality that Confucian thinking had failed to gain the hegemony of the socio-political realm. Moreover, their exposure to Western ideas, which merely portrayed a progressive and modernized Western world, further forced them to question Chinese tradition. Under such circumstances, Chinese intellectuals began to feel "cheated" by the traditional values, more aware of the need to create a meaningful cosmos through a search for an alternate world view (Chang Hao, 1987).

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<sup>5</sup>For details of the social and political structure of traditional China, see, for example, Lin (1972: 23-58, 1979: 10-25) and Schwartz (1985).

<sup>6</sup>The discussion in the previous section only concentrates on one of the dimensions of Confucianism and the socio-political structure of Chinese past. However, there is no intention to argue that Chinese culture and polity is so rigid and static. Other scholarly works have good discussions of Chinese past and Confucianism, see, for example, Weber (1951) and Elvin (1973).

<sup>7</sup>For details of the role of literati and intellectuals, see, for example, Wang (1966); Yu (1987); Tang (1989); Gramsci (1971) and Denitch (1979).

<sup>8</sup>Y. C. Wang (1966) conceives that certain dominant Confucian ideas greatly influenced the behaviour of the intellectuals and, through them, society at large. The May Fourth scholars, like their forerunners, the literati, were also influenced by the Confucian thinking.



Clarification of this context enhances our understanding of the nature of the MFM, especially the intellectual tide during this period.

### **THE NATURE OF THE MAY FOURTH MOVEMENT**

Concerning the nature of the MFM, the most dominant theme is the search for a new China. It has been suggested that even though the May Fourth Scholars had different approaches to solve China's intense crisis, they had the common ground that the revitalization of Chinese society required most basically a "Cultural Revolution". Despite their differences regarding the relative importance of political action versus cultural reform in resolving China's problems, transformation of the cultural superstructure seemed to be the antecedent to both the liberal faction headed by Hu Shi and the revolutionary faction headed by Chen Duxiu (see, Solomon & Sullivan, 1973). Seen in this light, the cultural crisis set the intellectual milieu for these May Fourth Scholars.

The nature of the May Fourth Movement is so complicated that waves of debate on its nature and significance have continued since 1919.<sup>9</sup> Some scholars suggest that the movement is a "Chinese Renaissance" which they associate with the European Renaissance since the spirit of criticism and destruction of the ancient culture constituted the whole movement. This term was proposed by Huang Yuan-yuan in 1915 before the movement was started (cited in Chow, 1960). Scholars holding this view maintain that the similarity of both movements lies in the objective of emancipation. Jiang Monlin, one of the May Fourth scholars, wrote of the European Renaissance as an "emancipating movement". He also observed,

"the recent May Fourth Movement is a first step toward this kind of emancipation. We are going to change our attitude toward life and bring about a Chinese Renaissance, emancipating emotions, emancipating thought, and demanding human rights." (Jiang, 1919, cited in Chow, 1960: 338)

After examining the nature of the May Fourth Movement some liberal authors also considered it as Renaissance since it produced "a new literature in the living language of the people to take the place of the old literature in the classical language" (Hu

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<sup>9</sup>For details of the debate, see, for example, B. Schwartz (1972); Chow (1990); Yu Yingshih (1989) and Lin (1989).

Shi, 1934, cited in Chow, 1960: 339).

Apart from that, the May Fourth Movement was regarded as a humanist movement "led by men who knew their cultural heritage and tried to study it with the new methodology of modern historical criticism and research" (Ibid). Some scholars, having been exposed to Marxist and liberal thoughts, held that the May Fourth period was similar to the features of Greek and Roman civilization since the Chinese economy evolved from a medieval condition toward a capitalist condition as its counterparts (Chow, 1960: 339).

Having seen the spirit of criticism and destruction of the ancient culture among the May Fourth scholars, some researchers even suggest that the Movement was a Chinese version of the French Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Their appeal to reason rather than custom, to nature not man-made law, and to humanitarianism and aesthetics instead of ethical rules and religion highlighted the nature of that enlightenment. Their sceptical view, subjecting everything to question before they found enough evidence to support their belief, also indicated a fundamental change of their conceptualization of social reality.<sup>11</sup> Such change, to these researchers, is similar to that of the French Enlightenment.

Rejecting any association of the movement with the European Renaissance, Chow (1960) suggests that the nature of the May Fourth Movement is far from a Renaissance since the principal goal of the movement is not a cultural revival but just the contrary. For Renaissance is a cultural revival of ancient civilization.

"The Renaissance in Europe was in a sense the rebirth of interest in an ancient civilization, a seeking to substitute Greek and Roman ideas for those of medievalism... But the May Fourth Movement was far from being a restoration movement. On the contrary, it aimed at the transplantation of a modern civilization into an old nation, accompanied by bitter criticism of the old civilization." (Quoted from Chow, 1960: 340)

Seen in this light, the notion of anti-traditionalism raised throughout the May

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<sup>10</sup>For details of this view, see, for example, Schwarcz (1986).

<sup>11</sup>Even though the May Fourth Movement possessed something like the spirit of enlightenment in France, we cannot directly consider the Movement totally as an enlightenment like that of France. For details of the similarity & difference, see Chow (1960: 341-42); Schwartz (1986); Grieder (1970) and Hu Shi (1935).

Fourth Movement is then contradictory to the essence of a cultural revival. King (1987) argues along the same lines that the May Fourth scholars intended not to revive the ancient culture but to replace it by Western ideas. Those May Fourth Scholars who supported the New Culture Movement were motivated by their "admiration" of Western culture rather than the urge to revive Chinese tradition. Concerned primarily with strengthening China, these scholars considered the Chinese tradition outdated; and they therefore criticized the old tradition. At the beginning a movement to criticize old tradition, the May Fourth Cultural Movement developed into a movement to criticize old tradition to a movement of anti-traditionalism because these intellectuals believed that the cultural crisis could be resolved only by learning from the West. The call for total westernization indicates that the MFM was a movement of reformation rather than Renaissance (King, 1986: 199-212).<sup>12</sup>

In addition, Chow (1960) considers that the notion of "reorganization of the national heritage" suggested by Hu Shi and other May Fourth scholars as a later development of the movement. The main concern of those May Fourth scholars, was how to maintain sovereignty and to free China from Japanese invasion, was exposed in the student protests of 1919. Students attacked the warlord government for making a secret agreement with the Japanese government with the intention of expanding military forces. Besides, they also criticized the Western countries not only for allowing Japan's invasion of China but also for not condemning such a move.<sup>13</sup> Out of their prime concern of national survival and national construction, the students organized themselves to join the popular protests in 1919. The most pressing issue confronted by these May Fourth scholars was the national crisis, especially when the country was in the midst of disintegration in both political and orientational orders. Imbued with patriotism, intellectuals sought alternate ways for saving China. The student protests thereby

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<sup>12</sup>For details of the view of the May Fourth Movement as a "Chinese Reformation", see, for example, Chow (1960: 341-342); see also Schwarcz (1986) and King (1987: 199-212).

<sup>13</sup>For details of the historical context of the movement, see, for example, Chow (1960: 84-170) and Fairbank (1983).

developed into a nation-wide popular movement.

Despite the general agreement shared by most May Fourth scholars the most fundamental problem that China confronted had to do with the cultural crisis, different intellectuals adopted diverse strategies to tackle such intense crises. Early in 1917, the May Fourth scholars staged the movement discarding old Chinese tradition on the one hand and supporting democracy on the other. They also painstakingly explored questions such as "what is the role of traditional Chinese culture in the restoration and renewal of Chinese civilization amidst the general crisis of a cultural failure-of-nerve?", "should the traditional culture be simply discarded, or persistently reaffirmed even in the face of formidable challenges?" The different stances of the scholars toward the solution of the cultural crisis revealed the controversial and complicated nature of the problem. On the one hand, the May Fourth positivist and the left-wing scholars totally rejected Chinese culture, whereas the National Essence school adopted the stance of reaffirming the moral superiority of Chinese tradition. Sitting in the middle were the New Confucians who struggled against both extremes and maintained their moderate ground.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the fact that the Chinese intelligentsia had emerged as a visible group of new social types in the 1920s as Chang Hao (1987) suggested, they were far from a coherent and cohesive group. It is observed that these intellectuals were of diverse political stands, the growing division among them inevitably created heated intellectual debates and controversies. No matter how critical and iconoclastic Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu, Li Daozhao and other intellectuals of China's tradition and culture, they were only "part" of the whole Chinese intellectual community. With divergent views on China's problems and ways to solve the intense social and political crises that China was confronting, some scholars such as Liang Shuming advocated the restoration of Chinese past. Like the first generation of Chinese intellectuals: Liang Qichao, Wang Guowei and Cai Yuanpei who were of divergent and even conflicting views on China's problems and adopted different

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<sup>14</sup>Chang Hao (1987) discusses the ideological formation and response of the first generation of Chinese intellectuals in modern China to the intense cultural crisis which deserves particular attention. For details of the divergent stands in solving the cultural crisis in this period, see, for example, Fairbank (1983); Bianco (1977); Chow (1960: 289-370) and Li Zehou (1990b).

approaches in solving them. Seen in this light, the May Fourth intellectuals were a divided group of people, having different interpretations and strategies in coping with China's immediate crises. Therefore, we should be aware that despite the iconoclastic elements shared by many of the second generation of intellectuals, we cannot make an over-generalizing claim that all of these May Fourth scholars formed a homogeneous group with coherent and unified political platform. The following discussion will further demonstrate how diverse intellectuals and their ideas are even though they are regarded as "reformists" supporting democracy and anti-traditionalism. With different social locations and from diverse intellectual fields, together with different socio-political and socio-economic opportunities that they accessed, intellectuals selected different strategies in response to their unique socio-historical circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

## **MAJOR THEMES OF THE MAY FOURTH SCHOLARS' THOUGHT**

Putting this socio-historical context into perspective, we observe that the central problem confronting the May Fourth intellectuals involved the interplay between the forward-looking and far-reaching life style of modernity and a stubbornly sustaining and old-fashioned tradition. The extent of the crisis is not only a matter of individual interests concerning the role of the intellectuals themselves but also a matter concerning the whole nation. Despite the fact that many issues of concern were raised during this era, the central themes are emancipation and national salvation, new epoch and modernity and almost unanimous calls for democracy.

### **Emancipation and Anti-traditionalism**

The spirit behind their cultural iconoclasm and total rejection of tradition is the strong urge for emancipation and liberation of man.<sup>16</sup> "Emancipation of man", to most of the May Fourth scholars, had to do with the rejection of the old traditional "norms and

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<sup>15</sup>For details of the divergent stands in solving the cultural crisis in the May Fourth period, see, for example, Fairbank (1983); Bianco (1977); Chow (1960: 289-370) and Li Zehou (1990b).

<sup>16</sup>For details of their cultural iconoclasm and totalistic anti-traditionalism, see Lin Yusheng (1979) and Chow (1960).

regulations" (*Li jiao*) embedded in the feudal cultural-political order. Many of them believed that destruction of the old would bring a new order for China. Kang Lin, whose study is on May Fourth fiction, highlights the fact that the central conflict which confronted the May Fourth scholars was between the awakened individual on the one hand and the society in its entirety on the other. Kang Lin also suggests that the basic cause of this conflict between individual and society lies not in literature itself but in social realities (Kang, 1987: 171). In this regard, a deeper understanding of such a conflict requires a contextual analysis of the ideas of these intellectuals.

Chen Duxiu denounced the traditional Confucian thought and openly declared "unless the old [society] is demolished, the new one will not arise" (Chen, 1916). He condemned Confucian thought, arguing that it had sustained superfluous ceremonies, preaching the morality of meek compliance with authority, and disparaging struggle and competition. Hoping to rejuvenate China, Chen (1915) steadfastly emphasized the significance of individuality. He openly abandoned the Confucian ethics such as filial piety and loyalty to one's leader, the caste system condoning the unequal status of individuals, and the sexual double standard causing inequality between the sexes and impracticality for everyday life, considering the Confucian principles outmoded. He even openly declared that "Chinese thought is a thousand years behind Western thought", advocating a total rejection of the past and putting faith in progress, democracy and science (Chen, 1915, 1916, 1919). Lin Yusheng suggests that the fundamental source of Chen's idea of anti-traditionalism lies in the role nationalism played in his thinking (Lin, 1979: 59). Nationalistic iconoclasm is clearly found in his ideas.

"All our traditional ethics, law, scholarship, rites and customs are survivals of feudalism. When compared with the achievement of the white race, there is a difference of a thousand years in thought, although we live in the same period. Revering only the history of the twenty-four dynasties and making no plans for progress and improvement, our people will be turned out of this twentieth-century world, and be lodged in dark ditches fit only for slaves, cattle, and horses. I really do not know what sort of institutions and culture are adequate for our survival in the present world if in such circumstances conservatism is still advocated. I would much rather see the past culture of our nation disappear than see our nation die out now because of its uniqueness for living in the modern world. ... Whatever cannot skilfully change itself and progress along with the world will find itself eliminated by natural selection because of failure to

adapt to the environment." (Chen, cited in Lin, 1979: 66)

In view of China's deep cultural crisis, Chen believed the learning from the West and the quest for modernity as the only way to national survival. With his single-minded wish to save China, Chen attempted whatever possible ways to 'cure' China's illnesses. Such an observation might shed more light on the frustration of Chen's political stands, ranging from liberal to Marxist.<sup>17</sup>

Like Chen, Hu Shi attributed the fundamental cause of China's backwardness to its feudal and outmoded culture. One point in common between Hu and Chen lies with their interpretation of tradition --- the rejection of feudal norms and regulations (*Li jiao*). However, Hu adopted another way to resolve China's problem. He pointed toward the importance of enlightenment of the people by which he also supported the destruction of the old and the construction of the new. Even though he did not admit that he was a cultural iconoclast, his speeches and writings during the May Fourth Movement revealed his ideas of anti-traditionalism (Wang Dezhao, 1979). In his short story "The Island of Unchanging Reality", Hu hoped "to destroy superstition and enlighten the people's intellect". Hu also criticized the Chinese people for their unwillingness to think (Hu Shi, 1954). Early in 1917, Hu wrote his work *Yibusheng Zhuyi* to condemn Chinese tradition. He also wrote a script for a drama supporting the liberation of women from feudalistic family and marriage systems. These works affected the Chinese intellectual community greatly, invoking debates on anti-traditionalism (Hu, 1917). In his preface to the writings of Wu Yu, (another May Fourth cultural iconoclast who strongly condemned feudalistic family systems and outdated rituals and rules in Chinese tradition) Hu praised Wu as a respectable hero in attacking Confucian thought (Wang Dezhao, 1979). Differing from Chen who participated in political movements and became a leader of revolutionary activities to save the country, Hu Shi used intellectual reorganization of Chinese culture throughout his whole life with the intention to enlighten the people.

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<sup>17</sup>For details of the development of Chen's thought, see the following discussion, Li (1990a); Chi (1986) and Wang Hongmo (1985). Solomon and Sullivan (1973) and Pepper, S. (1973) had a good discussion on the ideological formation of these May Fourth Scholars which deserves attention.

Lin Yusheng (1979: 83) observes that Hu Shi was embedded in a life-long contradiction --- "between his commitment to both the evolutionary reform of Chinese tradition and the total rejection of that tradition". Such a life-long contradiction is reflected not only from his ideas but also from his real life. Hu Shi condemned the feudal marriage which was not free but was arranged by parents. Hu Shi intellectually rejected such a stubbornly sustained tradition, but emotionally he himself had to accept his marriage to an illiterate woman to please his mother. Even though he found himself a good girl friend during his studies in the United States, he finally gave up his wish (Zhou Mingzhi, 1989).<sup>18</sup> Such an observation has indicated the complicated social psychology of Hu.

Similar to Chen and Hu, Lu Xun also attacked Chinese tradition, especially the feudal rituals and thoughts. Some questions central to Lu Xun's thought are: What is the ideal nature of man? What is the greatest deficiency in the nature of the Chinese people? What is the root of the sickness of the Chinese people?<sup>19</sup> In his "Diary of a Madman", Lu Xun pointed out that traditional Chinese rituals and thought patterns which had suffocated the people must be totally rejected. In his "True Story of Ah Q", Lu Xun exposed the weaknesses of the national character of the Chinese people. Ah Q is characterized by what Lu Xun suggested is a vile, cunning and megalomaniacal personality. Ah Q used "the method of securing spiritual victory" to rationalize the humiliations which he experienced in order to make himself more comfortable. With such a portrait of Ah Q's personality, Lu Xun tried to unravel the fact that the Chinese people not only had failed to admit their weaknesses but also had tried to escape from reality rather than to evaluate themselves genuinely. With the story of Ah Q, Lu Xun

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<sup>18</sup>In addition, Hu Shi originally opposed the traditional idea that having offspring is very significant to family continuity. He once said that he did not want to get married for he did not regret having no offspring. However, he eventually got married and had a child afterwards. Hu wrote a poem to his new born child expressing no mercy for him, and indicating that his rearing and care of him was mere responsibility. He therefore told his son that it was unnecessary for him to observe the Confucian ethics of filial piety. Through this incident we learn that a deeper level of conflict confronted Hu Shi. Zhou Wen, another May Fourth intellectual, also experienced a similar conflict for he also sacrificed his love in the cause of filial obedience. See Zhou Mingzhi (1989) and Kang Lin (1987: 178).

<sup>19</sup>These questions are cited in Lin (1979).



intended to criticize the Chinese tradition and to arouse the people's deeper reflection upon themselves.

"My method is to make the reader unable to tell who this character can be apart from himself, so that he cannot back away to become a bystander but rather suspects that this is a portrait of himself as well as of everyone [in China]. Therefore, a road to self-examination may open up for him." (quoted from Lin Yusheng, 1979: 124)

In addition, we also observe that the central conflict between individual and society is embedded in Lu Xun's works. In In the Tavern (*Zai jiulou shang*), Lu Xun's protagonists are both idealistic fighters and socially oppressed slaves. His A Happy Family (*Xinfu de jiating*) also reflects a similar conflict in which a young writer made a decision to "overcome all obstacles" in order to emancipate himself five years ago but is now unable even to conjure up "a happy family". Lu Xun pointed out that the desolation of life, the responsibilities of supporting a family and the heavy household load had contributed to his "failure" in realizing emancipation.<sup>20</sup>

#### National Salvation Eclipsed Emancipation

The foregoing discussion has highlighted the fact that many of these May Fourth scholars had a prime concern for individual freedom and emancipation. A persistent theme of the dichotomy between reformism and revolutionism which had pervaded the late 19th Century (see, for example, Rankin, 1971 and Chang Hao, 1987). It bifurcated into reformists who proposed to solve the political crisis by means of cultural transformation while revolutionists adopted more radical political action to deal with the national crisis. However, one question that emerges here is why reformism failed to create a consistent force to transform Chinese society in the twenties. To answer this question, we must again turn back to the particular socio-historical context of the May Fourth era. The urgent national crisis required an immediate solution, but emancipation required much time to be realized. Because the May Fourth scholars recognized that the

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<sup>20</sup>The central conflict between individual and society and the strong urge for emancipation also constitute the theme of the May Fourth fiction. As one of the May Fourth writers Yu Dfu said, "[The greatest success of the May Fourth Movement lay, first of all, in the discovery of individual personality." For details of such discussion, see, Kang Lin (1987). Putting these observations together, we conclude that the common concern among these scholars is humanism and emancipation of man, coupled with a strong urge to solve China's immediate cultural crisis.

intellectual and cultural transformation of China was difficult to achieve quickly, some of the May Fourth scholars turned to politics, adopting the revolutionary practice of Marxism-Leninism. Li Zehou (1990a) suggests a dual thesis for the MFM, arguing that the Movement is characterized by dual themes of enlightenment and national salvation. He also argues that even though these two components are different, they are mutually interactive. The urgency of national salvation had finally eclipsed the demands for enlightenment.<sup>21</sup> This idea also explains why liberalism had lost ground in China and had to give way to Marxist ideas. In order to achieve a wholesale transformation of the values and spirit of the people, some May Fourth intellectuals changed their moderate approach to a radical one, believing that to follow Russian way of revolution could resolve China's immediate crisis. The Russian revolution set them a practical example, satisfying their thirst for national unification and national independence. As Li Zehou (1990a) suggested, the early revolutionaries like Li Dazhao, Chen Duxiu, Zhou Enlai and even Mao Zedong had not studied and understood wholly the works of Marx and Lenin. They adopted Marxism and Leninism because the ideals of Marxism were consistent with their aspirations. Lin Boqu, one of the CCP members who converted from liberalism to Marxism in the 20's, ascribed such a change mainly to their disappointment in the 1911 Revolution. Originally, they expected that there would be peace after the 1911 Revolution. When the Revolution failed, and democracy could not be achieved overnight, they then took the Marxist path in order to save and transform China immediately (Lin Boqu, 1941). In addition, the "hypocritical nature" of the Western world in the settlement of the World War I also made Chinese intellectuals disappointed.<sup>22</sup> Li Dachiu, one of the earliest leaders of the CCP, observed that the First World War had

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<sup>21</sup>Wu Sheng (1981), a historian of Party history in socialist China, also considers the prime concern of the people in the May Fourth period national salvation.

<sup>22</sup>President Wilson of the U.S.A. promised Chinese people that he would help China retain Shantung province getting it back from Germany in the peace settlement of WWI, but he did not keep his promise and allowed Japan to occupy this area without China's agreement. One point that deserves emphasis is that the critical thinking of the May Fourth scholars is not only applied to the evaluation of the old Chinese tradition but also to Western thinking. The hypocrisy of the West made these scholars disappointed. Experiencing the pain of imperialism, they realized that a western style of democracy was only a dream. Against such a background, they turned away from liberalism to Marxism (see, for example, Ju Chouba 1982: 34, 35)

already shaken the foundation of European civilization and inevitably led to a deep suspicion among Chinese people toward the sincerity of the West (Cheng, 1990). Questioning the value of European civilization, these early revolutionaries eventually adopted a more radical approach, believing that the Marxist path could transform China. Wu Sheng (1981: 10) maintains that the basic cause for the conversion into Marxism of those early revolutionaries is the hope given by the Russian Revolution, depicting a blissful picture of the liberation from feudalism and economic backwardness. Because of similarities between China & Russia -- both countries were politically feudalistic and economically backward, they therefore turned to the socialist path. Similarly, Geng Yunzhi (1990: 91) also remarks that "it is quite obvious that Marxism was accepted at first as a weapon for national salvation, not as general thinking." It is in this regard we support the notion that the strong urge for national salvation replaced the call for emancipation during the 1920s.

#### Strong Sense of New Epoch<sup>23</sup>

A parallel call alongside total anti-traditionalism is "modernity" including the ideas of "science and democracy" and "developing new epoch" as the ideal means for modernizing China. A closer examination of the thought of the May Fourth scholars reveals their "universalistic" orientation in conceptualizing social reality (*chaoliu yishi*). Chang Hao (1989a) has summarized the thoughts of May Fourth scholars clearly, arguing for a new awareness of an outside world had emerged since the 19th century, which awareness was deepened and exacerbated when China was repeatedly defeated by the external world. Under such circumstances, the May Fourth scholars strived to learn from the outside world, trying to keep pace with development there. They put forward the idea of epoch (*shidai*) which is also a logical intellectual development as they rejected the old tradition and searched for something new. It is suggested that *shidai* was first introduced in the decade before the founding of the Republic and became popular in the twenties, especially acting as a catchword among those radical intellectuals.

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<sup>23</sup>The material of this section is mainly based on the article of Leo Lee (1991).

"shidai's most important connotation came to be 'the present time' or 'our time', always with the implication that it is a time of breathlessly rapid changes and incessant innovation." (Sun, 1986/87: 52 cited in Leo Lee, 1991: 163)

The idea of new epoch was repeatedly and consistently mentioned in the magazines and publications during the May Fourth era. For instance, the manifesto of the *Xinchao* (New Tide) stressed a comprehension of the new epoch. Luo Jialun, one of the founders of New Tide, proclaimed "knowing your shidai" as a clarion-call. Wang Quqing, a radical poet, stated clearly "knowing your shidai! Your shidai --- that is the present developmental stage of society you are living in --- foredains [sic] what you should do, and whence to start" (Leo Lee, 1991: 163). We also observe that the notion of *Xin* (new) is popular in May Fourth publications like Liang Qichao's "New People" (*Xinmin*), Chen Duxiu's "New Youth" (*Xin qingnian*), "New Literature and Art" (*Xin wenyi*), "New Life" (*Xin shenghuo*). "New Society" (*Xin shehui*) and "New Epoch" (*Xin shidai*) (*Ibid*, 159). The spirit of "new" sheds light on the understanding of the MFM in which most intellectuals had attempted to destroy the old and establish the new with the intention to save the country. Their adherence to "new" also indicates a strong urge for "modernity" in the May Fourth era. Thus, a new historical consciousness was induced among the May Fourth scholars. Having such a historical consciousness, these scholars realized the entry into a "new epoch" of world history and began to acknowledge the destiny of their country as no longer separate but an integral part of mankind (*Ibid*). It is against such a socio-intellectual background that different Western ideologies and thoughts began to take root in China. The introduction of Darwinism and evolutionary ideas shocked the whole Chinese intellectual community. Yan Fu, one of the late Qing scholars, translated Darwin's ideas and suggested,

"The greatest and most irreconcilable difference between Chinese and Western thinking is that the Chinese love the past and neglect the present, while the Westerners strive in the present to surpass the past. The Chinese believe that to revolve from order to disorder, from ascension to decline, is the natural way of heaven and of human affairs. The Westerners believe, as the ultimate principle of all learning and government, in the infinite, daily progress, in advance that will not sink into decline, in order that will not revert to disorder." (cited in Leo Lee, 1991: 160)

Yan Fu's introduction of social Darwinism and Spencerian principles of "natural

selection" and "survival of the fittest" had tremendous impact on the Chinese intellectual community, not only giving rise to a nationalistic imperative for China to strive for survival but also stressing the importance of human progress in the new epoch of human history. Having been influenced by such ideas, many May Fourth scholars adopted Darwinian ideas of progressivism. Chen Duxiu, in his plea to youth, stressed the significance of "progressivism" to be one of the characteristics of new youth. In his social organism, Chen compared individuals to the cells of an organism. He anticipated that a country would decline and eventually perish if it remained unchanged. Alongside this, Chen considered progressivism as a universal law in social development (Chen, 1915: 1-6). In another well-known article "The French and Modern Civilization", Chen pointed toward evolutionism as one of the French contributions to mankind. In his article "The Year 1916", Chen proclaimed a consciousness in the twentieth-century,

"The epoch in which you are living, what epoch is this? It is the beginning of the sixteenth year of the twentieth century. The changes of the world are evolutionary, different from month to month, year to year. The shining history is unfolding faster and faster ... To live in the present world, you must raise your head and proudly call yourself a person of the twentieth century, you must create a new civilization of the twentieth century and not confine yourself to following that of the nineteenth. For the evolution of human civilization is replacing the old with the new, like a river flowing on, an arrow flying away, constantly continuing and constantly changing." (Chen 1965, 1: 41)

Bonnie McDougall (1971), in the same manner, suggests that the idea of evolution was discussed in other literary writings of many May Fourth scholars. She has discovered that the general philosophical writings and general literary histories about Western literature and literary theories of Chinese writers were based, in part or in whole, on Western books such as Thilly, *History of Philosophy*; Perry, *Philosophy of Recent Past & Present Philosophical Tendencies*; Marvin, *History of European Philosophy*; Elliot, *Modern Science and Materialism*; works closely associated with the idea of evolutionism.<sup>24</sup> Thus, ideas of evolution and progressivism certainly influenced these May Fourth scholars. Along the same lines, Leo Lee (1991) also observes that the "idea of progress" and "evolution & eugenics" are commonly discussed and quoted in the

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<sup>24</sup>These titles are taken from Chen Zhengmo (1933) *Xiandai zhexue sichao*, as cited in Leo Lee (1991).

writings of the May Fourth scholars like Chen Changheng and Zhou Jianren (the brother of Lu Xun). Thomas Metzger, after examining the ideas of the May Fourth scholars, suggests that a new personality characterized by "the zealously ideological, heroic self" emerged among these intellectuals. According to Metzger, it is with such a new personality of "heroic" type that most May Fourth scholars "habitually expressed great optimism about the imminent change for the better in world affairs". Such an historical consciousness had also provided these scholars with a new "philosophy of life" based on energy and optimism (Metzger, cited in Leo Lee, 1991: 163). Thus we may conclude that Western thoughts and ideologies contributed greatly to the social-intellectual context which shaped the works of such May Fourth scholars as Chen, Hu and Lu.<sup>25</sup>

#### Call for Democracy

Imbued with patriotism and nationalism, most of the May Fourth scholars believed that Western thinking and technology could help transform the old-fashioned, nearly out-dated Chinese tradition even though they had no concise conception of Western ideas. Moreover, they hoped to borrow Western thoughts to fill the ideological void resulting from the cultural disintegration. The success of the West, in the eyes of the May Fourth scholars, related directly to the ideas of "democracy" and "science".

Chen Duxiu initially advocated democracy in the magazine, *Qingnian*, (Youth). Chi (1986) suggests the understanding of Chen's democratic thought in terms of three stages. In the beginning of the New Culture Movement, he turned to the prominent American liberal John Dewey's concept of democracy, hoping it could modernize China. In his series of lectures in China just before the May Fourth Movement, Dewey proposed that China might use its old guild system to build a democratic society based on a model similar to that of county governments in the United States (Dewey, 1973 first published

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<sup>25</sup>The awareness of new epoch was not initiated in the May Fourth era. Among the first generation of Chinese intellectuals in the late Qing period, Liang Qichao was aware of the need to transform China in terms of new ideas and values. After receiving an education in the West, Liang was captured by some of the Western ideas such as democracy, modernity, evolution, rights and freedom, etc. The May Fourth scholars followed the foot path of their forerunners and made the sense of new epoch more explicit. For details of the ideas of the first generation of Chinese intellectuals, see, for example, Levenson (1959); Sun Huiwen (1966) and Lin Qiyin (1989) and Chang Hao (1987).

1919). Chen was much impressed by Dewey. Thereafter, he published several articles supporting Dewey's ideas and advocated that they be put into practice. Chen simply quoted, accepted and divided Dewey's ideas into four categories. First, political democracy is to protect people's rights constitutionally through a parliamentary system; second, democracy of rights is a system in which the freedom of speech, publication, religion and domicile are protected; third, social democracy is to uphold the principle of equalitarianism; fourth, economic equality is concerned with the elimination of economic inequalities and redistribution of wealth between the rich and the poor (Chen, 1919:13).

In regard to his early conception of democracy, we can observe that Chen interpreted democracy as a means not only to resolve social and political conflicts but also to improve society. Chen criticized Dewey's ideas as not being thorough enough; therefore he modified them, and asserted people have the right to formulate the constitution to protect their civil rights. In other words, Chen emphasized people's rights and urged the control of bureaucratic power. He also promoted local self-rule government and trade associations to lay the foundation for democracy at this stage.<sup>26</sup> However, his adherence to liberalism was short-lived. Having found that these proposals defied easy implementation, Chen forsook liberalism for Marxism-Leninism. His disillusion with the Western countries' "betrayal" in allowing Japan's invasion of China had forced Chen to re-evaluate democratic ideals as projected by the West. With Li Daozhao and some other intellectuals, Chen gradually shifted from advocating various forms of democracy to supporting Marxism-Leninism. Having seen the success of the Russian Revolution, they also adopted the more radical method of transforming China through revolution. Their sudden conversion to Marxism again reveals their strong urge to save the country.

The democratic thought of Chen during the communist period can be characterized by his concern for the interests of the masses. Chen evaluated Western democracy and pointed out the fact that Western democracy was suitable for the

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<sup>26</sup>For details of Chen's political thought, see, for example, Chi (1986); Chow (1960); Feigon (1983) and Wang Hongmo (1985).

bourgeois class. He admitted that he was wrong to devote his time only to the reconstruction of China catering solely for the intellectuals. Such a reflection had caused him to shift to mass politics, especially his concern for the working class. He condemned dictatorial rule and preferential treatment to any sectoral interests. With this belief in mind, Chen held that capitalistic economic relations would probably lead to exploitation of the working class. Chen therefore turned to Marxism in order to actualize his ideal of equal society and emancipation. In "The Awakening of the Workers", Chen argued that workers were the pillars of society, and were most useful and important to social development. Having this notion in mind, Chen tried to awaken the consciousness of the workers to revolutionize the country (Chen, 1920: 1-2). In his "Talk about Politics", Chen made his position clear that the most suffering group in this world was workers. He, therefore, argued that workers should struggle for political power (Chen, 1920: 4).

The expulsion from the party in 1929 and his disillusionment with Stalin's dictatorial rule in the Soviet Union made Chen aware that the communist ideal was only a myth. Rethinking the essence of democracy, Chen thereafter pointed out that the dictatorial rule of Stalin lay not only in the ruler himself but also in the political structure. In his "The Last Views of Chen Duxiu", he made it distinctly clear that what he adhered to was the assertion of people's rights, which he considered as fundamental to democracy. He criticized the "democracy of the proletariat" as a weapon to destroy "concrete democracy" (Chen, 1950: 15). Chen (1950) commented,

"though Lenin was then keenly aware that 'democracy is the antidote to bureaucracy,' nevertheless, he did not seriously adopt democratic measures, such as the abolition of the secret police, the permission of the opposition party to exist legally, the realization of the freedoms of thought, press, strike and election." (Quoted from Chi, 1986: 217)

Chen put his position a step further and suggested that democracy could transcend time, class and social systems. He stated the concrete contents of democracy:

1. No government agencies, except the courts should have the right to arrest individuals.
2. No taxation without representation.
3. The government cannot levy taxes without parliamentary approval.
4. Opposition parties should have the freedom to organize, and the freedom of speech and press.
5. Workers should have the right to strike.
6. Peasants should have the right to cultivate land.



7. There should be freedom of thought, of religion, and so forth. (Chen, 1950: 15, quoted from Chi, 1986: 218)

Putting these observations together, we conclude that the central theme of Chen's democratic thought in his last days is the protection of the people's rights. Chen believed that democratic rights should be vested in the masses rather than any minority or any class. He also asserted the freedom of the people under which emancipation can be realized. These observations echo the view of Gu Xin's analysis of Chen's democratic thought, arguing that Chen's conception of democracy is characterized by "democracy for ordinary people" (*Pingmin zhuyi minzhuguan*).<sup>27</sup>

In response to the high tide of the emancipatory movement, a group of liberals (including Cai Yuanpei, Wu Zhihui, Hu Shi and Jiang Monlin) sought individual freedom (Chow, 1960). In varying degrees, they advocated freedom of thought and expression (Cheng, 1990: 74-75). Unlike the leftists, the liberals tended to avoid political entanglement and, therefore, suggested educational and cultural movements to realize reform in China. In Hu's view, the solution to the predicaments of China should not rest on all-embracing "isms" but concentrate on the study of practical and specific problems. With an immediacy to transform China,<sup>28</sup> some liberals joined Li Dazhao, the new Marxist convert,<sup>29</sup> and published a "Manifesto of the Struggle for Freedom". In this manifesto, they demanded the abolition of police oppression, the enforcement of laws and regulations governing the press and publication enacted in 1912 and governing emergencies enacted in 1914. They also called for freedom of publication, speech, assembly, and association; secrecy of communications; the writ of habeas corpus and the supervision of elections by a nonpartisan organization (Hu Shi, 1920: 133-134; see also

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<sup>27</sup>For details, see Gu Xin's analysis in Lin (1989: 215-240) and see also Chow (1990: 505-512).

<sup>28</sup>In this period, there were some political groups with divergent views and approaches to reforming China such as the liberals, the leftists and the conservatives in the late Qing period. These groups struggled to control the ideological hegemony. However, without the support of the warlords, their political proposals were doomed to failure. See, Cheng (1990) and Fairbank (1983).

<sup>29</sup>This coalition between the liberals and the leftists does not mean that they abandoned their original political stands. They cooperated together when they had some common ground. Even though Chen & Hu adopted different political stands the former tended to be more radical while the latter more moderate, they had common concern for Chinese culture, seeing cultural & political change as inseparable. This common concern was revealed through their support of literacy reform. See, for example, Bianco (1971); Cheng (1990); Solomon and Sullivan (1973).

Cheng, 1990). This manifesto, in a word, clearly demonstrates what the May Fourth scholars with liberal thought really wanted. Their conception of democracy rested upon their demand for an open and responsive government. Rejecting autocratic rule, they intended to create a "democratic" government which allows more individual freedom and autonomy. Their adherence to democracy also reveals their strong urge for individual freedom which protects people from restriction and constraint from an autocratic and feudalistic government. This idea is also consistent with their dream for a "free society" without much state interference.<sup>30</sup>

The democratic thought of Hu Shi can be characterized as an "evolutionary approach" because he believed democratization in China could not be achieved overnight. His notion of democracy is consistent with his idea of "drop-by-drop" reform. The ultimate goal for Chinese democracy, according to Hu, was the establishment of democratic constitutionalism in which the people's rights were well-represented and protected. Like Chen, Hu condemned dictatorial rule and consistently fought for democracy in both cultural and political realms. In the midst of debate for either dictatorial or democratic rule in the twenties and thirties, Hu appealed to the people that the only hope for China would be the actualization of democratic politics.<sup>31</sup>

Democratic constitutionalism, in Hu's mind, is a simple system of politics, which is suited to train people with little political experience and competence. Hu suggested that people should be allowed to learn how to exercise their civil and political rights through which process they would gradually grasp the concept of democracy. He considered the practice of democratic constitutionalism as the kindergarten level while dictatorial rule is the graduate level. In this regard, he urged people first to enter the kindergarten rather than jump to the graduate level (Hu, 1933). Here again we can see the idea of progressivism underlying his democratic thought. On 1 August 1948, Hu

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<sup>30</sup>Scholars suggest that the May Fourth intellectuals considered nihilism since they were disillusioned by the feudal political order. Their call for emancipation also led them to adopt the path of nihilism, See, for example, Li Zehou (1990a).

<sup>31</sup>For details of the debate and Hu's democratic thought, see, for example, Chi (1986) and Grieder (1970).

made a radio speech in Beijing appealing to the people for three ideal common goals of modern world culture: first, to use science for diminution of human suffering and improving human life; second, to raise the economic standard of the people through a socialized economic system; and third, to realize the emancipation of man through the establishment of a politically democratic system in which the people could enjoy freedom of thought, creativity, independence and self-actualization (Hu, 1950: 8). In addition to these assertions, Hu also associated liberty and democracy together. His respect for freedom and liberty made Hu believe that the natural evolution of human history moves man inexorably toward freedom in the form of constitutional democracy. In order to realize these goals, Hu supported parliamentary government in China, arguing that oppositional forces in politics are healthy. When he was in Taiwan, Hu declared that only freedom could liberate China's national spirit; and the implementation of democratic reform would bring real emancipation and further development to China's future (Hu, 1950: 17). Having such observations, we may conclude that Hu Shi is a political liberal whose democratic thought reflects a strong sense of Western liberalism.<sup>32</sup>

After examining the views of the May Fourth scholars toward democracy and science, Sheridan (1977: 110) suggests that "westernization, thus conceived, implied the purposeful displacement of Confucian political institutions and social values in order to serve the transcendent need of building national power". In the minds of the May Fourth scholars, the virtues of democracy could fill the ideological void, which was the immediate solution to the national crisis. It is also argued that despite their call for democracy and science, they had no precise understanding of *Minzhu* (democracy) (Cheng, 1990). Their demands for political freedom and individual autonomy, in a word, only reflect their general view against the autocratic government. Their conceptions of

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<sup>32</sup>The May Fourth scholars supported not only Western democracy but also science. It is suggested that many of these scholars advocated Western science, treating it as a means to transform China. They even made science their faith in modernizing China. The rise of scientism has been widely discussed in the May Fourth literature. Li Zehou (1990a: 55-104) also suggests that it is also against the tide of scientism that some of the May Fourth scholars finally supported Marxism since they were influenced by Marxists' claims that their ideology was scientific. Associating modernity with science, these intellectuals eventually joined the path of Marxism and Leninism. For details, see, for example, Chow (1990); Tang (1989).

democracy are not well-defined and far from mature.<sup>33</sup> Some researchers argue that the May Fourth scholars just treated "science" and "democracy" as a "faith", trusting it could help the transformation of China, while other studies also point out that the idea of "democracy" among the May Fourth scholars is undeveloped, fragmentary and inconsistent (see, for example, Lin Yusheng, 1989; Wang Ruo & Gao Like, 1989). Wang (1966: 315) also comments that "[the May Fourth intellectuals] accepted the value of liberty and democracy without question even if they did not really understand the deeper implications of these concepts". Lin Yusheng and Vera Schwarcz, in a similar manner, argue that the May Fourth scholars simply rejected the traditional values as a whole without ever rationally thinking through the question of what to keep and what to discard from the legacy of the past (Lin, 1989: 198-240; Vera Schwarcz, 1991). Deeply in their minds, the May Fourth scholars could not really forget the traditional values. These observations support the view of Levenson, arguing that the May Fourth scholars were emotionally attached to China's past and intellectually committed to Western values (Levenson, 1959). This writer observes at this stage that we should analyze and evaluate these May Fourth scholars' democratic thought in light of the particular socio-historical and socio-cultural contexts. The whole intellectual community of this period was overwhelmed by the intense national crisis. As Oxnam suggested, Chinese people have been questing for "motivating ideology",<sup>34</sup> attempting whatever forms of ideology and value to fill the already disintegrated cultural-moral order. It is thus understandable that people had no systematic study of them but adopted with the intention to strengthen China immediately.

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<sup>33</sup>If we evaluate the concept of democracy of the May Fourth scholars in light of the Western notion of democracy as characterized by procedural rule and checks and balances in the government, we can argue that their notion of democracy is far from mature. For details of Western democracy, see, for example, Pennock (1979) and Macpherson (1973).

<sup>34</sup>I got this insight from Robert Oxnam, a senior research fellow of Columbia University, who spoke on "The Power of the Past in Today's China" for the conference "Continuity & Disjuncture: China in the 20th Century" organized by the Asia Society-Hong Kong Centre, Jan. 1994.

## TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE MAY FOURTH SCHOLARS' IDEAS

People's ideas are influenced by the particular socio-historical context and the situations that they face. Only when we understand their ideas in the context of their different life courses and historical situations can we thus develop a more accurate picture of their ideas. In addition, we shall examine how the social locations of intellectuals have influenced the ideological formation of intellectuals. We also hypothesize that the institutional factors, educational and occupational orientations and social networks of intellectuals might have formative influences on their ideas. In spite of structural and institutional constraints upon the knowledge production of intellectuals, individual variations and diverse interpretations are common. This line of reasoning demonstrates the dynamic and interactive process between the social structure and social agency, revealing also the tension between social and cultural constraints and individual choice. Different social locations and generational experiences, coupled with differed political opportunity structure, individuals may have adopted different coping strategies reacting to their environments. The following section discusses the ideological formation of the foregoing discussed intellectuals' ideas in the light of our proposed analytic framework.

### Social Location and Ideological Formation

It is our contention that the political ideas of the May Fourth scholars were influenced by their unique social locations. Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi and Lu Xun not only shared a similar socio-political context but also had close association with one another. They were the activists supporting the same academic activities, publishing their views and political opinions on *New Youth*, one of the most important magazines of the May Fourth period. Chen Duxiu was the founder of *New Youth*, but soon many of the most brilliant avant-garde intellectuals joined its editorial committee. Because of the pre-eminent position of Beijing University (*Beida*), *New Youth* attained an immediate prominence in the May Fourth intellectual circles. The first issue, entitled, "A Call to Youth" was written by Chen himself. He encouraged the May Fourth young people to

make use their golden opportunities to transform the country, involving themselves into the development of a new culture and new era for China. He concluded with six principles that the youth should follow: "Be independent, not submissive; progressive, not conservative; outspoken, not reserved; cosmopolitan, not parochial; practical, not formalist; and scientific, not imaginative." (cited in Bianco, 1971, 37-38). Hu Shi published his "revolutionary " manifesto of January 1917 under the title "Some Tentative Suggestions for the Reform of Chinese Literature" in *New Youth* introducing the idea of replacing the traditional language (*wen yan*) with the vernacular (*bai hua*). Hu's view received a warm endorsement of Chen. Like Hu and Chen, Lu Xun also revealed to us that the true nature of Chinese people through a lucid madman. Grippled by a persecution mania and the conviction that his family, his neighbours and others in this world attempted to kill him so they could eat him, Lu's madman wonders whether man has always eaten man. Being dissatisfied with stubbornly sustained and excessively ritualistic tradition and classical culture, Lu proclaimed that Chinese tradition had killed and "eaten" people, depriving people's rights and freedom. Lu made it explicitly that "I am to a history that counts four thousand years of cannibalism" (quoted from Bianco, 1971: 38). After the publication of *New Youth*, it was well received by students and intellectuals. Students not only supported *New Youth* but also took its every editorial pronouncement as an article of faith. With its popularity among the Chinese intellectual circles, *New Youth* became the forum for public discourse, creating the room for heated debates concerning the intense social, cultural and political problems that China was confronting. As Bianco (1971) suggested, *New Youth*, in a sense, played the role of *Le Globe*, a French magazine founded in Paris in 1824 as the literary and philosophical organ of the rising Romantic school, creating the forum for creative writing and free expression of ideas in the midst of curtailed freedom of press and restricted publication. Most significant, *New Youth* seemed to be a strong "intellectual force" as what Bourdieu described which influenced the ideological formation of intellectuals and the intellectual tide of the May Fourth era. In addition, *New Youth* also provided the link for these May Fourth scholars, bringing

them together to form a basis not only for cultural critique but also for formulation of plans for solving China's immediate crises.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao also came from the same educational institution, Beijing University. Sharing a similar educational culture and institutional framework, these scholars supported each other, or put in other words, reinforced the critical attitude toward Chinese tradition of one another. One prominent May Fourth scholar must be named here is Cai Yuanpei, the Chancellor of Beijing University during the most critical period of May Fourth Movement. Cai was also regarded as the Father of the Chinese Renaissance who supported and initiated reforms in Beida. Well aware of students' moral well-being, Cai not only supported the formation of a Society for the Promotion of Virtue at the university in 1918 but also defended academic freedom against government pressure. Cai also recruited a heterogeneous group of academics and allowed pluralistic schools of thought. During the office of Cai, Chen Duxiu was appointed as Dean of the Faculty of Letters, one of the four schools which made up the university. Hu Shi was made the professor of the history of Chinese philosophy and Li Dazhao was also recruited as the university's head librarian. Having these people together, Beida inevitably became a unique intellectual field which had significant impact on students' movement in particular and the intellectual current of the May Fourth era. Thus, the magazine *New Youth* and the Beijing University provided the necessary basis for the May Fourth intellectuals who could make use of this as forum for public discourse to form their political platform. Having a strong educational association and social and political ties, these intellectuals therefore shared similar views on China's immediate problems. As Sullivan and Solomon (1973) observed, the scholars who associated closely with *New Youth* generally agreed that China was confronting a cultural crisis which required immediate solution. Putting these observations, it is evident that ideas of intellectuals are influenced by their institutional networks and political ties.

In spite of the similar views that they shared toward the diagnosis of China's

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<sup>35</sup>Sullivan and Solomon (1973) has a detailed content analysis of *New Youth* which deserves particular attention.

problems, different intellectuals adopted divergent strategies or approaches in solving the problems. It is our hypothesis that the difference among these scholars lies with their unique social locations.

### Chen Duxiu

Chen's ideas had been greatly affected by his role as a revolutionary and cultural iconoclast. Chen persistently fought for democracy, and his life concern was to revive China politically and culturally. Unlike most of the May Fourth scholars, whose main concern was the question of cultural change, Chen's major interest was centred primarily on political and social affairs. With a different perception of the role of intellectuals, Chen tended to be more "action-oriented" as he actively participated in political and social movements to save China. He was a veteran revolutionary since he took part in the 1911 Revolution, overthrowing the feudal monarchy. However, Chen did not join the Tongmeng Society (the organization sponsoring revolution against the Qing dynasty) and the KMT. Seeing the KMT as too bureaucratic, Chen therefore advocated popular politics based on freedom and autonomy, considering real democracy and republican institutions as the most fundamental system for modern China. He also pinned his hope on the youth, urging them to free themselves from deep-seated customs and traditions and to become citizens with new ideas of independence and freedom.<sup>36</sup> The conversion from liberalism to Marxism-Leninism highlights not only the change of his political stand but also his interpretation of democracy. After meeting George Voitinsky, Secretary of the Far East Department of the Comintern in 1920 Chen adopted communism and founded the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. From that time on, *New Youth* began to publicize ideas of Marxism rather than liberalism and democracy. It also published a special issue commemorating International Labour Day on 1 May 1920 indicating *New Youth's* close association with the working class. However, the political thought of Chen was not without constraint because of his chairmanship of the CCP from 1921 to 1927. Even

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<sup>36</sup>His role as political activist was clearly indicated from the founding of the *Weekly Critic*, a paper to promote his political ideas and to serve his political purposes, see, Chow (1960: 57) and J. Chen (1971).



though Chen did not totally support the collaboration between the CCP and KMT, he had to uphold the party line to ally with the KMT after having been pressured by the Comintern. Under such circumstances, Chen published *Guide Weekly* to promote the official policy of Communist-Kuomintang collaboration and propagated a national anti-imperialist revolution in China. After all, Chen reluctantly went along with the Comintern view that because the CCP was still too weak to gain support from the people, he had to give up his view eventually. Nevertheless his support of collaboration with the KMT was finally castigated by other party members in the August Seventh Meeting of the CCP held in 1927. Chen was criticized for rightist opportunism toward the KMT, and forced to resign from the party chairmanship, thereby diminishing his influence in the CCP. The cause of Chen's expulsion from the CCP, his stance toward the Chinese Eastern Railway incident, is worth mentioning here. In 1929, Zhang Xueiang, a young marshal, attempted to seize the Chinese Eastern Railway. The Soviet Union sent a large number of troops to Manchuria. The CCP supported the move of the Soviet Union, espousing slogans such as "Oppose the Chinese Imperialist Invasion of the Soviet Union" and "Support the Soviet Union in Arms". Chen criticized the CCP's stance and denounced it as treasonous to China. Not surprisingly, his critique eventually led to his expulsion from the party.

Having such experiences and disillusionment with Stalin's dictatorial rule in the Soviet Union, Chen began to favour Trotsky's revolutionary theory. He, therefore, began to establish contacts with the followers of Trotsky in Shanghai and openly criticized the Stalinist leadership and the current line of the CCP in "A Statement of Our Political Opinions" in December 1929. Chen published *Le Proletaire* in Shanghai in 1930 to promote Trotsky's revolutionary theory. Against the "main stream" of socialist revolutionary theory, Chen's support of Trotsky, of course, was condemned and he was labelled as a Trotskyite even though Chen claimed that he no longer belonged to any party in his later days. Being expelled from the main stream of the Marxist revolutionary movement, Chen was also caught by the KMT and sentenced to 13 years of imprisonment

for his anti-government propaganda. During his time of imprisonment, Chen reflected deeply upon his revolutionary ideas and conception of democracy.<sup>37</sup> His emphasis on emancipation and individuality also indicates his recognition of the essence of autonomy and independence. Chen's change in social location from party chairman to prisoner, coupled with perception of his "existential" situations, had influenced his political ideas in his last days.

### Hu Shi

Hu Shi, like Chen, was not immune to the impact of his social location. Being a scholar and cultural critic, Hu not only advocated the destruction of feudal tradition but also initiated the reorganization of Chinese culture. Realizing the difficulties in democratization, Hu spent his life in scientific interpretation and reorganization of the ancient Chinese culture. In addition to the role of cultural critic, Hu had been closely associated with the Nationalist government. Hu was initially critical of the Nationalist government; but from the Japanese invasion of Manchuria onwards, Hu became supportive of the government. Despite his dissatisfaction with the government in many ways,<sup>38</sup> Hu still pinned his hope on this government to resist Japanese militarism. In September 1938, Hu was appointed as Chinese ambassador to the United States (a post he held until September 1942). His close affiliation with the Nationalist government nevertheless offended many intellectuals. Not surprisingly, Hu was criticized for his compromise, cooperation and partial apology for and involvement with the practical politics of the KMT.<sup>39</sup> Despite the criticism from the intellectual circles, Hu's close association with the Nationalist government became clearer when he advised Mao Zedong not to establish another political party based on military force and to give up the use of armed force during the conflict between the KMT and CCP. In September 1945,

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<sup>37</sup>For Chen's biographical details, see Chi (1986).

<sup>38</sup>For details of his criticism on the Nationalist government, see Chi (1986: 108-114).

<sup>39</sup>For details of his relationship with the KMT, see Chi (1986) and Grieder (1970 especially the appendix on CCP's criticism of Hu Shi).

Hu was appointed as the president of Beijing University and later he was also elected as the chairman of the People's Congress after the Nationalist government's entry into the Nationalist constitutional period. When the CCP took over the mainland, Hu went with the Nationalist government to Taiwan. Later, he went to the United States to continue his scholarly work. During this time, Hu still expressed openly his support for Jiang Jieshi, the leader of the Nationalist government, regardless of how difficult the situation might be. Hu returned to Taiwan and was appointed president of the Academia Sinica and held the post in Taipei from 10 April 1958 up to June 1964 when he died suddenly of a heart attack.<sup>40</sup> Hu's role as an establishment intellectual and life-long career as cultural critic thus affect his political stand and conceptualization of social reality.

### Lu Xun

Being a social and cultural critic, Lu Xun was also affected by his social location. Unlike Chen, Lu was not a political activist but a scholar. In the beginning of the May Fourth Movement, he supported the New Cultural Movement, seeing it not only as a possible means for Chinese enlightenment but also an opportunity to establish a new socio-political order. He therefore denounced the Chinese tradition as other cultural iconoclasts did. In his later years, Lu Xun became a sinologist working in the field of Chinese literature. With such a role he began systematically to revive and reorganize Chinese culture. His ideas of anti-traditionalism, according to Lin Yusheng, are far from total rejection of China's past. Instead, Lu Xun never escaped from the tension between intellectual rejection of but emotional attachment to Chinese tradition (Lin, 1979). Putting these observations together, there is a definite and powerful relationship between the intellectuals' affiliation with social and/or political organizations and their intellectual production.

Equally important, the perception of their particular socio-historical situation exerts also formative influences on them. Geng Yunzhi (1990: 96) suggests that most of the May Fourth scholars were disappointed by their particular social and political

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<sup>40</sup>For the biography of Hu, I depend on Chi (1986).

situations. Direct confrontation with "political corruption, intellectual chaos, inordinate respect for everything ancient, strong inertia, the restoration of lifeless things and the adherence to pernicious customs all combining to stifle society" in the 1920s made them frustrated. Under such political and social circumstances, most of these scholars lost their interest in politics, considering it as dirty and without merit. Huang Yuanyong, one of the most prominent journalists in the May Fourth era, wrote that "all one can find in today's politics is defects, never merits" and "nothing in the current situation offers a topic of discussion" (cited in Geng, 1990: 96). Their realization of the hollow framework of the Republican system, together with their consciousness of the need to revive the national spirit, drew most of their attention in search of solutions for the immediate cultural and ideological problems. Because Hu Shi and Lu Xun perceived themselves essentially as scholars and thinkers, coupled with the fact that they had no political power and influence in the early May fourth period, they initiated cultural change in China rather than taking part in the revolutionary movement. Whereas Chen Duxiu perceived himself not only a cultural critic but also a political leader, he therefore became a revolutionary. In short, their perceived role of intellectuals and their diagnosis of the existing situation influenced their action during this period (for details, see Geng, 1990). The foregoing discussion has so far indicated that even these scholars were of the same socio-historical and socio-political contexts, they adopted different strategies because they had diverse perceptions of their roles and also the secondary ties such as their political affiliation also influenced how they reacted to the external crisis or threat.

#### Generational location and Intellectual Radicalism

In addition to the influence of social location on intellectuals, I also suggest that their generational locations also had formative influences on their political stand and ideas. Chen, Hu and Lu were born in a similar socio-historical context in which they encountered immense national crisis. In light of the schematic form of generational location, I regard Chen, Hu and Lu as members of the second generation of intellectuals in modern China.

Hu Shi was born in Shanghai on 17 December 1891 in Anfei province. Chen Duxiu was born in Huai-ning on 8 October 1879, 12 years before Hu, within the same province of Anfei. Lu Xun was born on 25 September 1881 in Shaoqing, Zhejiang province. Though their ages were different, they were born in a similar socio-historical context and experienced similar socio-political crises. Li and Schwarcz (1983/84: 46) suggest,

"Generational identity is not necessarily self-conscious or obvious. The age of any particular intellectual in itself cannot explain fully to what generation he or she belongs. Certain intellectuals, such as Hu Shi, for example, although much younger than Lu Xun and Chen Duxiu, may be said to be part of their generation nonetheless. Others, such as Liang Qichao and Lu Xun, play key roles in the lives of more than one generation ... Some people keep repeating, in new ways, the views of previous generations, keep pursuing earlier ideals."

In this regard, it is difficult to categorize intellectuals into distinct and separate generations, but it is nevertheless important to classify intellectuals in terms of different generations to illuminate how the historical situations that they encountered influenced their intellectual production.

The second generation of Chinese intellectuals in modern China confronted both internal socio-political crises and external threat. This generation of intellectuals emerged in the early stages of the disintegration of the feudal socio-political and cultural-moral orders and the rise of an immature republican government especially grappling with internal instability caused by unceasing conflicts among warlords and by foreign invasion. Being exposed to such a socio-historical context, these intellectuals were profoundly coloured by patriotic devotion and imbued with a strong national-salvation ideology. Under the threat of national survival, they were confronted with an unprecedented challenge to find immediate solutions to the intense and urgent crises in order to save the country from total bankruptcy. The complexity of the problems made the ideas of the second generation of intellectuals very complicated. They had to think through a series of difficult questions such as the integration and evaluation of Eastern and Western civilization, political ideologies and ideologies for the cultural-moral realm in modern China. Their major concern is the struggle between tradition and modernity in

which they had to find the way for the modernization of China. It is also suggested that it is difficult rather than easy conditions that produce civilization, especially when civilization must be achieved with a hitherto unprecedented effort as a response to a challenge which has shaken the fundamental socio-political and cultural-moral orders. The sudden crushing defeat of the traditional political-social order in the late Qing period forced those intellectuals to chart a new course for the country. That explains why many Chinese intellectuals considered the salvation of China politically and culturally as the most significant task to which they were anxious and willing to devote themselves. Different proposals and thoughts for China's rebirth can be seen as the products of this particular socio-political context.

According to Li & Schwarcz, Chen, Hu, and Lu are regarded as the architects of the Chinese Enlightenment Movement. Their disillusionment at the failure of the 1911 Revolution caused them to look for new ways to solve China's cultural dilemma. Li & Schwarcz suggest,

"Whereas the previous generation was consumed with national salvation, the second generation was able to turn its full attention to the anti-feudal new culture movement. This was a thoroughly iconoclastic generation, which tried to chart new directions in literature, through a new vernacular language movement. It was also the first to explore Marxism, as well as to champion the slogans of science and democracy." (Li & Schwarcz, 1983/84: 48-49)

Unlike their previous generations whose main concern was how to restore the political order, the second generation eagerly put their energy to the task of establishing not only a strong political order but also a new cultural identity as a mechanism to integrate Chinese society and to fill the ideological void. Up to this point, we conclude that the unique generational locations to which the intellectuals belonged greatly influenced their ideological formation. Again, we must be conscious of the limitations of the notion of generational location since different intellectuals, despite having similar generational experiences, may have reacted and behaved differently to their external environments. It is in such a conjuncture that we have to link Bourdieu's "strategy" and the idea of "political opportunity structure" together to have a deeper analysis of their

ideological production.

### Educational Orientation, Intellectual Field and Ideological Formation

Apart from the impact of the generational location, we must also examine how the climate of thought in general and the intellectuals' educational orientations in particular influenced their ideological formation.

It is intellectually stimulating to know how different sorts of intellectual influences provided "symbolic resources" for or set constraints on their responses to their socio-historical context. More specifically, we must examine how the range and configuration of ideas, values and beliefs influenced the ideological formation of these scholars. Their exposure to the intellectual milieu may have taken formal or informal channels. Most important of all, Chen, Hu & Lu were provided with similar "symbolic resources", that is, their training and exposure to the Chinese classics before they went to study abroad. At the age of six, Chen began his formal studies in *Four Books* and *Five Classics* in the traditional manner of learning by rote. His grandfather was a strict teacher who asked Chen to recite passages properly. Such a training gave Chen a solid foundation in Chinese classics (Chi, 1986). Like Chen, Hu Shi began his Chinese study when he was only three years old. His father taught him and his mother who was also illiterate, Chinese characters. They learned Chinese by using red paper cards. At the age of nine, after his father's death, Hu was taught by his uncle and later by his cousin, at family school. From 1895 to 1904, he studied ancient texts. Once, Hu accidentally found the popular novel *The Water Margin*, the reading of which influenced his writing style and also led him to organize a literary revolution later (Ibid). After examining Hu's thoughts, Chi suggests,

"Although Hu Shih [Hu Shi] has generally been grouped among iconoclastic scholars, his attitude toward Chinese history, especially in his later years, differed greatly from that of scholars who wanted to destroy everything traditional and who dismissed almost everything traditional as valueless." (Chi, 1986: 115)

In his article "Old Way to Look at Chinese Ancient Political Thought", Hu Shi demonstrated his moderate stand as a cultural iconoclast. Instead of totally abandoning

Chinese culture, Hu reappraised the Chinese past.

Lu Xun, like Chen and Hu, had a strong foundation in Chinese classics. We must not ignore the fact that Lu Xun was one of the prominent scholars in the history of Chinese literature.<sup>41</sup> Lin Yusheng, having examined the works of Lu Xun, points out the fact that Lu Xun failed to abandon totally the Chinese tradition even though he had attempted to do so. Lin observes that Lu spent much time in scholarly research on various aspects of that tradition. Lu Xun's decision to embark on a literary career is a catalytic rather than a decisive factor in giving up his medical studies since he had a profound interest in literary and artistic matters. He was also an avid reader in Chinese ancient texts. Having an extensive reading of some standard collection of poems and orthodox histories during his study in his home town, Lu Xun developed a solid basis in Chinese literature. Apart from orthodox texts, Lu also read "unorthodox" books such as traditional novels, folklore, Daoist texts and commentaries, local histories, heterodox historical works and treatises on printing. With such an intellectual background, it was easy for Lu to take up a career as social critic in his later years. Lin also observes that Lu Xun's works demonstrated a close link with Chinese traditional thoughts.

"He [Lu Xun] made use of some traditional stylistic techniques in his creative writings. Personally and aesthetically, he appreciated a number of elements in the tradition." (Lin, 1979: 137)

His Brief History of Chinese Fiction is a pioneer work in this field, treating judiciously the evolution of traditional Chinese fiction. Lin suggests that Lu's scholarly treatment of traditional Chinese fiction and his iconoclastic totalism seem contradictory (Lin, 1979: 138). Lu Xun experienced no tension as a result of this apparent contradiction since he believed the element of realistic humanism in traditional Chinese fiction was universally applicable to literature whether in the Western or the Eastern world (ibid). Nevertheless, such an assertion of Lu Xun still leaves unresolved the problem of his willingness to discard some positive elements in Chinese tradition, albeit

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<sup>41</sup>His eminence in Chinese study is well-recognized as the late professor Tsi-an Hsia regarded Lu Xun as one of the most learned professors in the field of Chinese literature.



cross-cultural ones. This unanswered question indicates the dilemma confronted by Lu Xun: remembering and forgetting the Chinese cultural inheritance.

Even Chen Duxiu, who persistently fought for democracy and supported totalistic anti-traditionalism in the May Fourth period, still recognized some general and cross-cultural positive elements in the Chinese tradition.

"My anti-Confucianism does not imply that the [Confucian] virtues of cordiality, uprightness, courtesy, temperance, deference, faithfulness, righteousness, honesty, sense of shame, and the [Confucian] way of conscientiousness and reciprocity are worthless. However, these virtues are common to all practical moral systems of the world. Therefore, we should not take pride in the fact that Confucianism has them." (Chen, 1917, cited in Lin, 1979: 80)

His appraisal of Chinese culture and assertion of the positive values in Confucianism have indicated that Chen did not totally reject the Chinese tradition.

The preceding observations indicate that these three intellectuals discussed found it difficult to forget or abandon totally the Chinese tradition because of their strong foundation and knowledge in Chinese traditional thought and classics. Even though they had attempted to discard the tradition totally in the early phase of the movement, they never forgot their learning in Chinese classics. They were still susceptible to the subtle but important appeals of Chinese tradition. Their attachment to tradition may have stemmed from what Levenson (1959) calls "cultural identity". With this particular identity, these intellectuals confronted a complex and dialectical relationship between rejection of old tradition and acceptance of other values. Thus a complicated social psychology was formulated among of the May Fourth scholars. Li and Schwarcz (1983/84: 43) suggest that the May Fourth scholars "being still full of the notions of traditional scholar-officials (*shidafu*) they often lapsed back into conservatism. Many returned to the embrace of feudal culture" (Li & Schwarcz, 1983/84: 43).<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the influence of Chinese tradition, their direct exposure to the West also exerted significant impact on their political and philosophical orientations. Studying

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<sup>42</sup>Kang Lin (1987) and Geng Yunzhi (1990) have a detailed discussion about the social psychology of the May Fourth scholars and they consistently argue that the central conflict confronting these intellectuals is not merely in ideas themselves but they are the products of their particular socio-political and socio-historical settings. Such an observation helps explain why Hu Shi, Lu Xun and other May Fourth scholars advocated "reorganization of Chinese culture" in the later phase of the Movement.

abroad had become more popular since late Qing especially when the leaders attempted to adopt Western technology to transform China and restore the social-political order. Many young scholars were sent to study in Europe, America and Japan.<sup>43</sup> From 1912 to 1929, a steady flow of students travelled to America. Most of the students studied technical subjects such as agriculture, engineering, commerce and mining while only 20% of them enrolled in subjects like law, finance and education (see, Wang, 1966: 111).

Hu Shi went abroad to study in the College of Agriculture at Cornell University after he successfully got the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship. Hu found he was uninterested in farm practice and pomology after being exposed to this field. After a year and a half, he decided to transfer to the College of Arts and Sciences. He got his B.A. in 1914. Upon his graduation, he was admitted to Columbia University to study philosophy under the guidance of John Dewey. Hu Shi was greatly influenced by Dewey and Thomas Huxley. In his article "On Introducing My Own Thoughts", he acknowledged that his ideas were stimulated by both thinkers. Huxley taught him to be skeptical, subjecting everything to doubt before securing sufficient evidence. John Dewey's pragmatism had penetrated Hu's thoughts, stimulating Hu to think and consider at all times the existing problems and the effects of a thought. Having been taught by Dewey and Huxley, Hu began to understand the nature and function of the scientific method (Hu Shi, 1953: 608). As a disciple of Dewey, Hu followed pragmatism closely, arguing that dialectical materialism was meaningless. This also explains why Hu put forward the idea of dealing with pragmatic issues rather than discussing "isms" in the twenties and his consistent adherence to liberalism instead of Marxism.<sup>44</sup>

Chen Duxiu, like Hu Shi, had the chance to study abroad. He started his studies in Japan in 1902. Later, he made several more trips to Japan. It is reported that Chen attended six schools in Japan including Kobun Institute, Tokyo Higher Normal school,

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<sup>43</sup>For detailed research on the students studying abroad from late Qing period to the establishment of new China, see Wang (1966: 74-192) and *Mingbao Yuekan* (Sep. 1993).

<sup>44</sup>For details of the philosophical foundation of Hu's thought, see, for example, Hu (1953); Chi (1986: 102-108).

English Language School, and Waseda University. Some reports also suggest that Chen studied in France from 1907 to 1910, where he grew to admire French culture, but this information is not sufficiently proved (Chi, 1986: 200). Even though we are uncertain what subject Chen studied abroad, he had become politically active during his years of studies in Japan. It is also suggested that his ideas of democracy and revolution were formulated throughout his trips and study in Japan (Ibid).

Chen's political thought, like that of Hu, was greatly influenced by his exposure to Western ideas. A closer examination of his ideas has indicated that Social Darwinism, democracy and Marxism shaped different stages of Chen's ideas. Influenced by Social Darwinism, Chen adhered to progressivism, believing that China would have to pass through difficult, even brutal, struggles to achieve reconstruction. He urged China to adapt to changing conditions. Having been exposed to Western ideas of democracy, Chen considered democracy as the only way to save China. We have discussed in the foregoing part that Chen's early interpretation of democracy was merely related to individualism. He even perceived democracy as a means to improve society. Thus, these observations have shown that Chen's democratic thought is influenced by Western democratic thought. Needless to say, Chen's later ideological development is intimately associated with Marxism. Throughout his years working as a revolutionary in the CCP, he promoted Marxism in China even to the point of involvement in revolutionary activities. The changing socio-political context and his participation in the socialist revolution at last made Chen realize the myth of socialism and he turned to liberalism again in his last days.

Lu Xun, like Chen, also went to Japan to study after his graduation from the School of Railways and Mines in Nanjing. He first received two years' language training at Kobun Institute in Tokyo and thereafter went to Sendai Medical School. According to his own biography, he attempted to be a physician in order to help the people who were suffering from mistreatment of traditional Chinese herb doctors. His personal experience of the death of his father because of mistreatment directed Lu Xun to the medical field.

Lu Xun recalled,

"I had a beautiful dream that I would cure patients like my father, who had been mistreated, upon my return to China: I would serve as an army doctor and thereby I could strengthen the faith of my countrymen in modernization." (Lu Xun, 1956, 1: 4)

Although he performed well in his medical training, he finally gave up his training and turned to literary endeavour. His commitment to work in the intellectual and cultural realms was by no means a sudden change. Deep down in Lu Xun's mind, the intense crisis of the May Fourth era was related to China's cultural crisis, and the root of China's backwardness was due to weaknesses in Chinese national character. He therefore devoted himself to literary work in order to enlighten Chinese people. He believed the modernization of China lay not only in science and technology but also in the spirit of the people (Lu Xun, 1956, 1: 52). Against the tide of emphasizing military and technological modernization, Lu pointed toward the failure of such a narrow view of transformation and argued that a new spiritual and cultural foundation should be established without which he believed China could not successfully achieve the goals of modernization. It is in this light that Lu Xun was also influenced by the tide of "modernity" in the May Fourth period.

In addition to the impact of the general socio-intellectual background of his time, his stress on "individuality" and liberalization had a close link with the ideas of Nietzsche. Lu Xun wrote in *New Youth* to urge the youth to abandon the traditional and feudal thoughts and rituals. Besides, he appealed to the youth to assert their individuality as a fundamental means to revive the spirit of the people. Lu Xun stated,

"The concept of individuality of Nietzsche though difficult to be realized in this world, the spirit behind this idea is very significant for which can bring with a harmonious world." (Lu Xun, 1956, 2: 44-45)

Because of Nietzsche's influence, Lu Xun lamented that the Chinese people lacked the "arrogance of individuals" which Lu considered as a real emancipation of man from feudalism (Lu Xun, 1956, 2: 30).<sup>45</sup> Moreover, Lu Xun was exposed to other

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<sup>45</sup>Kelly (1991a) has researched the impact of Nietzsche on Lu Xun and other contemporary Chinese intellectuals.

Western scholarly works, citing Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Ibsen to illuminate his conception of free development of individuality (Lu Xun, 1956, 1: 185-91).

Putting these observations together, we then conclude that these May Fourth scholars were influenced greatly by their educational orientations and the intellectual milieu. One point which worth stating here is that these intellectuals came under Western influence after they became adults. In this regard, Western influences were superimposed on their minds already steeped in traditional culture. This does not belittle the role of Western influence on their ideological formation but this observation sheds more light on the dilemma confronted by these scholars.

The preceding part has discussed different political stances among the May Fourth scholars. In spite of their common concern for national salvation and cultural revival, they adopted varied approaches to resolve the problems. Their affiliation with different social and political groups also shaped their ideological and political orientations, which were further reinforced and influenced by their unique intellectual fields. Examination of the May Fourth scholars has indicated that Beijing University provided the intellectual basis in which many May Fourth scholars exchanged their ideas of democracy and shared their views of how to modernize China. *New Youth* was also the magazine where most May Fourth scholars like Lu Xun, Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi published their views attacking the Chinese tradition and promoting their ideas of emancipation and democracy. Having such a connection and intellectual basis, these scholars successfully formulated their intellectual field, creating a strong intellectual force to initiate change in both the cultural and political arenas. This finding not only highlights relational and institutional attributes of ideas<sup>46</sup> but also indicates to us how these May Fourth scholars endeavoured to develop their fields in contrast with apparatus as Bourdieu suggests. Even though Bourdieu's notion of "field" cannot be directly applied in 1920's China since the civil society was still weak, the struggle and strategy that these intellectuals had

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<sup>46</sup>Solomon and Sullivan (1973) systematically analyzed the content of *New Youth*, suggesting that cultural themes are the core message of such publications. Despite the fact that splits among intellectuals were observed, they had a common view that China's fundamental crisis is cultural crisis.

striven is highly indicative to us how intellectuals exert their autonomy of values in replace of the state dominant one.

Acknowledging the fact that Gramsci's notion of "war of position" should not be directly applied in China, we still observe that the May Fourth scholars were involved in a struggle of hegemonic control (it seems to be a war of position in Gramscian sense). With different political stances and varied approaches toward the solution of Chinese cultural crisis, these scholars opposed each other in order to control the ideological realm. This cultural-ideological conflict was acute in the debate on the choice between liberalism which signified a pragmatic and progressive way to China's modernization and Marxism-Leninism which advocated radical revolutionary activities. During this intense debate, Hu began to ask people not to speak of "isms" but to give their attention to practical matters. His idea of pragmatism caused him to support the KMT, which he considered as the only and strongest force to resist the Japanese invasion. Not surprisingly, Hu's advocacy was criticized by the CCP (see Chi, 1986; Chow, 1960 and Grieder, 1970).

In addition, the May Fourth scholars were also involved in debating whether the adherence to science could solve China's crisis. Some conservative scholars pleaded support for the revival of Chinese tradition to restore order whereas the liberalists supported science and democracy. Such a debate on science and philosophy in the twenties is highly indicative to us that a war of position was part of the May Fourth intellectual movement.<sup>47</sup> The debate between the Neo-Confucian scholars such as Liang Shuming and the liberal Hu Shi on Eastern and Western civilization and different alternatives for China's modernization again demonstrates the struggle for hegemonic control.<sup>48</sup> Putting these observations together, we thus conclude that struggle or competition were common within the intellectual circles of the May Fourth Movement.

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<sup>47</sup>For details of this debate, see, for example, Li Zehou (1990a: 55-104); Chow (1960, 1990) and Tang (1990: 395-414).

<sup>48</sup> For details of such a debate, see Li Zehou (1990a) and Fairbank (1983).

## **CONCLUSION**

The present chapter has briefly recapitulated the socio-historical and socio-political contexts in which the May Fourth Movement took place. The preceding discussion has also indicated that ideological formation of intellectuals is influenced by different variables. The next chapter will discuss various pro-democracy movements in the post-Mao era.

## CHAPTER THREE

### PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENTS IN SOCIALIST CHINA: A STUDY OF DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRACY

"Down with bureaucratism, return to us democracy", "Long live democracy, down with autocracy", "Give us freedom or let us die" were the catchwords in the pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square of 1989. The spontaneous demonstrations that broke out in Beijing and other cities were unprecedented and unanticipated in the history of the People's Republic of China. Although the movement was formed by the students and intellectuals, it was also joined by the urban workers, ordinary citizens, government bureaucrats and even overseas Chinese. Su Shaozhi (1990), the former director of the Institute for Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought at Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS), also regards the 1989 democracy movement as the largest mass movement in recent Chinese history since it received broad participation from many circles.<sup>1</sup> The movement not only revealed the deeply-seated grievances of the students toward the education system and unfair treatment of intellectuals in particular, but also pointed out social evils such as corruption, inflation, profiteering and economic difficulties in general. Besides, it also brought antagonism between the state and the urban population into the open. More sociologically significant, the June Fourth incident also apparently unravelled the intense sense of identity crisis among the youth in post-Mao China (see, for example, Rosen, 1992 and chapter 4). Scholars suggest that because students are more open to new knowledge, especially in the interaction of the educational

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<sup>1</sup>The following part will discuss the nature of the Tiananmen Square Incident as a people's movement in detail. As suggested by some scholars such as Tony Saich (1990), Frank Pieke (1992) and J. Unger (1991), the student demonstration of 1989 developed into a people's movement in the big cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. According to one source, the number of injured and killed people around the Square and in the edge of Beijing Shi was up to several thousand. It was also reported that thousands and thousands of civilians supported the movement, hoping to protect the student hunger strikers in the Square. Some of them even used their bodies or any kinds of barriers to prevent the martial troops from entering the Square. This source of information is adopted from an informal interview with a Chinese scholar in London, October, 1992. In this regard, I believe the movement was widely supported by people from different walks of life especially in Beijing. See also Unger (1991).



system and socialization, they may become more sophisticated, in receiving Western ideas. It is also observed that students are patriotic and politically minded, having strong aspirations for reforms and revolution, and they are eager to change the existing political and social systems (see, for example, Lauer, 1976: XIV-XV; Emmerson, 1968: 415-416). Lipset also argues in a similar manner that students have often been the carriers of modern ideas of liberty, socialism, industrialization, and equal opportunity especially under autocratic rule. They always play a major role in fighting for freedom and democracy as was shown in the liberation movements and revolutions in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia (see, Lipset, 1969: XV and 1967: 8-9). Student protests and student-led social movements are not "unique" or "particular" phenomena in Europe but have been documented in Chinese history as well.

The call for democracy constituted the central ideology throughout the movement of 1989, which brought the students on different campuses together and made their demonstrations a coherent movement across the country. Though democracy was certainly their battlecry, it is still futile to discuss democracy in the abstract. To different students, democracy may have different meanings and interpretations. It is meaningless just to describe the June-Fourth demonstrations as a democratic movement without a precise understanding of their concepts of democracy. It is against such background that we are going to examine the cognitive side of these pro-democracy movements,<sup>2</sup> looking into how the movement intellectuals conceptualize democracy.

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<sup>2</sup>By pro-democracy movement, I mean that the organizers and participants demanded more political freedom and individual autonomy. Students repeatedly employed the slogan "Long Live Democracy" as their symbol throughout their demonstrations since 1919 (see the discussion in last chapter). Thus I use 'pro-democracy' movement to describe the nature of the various movements in modern China.

## **ADVOCACY FOR DEMOCRACY IN SOCIALIST CHINA**

### Crisis in Socialism and Pro-democracy Movement<sup>3</sup>

In recent years, the crisis of socialism has become a topic of contention among the scholars and intellectuals in both mainland China and East European countries. The ideological disintegration of Communism has become a common phenomenon throughout the socialist states since the majority of the people seem to have lost their faith in the practice of Communist ideals. The past four decades of the 'socialist experiment' in mainland China have demonstrated clearly the problems in the praxis of Communist ideals. People living in China have encountered endless social upheavals. The agony of the Cultural Revolution and the growing awareness of the failure in praxis of Communist ideals in the last two decades have caused the people to lose faith in Communism.<sup>4</sup> According to Su Shaozhi, "the Party and the government discredited themselves by promoting multiple campaigns and making many mistakes" but they have not corrected them immediately (Su, 1990: 7). Predicaments and difficulties have been experienced not only by the general public but also by the educated people like the university students and the intellectuals. As observed by Kelly and Brugger (1990), "there was talk of China's dire 'predicament' and 'crisis'", particularly concerned with surges in inflation, the disclosure of graft and corruption in high places, and continuing malaise among students, intellectuals, and the population generally. In the same vein, He Pochuan (1989) and Li Ming (1989), both intellectuals in mainland China, pronounced the immense crises confronting China and urged immediate attention and resolution toward these intense predicaments. Under such circumstances, decline of ideology or self-legitimation crisis is easily observed in post-Mao China (see, for example, White, 1993 and Kelly, 1991).

In order to rebuild the rapport between the state and the people, the Communist

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<sup>3</sup>For details of the discussion on legitimation crisis or crisis of socialism in post-Mao China, see, for example, my master dissertation written in 1990-1991, unpublished thesis of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

<sup>4</sup>There have been many publications discussing the crises in China ranging from the socio-political to the socio-economical realms in the post-Mao era. See for examples, Li Ming (1989); Ho Pochuan (1989); Li Honglin (1980); Zhang Zhou (1990); Liu 91982) and Rosen (1992); White (1993).

leaders launched the Four Modernizations in the 1970s with the principal goal to quicken the economic development and to improve the life of the people. Apart from that, as the post-Mao leaders tried to secularize ideology, a process of depoliticisation or political demobilization (for details, see, White, 1993).<sup>5</sup> After the national crisis of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident, Deng Xiaoping repeatedly stressed the importance of economic modernization and promised deepening reforms in China. Even though his over eighty-eight years of age, he travelled round the special economic zone. His tour was labelled "Deng's Storm". Furthermore, his idea of economic reform was later confirmed as party policy in the 14th Party Congress of the CCP held in October 1992.<sup>6</sup> However, predicaments in economic and political reforms have brought about discontent and outrage. The overheating consumption, uncontrollable inflation, the stubbornness of bureaucracy and the delay in political reform, all have proved the existence of a deepened crisis in socialist ideals and practice. As Nathan observed, though the reforms have the principal goal to redeem the Party's legitimacy by radically improving the economy, the inflation and devolution of power brought by the success of reform have contributed to a decline in the regime's authority, giving rise to a wave of profound questioning about the rule of Communist China (Nathan, 1990: 108-109; see also Hicks, 1990). A general crisis of faith in socialism and a particular crisis of legitimacy have developed in the post-Mao era. The outspoken physicist Fang Lizhi flatly told a foreign journalist that Marxism was dead in China. Ideological retrogression in the post-Mao era has set a kind of God-is-dead atmosphere in China (Brugger and Kelly, 1990).

Realizing the failure in the Communist praxis and the direct experience of the totalitarian and authoritarian rule, the people in mainland China have begun to seek emancipation and democracy. The exposure to the West has made the people of China

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<sup>5</sup>The senior leaders of the Communist Party have restated and stressed the importance of reforms in the post-Mao era since 1978. The central theme constituting the reforming era is four modernizations. See, for example, the speeches of Deng Xiaoping (see, Deng 1984 and 1993). However, four Modernizations have fallen away in recent years.

<sup>6</sup>For details of this discussion, see, for example, *The Nineties* and *Zheng Ming* (different issues in 1992), which have a series of report and commentaries on this issue. See also Jiang Zemin's (1992) speech addressed in the 14th Party Congress of the CCP. In this meeting, market reforms were confirmed officially.

further believe the success of democracy and technology. From the late 70's onwards, there have been several pro-democracy movements in China, notably the 1976 Tiananmen Incident of "Qin Shihuang, your age has passed",<sup>7</sup> the Democracy Wall Movement in 1978-83, the student protest in 1986-87 and the June Fourth Incident in 1989. Each social movement accentuates the demand for democracy and paves the way for the rise of the intellectuals (Calhoun, 1991).

Social movement (*yundong*) is not new to post-Mao China because mass movements were common under the reign of Mao Zedong. The Red Guard activities were mobilized partly by the central authority. From the late 50's to mid 70's, various mass movements or campaigns were initiated and mobilized by the elite in the party. For instance, elite initiatives were manifested in the targeting of "capitalist roaders", the organization and leadership of factional bands in the Anti-Rightist Campaign, Socialist Education and Four Clean Campaign. As Dittmer (1994: 136) observed, "elite initiatives, however, played out in a context of considerable mass spontaneity." The Party elite orchestrated many mass and social movements behind the scene. Schurmann (1968) and Townsend (1969) argue along the same line that the CCP had a successful record in the mobilization of the masses to support its policies. From this point of departure, large-scale campaigns or mass movements are not totally new to the post-Mao movement activists. It is also such a *yundong* tradition set off the Democracy Wall Movement and subsequent movements.

### The Democracy Wall Movement in the Late 1970's

A "Democracy Wall Movement" erupted on the streets of Beijing in the second half of November 1978 and later spread to other cities in China demanding "democracy, freedom, human right and law".<sup>8</sup> Unlike the June Fourth Movement, this movement was

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<sup>7</sup>Qin Shihuang was the emperor of Qin dynasty and he was infamous because of his autocratic rule. Qin Shihuang was condemned for treating people harshly, killing people without proper reasons and he was regarded as one of the evil rulers in Chinese history. The association Deng with Qin implies that people were extremely angry and dissatisfied with the existing government, especially the autocratic rule under Deng's regime.

<sup>8</sup>The Democracy Wall Movement in the late 70's captured the attention of the West, and it was also regarded as a "Human Rights Movement". For details, see, for example, Aellette Laduguie (1980).

mainly supported and organized by the youth who were sent to work in factory or in village.<sup>9</sup> Concerning the social background of these activists, one point which deserves attention is that some of those participants were educated youth returned from the countryside. Having experienced the 'tragedy' of the "going to the mountains and villages" campaign, these educated youth raised their grievances regarding their "lost youth", especially their missing opportunity in education and suffering from lack of economic and political opportunities during the past decade. After the Revolution, some of these activists took the opportunity to enroll themselves in university. For instance, Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming received university education and they were active in student activities and movements (For detail, see, Goldman, 1981). Unlike other educated youth, this group of young scholars received education at all levels at the time and had also to be workers or peasants for years at a time. In the light of Gramsci's notion of organic and traitional intellectuals, these educated youth seemed to be the "organic one" because they were not working in state apparatus or supported/established by the state as other educated youth. Instead, this group of young people regreted for what they had lost in the Cultural Revolution, being conscious of their independent role and relationship with the state, they were eager to equip themselves in order to be more intellectually independent and academically autonomous.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Unlike the May Fourth Movement and the Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution, the 'Democracy Wall Movement' was not based on student activists. Most of the activists were workers aged between 25 and 35, with a relatively homogenous social background. Besides, most of them were the sons and daughters of the middle and upper-middle strata of Chinese society. They were the children of cadres and intellectuals who, prior to the Cultural Revolution, could have expected better education up to tertiary level; but they were "sent down to the front line of production" during the "dark age". Thereby their future was ruined. Moreover, they were regarded as "wrong class background" because of their parents who were either in disgrace or under suspicion during the ten year tragedy. Their parents had privileged positions before 1966 and were "well-connected"; that's why they were able to protect their children from being sent to the countryside, going instead to the front of the production line. After the Cultural Revolution, the majority of them had already missed the chance to have higher education. Even if they did return to college they were in disadvantaged position. Having lost their "golden opportunity" for developing themselves, these activists were antagonized. For instance, Wei Jingsheng was an electrician at the Beijing Zoo and his father was a cadre in the CCP in Beijing, enjoying the privileged position of deputy director of a department in a central ministry. Yang Guang, Wei's collaborator on "Exploration" (an unofficial publication during the movement) was a student at the Workers' University and a classmate of Hua Guofeng's daughter (the former Party chairman). Yang's father was also a higher cadre and engineer in the Ministry of Light Industry. In this regard, we may conclude that most of the activists shared similar social background and similar experiences. They devoted their youth and energy to support Chairman Mao but eventually found that they had been "cheated". It is against such socio-political backgrounds that they criticized the existing political system, doubted the practical value of socialism, and pointed out the problems of dictatorial rule in past decades. The so-called "Three-Faith Crisis" was the "product" of this circumstance. For details, see, Goodman (1981) and Chiang Chenchang (1981).

<sup>10</sup>Black and Munro (1993) have a detailed discussion on how some of these movement intellectuals who supported the 1976 Tiananmen Square Movement developed themselves as socially and politically independent groups maintaining a detached relationship with the state. In examining the social locations of these intellectuals in the light of Gramsci's notion of intellectuals, we must be cautious that what Gramsci suggested might not be totally applicable to Chinese case since he anticipated the rise of organic intellectuals against a capitalist

The understanding of their social location thus sheds light on the reasons behind their slogans such as "We want work!", "We want food!", "Going to the mountains and villages is reactionary!", "We demand human rights!", "Young people working in production groups are exploited!" (cited in McLaren, 1979: 6). The discovery of the socialist myth made these people conscious of the importance of human rights and freedom. At first, the participants attempted to establish a free speech area, which they named "Hyde park" and which became known as "Democracy Wall". Wall-posters were posted at the very beginning but unofficial press, magazines, newspapers and pamphlets flourished later. To describe this incident as a movement one would expect a greater degree of uniformity in ideas and unity of organization. In reality, the Democracy Wall Movement had no united idea and organization. Instead, it emerged spontaneously various self-styled "mass societies" such as China Human Rights Alliance and the Enlightenment Society. The major concern of these participants was "democracy, freedom, human rights and law". One of the groups within the May Fourth Movement had a slogan of "Democracy and Science", while another group the April 5th Movement raised its critique of late-Maoist China as feudal, fascist and lawless. Most of these activists were merely concerned with the rights to have opinions, to discuss opinions, to experiment, and to express themselves. "Science, Democracy and Law" is thus a digest of all the wall-posters which appeared on Democracy Wall (Goodman, 1981).<sup>11</sup>

Not surprisingly, democracy had different meanings to different individuals and groups without a united platform or ideas. In Goodman's view, these participants had no clear conception of what democracy was but merely replaced "Revolution" by "Democracy", seeing it as the shibboleth in the new language of politics (Goodman, 1981: 7). Like the May Fourth scholars, some of those participants just interpreted democracy as the immediate "withering away" of party control while others conceived

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society instead of socialist society as such. From this point of departure, the adoption of Gramscian notion here is that we believe the educated youth right after the Cultural Revolution were more more conscious of their independence and avoided becoming state apprentice.

<sup>11</sup>For details of their demands and conceptions of democracy, see, for example, Goodman (1981); Nathan (1985); Lin Zhongjian (1978) and Wang Xuzhe (1981).

democracy as Liberal Democracy, Capitalism or Christianity or even the mixture of them (see, for example, Lu Min, 1979: 17 and *Qimeng*, 1 Jan, 1979: 11-27). In addition, some activists also regarded both the United States and Yugoslavia as models for democracy. Different advocates had different definitions of democracy; for instance, Wei Jingsheng's conception of democracy was to maximize individual freedom and non-Marxist socialism, whereas some defined democracy as the Paris Commune. For most of the activists democracy was interpreted as "being under the leadership of the CCP, even though at times this might entail some amazing contradictions" (Goodman, 1981: 8).

We can also basically classify their demand for democracy into two major categories: cultural and political democracy.<sup>12</sup> What they really wanted was to free themselves from the autocratic political system and to liberate the realm of literature and arts. A contextual analysis of their ideas reveals that their demands were the "product" of their particular historical situation. Their dreadful experiences in the Cultural Revolution made them realize the myth of socialist ideals, causing them to question the essence of socialism and thereafter to look for other alternatives. However, not all of them felt totally disappointed in the socialist system. Some of them still supported reforms within the socialist system. They hoped to reform the existing system and develop a real socialist state. That explains why even though most of the activists criticized dictatorship and problems of bureaucratization in Mao's era, they still adopted a Marxist framework to analyze existing problems. Nathan (1985) also argues along this line that people who joined the democracy movement had no intention to overthrow the existing regime. Most of these activists supported socialism, trying to correct the wrongdoing in past decades and hoped to transform China into a real socialist state. In the same manner, Goodman (1981) points out that most participants agreed "to persevere in carrying out the long-term struggle to realize socialist democracy" and to defend their constitutional rights. Most of them believed that real socialist democracy can bring greater freedom and emancipation for man. They hoped to institutionalize a legal system to ensure the success of socialist

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<sup>12</sup>This classification of democracy is based upon the observation of Goodman (1981).

transformation in China. They also hoped that the people's congress at grassroots level would be strengthened in order that people's rights could be protected. Most of these participants such as the *Lash* group in Guangdong mainly complained about administrative malpractice, dictatorial rule and bureaucrats, abuse of power and the suppression of people's rights. Having seen the discrepancy between socialist ideals and practices, they therefore became more concerned about people's rights and freedom (for details, see, Hua, 1976 and Wang, 1976).<sup>13</sup>

Contrary to the dominant belief in self-perfection within the CCP, Wei Jingsheng, editor-in-chief of *Exploration*, an underground Beijing publication, openly and forthrightly demanded not only freedom and democracy but also radical change in socialist China. Wei's examination of the problems of bureaucratic malpractices and dictatorial rule convinced him that the root of the problems lay in the political system and official ideology. Wei, having faced the horrors of the Cultural Revolution and having discovered the myth of socialist ideals, denounced the dictatorial Communist state and exposed the dark side of Chinese Communist rule. He demanded that people should have full rights to enjoy freedom and democracy, arguing that human rights were basic to all human beings (Xie, 1989), Wei believed,

"for the right to live, everyone should have the right to engage in political activities. In other words, every person should have the basic political rights to speak, hold meetings, form associations, publish, believe in whatever religion he prefers, move from one place to another, and strike for better conditions."(Xie, 1989: 49-60)

Underlying Wei's ideas is a strong sense of anti-dictatorial feeling, the expression of which also reveals a deep-seated crisis of faith in Communist ideals. Wei contended that the mask of the Communist Party's monolithic rule and monopolistically dominating mode of authority had suffocated the development of democracy. Wei openly criticized

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<sup>13</sup>In the post-Mao era most people, especially the intellectuals, supported the reform programme and the call for Four Modernization initiated by Deng Xiaoping. They thought that socialism could be transformed from within and the actualization of socialist society depended greatly on reform. Receiving a relatively liberal and open signal from Deng Xiaoping, most people therefore showed their support and hoped that China would be strengthened. In addition, Deng also openly told the overseas journalists that people in the mainland had the rights to self-expression and to criticize the government as written in the state constitution. However, the Democracy Wall Movement was suddenly suppressed, revealing that Deng just made use of the movement to strengthen his own political position. Having consolidated his position, Deng turned to a repressive approach in dealing with these activists. For details, see, for example, Goodman (1981) and Nathan (1985).



Mao and the totalitarian system from a self-stated socialist standpoint,<sup>14</sup> adding,

"... disasters caused by the autocratic rulers, by Fascism under a Marxist-Leninist signboard, by totalitarianism, and by those who toyed with hundreds of millions of human lives according to the vagaries of a small number of persons." (cited in Goodman, 1981: 5)

He went on to say that "if we don't want to be further enslaved, if we want our living standard to improve in accordance with the progress of modernization, we must first have democratic politics" (Xie, 1989: 50). What Wei actually advocated was freedom, democracy and human rights. Indeed, he argued that without such conditions the "Four Modernizations" initiated by the government were unobtainable (Xie, 1989: 59-60).

Unlike most people who trusted Deng Xiaoping to reform China, Wei believed that, without institutionalized democracy, China would again fall into despotic politics. In another article, "Democracy or New Dictatorship", Wei watchfully warned the people that the dictatorial rule was not yet over, implicitly pointing to the undemocratic rule of Deng Xiaoping. He not only rejected Mao Zedong's proletarian dictatorship but also searched for a system of checks and balances of the leadership by the people. Wei was not like other democrats in his time, most of whom sought not for institutional change of the political system but rather for a more responsive government,<sup>15</sup> Wei advocated somewhat a Western kind of democracy in the Chinese society. In Andrew Nathan's words, "Wei Jingsheng's [notion of democracy] was the only extended statement of a position close to the liberal Western mainstream" (Nathan, 1985: 104) since Wei highlighted the fundamental sense of the "human essence", human rights. Wei's emphasis on human rights seemed a breakthrough in the Chinese tradition, particularly when it has long regarded the rights of individuals to be subordinate to the collective rights. Not only has the traditional Chinese society upheld such a notion, but also the Communist rule has

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<sup>14</sup>The idea of "self-stated socialist standpoint" is based on Goodman (1981), whose discussion is very illuminating to us in the analysis of the Democracy Wall Movement in the late 70's.

<sup>15</sup>On the discussion of the ideas of other democrats, see, for example, Hou Jiliang (1989); Leijonhufvud (1990); Pan Jia-ching (1980) and *Zhengming* (Feb. 1989: 26-29).

also adopted such a stance. As Henkin observed, "to Marxists, in building socialism, individualism is an obstacle to be overcome. Freedom as commonly understood in bourgeois societies is negative, destructive ... Man can achieve true freedom only in community" (Henkin, 1986: 23). In keeping with this line of reasoning, human rights have been neglected in China. Therefore, individuals are expected to make all kinds of sacrifices, including the sacrifice of their rights, to serve the interests of the socialist state.<sup>16</sup>

In upholding his notion of human rights, Wei steadfastly condemned the dictators and painstakingly sought for the liberalization and democratization of politics (Nathan, 1985: 87-106). However, the 'liberal' ideas of Wei Jingsheng on human rights were too isolated from the central tradition of Chinese democratic thought. Wei not only failed to get much support in the earlier post-Mao era but also received criticism from other intellectuals. Some democrats even rejected Wei's theories and criticized them as "opposed to Marxism and in violation of our constitution", (Nathan, 1985: 106) since most democrats in the time of Wei still believed the individual rights should be sacrificed to those of the collective. For them, a democratic government was simply more open and responsive to people's needs, with a more enlightened and strong leader to guide the people; and this government was willing to rectify the wrong-doings in the Cultural Revolution.<sup>17</sup> A comparison of the majority's ideas of democracy with those of Wei can easily show that Wei proposed to have not only a responsive government but a government 'by the people, for the people and of the people'. Wei also believed that

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<sup>16</sup>Article 51 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) says, "the citizen of the PRC, when exercising his freedoms and rights, may not infringe upon the interests of the state, of society, or of the collectives", which indicates the subordination of individuals to the collective in the PRC.

<sup>17</sup>It is also reported by some of the contemporary intellectuals that they supported the reforms as proposed by Deng Xiaoping because they considered reforms and modernization to be coherent to the historical tide. Therefore, most of the intellectuals showed their support to the reform programme especially in late 70's and early 80's, believing Deng's sincerity in improving the social positions of the intellectuals. Unlike the Western intellectuals who adopt an anti-establishment attitude, the Chinese intellectuals are part of the establishment. This can explain why the influence of the dissident intellectuals is always minimal. I draw this light from the interview with Yan Jiaqi (see interview 1, Paris, 1992).

people should have the ultimate control and final say in any policies.<sup>18</sup> Though Wei's boldness and courage were admired by many in China, his ideas were accepted by few people (Nathan, 1985: 106). Wei Jingsheng's painstaking and laborious acts in the promotion of democracy and emancipation earned him fifteen years of imprisonment.<sup>19</sup> Though Wei was prosecuted and imprisoned, his call for democracy and protection of human rights has far-reaching significance, not only inspiring the later democrats but also laying the foundation for future movements for democracy.<sup>20</sup>

Following the path of Wei Jingsheng, some educated youth who returned from the villages and countryside, also protested against violations of human rights and democracy in the early 80's. Hu Ping and Wang Juntao, editors respectively of the underground publications *Beijing Spring* and *Fertile Soil*, together with other college journals like *Red Bean* of Zhonshan University, *Thinking*, *New Age* and *The April 5 Forum of Science* of Beijing University consistently voiced their grievances. The central thrust of these publications involves not only criticizing the autocratic rule of the CCP but also demanding democracy, freedom and emancipation of people's minds. Most important of all, these students began to be aware of the importance of people's rights, asserting their rights to supervise the government, and to press for genuine democracy in electing representatives in the People's Congress at the local level. These activists not only criticized the mal-administration of the government but also questioned the legitimacy of the CCP as well as the truth of socialism in the early 1980's. They even openly declared that the Wei Jingsheng case was mistakenly judged. Questioning the meaningless

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<sup>18</sup>Although Wei did not directly employ the notion of "by the people, for the people and of the people", a close scrutiny of his ideas can reflect the above-mentioned line of thought underlying his conception of democracy. At least, he stressed the concept of "right" which I think is fundamental to democracy. See, for example, Nathan (1985, 1990); and Xie (1989).

<sup>19</sup>After fourteen and a half years of imprisonment, Wei was just released in September 1993. In an interview, Wei said that he felt no regret for what he had done, and he said that he still wanted to fight for democracy and human rights in China. However, Wei thinks that democratization should not bring instability to the present regime. When asked of his attitude toward Deng Xiaoping who insisted to retain Wei in prison, Wei was at ease and even said that he hoped Deng might live on. (See a news programme produced by the Asia Television Company H.K. Sep, 1993.) In another interview, when asked his role in society, Wei replied that he was a dissident. He also told the news that he had written continually to the socialist leaders during his imprisonment, advising them not to ignore people's rights and reemphasized the importance of freedom and democracy to people. For details, see *Mingbao*, (25, Oct. 1993: 10) and *Open Magazine*, (No. 82, pp.22-23).

<sup>20</sup>Fang Lizhi, the most prominent democrat in the post-Mao era also openly admitted that he was influenced by Wei Jingsheng. Fang wrote a letter to Deng Xiaoping, calling for the release of Wei in Feb. 1989, see Chong,(1989); *Zhengming*, (Feb. 1989: 23-25)

sacrifice during the Cultural Revolution, students also advocated all-out social reformation to realize a power division and democracy in both political and economic realms. Putting these observations together, we conclude that these educated youth and college students became more conscious of human rights, striving for democracy and rethinking their relationship with the state (see, Chiang Chen-chang, 1981 and Yeh Hung-sheng, 1981).<sup>21</sup>

### The 1986-87 Student Demonstrations<sup>22</sup>

The 1986-87 campaign against bourgeois liberalism was sparked off by the massive student demonstrations throughout China in 1986.<sup>23</sup> Political reform and demands for democracy constituted the central theme of the demonstrations. Throughout the fall semester of 1986, extensive discussions about political reform were held in university campuses, organizing special symposia in political studies (*People's Daily*, 3 Nov. 1986). Students in Beijing brought out posters reading: "We want democracy, we want freedom, we support the student movement in the University of Science and Technology", "We want law, we do not want autocracy", "We'll fight for democracy, we will fight for freedom, we fight for freedom of the press." In other universities, they called for a similar motif: "We will fight for democracy; China should work for the people, not for a small group" (*Central Daily*, December, 15, 19, 1986; *Ming Bao*, December 26, 1986: 2; *The Nineties*, Jan. 1987: 17-18). The student demonstration was triggered by the issue of electoral reforms in late 1986. In December, the students at the University of Science and Technology in Hefei protested against the lack of power to nominate candidates for the People's Congress. On December 9, the students at Hefei demonstrated for three hours to protest against Japanese aggression in 1935.<sup>24</sup> The

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<sup>21</sup>Some of these student leaders continue to participate, organize and support the pro-democracy movement. Wang Juntao is still imprisoned for his support of the 1989 student movement. Hu Ping is now in exile in the United States, organizing pro-democracy movement overseas.

<sup>22</sup>For the chronological details of the 1986-87 demonstrations, see Stavis (1987: 96-104).

<sup>23</sup>According to one count, the demonstrations swept 150 campuses in at least 17 cities (*South China Morning Post*, 12 Jan. 1987).

<sup>24</sup>The 1935 Incident was the invasion by the Japanese military forces causing harmful effect to Chinese economy and political stability.

students in Wuhan, supporting the Hefei students, gathered at their campuses to commemorate the 1935 incident. The movements of Hefei and Wuhan students excited the students in Shanghai. On December 10, students at Jiaotong University in Shanghai put up wallposters to show their support of the Hefei students, as well as to voice their dissatisfaction with conditions on their campus. Receiving the news from Shanghai, students in Beijing also put up wallposters. Later, on December 19, students in Shanghai marched to the municipal government office, carrying placards asking for democracy and freedom. The student demonstrations started from Shanghai and later extended to other major cities in China. Similar activities were reported on campuses in Tienjin, Nanjing, Kuming, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Guangzhou, and other cities. Student demonstrations reached a climax around December 20. The size of these demonstrations varied, ranging from a few hundred in Guangzhou to 30,000 in Shanghai (*The Nineties*, Jan. 1987: 17-20). A Taiwan newspaper reported that the student demonstrations affected at least 17 cities and about 150 of the 1016 institutes of higher learning in the country (*Central Daily*, January 7, 1987: 1; *Achievement of Education in China: Statistics, 1980-85*, 1986: 6). It showed that the call for democracy had brought the students on different campuses together. If we closely look into their demands, we will probably ask what they were really fighting for. Were they fighting for a representative government, universal suffrage or any forms of government in the spirit of Western democracy?<sup>25</sup>

At first glance, it seems that because students were dissatisfied with the limited freedom and immature democracy in China, they became restless and thus demonstrated for freedom and democracy. However, a close examination of their demands reveals that the students left the term 'democracy' undefined and vague. Their demonstrations can show their activism and social consciousness but they did not really fight for a democracy

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<sup>25</sup>The author is well-aware that there are different models of democratic government, including the presidential system in the States, the parliamentary system in the U.K., the democratic form of government of France and various other forms of democracy. Simply stated, the essence of democracy, is closely related to the control of corrupted human nature. The establishment of a more democratic form of governmental structure is to have a proper mechanism to check the power exercised by the officials, to correct the wrongdoings and abuse of power. It sets the procedural details to guide the work of government in order to minimize the mistakes of people in the process of decision-making and implementation. In this sense, democracy is to prevent the abuse of power and to protect the rights of people. It is with this reasoning that democracy declares people should have the final say in both policies and the choice of government. See, for example, Williams (1976) and Popper (1966).

with a multi-party system or democracy in organizational management. What really concerned them were matters related closely to their personal interests.

In the several years preceding the 1986 demonstrations, students had enjoyed the fruits of reforms taking place in universities for they had picketed and put up wallposters complaining about poor food services and administrative problems in universities. Moreover, students could raise their demands and lodge their complaints directly to the university authority and the presidents of their universities. Students also participated in the president's advisory council in some universities. The university administrative bodies did address the grievances of students, withdrawing the policy of making campus cafeterias financially self-sufficient and made improvements in both administration and services (Kwong, 1988: 976-977). The demonstrations in late 1986, therefore, were not completely surprising since students had been encouraged to voice their opinions and grievances in the preceding few years.<sup>26</sup>

Their demands throughout the demonstrations suggested that they were voicing their displeasure at the reform measures being introduced on campus for they believed there was still room for improvement. Their demands, in a word, had basically to do with university administration and their quality of life. They put forth their dissatisfaction about the limited space on campus, complaining about crowded living conditions in dormitories (for there were often six students living in one small room). They also pointed to the fact of the declining quality of food at ever increasing prices. They believed that the reason behind the lowered quality of services was not simply inflation but was fundamentally related to government cuts in university subsidies (*The Nineties*, Jan. 1987: 17-19; *Beijing Review*, 30: 1 and 4, Jan. 5 & 26, 1987). Other

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<sup>26</sup>For the past few years, some prominent intellectuals, like Fang Lizhi and Wen Yuankai, both from Hefei's University of Science and Technology, argued for greater autonomy in university administration and encouraged students to fight for their rights and independence. Within such a context, students were motivated to voice their opinions openly. It is therefore natural that the demonstrations initially broke out at the University of Science and Technology, and Jiaotong, Tongji, and Wuhan universities. See *Renmin Ribao* (December 4, 1986: 4; January 25, 1987: 1); *Beijing Review* (30: 8, February 23, 1987: 17). Kelly (1987) also suggests that the 1986-87 student demonstrations were encouraged and even indirectly mobilized by the intellectuals who had been dissatisfied with the present government. It is against a context of widespread critical discussion on academic freedom and of autonomous intellectual environment that students were imbued with courage to break their silence. Some prominent intellectuals such as Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan, Su Shaozhi, Wang Ruoshui and Wang Ruowang repeatedly asserted intellectuals' independence and strongly called for the liberation of the cultural realm. Under the impact of these intellectuals, students were made bold enough to openly voice their demands. See, for example, Kelly (1987).

changes which affected and bothered them much were the revised curriculum, the elimination of automatic student aid and a stricter evaluation system. Students also vehemently grumbled at the introduction of tuition fees to cover some university expenses, for they had been enjoying free higher education since 1949. It is for these reasons they became annoyed and defiant. Thereafter, they used the demonstrations to voice their dissatisfaction their present living conditions.

The Hong Kong media published similar reports of some of the students' grievances. For instance, the students in Beijing were dissatisfied with the university's practice of turning off lights at eleven. Students in Nanjing complained about the inclusion of political studies in the curriculum. The students in Zhongshan University of Guangzhou pointed out the problems in the conservative university administration since it banned discussions on sexual liberation. Other students in Zhongshan Medical College also petitioned for better salaries on graduation and improved job allocation. Students at Shenzhen University also demonstrated against the imposition of tuition and residence fees based on their academic performance (Kwong, 1988: 979; *The Nineties*, Jan. 1987: 17-18). Accordingly, most of the issues that the students raised did relate closely to inconveniences and annoyances in their campus lives. What they protested against seems to suggest that they were fighting for their personal interests rather than for democracy. Stavis (1987) also argues along the same lines that most non-student participants did not consider a more democratic political system necessary. Rather, some may see democracy as a desirable goal for the distant future. He also observes that some citizens commented that those student protestors had more freedom than other social groups for which reason not many factory workers joined the demonstrations fighting for democracy. Up to this point, we can argue that the explosion of the student demonstrations had a close relationship with their direct experience of the declining living standard and their perceived uncertain future. Having been accelerated by the social crises, they did raise some issues which went beyond their personal concerns and interests to major social concern at a larger societal level. They also pointed to the bureaucratism, profiteering,

inflation and declining living standard in general. The rising expectations for reform were unmet by the existing reform measures. They felt frustrated with the regressive reform in the economic realm and the half-hearted attitude toward political reform. This caused general dissatisfaction among students and some urban dwellers (*The Nineties*, Jan. 1987: 17-19).

The demonstrations used 'Democracy' and 'Freedom' as catchwords to excite and unite the other students and they proved that strategy was effective. However, the students themselves probably did not really understand the precise meaning of 'democracy'. Their demand for democracy may not directly tackle the immediate problems that they were facing. As Kwong observes, "the juxtaposition in wallposters and slogans of democracy with social ills, bureaucratism, and insensitivity to students' well-being seemed to suggest that democracy was either the solution to these problems or their popular opposite" (Kwong, 1988: 980). Besides, they might misinterpret democracy merely as freedom of speech and expression, only hoping that democracy could solve any problems when the people could have freedom to express themselves. As Kwong observed, "like their predecessors at the turn of the century, the students seemed to have an overly optimistic view of what democracy could deliver" (Kwong, 1988: 980). Democracy, to the demonstrators, seems to be "a broad, utopian concept, unrealistically proposed as a panacea for China's problems" (Kwong, 1988: 980). Most of them were protesting primarily to reveal their concern over the social ills of the country and their impatience over the slow pace of change. Because the students had a high expectation for the reforms, the failure of the university authorities to move quickly further antagonized them. This explains why they acted together to voice their grievances, pointing to the fact of social evils in general. Even though they attacked bureaucratism in a wider social context, the heart of their complaints still lay in their dissatisfaction with the bureaucratism on campus (Kwong, 1988; *The Nineties*, 1987, 1: 17-19). Neither did they suggest checks and balances or any concrete proposals for institutional changes in the political structure. On the contrary, the students just adopted a broad notion of



democracy in order to accommodate their varied grievances, views and differing interpretations on different campuses (Kwong, 1988). Without a strong organization and well-defined ideology, the demonstrations were finally suppressed in early 1987. This also brought the downfall of the former party secretary, Hu Yaobang, as punishment for his lenient attitude toward the demonstrations. After the incident, the students became silent. Their silence did suggest their rethinking of democracy, cogitating upon their role and looking at the future of China. In the late 80's, students did organize some open seminars discussing the future of China and issues concerning democracy. Wang Dan and Shen Tong were organizers of "democracy salons" on their campuses. Both of them were student representatives and organizers in the 1989 Tiananmen Democracy Movement (For details, see, for example, Chong 1990; Oksenberg, 1990 and Schell, 1988). Bonnin and Chevrier, in their study of Chinese intellectuals and the state in the post-Mao era, also suggest that Chinese university students and intellectuals had attempted to expand their influence over the public sphere, creating their own field in contrast with the state apparatus. According to Bonnin and Chevrier (1991: 576), "the purpose of the *minzhu shalong* was to open a political sphere in an open contest with the existing political order, not to look for convenient niches within that order and for suitable mentors in the power elite" as it was started in its early phase. With the social and economic changes in the post-Mao era, Chinese intellectuals had attempted to explore more possibilities to assert their professional autonomy and intellectual independence. Even though Bonnin and Chevrier (1991: 578) suggested that "a sphere of economic and social pluralism emerged between the official sphere of the state and the private sphere of the individual, but no independent political sphere was associated with it", the relaxed socio-cultural and socio-ideological realms inevitably rendered Chinese intellectuals with more autonomy.

#### The Pro-democracy Movement in 1989

On April 15, 1989, the sudden death of the former general party secretary, Hu Yaobang provided another opportunity for the rise of students. In the 1986-87

demonstrations, Hu was purged and forced to resign from all posts in the Party after the anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign.<sup>27</sup> People had commemorated the downfall of Hu, whose sudden death brought a grief-stricken atmosphere and triggered off anger among the students in Beijing. In order to give remembrance to their beloved leader, some three hundred students from Beijing University went to Tiananmen Square to lay wreaths in memory of Hu. The number began to grow when students from other universities joined the commemoration of Hu. On 18 April, the students organized their sit-in demonstration at Tiananmen Square, requesting a proper reevaluation of the performance of Hu Yaobang and affirming the essence of democracy and freedom. They also asked for rehabilitating the 1986-87 student movement and those who participated in it; revealing and reporting the financial situation of the senior officials' children; freedom of press and allowing newspapers to be published by the public; increasing educational subsidies and improving the status of intellectuals; abolishing the regulations concerning freedom of movement and demonstrations and asking for a fair report of this movement. Some students even brought out placards saying "Down with bureaucratism", "Down with corruption", "Rise of Democracy", "Long Live Freedom" and "Strengthening China" (*Ming Bao*, 1989. April 18: 2; *South China Morning Post*, April, 18, 1989). On April 20, several thousand students gathered outside Zhong Nanhai, China's political nerve centre, asking premier Li Peng to come out to talk with them. The sit-in demonstration resulted in an open confrontation between the students and the police, in which some students were injured in the fight. However, the official reports did not mention the injuries of the students but just said that "trouble-makers" had incited the incident and caused the police injuries. This incident clearly gave impetus to further protests.

After the brush with authority, students became antagonized. A huge group of students from more than 20 universities marched shoulder to shoulders to Tiananmen

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<sup>27</sup>The 1986-87 demonstrations were diagnosed by the Communist Party as a bourgeois liberalization. The concomitant move of the Party was to crush the movement and to find fault with the former party secretary Hu Yaobang for his lenient attitudes toward bourgeois liberalism. Some prominent pro-democracy intellectuals, Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan and Wang Ruowang were expelled from the party and openly condemned by the hardliners for inciting the demonstrations and spreading the bourgeois ideas to students. See, for example, Chen Chang-chin (1987); Chou Yu-sun (1987).

Square, chanting stronger and more unified slogans demanding democracy and human rights. The students bellowed in unison, "Long live democracy, long live freedom" on April 22th, the day of the memorial service for Hu Yaobang. The students also raised high their banners with slogans like "Yaobang --- glory (yao) to the country (bang) in life, glory to the country in death", "Leader of youth, fighter for democracy", "Model of upright government", "Punish the bureaucratic profiteers" and "Freedom of the press". Beside the huge funerary portrait of Hu Yaobang, the students hung a big banner reading "China's Soul" on the Monument to the People's Heros, which made the atmosphere in the square even more solemn (*South China Morning Post*, April 22, 1989; *The Hong Kong Standard*, April 22, 1989; *Ming Bao*, April 22, 1989: 2). Hoping to attend the funeral of Hu, students waited outside the Great Hall calling, "Say one more farewell to Yaobang", "Let us see Yaobang one more time" (Li Qiao, 1990: 27). After twenty minutes, the ceremony came to a close and Hu's body was hurriedly carried away without allowing the public to say farewell. Knowing such an arrangement, students boiled with rage and began to chant rhythmically, "We want dialogue, we want dialogue". Four student representatives tried to present their petition to the government; three of them knelt suddenly on the steps of the Great Hall as a traditional show of submission but no one came out to receive them. As the crowd on the Square saw this, they shouted to the three to get up. Guo Haifeng, one of the representatives, replying to those workers who wanted him to get up, said "I won't. We knelt for the national emblem, not for some persons. The premier is the people's servant. He should have come out to talk with us. We didn't ask for an immediate reply, but only asked that he receive our petition" (Li Qiao, 1990: 29). The act of these student representatives moved many people, further pointing out the autocratic and irresponsive government in the eyes of people. Their petition basically reiterated their demands on April 18, adding "to strictly punish those who beat the students and people, and demand those who did the beatings to apologize to the ones who suffered", which clearly showed their anger toward the government's treatment of the 20th April incident (Li, 1991: 23).

An April 26 editorial of Renmin Ribao titled "Resolutely Oppose Turmoil" condemned the student movement.

"A small minority of people, taking advantage of the opportunity, [the memorial service of Hu] circulated rumours and singled out several party and national leaders for attack ... They circulated every kind of rumour, confusing the people's attention, to throw the whole nation into disorder, and to destroy the stability and unity of the political situation. *This is a planned conspiracy. It is a turmoil designed to negate socialism.*" (Renmin Ribao, April 26, 1989, emphasis added)

The uncompromising view of the government was the key to the entire course of events on Tiananmen Square. The Li Peng government tried to intimidate the students into submission, threatening the demonstrators, and hoped to divide the students into two groups by defining the movement as "a planned conspiracy" (Li, 1991: 42). Having read the editorial, students at Tiananmen Square were in a fume, being frustrated by the government's stand toward their patriotic and well-intended motive. Imbued with anger, the students organized another demonstration, joined by a huge number of participants such as teachers, urban workers and ordinary citizens. When marching to the Square, the demonstrators shouted, "Official profiteers! Official profiteers! If we don't attack, they won't fall!", "We want rule of law, not rule by man", "We want science, not sentiment! We want democracy, not dictatorship!", "Guarantee human rights; abolish privileged!", "Long live freedom! Long live democracy!", "Peaceful demonstration is not instigation of turmoil!" Most eye-catching were the banners saying "Support the Communist Party's correct leadership" and "Carry on with the reforms" (Li Qiao, 1990: 33). There was no sign of overthrowing the existing government; most of their placards and banners just condemned the malpractice of the government and demanded freedom and democracy.

Failing to get recognition from the government for their patriotic movement, students seemed to have only one alternative left, a hunger strike. Most of the demonstrators, using the model of the traditional remonstrators, believed that their hunger strikes would probably demonstrate their national loyalty. On 13 May, after the government's minimal steps to address their demands, three thousand students began a hunger strike. Their act attracted worldwide attention and genuine sympathy from the

public. The strikers stated, "in this the most beautiful period of our youth, we have no choice but to sever ourselves from all of life's goodness and beauty and leave them behind". Confronting the deep national crisis, the students believed they were the only group to awaken the government. The hunger strikers remarked that, "The country is our country. The people are our people. The government is our government. If we do not call out, who will? If we do not act, who will?" They also explicitly pointed out their motivation, saying, "What are we to do? Democracy is the most noble condition of human existence. Freedom is the inalienable right of all people. But for these we must exchange our young lives. Is this something that the Chinese people can be proud of? A hunger strike is an act of last resort, and right now there is no alternative" (*Xinwen daobao*, May 12, 1989). The demonstrators used the strike to demand an equal-footing dialogue with the premier Li Peng. On 18 May 1989, the dialogue between Li Peng and student representatives was held but ended without any agreement. The students, after the meeting, said that it was not a dialogue but only a meeting.<sup>28</sup>

Later on 20th May, Li Peng with the hardliners and on behalf of Party Central Committee and State Council, delivered a speech denounced the student demonstrations and regarded them as turmoil. The government also threatened to impose martial Law in part of Beijing municipality. Besides, the Communist Party (CCP) openly admitted that the state had sent troops to Beijing in order to restore public order. The act of the CCP further added oil to the flames of the demonstrators and also moved the urban population to join the movement supporting the patriotic acts of the students. It is evident that the ordinary citizens, urban workers, and even some of the government officials allied with the students. They not only participated in the movement but also became directly involved in saving the students, obstructing the entry of the People's Army and contributing money to the demonstrations (Saich, 1990). At this stage, the student demonstrations were developed into a full scale People's movement, joined by people of different walks of life regardless of their age and geographical locations (Unger, 1991

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<sup>28</sup>For details of the dialogue, see, for example, Saich (1990); Oksenberg (1990: 269-281); Peter Li (1991: 46-56).

and Walder, 1992). No matter how wide the support for the movement, it ended in bloodshed on & around the Tiananmen Square and the participants were defeated by the military forces. With massive persecution and arrests after the movement, some student leaders and intellectuals were forced into exile.

### **DEMOCRACY --- THE INTERPRETATION BY STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS**

Throughout the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident, the demonstrators' demands for democracy came as a warning to the conservatives. The demonstrators strongly believed that reforms should be intensified, not halted, and only democracy could get to the root of the problem. However, we must ask the same questions we asked of the 1986 demonstrations: were they fighting for democracy, meaning the Western party-politics and popular participation? If not, what were they really seeking? Why did they fight for these issues? We shall turn to these questions in an effort to understand the idea of democracy in the minds of the demonstrators.

The petitions of the students basically fall into three categories: first, on a personal level, the students fought for the improvement of educational policy, requesting a large-scale increase in educational funds and asking higher salaries for intellectuals; second, on a social level, the students complained about bureaucratic corruption, official profiteering, differential treatment and the declining living standard; third, on a political level, the students sought freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

#### Redress their Unresolved Grievances in 1986-87 Demonstrations

Their request for the reevaluation of the 'anti-bourgeois liberalization' movement of 1986 to review the verdicts against those who were unjustly treated during that period and their demand for the rehabilitation of Comrade Hu Yaobang's accomplishments and wrong-doings can be interpreted as unresolved grievances since the 1986-87 student demonstrations. Being frustrated with the suppression of the 1986-87 incident, they picked this opportunity to restate their demands and grievances. The rehabilitation of the 1987 movement and the reevaluation of Hu had a significant meaning to them. Hu Yaobang, was supported and regarded as the patron of the students and intellectuals. Hu

was sympathetic to intellectuals and thus his death was lamented by the students and intellectuals. The students and intellectuals regarded the loss of Hu as a possible symbol of the decline of the pro-democracy movement.<sup>29</sup> The death of Hu was not only a great loss to the country but also an obstruction to democracy in China.<sup>30</sup> Their outcry for reevaluation of the "anti-bourgeois liberalization" goes hand in hand with the quest for the rehabilitation of Hu. The unresolved ill-feeling since 1986, added with the sudden death of Hu Yaobang and the intensified social evils of the late 1980's, finally set the stage for the students' 1989 demonstrations.

### Democracy Undefined by the Demonstrators

After a close scrutiny of their ideas, I find that June Fourth dissidents, too have no well-defined notion of democracy. The student demonstrators just used 'democracy' and 'freedom' as catchwords to unite other students, but their understanding of democracy is far from mature. Some students even misinterpreted the meaning of democracy, just associating it with freedom of speech and freedom of expression. In my interview with Wan Runnan, the leader of the Front for Democratic China (FDC) (1991-1992), the organization supporting the pro-democracy movement in China, he said, "the students have no concise conception of democracy. They do not clearly understand the meaning" (Interview 2, Paris, 1992). Liu Binyan, and Su Xiaokang despite their support of the student movement, considered most students did not understand democracy clearly. After the June Fourth Movement, Su and Liu openly pointed out the mistake of students, hoping to lead them to have a deeper reflection on what democracy was. Nevertheless, Su and Liu became unpopular among students who regarded them as conservatives, who opposed the movement and were undemocratic (see Interviews 4 & 5, Princeton, 1993).

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<sup>29</sup>On April 19, 1989, the *World Economic Herald* and *New Observer* jointly sponsored a forum in memory of Hu Yaobang. A lot of prominent intellectuals like Su Shaozhi, Wu Jiang, Yu Haocheng, Yu Guangyuan, and Yan Jiaqi, etc evaluated the life of Hu Yaobang, commenting that his life was candid and courageous. The forum reflected the deep respect for Hu and their sorrows at his passing.. See *World Economic Herald* (April 19, 1989); Li Qiao (1990: 14-21).

<sup>30</sup>In interviews with some Chinese intellectuals in the summer of 1987 and 1988, Tony Saich found that the intellectuals specifically referred to Hu's dismissal as a key turning-point in their belief that the regime was capable of reforming itself. Zhao Ziyang, in their eyes, did not have a high regard for issues of intellectual freedom. It is under this context that the sudden death of Hu seems to break their dream of further intellectual liberalization and democratization. See, Saich (1990: 183).

Other intellectuals that I interviewed also made similar comments: such as,

"The students were merely demanding individual autonomy and freedom from the Party constraints. They hoped to improve the social conditions rather than to achieve a concise political platform". (Interview 3, Paris, 1992)

According to other sources, the students talked about democracy as a struggle for freedom of expression through speech and the press and freedom of association. In particular, they wished the government to recognize their autonomous student bodies and allow greater freedom in conducting the affairs of their own lives. Furthermore, student demonstrators also had a wrong interpretation of press freedom, believing that it could help modernize and save the country (Mark, 1991). In discussing multi-party elections, students saw direct election as a good thing, but civil liberties loomed much larger in their immediate vision of democracy (Calhoun, 1989: 574). Really what they struggled for was a responsive government which took the people's interests into account. Calhoun states that "they [the demonstrators] sought to be the 'voice of the people' and understood themselves as speaking ideally for the country as a whole" (Calhoun, 1989: 578). Pye also argues in the same vein that "the students' reaction [to Hu's death] was in line with the classic Chinese tradition of aggrieved parties wailing before the Yamen door, of publicly dramatizing their unhappiness by petitioning officialism --- and they expected that the louder the wailing the more likely their petition would be heard" (Pye, 1990: 337). In this regard, students were not fighting for universal suffrage for they merely interpreted 'pluralism' as their unanimous voice to be heard.<sup>31</sup>

Some student demonstrators not only lacked a comprehensive conception of democracy but also misinterpreted it. Jackie Smith, an American studying Chinese at

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<sup>31</sup>In contrast, some Chinese intellectuals who were also the supporters of the 1989 movement such as Su Wei and Fang Lizhi believed that the student participants had a clear conception of democracy in their protests. When asked about whether they consider student participants are clear of what democracy is, Fang Lizhi told me that students did have some general conceptions of democracy. He also said that those student participants understood the concepts of rights and freedom. However, Fang added that the students had no concrete political platform or detailed proposal for the institutionalization of democracy in China. If we judge the students' understanding of democracy in this particular light, according to Fang, we might well say that they were far beyond the satisfactory level. In my interview with Su Wei, he commented that Chinese students were clear of what democracy was and understood the concept thoroughly. He also made statements in defence of Chai Ling, one of the student leaders who is criticized as autocratic and undemocratic in and after the movement by the media. Such observations seem to suggest that intellectuals who have close association with the student movement would not only support but also defend the students from any criticisms. In the following part, we elaborate this point in light of how different social location has formative influences on ideological formation of intellectuals (see, Interview 3, Arizona, 1993; Interview 5, Princeton, 1993).



Fujian, asked the students at Fuzhou what democracy meant to them. The respondents defined democracy as a policy accepting [educated] people into government roles based upon their skills and not upon their connections. The students believed democracy could ensure a proper channel for their entry in governing posts and for getting rid of official corruption (Kraus and Erbaugh, 1990: 153). Some scholars also observed that the student demonstrators in Fujian did not really understand their protest objectives. Kraus pointed to the fact that most participants in Fujian replied with vague remarks, only asking for freedom but without specific demands. It seemed that they had no proper aims and objectives. More ironically, their slogans did not closely match with those of Beijing (Kraus and Erbaugh, 1990). Unger (1991) also reported that though there were strikes and petitions around in many cities other than Beijing, the demonstrators did not have a clear platform for petition. Unger says, "everywhere, people waited to see what would happen in Beijing", but the tide of demonstrations was motivated by their anger against inflation and mounting corruption. Democracy, according to them, was simply an independent judiciary, beyond the reach of a party leader's sway. More concretely, they wanted freedom from the constraints imposed from their units, additional freedom of speech and expression, allowing them to criticize the government. Up to this point, it is then clear the demonstrators were not seeking a procedural and institutional change in the political system. They just left the concept of "democracy" undefined and vague. In my interview of Fang Lizhi, he commented that students had a general understanding of democracy but they had not thought thoroughly about a detailed democratic political system. (see, Interview 3, Arizona, 1993)

More importantly, the demonstrators did not speak of 'one person one vote'. A series of reports by Mike Chinoy of Cable Network News aired in April and May 1989 reported that the students did not understand the foreign tradition of democracy. They just used democracy as a slogan (Walder, 1989).<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the demonstrators were

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<sup>32</sup>The *Time* (New York) (May 28, 1989, p.21) and *The Washington Post* (May 25, 1989) also reported that the students did not really support democracy in the Western sense.

fearful of popular democracy, believing that the general public would rule out the intellectuals as a minority group (Kraus and Erbaugh, 1990). As Unger observed, most intellectuals and students did not want "one person, one vote" because they did not want to see the nation's leader determined by the dominant number of peasants (Unger, 1991; see also Pieke, 1989). Some of the intellectuals even supported the idea of neo-authoritarianism,<sup>33</sup> though they did not admit it publicly. Apparently, not many of the demonstrators were genuine supporters of democracy (Kwong and Chan, 1990; Su Wei, 1992). Nathan comments that the student demonstrators "cast themselves ... as loyal followers, appealing to the authorities to live up to the values the authorities themselves had articulated" (*The Nation*, April, 23, 1990: 564).

#### Undemocratic Acts of the Demonstrators

Apart from that, judging from the behaviour and performance of the pro-democracy movement leaders, I argue that they did not really internalize the essence of democracy. It has been reported that the members of the Front for Democratic China (FDC), the organization supporting the pro-democracy movement in China, do not possess the necessary leadership qualities. It was widely reported that many leaders of the organization lacked a democratic spirit, let alone democratic behaviours. One of the student leaders, Wu'er Kaixi was found misusing the public funds from the FDC by leading an extravagant life style. Hu Ming, an aide to Wan Runnan, the former chairman of the Front, and Yan Jianli, a front board member from Berkeley, admitted failing to deliver donations from abroad to the Tiananmen students (*The Nation*, April 23, 1990, see also *Shijie ribao*, 25 Dec. 1989). Some journalists who have had direct interaction with and observation of the student leaders told me that there were power struggles and

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<sup>33</sup>It was the heated debate on "neo-authoritarianism" in mainland China in the late 1980s. Some Chinese intellectuals advocated "neo-authoritarianism", suggesting that what China needed was not Western democratic institutions but a strong and competent leader. Holding the view that stability and prosperity are prime concern of Chinese people, these scholars therefore pinned their hope upon a strong political leader. Presumably, this leader is able to maintain political stability, providing a favourable infrastructure for future economic development. In addition, people supporting such idea also believed that democratization would take place after economic reforms have succeeded. It is with such conceptions that they support authoritarianism rather than democracy. For details, see Oksenberg (1990). Womack (1989) argues along these lines that it is impossible to develop Western democratic structure in China when there is no corresponding socio-political and socio-cultural foundation as her Western counterparts. Hence, Womack suggests that China can modify its "party-state democracy", making it more accountable to and democratic for the people.

conflicts among the student leaders. One of them told me,

"On the second anniversary of the movement in Paris, I was responsible for reporting the event. I found the meeting not only unorganized but also revealed the power struggle among the leaders. Failing to see Wu'er Kaixi, I directly asked Chai Ling where Kaixi was. I was shocked when Chai told me that the organizing committee had failed to contact Kaixi. After several months, when I came across Kaixi in Paris, I immediately asked him why he was absent from the event. Kaixi told me that he was not supported by the organizing committee. Therefore I began to understand the reason behind and discovered the power struggle among the student leaders". (Interview 4, Paris, 1992)

Some journalists from Hong Kong and Paris also complained of the irresponsible and corrupt behaviour of the leaders and criticized them for having no concrete political ideals. One of them angrily told me her impression of the student leaders, noting,

"some prominent student leaders perceived themselves as 'people's leaders' and 'the great hero' since they considered that they had sacrificed for China. Thus, they wanted to be respected and honoured. I think they have forgotten that many anonymous people died on the Square to make them famous". (Interview 4, Paris, 1992)

Some journalists even doubted the integrity of the student leaders. One Hong Kong correspondent in Paris said,

"Chai Ling was always late for appointments with us (the journalists) but without showing any regrets. You know, she even criticized us for wasting her time. It is not only my feeling, but also the impression of some Paris journalists. I remember that we (the H.K. journalists) had been waiting to interview her just a few days after her arrival at Paris. We were extremely frustrated that she refused to see us but only interviewed with some foreign media". (Interview 4, Paris, 1992)

"Once when we could get hold of Chai Ling and Feng Congde, the former husband of Chai, we tried to interview them. Feng said to us that because they had given an interview with TVB (the biggest T.V. broadcasting company in H.K.), there was no need to have other interviews. Having heard this, I was depressed and felt I was being discriminated against". (Interview 4, Paris, 1992)

The journalist had another occasion to observe Chai Ling's misinterpretation of democracy. She added, "when I tried to interview her on another occasion, Chai Ling said to me "whatever I want to say, I have right to say"; "if I don't want to say anything, it is my human right" (Interview 4, Paris, 1992). According to these journalists, Chai Ling just asserted her rights but she failed to respect other people. Liu Xiaobo (1992) evaluated the 1989 pro-democracy movement and commented that most student leaders just talked about rights without also considered responsibilities. He also criticized them for their undemocratic acts and personality cult. To Liu, it is unacceptable, indicating

clearly their immature understanding of democracy.<sup>34</sup>

From the interviews with the journalists, I find that some of the student leaders have failed to lead a democratic life. In a conference raising funds for the movement in Taiwan, Chai Ling, being the guest in the meeting, embarrassed those who attended, saying that they could not legitimately speak for the Chinese people. She said that only she was "qualified" to speak on behalf of Chinese people. As a result, she was harshly criticized because she conceived of herself as the hero of the movement (*The Nineties*, 10, 1992, 14-15). Feeling frustrated with the undemocratic acts of the student leaders, some foreign and Hong Kong journalists told me that they were no longer interested in reporting the news concerning the movement (Interview 4, Paris, 1992). I discovered that many local Chinese in Paris and in New York who originally supported the movement, no longer offered donations because of the corrupt acts of the student leaders. When asked their impression of the student leaders, one of the local Chinese vehemently criticized their behaviour (Interview 3, Holland, 1992 and see also interview 4, Princeton, 1993). According to these reports and experience, I can conclude that some of the student leaders are far from mature in both democratic thinking and acting. Their performance damaged the movement. Yan Jiaqi also claimed that not all the organizers of the pro-democracy movement are democratic; some of them are still authoritarian and dominant (Interview 1, Paris, 1992). It was reported that the Front also received funds from the Taiwan government, which act greatly deterred the organization's move toward independence. Some leaders of the Front, indicated that they favoured the particular brand of capitalism practised in Taiwan (*The Nation*, April 23, 1990). Evidence also reveals that the members in the Front have not closely followed the democratic procedure. For instance, only a few members monopolized the leadership on the ground

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<sup>34</sup>One point that needs to be stressed here is that Liu Xiaobo's reflection and evaluation of the 1989 pro-democracy movement was criticized by some Chinese intellectuals and student community. Liu was rejected and condemned because he wrote the statement of repentance, eliciting that he did not witness any body had been killed on the Tiananmen Square during the massacre. Having been released from the prison, Liu found himself vulnerable and rejected by others. It is suggested that Liu's evaluation of the movement was written against such a background. Thus, some commentators have general agreement that Liu justified what he did by making other people infamous. I got such insights from the interviews conducted in June to July 1993 in the United States of America.

of "selectiveness" rather than allowing a mass membership organization (Kwong and Chan, 1990:560). Chen Jun, an activist who initiated a petition to free Wei Jingsheng, criticized the undemocratic acts of the Front leaders, saying "the front's leaders do not trust people outside their circle over whom they have no control" (*The Nation*, April 23, 1990). Another group of students from Columbia University, willing to help in any future democracy movement, submitted suggestions to the Front but failed to receive any reply and acceptance. Tang Yiming, a doctoral candidate at Columbia complained, "we met to prepare for Paris, submitting suggestions on the draft program and nominating delegates. But we never heard from them" (*The Nation*, April 23, 1990). In addition, the leaders manipulated finances and personnel matters, centralizing power in a small group of leaders. All these acts reflect "non-democratic" elements in the Front. As a result, people have become skeptical about their capacity to launch a democracy movement in China while they themselves have failed to demonstrate a grasp of democracy. Though they do not reject democracy, their attitudes toward multi-party democracy have been ambiguous (Kwong and Chan, 1990: 564). I also heard from some dissident intellectuals who are exiled in Princeton that conflict and competition for leadership between Chen Yizhi and Wan Runnan was intense (Interview 5, Princeton, 1993).<sup>35</sup> Power struggle was acute among these exiled pro-democracy leaders.

In addition, Yan Jiaqi, one of the leaders of the Front, still hoped to reform the party from within, appealing to the wisdom of the ruler, but he did not intend to challenge or overthrow him (*The Nation*, April 23, 1990). Fang Lizhi and Chen Yizhi stated in interviews that they also supported the liberal wing in the socialist leadership to initiate reforms, hoping to have a more relaxed environment for deepening structural changes in China (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993; Interview 2, Princeton, 1993). Unger and

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<sup>35</sup>In commemorating the 4th anniversary of the June-Fourth Incident in London, I personally saw that different leaders of the pro-democracy movement had conflicts with each other. One incident of interest is that some of the organizers of the meeting even openly debated whether to sing the song of 'Internationale' in front of the audience. Without a compromise, one of the organizers went off the stage to protest against it (field work observation 1, 1993). I was also told that the 2nd anniversary of the June Fourth Movement held in Los Angeles was mainly supported and organized by the Hong Kong students rather than by the students from mainland China. People who had direct experience in organizing such activities told me that they were disappointed by the students from mainland China, complaining that they would not assume any responsibility, let alone commitment. (field work observation 2, 1993)

Chan (1990:80) also concede that the demonstrators envisaged democracy as merely 'freedom', stating "the word [democracy] meant above all freedom from the petty and arbitrary controls that the leaders of Chinese work units and schools still exercise over so many facets of life". Most of them adopted the view that democracy was put forward as a long-term goal, while economic and social structure were given higher priority (*The Nation*, Jan 22, 1990).

#### Democracy Vaguely Perceived by the Public

The foregoing line of investigation is also consistent with some social surveys conducted in China. A relatively small opinion survey testing students' attitude toward democracy in a number of Beijing universities in 1986 indicated that 80% of the respondents regarded the United States as the most democratic country in the world and 96% believed that China would have a long way to go on the democratic path. However, the survey reported that most respondents did not really support the idea of multi-party politics. About 77% disagreed with the idea that democracy meant the alternation of political parties in power, (Wang and Wu, 1989). Another survey conducted at Henan University in April 1989, just before the June-Fourth Incident in Tiananmen Square, showed the overriding characteristics which students associated with democracy was good, honest, law-based government rather than the choice of a multi-party system. The respondents even described the 'democratic centralism' practised in socialist China as democracy instead of the multi-party system. Though most of them (65%) believed that democracy was the best system, they also realized China lacked a democratic cultural foundation to 'breed' democracy. It is therefore natural that most respondents still adhered to the Confucian principles of having a sacred ruler instead of the democratic government adopted in the West (Chang Hao, 1989: 18-22).

From 1985 to 1988, some political scientists conducted a nation-wide opinion survey testing the political culture of the mainland Chinese people.<sup>36</sup> It was reported that

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<sup>36</sup>This opinion survey was the first nationwide social survey conducted independently of the state since the formation of the PRC, with a huge sample of 1500,000 cases. This survey can be seen as the first systematic social survey on political culture of Chinese since 1949, see Min Qi (1989: 1-4).

75% of respondents supported democratic politics but they did not really understand the meaning of democracy. The research indicated the respondents had confused the idea of democracy, correlating it with the traditional idea of *Minben*.<sup>37</sup> When asked about the meaning of democracy, some respondents (24.98%) thought of democracy as only 'democratic centralism' like that adopted in socialist China (Min Qi, 1989: 139). About 20% of the respondents envisaged democracy as a responsive government, consulting public opinions, and meeting the needs of people (Min Qi, 1989: 149). Only 6.55% of the respondents chose the statement "it's people's right to choose their leaders" as the meaning of *Minzhu* (Min Qi, 1989: 181). Most respondents put their highest priority in individual freedom and individual dignity; freedom of speech, second; and right to election and being elected, in a lower priority (Min Qi, 1989: 183).

Like the earlier movements, most of those involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement just used 'democracy' as a slogan without a comprehensive and precise meaning. They were not seeking either popular democracy or multi-party politics. Neither did they want to overthrow the Communist Party nor institutionalize universal franchise. What they were really fighting for basically relates to the gloomy future of intellectuals because of the further decline in educational investment and worsening treatment of intellectuals. Unlike the 1986-87 student movements, the demonstrators' demands did go well beyond the personal level to the societal level, addressing the general fear of declining living standard, the unbearable inflation, official profiteering and corruption. Hoping to break through the restrictive policy on expression and press, the demonstrators also demanded freedom of press and freedom of expression. Their common call for democracy and vehement attack of the social evils did receive massive support from the people and thus a widespread People's Movement was developed. Up to this point, we observe a consistent call among these activists throughout different movements in the contemporary era for the "assertion of human rights". No matter how

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<sup>37</sup>*Minben* means the ruler has the mandate of Heaven but he should respect the ruled, being considerate and attentive to the welfare of people. However, it is different from the essence of democracy in which emphasis is put on the rights of people, ruled by the people.

they perceive the concept of human rights, it is most important that the ideas of "rights" and "individuality" have not only been cultivated but also have taken root in the minds of the people.

This chapter has discussed the conceptions of democracy throughout various pro-democracy movements in contemporary China. A better understanding of the conceptualization of their democratic thought and political demands must be analyzed against the particular socio-economic and socio-political contexts. One significant point which must be addressed here is that even though the 1980's was marked by a decade of struggling for democracy in mainland China, different people in mainland China still had diverse and even conflicting views on what democracy is or how to practise it. This chapter has highlighted the fact that even people lived against the same socio-historical context, they still had diverse interpretations of their environments. Therefore, we must analyze their ideological production in relation to not only the context in which they lived but also their social locations, political opportunity structure and fields in order to understand the dynamic and complicated phenomenon of knowledge production. Strating from such a socio-historical and socio-political contexts, the next chapter will discuss the political ideas of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident in light of the proposed analytical framework.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE 1989 PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

Scholars suggest that student movements can be categorized by two different orientations (Feuer, 1965; Altbach, 1967). The 'norm-oriented' movement is one under which the participants have specific goals, fighting for a specific limited issue. The 'value-oriented' movement, in contrast, is concerned with broader ideological issues. The literature of social movement also points out that most revolutionary political movements are 'value-oriented'.<sup>1</sup> In the student community, these 'value-oriented' groups have not only long term influence but also a leading function in 'norm-oriented' actions. In contrast to this, the norm-oriented 'caused-group' aims at reducing fees or securing a change in college administration (Altbach, 1967). Not surprisingly, these student groups are side by side in educational institutions and it is normal to see some overlap between these two types of groups in a student community.<sup>2</sup> It should be pointed out that a limited protest fighting for some isolated issue may be developed into a sustained movement. Altbach (1967) suggests when the norm-oriented movement is supplanted by students' interest in capitalizing on a particular movement regarding wider ideological and political issues, it may become a 'value-oriented' movement which addresses wider societal and political issues.

In last chapter, I have presented the ideas of democracy in various pro-democracy in contemporary China. The principal goal of this chapter is to examine contextually the demands and ideas throughout the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident in light of the

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<sup>1</sup>It is also suggested that on-going student political organizations, particularly 'underground' groups, fight for broader issues such as ideological commitment to Marxism, Hinduism, or other ideological concepts (Altbach, 1967).

<sup>2</sup>Petras (1964) suggests the term 'etudialist' to describe those movements primarily fighting for student welfare, fee increases, and administrative harassment of students. This type of student protests, according to Petras, are always militant over issues concerning student welfare. At the same time, they are occasionally interested in issues with broader concern. Contrasted to such movements are 'society-oriented' student movements under which wider societal issues and political matters are addressed.

proposed analytical framework. A primary hypothesis is that the social location, the access to economic and political opportunities and the secondary socialization in terms of educational orientation of the students, and occupational and political ties of intellectuals, have tremendous impact on their intellectual radicalism. I also hypothesize that the broad participation in the 1989 pro-democracy movement is mainly because of similar economic predicaments and social injustice that confronted people from different walks of life. I also believe that the achievements and failures of reform have been impinging greatly on students and intellectuals on the one hand and urban employees on the other under which circumstance the political eruptions of 1989 were caused. I therefore hold that there may be a strong relationship between economic difficulties and the uprising of the June Fourth Movement. It is my contention that student movement developed from a 'norm-oriented' into a 'value-oriented' movement, especially when the movement was imbued with widespread support from both local and overseas Chinese.

#### **DEPRIVED SOCIO-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND DISADVANTAGED SOCIAL LOCATION AND INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM**

In socialist China, treatment of the intellectuals was harsh and unjust, especially during the anti-rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution. They were coarsely attacked and criticized (see for example, Fairbank, 1987 and Goldman, 1981). In the post-Mao era, the CCP has stressed better treatment of intellectuals from time to time, allying them with the working class, and has reemphasized the position and importance of intellectuals in the Four Modernizations (Deng, 1980, 1983: 308, 1984: 224, 302; Zhao Ziyang, 1987 and Jiang Zemin, 1992).<sup>3</sup> Though the treatment of the intellectuals has shown some improvements since 1978, their quality of life is still far below the average of other walks of life in the reforming era (Deng Ziduan, 1992). The poor salaries, deprived living conditions, insufficient health care and the lack of autonomy in

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<sup>3</sup>In the post-Mao era, Deng repeatedly states the important role of intellectuals involved in the modernization of China. Intellectuals are also regarded as part of the working class, the definition of which symbolizes the official recognition of intellectuals. However, their social position is vulnerable, subject to the changes in state policy toward them. Because of having no independent economic position, critical, they are not immune to political constraint and are especially restricted by their social role as establishment intellectuals. For details, see, for example, Cheek (1986 and 1992: 124-145 and chapters 5-9).

work as well as the limited chance for development are objective evidence showing their disadvantaged social position. I believe this continual suffering may strongly influence their intellectual radicalism.

### Income Gap between Intellectuals & other Occupational Groups

Different surveys and studies have reported a consistent chronic decline of intellectuals' salaries. Reports indicate that the incomes of most intellectuals not only lag behind other sectors even more than they did in the 1950's. For instance, the salaries of higher intellectuals (including professors, associate professors and researchers) dropped from a range of 345-149 yuan in 1950's to 225-122 yuan in the 80's. The rate of decline is 7.7% (see table 1) (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 91). According to Qian Jiaju, a Chinese economist, argues that the real wage of the intellectuals today is only one-tenth of what intellectuals earned in the 1930s (Qian, 1988).

Year rank	1950's	1980's
professor	207	160
associate professor	149.5	122

Table 1: A Comparison of income of the university lecturers between 1980's and 1950's (Unit: in Rmb)

(Source: Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 91)

According to a 1987 survey, the intellectuals in Beijing who began their careers between 1970 and 1975 received an average income 10.2 % lower than those with other employments (*The Nineties*, April, 1988: 20). Table 2 also shows the income gap between mental labour and manual labour in 1982 and 1988.

The income discrepancy between factory workers and intellectuals has widened especially when longevity is considered. (See table 3) Thus, a factory worker can earn more than an intellectual with the same length of service. And the discrepancy is exacerbated by the fact that an intellectual must spend more time in education before entering the work force. This situation has made intellectuals angry and discontented (Deng Zhiduan, 1992: 14).

Among all age groups, the middle-aged intellectuals are least advantaged when work loads and incomes are compared. When comparing their average incomes with other age groups, these middle-aged intellectuals lagged behind by as much as 17% (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 94). Usually, the middle-aged group is the majority in their professions for these people have much working experience and they are able to bear key responsibilities in organizations. In 1987 a survey conducted by the Beijing Commission of Science among 3000 middle-aged scientists and technicians showed that 45.6% of the junior and middle level scientists and technicians had senior level responsibilities but their salaries had remained unchanged for years. This survey also found that 52.8% of these scientists had much greater more responsibilities than their juniors with resultant heavy work loads (*Guangming Ribao*, July 15, 1987: 4). Such unacceptable conditions placed immense pressure on these intellectuals.

This income gap has also been reported in other surveys. In 1987, the average monthly salary of Beijing employees in science and technology, education and public health was only 99 yuan while the average wage for construction work was 152 yuan; in public enterprises, 119 yuan; and in commerce, 114 yuan (*Zhongguo Zhi Chun*, Nov. 1986: 66). These figures further suggest that having more education does not mean better remuneration.<sup>4</sup> With little income, they have suffered more than others under the circumstance of soaring inflation. As *Zhongguo Zhi Chun* suggested, the average consumer spending in Beijing was 89 yuan in 1986, nearly 100% of the limited disposable income of an intellectual (*Zhongguo Zhi Chun*, Nov. 1986: 66). A similar study examining the income differentiation between the intellectuals and the workers reportedly found that the more educated received less income. (See table 4)

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<sup>4</sup>According to the State Statistics Bureau, the workers with university level received 139.1 yuan monthly while the workers with only primary level had 121.9 yuan. The income of workers with higher education was only 14% more than that of the workers with lower education. Workers with senior secondary level received 12.9% less than those with only junior secondary level as reported by a survey in Beijing. The figure shows us, to some extent, that most manual workers earn more than most low level mental workers (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 93-94).

Age	income of university graduate (mental labour)	income of primary & secondary students (manual labour)	income gap between them
25 or below	59.8	67.18	-7.38
26-28	63.4	71.55	-8.15
29-31	63.4	77.63	-14.23
32-34	65.9	76.22	-10.23
35-37	68.5	83.32	-14.82
38-40	73.4	88.32	-14.92
41-43	77.5	87.6	-10.1
44-46	78.3	97.1	-18.8
47-49	87.1	99.72	-12.63
50-52	103.6	102.83	0.77
53-55	124.7	107.1	17.6

Table 2. Monthly Income Gap between Manual & Mental Labour in 1982 (Unit: in Rmb)

(Source: *Jingji Yanju* No.8 1982:38)

Years in work force	Mental work	Manual work	Mental vs manual
10 years & below	142Y	167Y	-25Y (17.6%)
10-19 years	167Y	183Y	-16Y (9.6%)
20-29 years	201Y	201Y	0Y (0)
30 years & above	202Y	230Y	-28Y (3.9%)
average	172Y [sic]	182Y [sic]	-10Y [sic] (5.8%)

Table 3. Income Gap between Mental & Manual Labour in China, 1988

(Source: *Jingji yu Guanli Yanju*, No.2, 1990:41)

Occupations	average annual income (Unit: in Rmb)
construction	1556
transportation	1452
manufacturing	1285
public utilities (manual workers)	1234
finance & monetary	1216
research & education	1182

Table 4: A Comparison of Incomes of different Occupational Groups in 1985

(Source: Zhang, 1989: 141)<sup>5</sup>

Putting the foregoing observations together, it is therefore not surprising to hear the saying that "the one who writes books is inferior to those who sell them". The deprivation that intellectuals are experiencing clearly shows that more education means diminishing returns. This phenomenon is characterized as "*naoti daoguo*" in mainland China, meaning that the manual labourer has a better prospect for income than the mental labourer (*Jingji Ribao*, 21 Nov. 1990). In this circumstance, people commonly believe that "education is useless".

<sup>5</sup>The above cited figure does not include all workers in all these occupations.

The income gap has grown ever wider since the beginning of the Reform era. The major reason for this is that households running industrial and commercial businesses have enjoyed enormous increases in their incomes (*United Daily News*, June 28, 1988; 9). It is also argued that the beneficiaries of the reform have been individual households since they have made profits through commercial transactions. Peasants have earned more by increasing their production and by working longer hours. People also complained that corrupt cadres have embezzled public funds and engaged in bribery. In addition, the preferential treatment of the coastal areas<sup>6</sup> has given rise to what are called '10,000 yuan families' (*wanyuan hu*).<sup>7</sup> A 1988 official survey revealed that the monthly income of an independent businessman in the Beijing area was about seven times that of a typical middle school teacher; and many owners of private enterprises had incomes more than ten times those of college professors (*Jingli Ribao*, Feb. 22, 1988; see also Li Qiang, 1993: 265-271). According to one well-known mainland Chinese reformist, Wen Yuankai, twenty percent more people feel that they have lost out as a result of the reform than those who have benefited from it. In the reforming era, the urban workers generally got higher salaries than the intellectuals. After the wage reforms, workers could get bonuses and subsidies from profits retained by their enterprises (see Walder, 1992) while the intellectuals in the areas of education, scientific research, culture and health have not kept pace with the increment in wages, let alone other benefits. Compounding the situation is the fact that other occupational groups can get incomes in addition to their wages gained from their work units, (see table 5 & 6). Under such a circumstance,

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<sup>6</sup>Deng Xiaoping proposed the idea that the people in the coastal areas be allowed to get rich first. He believes other people from the interior parts of China will become better off since they will benefit from the economic boom in the coastal areas. Thus, the Party has given preferential treatment to the economic zone and coastal cities, offering them special allowances for customs and tax, and autonomy in trading with the overseas investors. This policy creates disparities between the coastal cities and the inner regions of China. However, these incentives now cover most of China especially when the CCP firmly re-states the importance of socialist market reforms in October 1992.

<sup>7</sup>It has been observed that millions of Chinese were employed in export processing enterprises by the late 1980s. Additionally, millions more were starting up their own businesses and the south-eastern coast and most Chinese cities were opened up to foreign investment and trade. It is also reported that the growth of urban private enterprise grew from a base of 140, 000 registered urban enterprises in 1978 to more than 3 million units by the late 80's. In addition to the formally registered private entrepreneurs, university students, intellectuals, reformers and ordinary workers have also engaged in legal but unregistered & untaxed economic activities. These observations seem to suggest that people from different walks of life also participate in doing business. Such a phenomenon is highly indicative to us that many more people in the mainland have become richer in the post-Mao era (see, for example, Gold, 1991; Rosen, 1987/8).

intellectuals' socio-economic position is even lower.

In 1988, *Beijing Ribao* ran a series of articles under the title "How to Deal with the Income Gap", in which it was reported that a taxi driver could earn over 3000 yuan a month; average income of private doctors was 460 yuan a day; however, middle school teachers were paid only 96 yuan monthly. In the field of education, middle-aged teachers of elementary or high schools are in the most disadvantaged position. Generally speaking, these teachers have more than 18 class sessions each week, not including time for marking papers and preparing lectures. In spite of such a heavy work load, they received the lowest incomes of all fields of employment for decades.

When we compare their situation with those who run private businesses with annual incomes up to 250,000 yuan (that is, over 20,000 yuan a month),<sup>8</sup> this further indicates the deprivation of Chinese intellectuals (*Renweibao*, June 5, 1988: 14).

	0Y (%)	Below 50Y (%)	51- 100Y (%)	101- 150Y (%)	151- 200Y (%)	201- 300Y (%)	301- 400Y (%)	401- 500Y (%)	Above 500Y (%)
illiterates/semi-illiterates	37.1	28.5	11.4	4.6	11.6	0.7		6.0	
primary school	43.0	28.3	13.0	5.3	5.0	2.9	1.4	0.5	0.5
secondary specialized school	60.7	19.9	9.0	3.1	3.5	2.3	0.8	0.1	0.7
senior secondary school	49.1	25.1	7.2	4.7	4.6	5.5	0.6	0.4	2.8
secondary technical school	58.4	22.0	6.5	4.1	4.3	2.3	1.1	0.5	0.8
college	63.3	23.0	5.6	2.3	2.2	0.7	1.9	0.9	0.2
university undergraduate	55.7	24.5	9.4	2.1	3.7	2.2	1.1	0.7	0.7
university graduate	52.9	24.9	11.4	1.6	4.4	3.4	0.9		0.4
graduate & above	7.6	54.1	10.5	7.6	17.6	2.5			

Table 5. Distribution of income earned outside the unit by staff, by educational level, 1992(%)  
(Unit: in Rmb)

(Source: Li Qiang, 1993:262)

Within such a social-historical context, it thus becomes a common phenomenon that "tailors earn more income than surgeons; selling eggs on the street makes more

<sup>8</sup>The figure cited here may be the upper limit but I think the average is not so much. One point which must be stated here is that it is difficult to determine whether the figure is an average or not because the Chinese source does not make it explicitly clear.

money than launching missiles" (Chen Kang, 1990). Many people in mainland China complained that "those using their brains are inferior to those using razors, and those who design atomic bombs are inferior to those who sell salted eggs". Even worse, "those who teach students to play the piano are inferior to those who move pianos" (Chia Chen-chang, 1989: 41). Under severe economic pressure, some intellectuals have been forced to do other part-time work like selling snacks, stationary, and school uniforms. Some school playgrounds were also turned into car-parks to collect parking fees. Some teachers have even relied on selling apples in the streets (Chen Kang, 1990: 5).<sup>9</sup> Under this difficult situation, an increasing number of intellectuals have left the teaching profession for other employment. According to a survey conducted by the Beijing Teachers College, 50% of its graduates of the past six years wanted to leave their teaching jobs. Among these people, 60% of them complained of the low income and social status (*Zhongguo Qingnian*, Mar. 4 1988). Another report also revealed many vacant teaching posts (about 2200 each year) to be filled in Beijing (*The Nineties*, April, 1988: 20). According to statistics published by the Education Committee of Hunan, there have been a sharp increase in teachers quitting their job. It is reported that about 6292 provincial teachers left their posts between 1990 and 1992. Most of them were under 45 years of age. The reason behind such a huge withdrawal rate, according to the report, was the poor income and prospect, especially compared with other occupations (*China Focus*, Vol.1.4: 6). In the face of falling income and social status of intellectuals, it is obvious that young people have no interest in the teaching profession (see for example, *Guangming Ribao*, 14 August, 1986; *Zhongguo Qingnian*, 9 Sept. 1986). That also explains why the "theory of the uselessness of knowledge" is so popular among Chinese. The disadvantaged position of intellectuals may have made university students worry about their future. In order to have a better future, they demanded further improvement in education during the June Fourth Incident 1989.

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<sup>9</sup>Nathan discusses the social aftermaths of the economic reforms clearly, pointing out the worsening social mood because of the income differentiation. See Nathan (1990, particularly chapter 6).



	< 100Y (%)	101- 150Y (%)	151- 200Y (%)	201- 300Y (%)	301- 400Y (%)	401- 500Y (%)	501- 800Y (%)	801- 1000Y (%)	> 1000Y (%)
illiterates/semi-illiterates	7.9	21.3	31.1	26.2	10.9	2.6			
primary school	6.4	17.9	26.1	29.5	13.6	4.9	1.3	0.1	0.1
secondary specialized school	6.2	18.6	25.6	32.9	11.6	3.2	1.7	0.1	0.1
senior secondary school	4.5	26.1	25.9	29.1	10.6	2.9	0.8		
secondary technical school	7.1	22.2	25.6	30.4	9.0	3.1	2.2	0.2	0.2
college	2.4	15.1	25.8	39.8	12.8	3.0	1.0	0	0.1
university undergraduates	1.6	11.6	26.9	42.7	12.5	3.2	1.3	0.1	0.1
university graduate	0.9	8.9	22.7	42.9	15.9	5.2	1.6	0.3	1.6
graduate & above	0.9	6.7	29.1	37.1	18.6	5.8	1.5	0.4	

Table 6. Average monthly income from the work unit, by different qualification level (1992)  
(Unit: Rmb)

(Source, Li Qiang, 1993:273)

### Insufficient Housing for Intellectuals

Poor salaries and declining real incomes reflects only one side of the story. Combined with low income is the problem of living environment. According to a survey in West Beijing City, the living condition of the middle-aged teachers was extremely hard and poor. The average area per person was less than four square meters and the buildings in which they lived were old and shabby. For example, a family with four members were cramped in a quarter with only seven square meters. Most of the respondents reported that they had been living together with three generations. Ironically, some newly-married middle-aged intellectuals, owing to the shortage of housing, were forced to live apart, either staying with their original family or just sharing a flat with other students (*The Nineties*, April 1988: 19-21; *Zhengming*, August 1987: 62-63; Zhou Fangniang, 1989). Even though the living conditions of intellectuals have been improved in the post-Mao era, many young and middle-aged intellectuals are still on a waiting list for apartments.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Deng Zhiduan (1992) argues that the housing shortage for higher intellectuals has been improved for they no longer have to live with children & grandchildren in an apartment room. However, the living conditions of other intellectuals generally remained unchanged.

The lack of space has affected their quality of life. Most of the middle-aged intellectuals have to share the desk with their school-age children. Many of them either have to prepare their lessons after their children go to bed or return to their school office to do their work (*Central Daily News*, Taipei, August 3, 1982: 5).

Another study done by the State Statistics Bureau also reported that half of the 200 high and middle-level intellectuals had housing problems; and 5% of them even had no house at all. In the same survey, it showed 5% of them had less than 4 square meters of living space while 45% of them had three generations living together in a small room (*Guangming Ribao*, Sep. 19, 1988). "Insufficient housing" has frustrated them and made them more impatient for changes. Fully 48% of researchers at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences complained about a "housing shortage" in 1987, for some were forced to live in basements. When comparing with other people, the intellectuals again find themselves in an underprivileged position. For instance, the average living space of the population of Beijing was 6.7 square meters while the intellectuals had an average of six square meters at Beita (*Guangming Ribao*, July 15, 1987). Another source reported that most intellectuals considered housing a higher priority than other people (*United Daily News*, Taipei, Dec. 29, 1988: 9). Such inadequate housing and poor living conditions have prepared the ground for their radicalism.

#### Poor Health Care for Intellectuals

In addition to the poor incomes and living conditions, the acute insufficiency in health care further puts the intellectuals into a position of extreme suffering. According to some reports, the death rate among middle-aged intellectuals has been increasing. As a result of heavy work loads, poor living conditions and emotional stress, life expectancy of the intellectuals is in general 10 years shorter than that of other walks of life. Statistics show that the average life span of the intellectuals is about 58.5 years, much lower than that of the general population (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 96-97). The "Internal Reference News", a Chinese newspaper for high-ranking officials, revealed the following facts concerning life expectancy of Chinese intellectuals: first, the average life expectancy of

senior intellectuals is 58 years, 10 years shorter than that of other groups; second, 1/3 of the mid-level (equivalent to that of assistant professor) and senior intellectuals died between the ages of 40 and 50; third, 1/2 died before 60; fourth, the major causes for their deaths are cancer (53.7%) and heart diseases (20.1%) (*The Nineties*, April 1988: 19). Without a systematic health scheme, they have suffered from serious illness.<sup>11</sup>

Among intellectuals, the middle-aged group suffers the most. A survey conducted in Guangzhou examining the health situation of the middle-aged intellectuals found that more than 42% of the respondents were having illness. A similar study in Beijing discovered that more than 81% of the middle-aged intellectuals were suffering from illness. When comparing the death rate of the middle-aged intellectuals with the same age group in the rest of the population, the death rate of the former is 20 times that of the latter (Zhang, 1989: 143). The researchers concluded that the high death rate was due to their poor living environment, stressful working conditions, frustration and dissatisfaction in job prospects. With malnutrition and poor health care, the intellectuals have been forced to the edge of death. Though the state has indicated a determination to improve health care for the intellectuals, there have been no substantial improvements.<sup>12</sup>

#### Loss of Autonomy in Work Place

In addition to the inadequate socio-economic opportunities, the intellectuals also lack political opportunities and opportunities for personal development. Despite the supportive policy to intellectuals announced by the state, the cadre bureaucrats in the managerial level have not really implemented the policy to make good use of intellectuals (see, for example, Deng Zhiduan, 1992: 323-337). Those intellectuals who have joined the state-run enterprises found poor opportunities for promotion, unfair treatment and constraints in professional development. They, therefore, preferred to work in the private firms if they got the chance (White III, 1990). However, the job market is constrained by

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<sup>11</sup>Various surveys conducted in Tianjin, Beijing, Shanghai repeatedly report that intellectuals are confronting serious health problems. Compared with other social groups, the health problems of intellectuals are apparently more serious. For details, see *Zhengming* (1987.8: 62); *Quangming Ribao* (July 15, 1987).

<sup>12</sup>One survey at Liuning showed that the medical fund for teachers was only 1.5 yuan per head. It was reported that the situation became worse after the 1989 Tiananmen Incident (see, *The Nineties*, April, 1988: 20; *Ming bao*, 15 Mar. 1991 and 9 July, 1991).

the system, which makes it difficult for intellectuals to change jobs. It was reported that when some technical specialists applied to change jobs in Lanzhou, their bosses immediately stopped their salaries. Some other discriminatory policies toward the intellectuals are common in China. Having lost the chance for further their studies to get proper qualification during the Cultural Revolution, most of the middle-aged intellectuals are not 'well-qualified'. The Dean of the Psychology Department at Hangzhou University pointed out the fact that the middle-aged intellectuals "have a low level of education", and therefore cannot be promoted very easily. The Dean explained, "[these middle-aged teachers] can only become lecturers; they cannot become associate professors" (Rai, 1991: 144). Without a formal qualification, they cannot get a promotion. Their devotion to the teaching profession has earned them an extremely deprived life.<sup>13</sup>

In China, it is extremely difficult to get access to resources without proper social networks. Unluckily enough, most middle-aged intellectuals have failed to secure a proper network (*Guanxi*), without which they lack opportunities for personal development and have no political influence. For instance, they have found difficulties in publishing their writings. The head of the Comparative Education Department at the Hangzhou University admitted that "it is very difficult for young authors [to publish]. No one trusts you ... One associate professor of Chinese language earned Y10 000 from the royalty of a book. I got Y 2800 for one publication" (Rai, 1991: 146). In addition, the intellectuals have to raise funds to publish instead of having monetary rewards for their works. Despite the difficulty in publication, they are still eager to get their works published. One case reveals that a professor not only had to sell most of his property to raise funds but also sold his blood two times in order to get sufficient funds to pay debt to the publisher. The report says that this professor is fortunate to have succeeded in getting his work published. For most of the intellectuals, publication is still a dream, far beyond

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<sup>13</sup>Su Xiaokang (1989a) has published a book revealing the crisis of education in China, especially pointing to the exceedingly severe conditions of the middle-aged intellectuals. His report has received wide support in mainland China. See also other scholars who have also pointed out the fact of crisis in education of China, for example, Li Ming (1989) and He Pochuan, (1989).

their imagination (*Huaqiao ribao*, 12 Nov. 1992).

Another problem directly confronting the intellectuals is the under-utilization of their abilities and the lack of career development. A 1986 study surveying 10,000 technical specialists at 400 colleges and research institutes in Shanghai indicated that only 30% of the respondents could develop themselves in work while 36% reported that they could partially use their specialty at work. Even worse, 7% said they could not do it; but 20% showed that they had been denied the job for which they were trained (*Guangming Ribao*, Dec.2, 1986). A national sample survey of 35 000 middle-aged intellectuals revealed a similar finding that 14% of the respondents could not independently and fully do their jobs; 61% could enjoy a minimal degree of autonomy but were confined to a very basic level of work. In this sense, their skills and expert knowledge are not well utilized. Among the respondents, less than 25% were satisfied with what they were doing, feeling they could fulfill their roles (*Quangming Ribao*, July 15, 1987). According to another study, 34% of the respondents reported that they could not actualize their potentials. These surveys reveal intellectuals' wish for professional autonomy and a dissatisfaction at its lack. With raising expectations in professional autonomy and intellectual freedom by the reforming regime of 1978, the limited opportunities for personal development and political development have further made them angry and depressed (*Renmin Ribao*, 5 May, 1988).<sup>14</sup>

#### Discrimination Against Young Intellectuals

In particular, the young intellectuals have been facing adverse situations. One study revealed that the young intellectuals have been victims of discrimination. Only 5% of the intellectuals under 40 could get higher posts. It was also reported that the average age of committees in the Chinese Academy of Social Science is 73; the average age of the professors in the colleges under the State Educational Committee is 59-60, while the associate professors are 53-54 (*Renmin Ribao*, 25 May, 1988). The lack of promotion

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<sup>14</sup>Deng Zhiduan (1992) examines the causes for the brain drain problem in China, suggesting that one of the major reasons for such phenomenon is the lack of professional autonomy which they could enjoy overseas. For that reason intellectuals prefer to stay in other countries rather than return to China.

and professional development has suffocated the intellectual community as a whole. In a national survey, when the intellectuals were asked to evaluate whether or not their self-interests and personal aspirations were realized, most of the respondents (average 70%) were dissatisfied with their present circumstances. More than 72% of the respondents felt that their income and living conditions were well below a reasonable level. Most of them (average 70%) expressed dissatisfaction with their present social and political status. They complained of lacking opportunity for self-actualization and personal development. They also thought that they had been deprived of freedom of expression (Min Qi, 1989: 80). Other studies also report similar findings. Most of the respondents consider the most important factor in their work to be "power", suggesting that power implies social status in the intellectual community. In addition, they also report that discrimination toward the young intellectuals is still acute. They complain of the limited chance for promotion and the criteria for assessment based on seniority rather than merit (*Xingdao ribao*, 28 Nov. 1992). Phenomena such as favouritism, antiquated promotion policy, excessive reliance upon seniority, over-staffing, political prejudice and deterrents to labour mobility have been commonly experienced by Chinese intellectuals. Underutilization of talented manpower, coupled with mistreatment of intellectuals and poor working conditions and poor prospects are crucial factors for intellectual radicalism.

The perceived disadvantaged social position of intellectuals and the limited social and political opportunities have already made them exceedingly depressed (*Xingdao ribao*, 28 Nov. 1992). Against such a background, the intellectuals boldly condemned corruption for causing social inequality and sought better treatment for the intellectuals and improvement of education, seeing changes in the present regime necessary. That is why they spelled out their reason for protests on a poster : "We having nothing, only our conscience " (Ostergaard, 1989:29). Deteriorating living conditions have also united them, enabling them to use their professional associations, like the Writers' Associations, the All China Journalists Association and the Association of Young Economists to apply influence on the state to change. As Yan Jiaqi, the leader of the Association of Beijing's

Intellectual Circles, stated "at a time when the fate of our nation is in the balance, conscience calls us; and intellectuals, who are usually modest, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous, can no longer be silent. Our reason tells us that we should no longer be divided. Intellectuals should organize in this great patriotic democratic movement" (*Ming Bao*, 20 Feb. 1989, quoted from Ostergaard, 1989:29-30). It is evident, then, that the underprivileged social position of the intellectuals has moved them to radicalism.

#### Inadequate Educational Subsidies and Student Radicalism

Aware of the disadvantaged position of the intellectuals, the student demonstrators feared that they would face a similar future. The government's inadequate educational investment had greatly frustrated them. Since the 1986 student demonstrations, the students had been complaining about the tightening educational subsidies from the state. From 1985 onwards, the State Education Committee had reduced its financial support to universities and students. The actual expenditure for academic use was reduced from 40% to 20% in the total expenditure of a university budget (Zhou Fangniang 1989: 297-298). In the past four decades, the state investment in education showed a regressive trend rather than a progressive one. According to *Hongqi*, (Red Flag), one of the official newspapers, the average national expenditure in recent decades on education was about 2 % per annum (of the gross national products) (*Hongqi*, no.9, 1988: 19). If we compare the statistics of 1984-1987 with that of 1977-1983, we find that the expenditure in education as a proportion of the total national budget was further cut (*Jiaoyu yanjiu*, no.7 1988: 24-25). With the school population increasing from 1.4 million to 1.7 million in 1987, the actual support for education was reduced (see, *Beijing Review*, no. 8, Feb 23, 1987: 21-25). A study in Tianjin showed that the academic expenditure was further cut from 37.5% in 1986 to 11.46% in 1988. These figures show us that the actual academic expenditure in 1988 was less than 1/3 that of 1986, showing declining capital investment in higher education (*Achievement of Education*, 1991). It was also reported that the Chinese national expenditure in education was placed 149th of 151 countries in the mid-80's (*Gaodeng jiaoyu xuebao*, no. 1, 1985:

64).<sup>15</sup>

If we take the inflation rate into account, (for instance, with double-digit inflation from 1987 to 1989) the "disposable" investment in higher education is cut in real term. The total capital investment in education from 1989 to 1990 dropped (*China Statistics Report*, 1991). Such an inadequate investment in education caused a wave of complaints over intellectuals' salaries and living conditions during the Seventh National People's Congress, where many delegates raised this issue including Ding Shisun, the President of Beijing University. In response, Li Peng had to acknowledge the problem openly in the press, trying to assuage the feeling of discontent among the popular masses and college students (*Renmin Ribao, Haiwaiban*, July 4, 1988: 1).

In addition, limited investment in education directly affects teaching and research in China. Although academic and scientific research facilities have improved since 1978, they still fall short of international standards. With chronic funding shortages, both library & laboratory facilities are still far from satisfactory. Researchers in universities often find difficulty in getting sufficient material from libraries to complete their projects. According to Dr. Herny Rosemost, an American scholar who spent almost two years at Fudan University in Shanghai, its libraries are "one step away from chaos" because "massive efforts in cataloguing & recataloguing are required, borrowing & return procedures must be streamlined, and the holdings of contemporary books & journals --- especially in Western languages --- must be updated and expanded" (Rosemost, 1985: 44). Without enough financial support for education, students and intellectuals have found difficulties in pursuing academic work. According to some statistics, the average cost of books rose by 2.3 times from 2.10 yuan in 1984 to 5.10 yuan in 1988. Even worse, the cost of foreign books increased by three to four times. This inevitably led to a shortage of books (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 298). In a survey conducted in Hubei Province in 1987, most of the 514 middle-aged intellectuals interviewed described

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<sup>15</sup>The CCP admitted that average per capita government spending on education was US\$ 11.2 in 1989, which not surprisingly placed China the second from the bottom among all the countries surveyed in terms of educational investment. See *Issues & Studies* (April, 1989); Gai Che-sheng (1990); see also Lo (1989; 1993).



themselves as 'operating on overload' (Rai, 1991: 147). Teachers stated that, "the acute problems confronting them are difficulties in borrowing books, writing books and publishing books, all of which have resulted in difficulty in teaching and research" (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 198). Owing to the shortage of funds, the intellectuals cannot go to conferences or engage in basic research. From 1983 onwards, the cost of experiments has increased two to three times, and the concomitant result is insufficient funds for experiments. Students have to share experiments instead of individually conducting them. Even worse, some of them have to observe the demonstrations by teachers rather than doing actual experiments (Zhou Fangniang, 1989: 298). Under these circumstances, quality of teaching was declined. Therefore, a common complaint of Chinese scientists is that many potentially excellent research projects are put aside because of insufficient funds and inadequate facilities.

More seriously, the inadequate educational funds also put students and intellectuals into a physically 'dangerous' situation. They have been forced to live in dormitories with poor maintenance. According to a study of the top universities in Beijing, most of the student dormitories were hazardous, but the university authorities had no funds to repair them since costs had doubled or even trebled. These financial impediments caused the university authorities to incur great financial debts. It was also reported in Jinsu, indicating that 17.2% of the school buildings were in danger of collapse. The situation in the primary schools was even worse, showing more than 70% of the school building structures to be dangerous (Zhou Fangniang, 1989). It is also suggested that the impasse in education is related as much to the wrongful allocation of funds as to insufficiency of funds (*Kuaibao*, 21 Dec. 1991). The poor living conditions and gloomy future for education have made students frustrated. The slow pace of reform and poor development of education, seen in this light, are the driving forces for the students and intellectuals in the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989. Having seen the difficulties of their forerunners, the "budding intellectuals" in university worried about their future. Without hope that education might develop and aware of the falling

importance of knowledge. an increasing number of student are withdrawing from school.

### An Increasing Withdrawal Rate of Students

If we consider the June Fourth Incident as an outburst of their anger, we may infer that the increasing withdrawal rate of students from school and university is an indication of their long-term dissatisfaction with the falling social position of intellectuals. It has been reported that most students do not enjoy their studies and have doubts about their future. One writer suggests that there are four main schools of thought among university students. Those in the 'T school' are preparing for the TOEFL test, hoping to study abroad. The 'M school' students spend their time in playing 'Majiang' whereas the 'D school' students are dancing their way through college. Last, the students in 'L school' are engaging in love affairs (Chen Kang, 1990; see also Zhou Fangniang, 1989). According to a survey at Shanghai examining the leisure activities of students, 70% of the sample just tried to do nothing special to 'kill' time; 20% of them simply had nothing to do, feeling aimless and without direction (Li Ming, 1989: 231-232). Here, we can see their loss of interest and direction in both studies and life. In 1988, 8500 students withdrew from school, approximately 6% of the junior students in secondary level at Dalian. The withdrawal rate at Fuzhou came up to 42%; while the students quitting their studies at Huibei even rose to 100 000 within several months (*Zhongguo jiaoyubao*, 20 July, 1988). Such high withdrawal rates are found not only in the secondary level but also in both the undergraduate and post-graduate level (see for example, *Kuaibao*, 29 Apr. 1992). From 1987 onwards, the withdrawal rate of the post-graduate students has been rising (*Beijing qingnianbao*, 4 June, 1988). Lo (1989; 1993) argues that there is a consistent upward trend of rising students withdrawal rates since the late 1980's. Lo suggests one of the reasons for such a phenomenon is the insufficient government support of education. Table 7 indicates a continual decline in the number of postgraduates since 1987.

Some departments received no applicants and many research students left their studies. They conceived that education was no longer useful since it could not ensure

them a better jobs after their graduation (*Guangming Ribao*, 9 August, 1988; *Zhongguo qingnianbao*, 2 Jan. 1988). Other evidence also confirmed these observations (Su Xiaokang, 1989; Zhou Fangniang, 1989).<sup>16</sup> Most young people are more anxious to find ways of making money than to continue their education.<sup>17</sup>

Year	No. of Post-graduates in Institutes of Higher Education
1987	106,185
1988	100,810
1989	91,001
1990	84,158

Table 7: The Number of Post-Graduate in the Institute of Higher Education 1987-1990.

(Source: Dept. of Planning & Construction, State Education Commission, The PRC, *Achievement of Education in China*, People's Education Press, 1991: 42)

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated clearly the declining social position of the intellectuals and the insufficient investment in education. The lack of the opportunities for both economic and personal development have made both the students and intellectuals exceedingly depressed.<sup>18</sup> Having seen the soaring inflation and acute corruption in the Communist bureaucracy, they became restless and intolerant of delay. The students were further antagonized by the government decision to reintroduce the political job-allocation system. They rejected such a system because they had doubts that their future could be appropriately determined by the Party, particularly are controlled by family relationships and connections. (Ostergaard, 1989:31).<sup>19</sup> It is against such a

<sup>16</sup>Su Xiaokang (1989b) not only attacked traditional Chinese culture in *Hexiang* but also pointed out the intense education crisis, suggesting that the state should respect intellectuals and improve education in China.

<sup>17</sup>Some surveys testing the values of youth in China, show that they have become more concerned with obtaining money and material well-being. See, for example, Rosen (1990); Hicks (1990); Hamrin & Cheek (1986).

<sup>18</sup>The insufficient subsidies in education upset the students' interest. Well before the 1989 demonstration, students had begun to complain vehemently on the university campuses. For instance, the students in Beijing University openly denounced the educational policies, creating posters to express their desire for reform in China's educational system. Complaints of the hardships in education and declining standard of welfare for students had been rife among students. Studies indicated that many students were malnourished (*Mingbao*, 12 July, 1991; 18 July, 1991). In this light, we can claim that the unresolved crisis in 1986-87 student protests eventually cumulated in the uprising of the June-Fourth Incident of 1989. Hence, they demanded improvement in the life of intellectuals and upgrading their professional status. However, the more changes they demanded, the more enraged and alienated they felt since there was no sign of concrete improvement (*Mingbao*, 4 August, 1988).

<sup>19</sup>Ostergaard (1989:31) who was in China when the 1989 Incident erupted, and had the chance to interview students, observed that the core demands of students throughout the movement was "Better wages for teachers and more investigations of the educational system", "implementation of the rights granted in the constitution such as the right to organize and press freedom and the popular

background that the student movement escalated from simple demands for better treatment toward intellectuals and fair evaluation of Hu Yaobang, their beloved *houtai*, to a full-brown value-oriented demonstration movement addressing societal issues.

## SECONDARY SOCIALIZATION AND INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM

It is evident that the student leaders had been greatly influenced by their secondary socialization especially by their teachers who had been supporters of democratization in China. Some of the student leaders, Wang Dan and Shen Tong, well before the 1989 demonstrations, had engaged in organizing 'democracy salon' seminars, concerts and exhibits to discuss the issues of democracy and political reforms. They were frustrated by the Party's half-hearted attitude toward political reforms. Encouraged by their teachers, the student demonstrators had been thinking about the future of China.<sup>20</sup> It was widely believed that Wang Dan had been influenced by the ideas of the outspoken democrat, Fang Lizhi and wife Li Shuxian, while Wu'er Kaixi was influenced by his teacher Liu Xiaobo, a cultural critic (for details, see, Chong, 1989; Black and Munro, 1993; Bonnin and Chevrier, 1991). In an interview, Wang Dan openly admitted that he was inspired by Fang Lizhi and always consulted with Li Shuxian, but he did not accept totally their ideas (Fan, 1989: 203-206).<sup>21</sup> Throughout the movement, Wu'er always followed the advice of Liu Xiaobo. According to one of the student leaders from Beijing Normal University, "Wu'er is our leader in practical matters, but Liu Xiaobo is our ideological leader" (*Renmin Ribao*, 29 Sep. 1989).<sup>22</sup> Liu rejected the necessity of intellectuals' loyalty to the state. He said, "it is exactly the faithful character of Chinese

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demands for combating inflation and profiteering practices among officials".

<sup>20</sup>It was reported that a Hungarian-American businessman had supported a range of autonomous intellectual activity with the established China Fund. A New York - based journal *The Chinese Intellectuals* was also published and issued on the mainland before June 1989. The model of democratization set by Taiwan also encouraged the participants in the 1989 movement (Gold, 1990:144-45).

<sup>21</sup>There is some research discussing the network between the 1989 student demonstrations and Fang Lizhi and Li Shuxian. See Chong (1989). In the past few years, Fang openly denounced the socialist system and demanded democracy and total westernization. Fang also had initiated and implemented administrative reforms when he was the vice-president of the Chinese University of Technology and Science. The speech and action of Fang had great impact on the students. See Schell, (1988); Barne and Miniford (1989: 327-340).

<sup>22</sup>The students were also advised by other intellectuals, either their teachers or close associates, see *Zhengming* (May, 1990).

intellectuals that makes it difficult for them to break their attachment to the despotic system". He added that "intellectuals should be loyal to their own belief and the law" (*Zhengming*, April, 1989 and Liu Xiaobo, 1990). Unlike other intellectuals' support to the reformers, Liu sought for independent thought and intellectual creativity. He was not only critical of authorities but also emphasized the growth of civic consciousness. He asked for a self-critical reflection and strived for personal courage, daring and freedom (See chapter 8).<sup>23</sup> Deeply influenced by Liu, Wu'er was bold enough to ask the premier Li Peng not to waste time, seeking equal-footing dialogue with the state and the recognition of the autonomous student bodies.

The ideas of Su Shaozhi, Wang Yizhou and Yan Jiaqi, three outstanding and prominent social scientists in China, had great impact on the youth. Su and Wang were accused of inciting youth to action in 1989 while Yan's ideas on democracy were condemned as advocating a system of Western capitalistic democracy for China (*World Economic Herald*, 19 April, 1989). Yan Jiaqi, in a *Chinese Youth* interview, asked for more democratization in the political structure. He also encouraged students to remember the spirit of Science and Democracy as emphasized in the May Fourth Movement. Su Shaozhi and Wang Yizhou also reminded students of the "triple anniversary" of the French Revolution, the May Fourth Movement and the liberation of China, and the role of youth in the forefront of these struggles (*Zhongguo qingnian*, Jan. 1989: 1-2 and Sept. 1989: 11; *Zhongguo jiaoyubao*, August 8, 1989:1, August 22, 1989: 4). Liu Binyan, the most outstanding writer of reportage literature in China, along the same lines, urged people to be critical and independent in thinking. He also introduced the concept of the "second kind of loyalty", which is characterized not only by a strong sense of mission to help the country but also a kind of critical support to the state. Liu's ideas had great impact on the youth, making them more critical (Schell, 1988; Barne and Miniford, 1989: 354-360). It is clear then that their social network with the prominent liberal

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<sup>23</sup>Liu Xiaobo (1992) has a detailed discussion on his relationship with Wu'er and other student leaders of the 1989 pro-democracy movement.

intellectuals<sup>24</sup> had tremendous impact on their political orientation. With such a secondary political socialization, students became more critical and outspoken. These lines of argument also suggest a close relation between secondary political socialization and political affiliation and ideological formation.

## **A LIBERAL AND RELAXED SOCIO-INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT AND INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM**

### The Influence from the West

In addition to the influence of their teachers, exposure to the outside world is certainly be one of the variables influencing the liberal thought of students. It has been reported that the university students were influenced by Western ideas, for they had read many foreign books and materials in the reforming era. When asked "what kind of books do you like to read?", more than 45% of the respondents replied that they read many foreign novels and stories, and books in their own speciality (Ye Jun, 1983: 320). The same study also showed that many of the respondents read Sartre's works and commentaries, while others heard about them from others (Ibid: 328). In addition, the student demonstrators were influenced by the ideas of Popper. Karl Popper defends 'democracy' against 'tyranny' from the view of scientific progress. Adopting the view of Popper, Wang Dan's 'democratic salon', Shen Tong's 'The Olympic Institute' and Wu'er Kaixi's 'Confucius Study Society' began to discuss problems in the philosophy of science. The popularity of Popper was due to his attack on Marxism as a methodological and logical "pseudo-science". Under the impact of Popper, student leaders adhered to the view that 'democracy' is more conducive to the growth of knowledge than is tyranny (Chong, 1990). In addition, the intellectual community was influenced by the ideas of Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Freud. Kelly also observes the great impact of Nietzsche on the youth, especially his ideas of nihilism and individualism. The personal courage, daring and freedom of these Western scholars attracted many young Chinese intellectuals

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<sup>24</sup>Liberal intellectuals refer to those intellectuals who have been the supporters of the political and economic reforms in the post-Mao era. They have been more open and sympathetic to the Western political thought. I get this insight from the interview of Yan Jiaqi, (see, Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

(Kelly, 1991a). In addition, democratic salons were popular in the University campuses, offering a relatively relaxed arena for both students and intellectuals to discuss different socio-political issues in China. Prominent intellectuals like Fang Lizhi and his wife, LiShuxian also participated in and supported the students through these meetings. Liu Xiaobo, another young and critical scholar, offered not only support but also advice to student leaders. Thus, scholars suggest that there has been an emergence of a "public sphere" in Chinese society, despite its pre-mature nature.<sup>25</sup> As Shen Tong explained the origin of his salon "The Olympic Institute", he said, "student organizations have always been a safe haven for intellectuals, a place for free thought and discussion" (*PEN American Centre Newsletter*, Dec 1989: 17). In the midst of a general cultural crisis and an identity crisis in the intellectual community, the Western ideas do occupy a significant position in the socio-cultural realm of Communist China. Tolerance toward this discourse on the campuses, coupled with a relaxed liberal educational orientation, made the students more critical and bold enough to confront the government directly.

The contact with the West was not confined only to the educational institutions. The extraordinary openness of China after 1978 had created an environment allowing Western influences to penetrate the life of the people. Compared with the 1970's, the students in the 1980's really got direct experience of the West. Table 8 shows that the number of students going abroad steadily increased between 1980 and 1985.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
No. of Students Studying Abroad	2124	2992	2326	2633	3073	4888

Table 8: Number of Students Studying Abroad 1980-1985

(Source: Department of Planning, State Education Commission, PRC, *Achievement of Education in China*, Beijing: People's Education Press, 1986: 50)

Prior to the Tiananmen Incident of 1989, more than 70000 Chinese students were

<sup>25</sup>There have been many scholarly works discussing the emergence of "public sphere" or "civil society" in post-Mao China. See for example, Walder (1989); Rowe (1989); Gold (1990) and White (1993); Wakeman (1993) & Huang (1993) and the conclusion of this project.

estimated to be abroad. There have been about 190,000 Chinese students studying abroad since 1978 (*Mingbao Yuekan*, Sep. 1993). Surveys<sup>26</sup> conducted before and after June-Fourth of 1989 also confirmed that most of the university students ranked studying overseas as the first priority (Zhao Ying, 1989: 93-96; Tang Yucheng & Yin Qing, 1988: 54-58).<sup>27</sup> According to the statistics collected by the American National Research Council, most of the Chinese students in the United States either intend to stay in the States or have not made up their minds. It must be noted that less than 10% of them have decided to go back China (Deng Zhiduan, 1992: 312). There has been a popular saying in post-Mao China that there are three routes for ambitious youth, namely, black, red, and gold. The black route means leaving China to study abroad to earn a black graduation cap & gown. The red is to join the CCP and becoming an official. The last one, the gold route refers to going into business to get rich (Rosen, 1990). According to one survey conducted in the Qinghua University, among 344 graduating students, 73.8% chose the black route; 5.5% chose the red; and 9.3% preferred to pursue the gold route. However, it is reported that only half of them were willing to go back to the mainland China after June Fourth 1989 (*Jingji ribao*, 17 Apr. 1991; see also *Wenhui Bao*, 21 & 22 Aug. 1992; *Mingbao*, 27 Apr. 1992). According to China's State Education Commission, only 30% of all departures prior to 1988 had returned to China (*The World Journal*, Oct. 8 1989) while many of these students had legally or illegally changed their status to remain overseas (Leo A. Orleans, 1988: 112).<sup>28</sup>

Contacts with the outside world have formative influences on students' values and ideas. Rosen (1989) after conducting and analyzing a series of surveys, concludes that

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<sup>26</sup>Despite the fact that the surveys quoted here indicate us that many students had strong intention to study abroad, we must be cautious of the quality of the surveys with particular reference to the way the questions were structured and the samples chosen. In this light, we can derive from these surveys a general picture of how students' view toward overseas studies but we cannot claim that the above-cited figure as absolutely reflective of the reality.

<sup>27</sup>According to *People's Daily*, the Chinese government planned to send about 3500 students and scholars abroad in 1989. Another source also shows that the number of new Chinese enrolments in American universities in fall of 1989 did not decrease even after the crack-down of the pro-democracy movement in China. See *People's Daily* (Jan. 10, 1989) and *The World Journal* (Nov. 7 1989: 3).

<sup>28</sup>For details of China's brain drain problem, see Deng Zhiduan (1992); see also *Mingbao Yuekan*, (Sep. 1993: 12-35) and Li Qiang, (1993: 221-224).



Chinese students have become more individualistic in thinking, adopting the Western ideas and standards. Surveys show that most respondents dare not criticize others for what they consider their "private matter". This line of reasoning plots a trend that the students have experienced fundamental changes in their thinking, primarily concerning behaviour and the avoidance of moral judgements about others. Moreover, the former collectivization of morality in Mao's era has already disintegrated. A sufficient illustration of this is the failure of the Communist Youth League (CYL), an official organization to educate and organize youth activities, which in recent years has not been able to effect students' thinking in collectivism nor in political thought.<sup>29</sup> Given such relaxed control, the youth were allowed to establish autonomous student organizations. A large-scale survey conducted among Beijing's fifty universities in 1986 indicated a steady growth of autonomous groups on the campuses.<sup>30</sup> For example, from 1983 to 1986, there was a 58% increase in the growth of associations, with participation in such activities growing from 13, 000 to 40, 000. Other studies from different localities also reported the same trend. A 1989 study in Guangzhou showed more than 70 such associations at Zhongshan University with more than 56.2 % of the students having participated in activities organized by these groups (Yi Zhifeng, et al. 1990: 2-6). The development of autonomous associations had really opened the students to a plurality of ideas and experiences, making them more liberal and open-minded, more accepting of ideas other than the orthodox one.

The acceptance of such individualistic and pragmatic attitudes among the youth greatly influenced their values and behaviour. A number of surveys found the findings that the youth were more conscious of 'professional improvement' than 'socialist morality'. They considered their career opportunities as substantial while political progress was insubstantial. Most youth who joined the Party did so only as a means of

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<sup>29</sup>In some surveys asking their attitudes toward the CYL, most respondents felt that it was disorganized & useless to them. Most of them preferred to join autonomous student organizations and activities. See Rosen (1990, 1992); Yuan Zeqing (1989); *Daily Report* (11 Jan. 1989: 31-32).

<sup>30</sup>This study surveyed more than 500 such autonomous groups. These groups had more than 40,000 members, approximately one third of the city's university students, see Wang Ling, et al. (1988: 239-256).

obtaining a good job assignment (Student Work Department, 1988: 71-77). According to one survey testing the motives of the youth in joining the Party, more than 59% of the respondents "in reality ... want a 'Party card' which can be used as capital to receive future benefits" while only 4% "believed in Communism and wanted to make a contribution" (Zhao Yicheng, 1988: 29). A study of over 1500 youth in Guangzhou reported that the most popular thought among them was their "concern with concrete matters relating to their work" (*Wushi*) (Wang Zhixiang, et al. 1989: 15-16). They considered freedom of choice and getting rich as their prime concerns (*Shanghai jiaoyu keyan*, 1989: 36). Some fourth and fifth graders in Hebei also forthrightly admitted that "we all want to join the Party. This is because you can get promotions when you are a Party member. You can have power when you are promoted. And with power you can become rich... With power, things can be done easily" (Rosen, 1990: 67). Though they condemned the practice of bureaucratism and official profiteering in 1989, they themselves also dreamed of power and money.<sup>31</sup> These figures indicate that the youth have become more pragmatic in pursuing the 'substantial' benefits rather than any ideological-political goals.

In addition to its influence on social values, Western thought also had great impact on the political thought of Chinese people. As Rosen observes, "a broad spectrum of the population seemed to agree that Western thought could be beneficial to China" (Rosen, 1992: 174). A national survey of Chinese political culture conducted in 1989 by an independent group of young and middle-aged Beijing political scientists reported that not only the highly educated and urbanized segment of the population but also Party and CYL members have adhered to Western ideas regarding assertion of individual choice (Min Qi, 1989: 123). Another study indicated that the respondents considered freedom of expression as important, especially supporting unrestricted speech in a wide variety of contexts, and they hoped to have freedom of speech as enjoyed by their Western

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<sup>31</sup>I also had a discussion with a young Chinese official in the Shunde county office. He told me that he intended to become a CCP member for the reason that much convenience could be obtained. Well aware of the fact that China is still ruled by the CCP, he believes having *Guanzhi* (network) and *houtai* (political patron) are significant (Fieldwork observation 3, 1993).

counterparts (Zhi Ming & Lian Xuehua, 1988: 42). Even after the crackdown on the pro-democracy movement in 1989, a wide variety of survey data revealed that students still admired Western democracy and supported capitalism. In asking whether they considered the Western political system as democratic, 62% in Xian, 66% in Tianjin, and 53.5% in Jiangsu either agreed or totally agreed. When asking their attitude toward equality before the law, 46% in Xian, 49% in Tianjin, and 35.4% in Jiangsu either agreed or totally agreed that everyone was equal before the law in Western countries (Tan Shumin, 1989: 26-29). Just before the 1989 Incident, surveys of universities in Beijing reportedly found 45% of the students either rejected or were skeptical of Marxism; while 53% of them supported "bourgeois democracy" (Quan Singlian, 1990: 15-18). According to another survey, conducted after the 1989 incident, 72.87% of the students still either basically or fully agreed that "democracy must be fought for from the bottom up, not bestowed from the top down" (Zhang Yibin, 1989:8-13). This orientation toward Western liberal thoughts made the students more critical of their present situations, causing them to be impatient with the slow changes. Their adherence to Western ideas also imbued them with a strong sense of crisis to reform and change.

The above discussion has highlighted the influence of the West on the student demonstration of 1989. Thus, it is not surprising to see student demonstrators bristling with foreign symbols and allusions, such as the replica of the Statue of Liberty in prominent public places (*The New York Times*, May 20, 1989). They located their movement squarely in the stream of world movements for democracy and human rights. Wallposters and placards were displayed, paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther king; Mikhail Gorbachev, Lech Walesa and the American civil rights movement (*Time*, New York, May, 1989). Selden also observes that "student leaders emulated the white headbands worn by South Korean dissidents and flashed the V sign favoured by anti-Marcos activists who fought for people's power in the Philippines" (Selden, 1990: 25). Such changes in their political perception toward a Western liberal orientation are closely related to the socio-historical and socio-political changes in the post-Mao era.

The students had general contact with the West through more overseas experiences, listening to the Voice of America (VOA) or the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and reading Western publications.<sup>32</sup> These kinds of exposure had already made the students and intellectuals more cosmopolitan. Comparing their lot with students in the outside world, they became dissatisfied with the present situation, culminating in the outburst of anger in attacking the government.

### The Soviet Influence

Aside from the Western influence, changes taking place in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe also influenced the demonstrators' political perceptions. Gorbachev's *glasnost* introduced in the Soviet bloc had already received the attention of the Chinese intellectual circles, thereby influencing the thinking of both the intellectuals and the students. The conservatives' argument that the collapse of socialism in the USSR could be correlated with bourgeois thoughts from the West and the converted forms of democracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe confirmed their fear and attribution of blame.. Furthermore, the student demonstrators also admitted that they had been affected by the recent developments in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's liberal attitude toward political democratization was welcomed by the Chinese students. They thought that Gorbachev was better than the Communist leaders in China (Calhoun, 1989). In addition, the historic visit of Gorbachev to Beijing in 1989 was a golden political opportunity for those student activists since most of the world media were present in capturing such an important moment. Making use of this opportunity, the student demonstrators believed that they could draw the attention of the whole world and through which to exert pressure on the government. Yan Jiaqi revealed to the *New York Times* that the movement of 1989 was greatly encouraged by the Soviet changes, stating "China used to be afraid of influence from the West. Now we are afraid of influence from the Soviet Union ... if we want to keep out Western influence, we can say we're against

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<sup>32</sup>It was reported that more than 50% of the university students in Beijing listen to VOA or other foreign broadcasts, with the number rising to more than 80% when there were important domestic or foreign events (Rosen, 1992: 176).

bourgeois liberation, or 'total Westernization' but we can't use that pretext [anti-westernization] against Soviet influence ... there is no ideological concept to resist it" (*New York Times*, May 14, 1989). Walder (1989) also argues in the same vein that the Chinese pro-democracy movement had been encouraged by the Soviet liberalization in recent years. The changes which took place in the Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union affected the whole Chinese intellectual community. They began to follow the Soviet Union, trying to learn the lessons of eliminating "the obstacles of bureaucratic and privileged stratum ... organizing the election of people's representatives ... and giving the people's congress the right to veto laws passed by the Presidium of USSR Supreme Soviet" (Rai, 1991: 157-158; see also *Zhengming*, 1989). Chen Yizhi, a former director of the Institute for Economic System Reform under China's State Council, commented abroad that the pro-democracy movement of 1989 was consistent with the international trend. Criticizing the CCP for discouraging democratization, Chen argued that "a market orientation and internationalization of the economic system, pluralism and democratization in the political system" is a logical development in modern society (Chen Yizhi, 1990: 150).

The deputy Party secretary at Beijing University also observed that "political changes in Eastern Europe had bolstered the 'liberal' forces inside China, and helped form 'underground' opposition and political organizations (FBIS/90/088/28). After their exposure to Western ideas, the students had found their motherland lagging behind the Western capitalist countries, even well behind the pace of development of the Four small dragons: Taiwan, Hong Kong, S. Korea and Singapore. Adding the recent changes in the European socialist states, the students had been awakened and thus demanded further reforms in China. The awareness of the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had already widened the horizon of the students, causing them to demand not only Western democracy but also Soviet-style reforms. Some demonstrators even displayed placards praising the Soviet leader and calling for more *glasnost* and *perestroyka* for China (Walder, 1989: 33). It was also reported that thousands of students at Beijing

University petitioned for Gorbachev to speak on campuses (*The Washington Post*, May 21 and 24, 1989). In short, the widespread influence of Western ideas, coupled with sudden socio-political changes in Eastern Europe, not only shaped the political perceptions of the students and intellectuals but also made them much more restless and impatient with slow changes. Hence, such a comparison with the outside world provided them not only a point of reference but also a source of crisis to the viability of the authoritarian Chinese regime. In this regard, we may conclude that the international tide for democracy might have exerted great pressure for democratization in China.<sup>33</sup>

Apart from the above-mentioned variables, their perception of what intellectuals should behave also has significant impact on their actions, particularly when these student leaders were still under the shadow of the literati tradition.

#### The Perceived Social Role and Political Orientation

From the very beginning, the students made it clear that because they supported the regime, their requests for changes and improvements were a reflection of their loyalty and patriotism.<sup>34</sup> As one of the student leaders, Wang Dan, boldly stated, "as an organizer of --- and active participant in --- this student movement, I feel I can already say I have a clear conscience, for this movement has made the Party realize the actual opinion of the people and has made the people, for the first time in forty years, aware of their own power" (Wang Dan, 1989). The demonstrators, hoping to contrast their moral righteousness against the corrupt and despotic government, staged hunger strikes. Their acts fundamentally demonstrate their righteousness, implicitly revealing the Confucian morality. The student demonstrators merely conceived of themselves as the only group to speak for the people, stating, "if we do not call out, who will? If we do not act, who will?" (*Xinwen daobao*, May 12, 1989). They urged the leaders to be more responsible.

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<sup>33</sup>I develop this point from O'Donnell though he is not talking about "external force" as such. His analysis of the relationship between the democratic transition and the crisis of the state is stimulating. See O'Donnell et al., (Pt IV 1986).

<sup>34</sup>Yan Jiaqi also stated to me that the student movement of 1989 was a patriotic one since the students did not want to overthrow the government in the first place. Their principal objective was to raise their grievances and attempt to advise the government to achieve further improvement. See (Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

As the hunger strikers proclaimed, "we will use the spirit of death to struggle for life ... But death is certainly not what we are seeking --- if the death of one or a few can improve the lives of many, if it will make the fatherland thrive and prosper, then we do not have the right to be cowards and continue to live." They continued, "farewell, our country men. Please allow us to reluctantly express our *loyalty* this way" (*Xinwen daobao*, May 12, 1989, emphasis added). Some hunger strikers openly expressed their belief that their death would be worth it, if they could arouse the nation. As Perry observed, "the seemingly cosmopolitan and contemporary style of the demonstrations masked a deeper reality that was essentially Chinese" (Perry, 1991: 131). Accordingly, a strong sense of a martyr's death was clearly shown. Solinger suggests that the demonstrators showed "a proclivity to moralize and demand high behavioral standards from rulers" (Solinger, 1989: 625; see also Feigon, 1990; Esherick and Wasserstrom, 1990 and Pye, 1990).

Chai Ling, one of the student leaders among the hunger strikers, said that, "we are using our lives to write our oath[the hunger strikers' statement]; it must clear the skies over the republic!" (Liang, 1989) "We love democracy more than rice", the student demonstrators shouted as they gathered at the Square (Feigon, 1990). Their overriding message elicits a tradition of "romanticism and revolutionary impulse fused with a cult of action" (Elvin, 1978: 18). Following the model of the literati, the demonstrators hoped their martyr's death would earn them glory, further outmoralizing the authority and thereafter they could capture the moral higher ground (Pye, 1990). Their idealism provides them a share of the intellectuals' feeling of responsibility to save the nation. More interesting, Wasserstrom (1990) holds that the student demonstration of 1989 is similar to that of the student movements in the republican era 1911-1949. Not only assuming the role of the literati, these students protestors also employed similar protest tactics, slogans and organizational strategies as their forerunners did. We can conclude that the students were more seriously concerned with the ideologies and values, as Lipset (1966) suggested. Having a strong sense of social conscience, these student leaders

therefore elevated their demonstrations to the level of general social concerns.

## **SOCIAL CONSCIENCE: PROCLAMATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRISES**

In the mid-80's, students, intellectuals and the general public experienced a decline of living standards. According to the social movement literature, it has been suggested that a crisis in a regime contributes to the rise of social and political movements. It likewise suggests that crises in a regime have a significant impact on the "political opportunity structure" (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991). Limited political and economic opportunities that people can access may become a force for the emergence and growth of a social movement (McAdam, 1988).<sup>35</sup> In this way, the perceived crises and threats to the cherished traditions and core state institutions can be interpreted as a political force for change.<sup>36</sup> In light of this argument, I hypothesize that the intense crises in mainland China had created the ground for the uprising of various social movements pledging support for democratization. The demonstrators, playing the role as the people's spokesmen, openly uncovered the crises and criticized the social evils.

### A Widening Income Gap among People and Official Profiteering

One of the social evils which we documented earlier was the ever-widening gap among the incomes of different social groups. A second significant social evil against which the students demonstrated was official profiteering. Hua Sheng, a social scientist and ally of Zhao Ziyang, points out that the fundamental cause of the June Fourth Incident of 1989 was the unresolved problems created by the discrepancy between economic and political reforms. Without proper planning in economic structural reform and the lack of a sophisticated legal system and political structure, unresolved issues in the economic realm not only became barriers to further reform but also caused economic difficulties for people (Hua Sheng, 1992). Su Shaozhi has a similar view that without

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<sup>35</sup>Oksenberg and Dickson (1991) have suggested "the perception of crisis" by the leaders, potential leaders and/or populace has a crucial effect upon the initiation of "great political reforms". They also regard one of the great political reforms of a regime as "democratization" in the midst of crisis. I got this insight from a discussion with Dr. Shing Ming, a colleague of mine in the Department of Public & Social Administration, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

<sup>36</sup>Argued along the same lines, the literature of democratization highlights the close relationship between the socio-economic and socio-political crises in the democratic transition. This literature indicates that crisis phenomena of a regime should not be regarded as merely negative but can be seen as a positive force for change. See O'Donnell et al. (Pt IV, 1986).



political reform, the problems associating with economic reform in past decades became much more difficult to handle; and these difficulties eventually created the context for the June Fourth Incident of 1989 (Su, 1990). The fundamental problem, in short, is the internal contradiction of economic and political policies that the CCP has adopted since the post-Mao era, characterized by "fighting against the Left in the economic field, and fighting against the Right in the political field" (Xu Luo, 1990: 85).<sup>37</sup>

Against such a background, the students pointed to the structural imbalance in the Chinese economy since the central government began its program of decentralization. "Independent feudal kingdoms" enjoying special economic benefits have formed in different localities (Perry and Wong, 1985). The real power had fallen not to the enterprises, as the policy objectives stated in the decentralization policy, but to the local authorities. It resulted in the problem of "positional economy" and uncovered the problem of corruption. Hua Sheng also accused the cadre bureaucrats of using their position to manipulate the public resources. Hua claims that some scarce commodities had passed through officials' hands several times before even leaving the warehouse, with the price jumping several times. This practice had created a 'second market' in which executive authority became the commodity; signatures, permits, account numbers and licenses, items of barter. This official profiteering not only demonstrates the structural risks of economic reforms but also signifies the present chaos in the economic realm (Hua Sheng, 1988). Official trading, profiteering and unfair distribution have become central problems for the people. Under the existing multi-level price system, those with special connections could buy one ton of steel at the official price of 700 yuan and immediately resell it at the market price of 2100. Most of the government officials, retired government employees, or their offsprings had become instant millionaires. This provided reason for the 1989 demonstrators to display wallposters, complaining about the

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<sup>37</sup>I have no intention to say that reforms launched in the post-Mao era have had no substantial result and positive contribution. Economic reforms implemented since 1978 have positively transformed Chinese economy. However, we cannot deny the fact that economic reforms have been full of contradictions such as class polarization, agriculture stagnation and net disinvestment, disintegration of rural social services, environmental deterioration, exacerbated spatial inequality and corruption and inflation. It is in this light that I argue that we should evaluate the significance and drawbacks of reforms in post-Mao China. For details, see Selden (1988 & 1990: 22-26).

official profiteering. One wallposter in Beijing University complained that Deng Xiaoping's son engaged in profiteering because of his special relationship to Deng. The poster also revealed that the Kanghua Company, a company closely associated with some senior officials, could get a special "quota" for export and "cheap" materials for manufacturing. Having such a privilege, the company could profit simply by selling the "quota" to others. That is why there is a saying that "power equals so many tons of steel, so many kilograms of chemical fertilizer, and a certain exchange quota" (*Gongren ribao*, Beijing, 24 August, 1988). It also answers why the youth associate Party membership with power and money. This source of graft is basically rooted in the very symbiosis of the public and private sector of the economy. Some goods are obtainable only from the state-owned sector, at a relatively state-fixed prices. Local officials, because of their position, can "buy cheap" from the planned half of the economy and "sell high" to the other half sometimes doubling or trebling the price. As a result, the ordinary people have to bear the rising prices and thus the declining living standards.

Alongside this, inflation made corruption less tolerable and it really politicized the people to join the June Fourth Movement. Even after the crackdown, workers still felt that official corruption should be attacked. According to one survey conducted under the auspices of the Women's Research Institute of the Chinese Management Research Academy, surveying 2075 workers and staff members in twelve cities to examine their perception of China's most pressing social problems, most of workers still considered official profiteering as the most urgent problem to tackle (*Guoji ribao*, 5 Jan. 1990). It is against such a context that the demonstrators asked for the detailed disclosure of the leaders' property and income as well as the investigation of official profiteering.

Galloping inflation had intensified the economic difficulties. Inflation was seen in November 1979 when the retail prices of non staple foods rose by over 30%. The situation became even worse in the 80's (*Ming Bao Yuekan*, August, 1980: 24-25). According to the state statistics, the commodity price index increased by an average of 7.37% annually in the period from 1985 to 1987 (9.43% in the cities), and 11% in the

first quarter of 1988 (13.4% in the cities). In addition, food prices rose markedly in the past few years. For instance, the price of vegetables rose by 153.3%, non staple foods by 96.6%, industrial products for household use by 6.7%, and household fuel by 15.1% between 1979 and 1987 (*Wide-Angled Lense*, June, 1988: 14). It was also reported that the inflation rate was 13% in the first half of 1988 and rose to 19% in June alone. In some cities, the inflation rate even exceeded 20% (Chiang Chen-chang, 1989). Galloping price rises had led to panic purchasing, which further intensified the rises in price. As official statistics showed, prices rose by 18.5% in 1988, while food prices rose as much as 23%. As a consequence, the cost of living increased in 1988 by 20.7% in urban areas (*Beijing Review*, no. 18, 1989: v). The situation became worse when the prices rose by as much as 25.5% in the first half of 1989 (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 9 August, 1989). With such a soaring price increase, the people in mainland China realized a decline in their real wages. For instance, their increment in wages was only 18.8% in 1989 but the inflation rate was up to 25% (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 9 August, 1989; see also Walder, 1992: 106). This inevitably forced people to use extra money to buy goods on the black market. With little disposable income and rising prices, people were generally discontented and restless. The foregoing socio-economic problems created the prerequisite for the alliance between the students and the urban workers. The common cause of their antagonisms lay in official corruption and economic inequality.

The following discussion will show how the economic predicaments politicized the public and moved the workers to the June Fourth Movement. In their petitions, the urban workers seemed to believe that democracy could solve the immediate crisis in economy and financial difficulties (*The People's Decree*, 29 May, 1989). We have already seen the financial plight of the people caused by corruption and inflation. One study conducted in Tianjin points out an actual decrease in salary. Though their incomes rose with a handsome amount of bonus, their real incomes rose by only 6 to 7 %, less than 1 % a year.(See table 9)

When analyzing the data, Walder also highlights the wide variations around the

mean. If the increase in wages is only minimal among a large group of urban workers, we can also conclude that a large group of urban workers were already falling behind, suffering a very serious decline in their purchasing power after 1986.

	Average	Monthly	Wage
	1976	1986 (1976yuan)	Percent Change
Blue-Collar Manual Workers	(N=381)		
Salary	46.62	40.32	-13.5
Bonus	4.68	13.39	+186.6
Total Income	52.42	55.82	+6.5

Table 9: Wage Trends, 1976-1986: Sample of Tianjin Earners

(Source: Adopted from Walder (1992) "Urban industrial workers: some observations on the 1980's" in A.L. Rosenbaum (ed) *State and Society in China*, Westview Press, 1992: 107)

The declining living standard is contrary to their rising expectation of the reform era. In the early years of reform, some people had really become rich, exciting a heightened expectation for a better life. In the late 70's, people aspired to own a wristwatch, a foot-powered sewing machine, a name-brand bicycle, and a transistor radio. By the end of the 1980's, these things were commonly owned; and they also possessed colour televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, tape recorders, etc. Besides, people in the urban areas had improved their diets considerably since the 70's. They had been accustomed to having more food, consuming much more chicken, fish, eggs and other non staple foods (Walder, 1992). Soaring increases in prices meant that people had to spend more to maintain their "normal" living standards. Having no real increment in wages, people began to realize that their living standards were falling. A worker who supported the student movement said, "they [the students] represent the people's thinking, the sense that we the people are in control. The leaders cover everything up. People don't know anything, and we are no longer the masters. That's why there is this uprising" (*The New York Times*, 28 Apr. 1989). Another ironworker also told the reporter that, "I hope student demonstrators will make the government do something about inflation" (*The New York Times*, 5 May, 1989). This strongly suggests that the workers hoped the

students would influence the leadership on matters concerning their own interests. It was also reported that the major concerns of the workers were inflation and freedom of press and speech rather than a precise platform for political reform (*New York Times*, April 28, 29, May 5, 1989; see also Calhoun, 1989). Their support of the movement, in this sense, is motivated by self-interest as well as sympathy. When this intense socio-economic crisis was coupled with the disintegration of the socio-political order, a total crisis was therefore formed.

Different opinion polls also revealed the most serious problems perceived by the people to be corruption and profiteering.<sup>38</sup> They supported the students' slogans concerning "anti-corruption", "anti-privileges" and "anti-corrupt officials". They also supported the struggle for democracy and press freedom. (See table 10)

Most of the Beijing citizens considered the students' demands and actions to be reasonable. Nor did they mind that the uprising had caused traffic jams and inconvenience to their daily lives. Most interestingly, their worry was whether the students would be able to keep on protesting (*China Information*, vol.VI, no.1, 1989, table 12A). Most respondents supported the students and considered an equal-footing dialogue with the government to be rightful and necessary. They also agreed with the objectives of the movement "to promote democratic reform and dissatisfaction with some of the government's reforms" (63.5% and 50.1%) (*China Information*, vol. VI, no.1, 1989: table 6A).<sup>39</sup> In general, the people in Beijing showed either extraordinary supportive or sympathetic views of the movement. (See table 11)

Categories of Slogans	%
Anti-corruption(anti-privileges,anti-corrupt official)	37.3
Anti-profiteering by officials	29.8
Pro-democracy(freedom,democracy,science,human rights)	15
Press freedom(the media must tell the truth)	7.1
Support the CCP(Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles)	4.0
Pay attention to education(improve intellectuals'life)	1.3
Everyone has a share of responsibility of the state	1.3
Others	4.1

Table 10: Slogans Most Agreed With by Beijing Citizens (Source: *China Information*, Vol.IV no.1, 98)

<sup>38</sup>These polls were conducted by an independent research institute during the May Movement which culminated in the June Fourth Incident. The result of the polls was documented in *China Information*, (vol. IV no.1 Summer, 1989.)

<sup>39</sup>The total exceeds 100 % because some respondents listed several different possibilities.

	Percentage
extraordinary supportive	50.9
sympathetic	44.5
indifferent	2.5
aversion	0.6
firmly oppose	0.5
no answer	1.0

Table 11: Citizens' Attitude Toward the Student Movement

(Source: *China Information*, vol. VI, no.1, 1989: 99)

Some Chinese citizens from Beijing and Guangzhou considered that the reason most of the people supported the student movement of 1989 was basically to air their grievances against the corruption and soaring inflation. One post-graduate student in Beijing said that the students and the people merely hoped to correct the wrong-doings of the government. At the beginning of the movement, the demonstrators tried to improve the present situations and solve the economic problems. They did not intend to overthrow the government nor did they have a clear conception of democracy. Their prime concern, in a word, was to improve their living standards and solve the social problems.<sup>40</sup>

## THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ORDER

In addition to the general discontent with social and economic life in the post-Mao era, the loss of hegemonic control by the state also prepares the ground for the outburst of public anger. In a survey of 371 intellectuals in March 1989, most of them (about 70%) felt that the public image of the party was 'not good' (Rosen, 1989: see also table 12). Many surveys testing people's attitudes toward the Communist Party reported the consistent trend toward a loss of faith in Communism (Rosen, 1992; Min Qi, 1989). Unlike the youth in the 50's or 60's, who faithfully supported Communism, the youth since the 80's have lost such faith. According to a survey studying the belief systems of

<sup>40</sup>This argument is based on my informal interview with some Chinese citizens and students who are now living or studying in London and Holland. (see, Interview 3, Holland, 1992 & Interview 5, London, 1992)

2000 university students at Hangzhou in 1990, more than 80% of the respondents did not know what their ideals were (66%) or answered that it was impossible to formulate such ideals (20%), though they considered having ideals good (Ying Hang, 1990: 17-21). Another survey testing the secondary school students' belief system also indicated that they had lost identification with the Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and the Communist Party. Only 30% of them believed in it while more than 40% either had no belief system or did not know what they believed (Wang Shuzhi, 1990: 24-25). (See also table 12)

Another survey worth mentioning here is one conducted by an independent research group organized by Chen Zhiming and Wang Juntao (who are regarded by the CCP as organizers of the pro-democracy movement of 1989 and are still in prison) early in 1989. The objective of this survey was to investigate the attitudes and values of people toward Chinese socialist government and Marxism.

	Junior High Students	Senior High Students
No belief system or do not know	44.7	41.9
Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and Communist Party	30.0	30.4
Truth	7.4	5.4
Both Marxism-Leninism and Buddhism	2.1	2.5
God and Jesus Christ	2.6	3.1
Reality	3.0	5.4
Freedom	7.0	8.8
Fate	3.3	2.5

Table 12: The Belief Systems of Secondary School Students (in%)

(Source: Adopted from Rosen, "Students and the State in China", in A.L. Rosenbaum, (ed) *State and Society in China*, Westview Press, 1992, p. 169)

The survey also found that most respondents had a very strong national feeling and they maintained that they bore responsibility to serve the country whenever the state was in crisis. Besides, most of the respondents (over 70%) held a negative attitude toward the notion that "it is reasonable and legitimate to betray your country when the country disappoints you".<sup>41</sup> This figure shows us that most respondents still had a strong

<sup>41</sup>It is interesting to note that Chinese people in the mainland have a particularly strong sense of national feeling. They

patriotism (See table 13). Nevertheless, patriotism to the state does not necessarily mean that they are loyal to the present regime. When asked whether they are proud of living in a socialist society, approximately half of the respondents had either ambivalent feeling or had no pride in living in socialist society. The same survey also indicated more than half of the respondents (about 56%) rejected the four Cardinal Principles. (See table 14)

Question	Do you agree that you have reason to reject your country when it makes you disappointed?		Do you agree that you are reasonable to betray your country when it makes you disappointed?	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Number	1712		1705	
Opinion	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Worker	23.64	76.36	13.56	86.44
Individual Labour	37.44	62.56	26.62	73.38
Intellectual	19.10	80.90	9.05	90.95
Cadre	15.21	84.73	9.7	90.30
Peasant	30.81	69.19	16.14	83.86
Total	25.05	74.95	14.32	85.69

Table 13: Chinese People's Patriotism to the State

(Source: Adopted from *Contemporary*, 30 Dec. 1989: 17)

In addition, this survey also found that most people had a very negative view of the CCP. To be more specific, 61.88% of the respondents had a bad impression of the CCP. More than half of the interviewed party members said that they had no pride being party members. Among non-members, more than half of the respondents said that they had no interest in joining the CCP. Equally interesting, more than 77% of the respondents considered the model set by the party members to be bad (*Contemporary*, 30 Dec. 1989: table 3). It is also interesting to note that about 70% of the respondents were dissatisfied with work style of the cadres. They felt that the cadres far from being democratic, abused their bureaucratic powers and performed their work inefficiently. Table 15 also shows us even though the majority trusted the government but they were dissatisfied with cadres' work style, implying that people in mainland China were annoyed by the bureaucratic and corrupted acts of cadres.

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wholeheartedly supported the application for bringing of the Olympics Game to China the year 2000, viewing it as China's glory and strength.



Question	Are you proud of being a citizen of socialist state ?			There is no need to uphold the four cardinal principles in China. Do you agree?	
Sample	1721			151	
Opinion				Agree	Disagree
Worker	53.74	30.21	13.9	54.4	45.6
Indiv. labour	56.97	28.69	13.93	63.33	34.67
Intellectual	52.84	30.5	15.96	53.12	46.88
Cadre	66.57	21.9	10.95	46.01	53.99
Peasant	44.73	34.39	19.62	46.01	37.8
Total	54.15	29.52	15.22	1.1 56.03	43.98

Table 14: People's Views toward Socialism and Four Cardinal Principles

(Source: Adopted from *Contemporary*, 30 Dec. 1989: 17)

Question	Do you trust your government?		Are you satisfied with the cadres' work style?	
Sample	1664		1418	
Opinion	Yes	No	Yes	No
Worker	68.39	21.27	20.63	65.87
Indiv. Labour	69.66	18.37	20.49	62.29
Intellectual	68.33	19.22	13.48	76.09
Cadre	85.34	7.76	21.34	68.66
Peasant	56.73	37.70	19.74	68.94
Total	68.93	22.05	28.44	69.84

Table 15: People's Evaluation of the Party and State Cadres.

(Source: Adopted from *Contemporary*, 30 Dec. 1989: 18)

This trend again demonstrates an intense ideological crisis in China, causing a legitimation crisis for the state and making the youth search for a viable belief system. The deepening sense of identity crisis had already shown in the late 70's. The so-called literature of Wounds exposed the sufferings and wounds of Chinese people in the Cultural Revolution. Bai Hua's film "Unrequited Love" also touched the most fundamental question regarding the legitimacy of the CCP, "You love the motherland, why doesn't the motherland love you?" This question expressed the arguments of countless victimized intellectuals. Furthermore, Cui Jian's 1987 song "I Have Nothing to My Name", China's popular rock-and-roll song, has become the anthem of the "new-birth generation"; and it also symbolizes nihilism (Rosen, 1990: 212; see also Chong, 1991).<sup>42</sup> Students have lost their faith in Communism and fought against orthodox ideological

<sup>42</sup>Gold (1990:143-146) has a good discussion on disillusionment in the cultural realm in the post-Mao era, which deserves attention.

teaching. In late 1988 and early 1989, a seminar was held at Shekou, in the Shenzhen special economic zone, addressing the "moral spirit" of such official youth heroes as Lei Feng, Zhang Haidi and Zhu Boru. The seminar hoped to set the models for the students. However, the participants argued that following these models was an "ideological burden". They not only denounced this propaganda ploy and called it "empty sermons" but also preferred "a discussion of concrete questions". The symposium was widely reported and regarded as the "Shekou Storm", reflecting the deep-rooted value conflicts and identity crisis of the youth (*Shekou tongxun bao*, 26 Dec. 1988: 3 and 19 Jan. 1989:3).

## CONCLUSION

In summary, the crises in the post-Mao era can be interpreted as the "threats or challenges posed to a political or social object that can, as subjectively perceived, likely lead to some changes of the defining characteristics of those objects" (Svensson, 1986: 134-5). In this way, threats and challenges virtually shattered the fundamental foundation of both the socio-cultural and socio-political orders of the regime that inevitably led to China's socio-political crisis. Though it is suggested that the economic crisis alone is not sufficient condition for setting off the demands for democratization (O'Donnell et al., 1986: 20), the 1989 crisis, combined with the defection of the political system and other social crises, are ample motivation (Haggard and Kanfman, 1992: 324-326). It is in this light I suggest that the economic predicaments in the post-Mao era, together with the ideological and legitimation crises, created the particular socio-political platform for the call for democratization. The June Fourth Incident mirrored many of the deep social and political contradictions existing in China. The unprecedented outpouring of support for democracy was further shored up by the social pressures from the liberated civil society, which virtually shook the foundation of the monolithic and totalitarian rule of the CCP. Put in another way, the students' political opportunity structure and their ability to mobilize their resources were greatly determined by the existence of socio-economic crises shared by all the people. It also supports the hypothesis that the grievances

commonly felt by the public and the demonstrators have provided the link between them. Therefore, it is not surprising that the student leaders regarded the movement of 1989 as a pro-democracy movement even though they had no precise conception of democracy and concrete political platform. The above evidence also explains why the student leaders and people misinterpreted democracy and their behaviour was far from democratic as indicated in the last chapter. As the 1989 demonstrations took on the moral tone of the May Fourth spirit, they became a genuine value-oriented movement in both the social and political realms.

## INTRODUCTION TO CASE STUDIES

In order to deepen our understanding of the intellectual production of Chinese intellectuals, the following discussion will be based upon four case studies to illuminate how the social location, educational orientation and secondary socialization of intellectuals have shaped their ideological formation. The selection of these cases, as we have mentioned in the introduction, is based on the prominence and significant role that these intellectuals have played in their particular fields. Because of their influential position, their ideas should have affected their fields in particular and the Chinese intellectual circles in general. In addition, the ideas and speeches of these intellectuals are reported widely inside and outside China,<sup>1</sup> having significant impacts on the public discourse in China. Equally important, the scholars of China studies, have generally agreed that these intellectuals are not only critical intellectuals but also the representatives of Chinese dissidents (see, for example, Cheek & Goldman, 1987; Goldman, 1992 & 1993; Nathan, 1990; Barme, 1990 and Black & Munro, 1993 and Schell, 1989). More interesting, the present selected intellectuals are now exiled in the United States, the change of their socio-economic-political circumstances may have led to change in their conceptualization of democracy and also their relationship with the CCP. Based upon these observations, we therefore consider the examination of their works and ideas as enriching experiences to us. One point which deserves attention here is that we **do not** mean the following case studies to **represent** the political thought of all Chinese intellectuals. Rather, we hope to demonstrate some dominant lines of thought shared among these Chinese intellectuals. The case studies, seen in this light, are not exhaustive. Of course, we **do not claim** that the contents of the interviews and the actual social positions of the selected interviewees **represent** the whole Chinese intelligentsia in

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<sup>1</sup>The works and ideas of Yan Jiaqi, Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan and Liu Xiaobo were widely reported and cited in mainland China and in the West. Moreover, some of their works were even translated and introduced to the English speaking world, see, for example, Yan Jiaqi (1992); Fang (1992); Liu Binyan (1990a & b) and Barme (1991). See also the discussion in chapters 5-8.

general in the late 1970s and the early 1990s. As we well acknowledge a continuum of change in the past decades, we are dealing only with the more marked developments at one end of the spectrum. The selection of them, to a certain extent, indicates how these prominent and critical Chinese intellectuals have conceptualized democracy and also their relationship with the state.

Following the intellectual practices in the fields of sociology of knowledge and sociology of intellectuals especially in China study,<sup>2</sup> our present research also adopts case studies as major method of investigation. The use of case studies allows the research to get close to the data, discovering how the actors define, perceive and interpret their social reality. Instead of only looking into how social structure has influenced people's thought and ideas, case study can provide a balanced view as it focuses mainly on how individuals think. Unlike positivist research which is basically variable-analysis, using a set of ad hoc procedures to define, count and analyze the interaction of identified variables, qualitative research is primarily concerned with the social construction of meaning. Instead of investigating how social structure influences social action, qualitative research assumes that systematic inquiry of social action must occur in a natural setting rather than an artificially constrained one. As Hammersley (1990) suggested, the fundamental features of qualitative research are: the use of everyday contexts rather than experimental conditions, giving special attention to the "micro" features of social life, and much concern with the meaning and function of social action.<sup>3</sup> More fundamentally, case study renders qualitative social research appropriate, putting unobservable or "inner experiences" into context. Unlike opinion polls conducted quantitatively by means of survey method, an intensive understanding of man and his ideas should not only rely upon published materials or merely be based upon quantitative methods. Instead, a coherent framework of how people think should come to grips with how they conceptualize the external world. Qualitative method supplements social

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<sup>2</sup>Research of similar kind usually adopts case studies as major method of investigation, see, for example, Check (1986); Goldman et al. (1987) and Barne (1991).

<sup>3</sup>For details of the nature of qualitative research, see, for example, Silverman (1985) and (1994); Chadwick et al. (1984).

research with insights of the "inner" side of people's thought and behaviour. The definition of the situation of the people, with the help of qualitative method, is thus wider. Confining not merely to the study of people's observable behaviours, it explores also subjective motives, feelings, and emotions.

Having such considerations, the present project selects case study in terms of intensive interview, hopefully, enhances the present research with interpretative understanding of Chinese intellectuals and their conceptualization of democracy. Notwithstanding the general acceptance of case studies as a qualitative method, we have no intention to de-emphasize the significant role of quantitative methods in social research. We only intend to highlight that the selection of case studies is more appropriate to this project because the method of which can offer us not only a deeper level of understanding but also viewing behaviour in a natural setting.<sup>4</sup> By means of case studies, we hope to construct a fuller picture of ideological production and the unique context in which ideas are formulated. Starting from these general considerations, our forthcoming chapters examine closely the relationship between the selected intellectual's ideas and their "historical uniqueness" by means of intensive interviews, analysis of their publications and speeches and the reading of their diaries, letters and personal history.<sup>5</sup>

The next chapter examines Yan Jiaqi, one of the most prominent Chinese political scientists, and his idea of democracy. Chapter 6 will be the discussion of Fang Lizhi, the most critical and outspoken natural scientist in China. Chapter 7 concentrates on Liu Binyan, the most popular writer and journalist in mainland China, and his political thought. The last case study examines Liu Xiaobo, in the youngest generation of Chinese

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<sup>4</sup>Weatherburn et al. (1992) note that many studies have failed to uncover the inner side of people's thought and the meaning that they attach to their behaviours when they are conducted by means of quantitative methods. Like other qualitative researchers, they distrust explanations of behaviour which reduced social life to a response to particular 'stimuli' or any 'variables', Weatherburn et al. then adopt questions to explore the meanings attached to the behaviour of their sample.

<sup>5</sup>Plummer (1983) has a very insightful discussion on the problems and literature of a humanistic method. He deals with one of the most debatable issues in sociology, the relationship between social structure and individuals. Having a deeper reflection, Plummer urges people to develop a more balanced view of how people think and act by looking intensively into the life of individuals instead of investigating only the formative impacts of social structure on people. This work inspires us to think about some fundamental methodological issues in sociology. For further details of such matters, see also, Alexander et al. (1987) and Mouzelis (1992).

intellectuals among these four, especially his critique and dissidence of China's culture and tradition, the Chinese intellectual circles and the national character of Chinese people.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE REFORMER INTELLECTUAL: YAN JIAQI AND HIS DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

Yan Jiaqi's thought not only has influenced the Chinese intellectual circles but also the state apparatus. His idea of democracy is also influential among dissident thinkers in and out of China. Nathan (1992) says "Yan's representativeness as a Chinese democratic thinker makes him important for an international readership." As one of the most prominent political scientists in the post-Mao era, Yan Jiaqi and the formation of his idea of democracy is the first case study we shall consider. Although Yan's writing on democracy began back to the late 70's, he had already begun in the 60's to examine the problems arising from the socio-political system (see Yan, 1988). In the late 60's, his confrontation with the despotic rule had already made him skeptical of monolithic rule under autocratic ruler (Yan, 1988: 11). Philosophical debates on the relationship between "ideas" and "matter" in the 60's made Yan begin to question the "truth" of Maoist thought and even to move a step further to query the existing socio-political system. More significantly, his reading of banned books in the fields of Western political thought, world history and biography, and pre-1949 Chinese history provided Yan further ground for questioning the theory and practice of Communism. The on-going gleaning of considerable information and his personal encounter with socio-political turmoil during the Cultural Revolution caused him to doubt the praxis of Communism and contemplate the reasons behind the tragedies. This chapter is going to examine Yan's political ideas, particularly his ideas of democracy, in light of the analytic framework of the present study.



## A BRIEF RECAPITULATION OF YAN'S DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

From the 1970's onwards, Yan has learned more about international political systems and thought, which exposure has advanced his ideas of democracy. By comparative study, Yan unraveled the fundamental problem of the Chinese political system, its lack of procedural rule and consequent totalitarian politics.

In the late 70's, Yan began to propose the end of life tenure for officials (Yan, 1990: 159-177). Having experienced the effects of corruption and maladministration during the Cultural Revolution, Yan decided that over-centralization of power was the central problem in the Chinese bureaucratic system. Thereafter he persistently advocated a democratic system of checks and balances as a way of overcoming the over-centralization of power in China (Yan, 1988: 30-38). Yan attacked the feudal characteristics of the Chinese political system, arguing that the socio-political system was not transformed even after the peasant revolution and the overthrow of the Qing dynasty. Yan observed that the continuing despotic system was characterized by a lack of legal limits on absolute power. The existence of a nationwide, monolithic, pyramidal power structure was the result of having no horizontal division of power among the officials (Yan, 1987a: 2-6). As a result, China has been suffering from what Yan calls the "boom-and-bust" cycle, a vicious cycle in Chinese history, marked by the general collapse and corruption of a dynasty after its rise to power, its removal and succession by another new regime which reigns until it in turn becomes corrupt, thereby beginning a new cycle (Yan, 1990: 80).

Intending to document the Cultural Revolution in order to learn something from the pain of those dreadful ten years, Yan and his wife Gao Gao collaborated to publish *Ten-year History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*. In this work, Yan and Gao not only lay out the historical facts of the Revolution, attempting to point out the fundamental cause for such a tragedy. Yan hoped that China would not fail to learn lesson of its history. Instead of merely uncovering the wrongdoing of the Revolution or using it as opportunity to criticize, Yan and Gao tried to point out the most important areas in which

collective reforms were needed. In this work, Yan and Gao spend much time in defining successive power struggles among the senior leaders as the typical feature of Chinese politics. This work also points out that this kind of political climate lends itself to the development of the excessive personality cult which inevitably led to Mao's dictatorship. In the preface of the revised edition of this work, Yan and Gao put forward their interpretation of the major factors leading to the Revolution. Condemning the rule of man rather than the rule of law, they have suggested that the root of the Revolution may be discovered in the very foundation of the Chinese socio-political and socio-economic structures. They write,

"there were deep-seated economic reasons why the Chinese were swept up in the Cultural Revolution by the hundreds of millions. Before the Cultural Revolution, the system of state ownership and a highly centralized, planned economy had put China under a high degree of administrative control. Political authority extended, in effect, into every area of people's lives." (Yan, 1992: 216-7)

In addition to the over-centralized economic structure, they also suggest four political factors which contributed to the eruption of the Revolution. First, Mao's diagnosis of Stalin's regime had a formative impact on the Revolution. In his evaluation of the socialist praxis under Stalin, Mao declared that the Soviet Union was on the way to capitalism. Denouncing "revisionism" in the Soviet Union, Mao thus directed his energy to purify the ideological foundation of the people. In contrast to the Soviet Union, Mao was determined to purify the ideological foundation of the Chinese people. In contrast to the Soviet Union, Mao moved China toward the "real" socialism to be actualized first in terms of socialist education and later in the Cultural Revolution. Second, the rift between Liu Shaoqi and Mao Zedong intensified, especially when Mao sensed that Liu's policy line was well supported in the Party. In order to ensure his supremacy in political leadership, Mao mobilized the youth to attack those so-called capitalists and rightists within the party and state bureaucracy. The third reason, according to Yan and Gao, was the long-standing problem of factional politics. Yan and Gao believe that the lack of a sophisticated political structure to monitor the exercise of power will inevitably result in chaos and political instability. Last but not least, they explicitly state China lacks is

democratic mechanisms to ensure power transfer and to monitor daily administration of the government. Having reviewed the history of the ten dark years, Yan and Gao feel that it is urgent to institutionalize democratic mechanisms in Chinese politics (Yan, 1992; see also Yan and Gao, 1988a). However, they could not spell it out freely when they were living in the mainland because their speeches had to be screened and approved by the senior leaders of the CCP. What they could say explicitly in the early eighties, they tactically and strategically implied by publishing their work within the approved boundaries. Though implicit, their call for democracy is clear in this work. What Yan and Gao have advocated from the early eighties onwards is to curb dictatorship by means of institutionalization of proper political structures. With due care to their personal security, they aired out something which could be tolerated by the party leaders. As Nathan (1992: xii) remarked, "[Yan and Gao] have written an important history of the Cultural Revolution --- Yan is profoundly informative on the complicated question of what ails China politically. In searching for ways to reform the system, he has thought hard about its fundamental problems, which he sees as both cultural and institutional."

In the early 80's, well aware of the boundaries of critique and intellectual dissidence, Yan did not attack the government directly. Instead, he dressed himself with the "Marxist coat", addressing the problem from a historical perspective and confronting the existing problems indirectly. Yan used the policy line of the Party, by attacking the "gang of four" for causing corruption and abuse of power, to criticize indirectly the dictatorship of Mao and to define the fundamental problem in the socio-political structure. In fact, his hidden agenda is the importance of a democratic system of government. Without mentioning the term "democracy", Yan adopted a moderate approach to suggest changes within the approved parameters. In his "'Imperial Power' and 'Imperial Position': Two Characteristics of Autocracy", Yan made it plain that without a proper system of power-checking, life-time tenure would probably lead to corruption and abuse of power. A powerful implicit message of "division of power" can be observed (Yan, 1980);

"the modern Western countries established their democratic systems beginning with the eradication of two characteristics of supreme power under autocratic rule. In those countries that have established democracy, the legislative powers no longer rest in the hands of an individual, but reside in a parliament that is periodically elected, thus the supreme state power is divided; even those who hold the supreme administrative power, the president, premier, or prime minister, have their administrative power doubly restrained by the parliament and by tenure of office, or at least strictly limited by the terms of office, therefore, the nontransferability of the highest power no longer remains". (Yan, 1980; translated in Yang and Bachman, 1991: 15)

Yan was conscious of the central problem in the Chinese political system and he also hinted at the importance of regulating the state power. To clear the ground for a more effective administration, Yan since the late 70's has advocated the removal of overcentralization and nontransferability of supreme state power. His proposal "On the Leadership Responsibility System", published in 1983, repeatedly stressed the importance of administrative reform. In his publication of "Cadre System" in 1987, Yan sought for the establishment of a "retirement system" and "a system of limited tenure" in order to curb the pressing bureaucratic problems (Yan, 1987b).

When the Central Committee was in the midst of discussing the revised draft of the constitution in 1982, Yan seized the opportunity to spell out in a little more detail his concept of constitutional rule, showing the imperative of developing the legal system. He tactically and wisely expressed his future-oriented and long-term view of the constitution, nailing down most carefully the meaning of the power relationship between the state and the people. According to Yan, "the relationship between the government and the people, the organic form of state institutions and the mutual relations among them, the relationship between central and local governments, and the position and role of the armed forces in the country" should be precisely stated in the constitution (Yan, 1982, quoted from Bachman & Yang, 1991: 19). The distinctive focus of constitutional rule, in Yan's eyes, is twofold, namely "division of power" and "checks and balances" in the government. He stressed that the state power originates from the people. Yan clearly reasoned thus: "who has the authority to discuss and decide on the constitution? The people. The present discussion of the constitution fully reflects the principle that the people are masters" (Yan, 1982; quoted from Bachman & Yang, 1991: 22).

Yan's political ideas gradually developed, becoming coherent and cohesive as he

consolidated what he had written throughout the past decade. Observing the political climate, Yan aired his ideas of democracy in an incremental way hoping to get the acceptance of the political leaders. Having briefly reviewed Yan's democratic thought, the following discussion will concentrate in the characteristics of his ideas of democracy, which have been greatly influenced by the Western ideal of democracy despite the fact that Yan does not believe that there is a difference between the Western and Eastern notions of democracy.<sup>6</sup>

Yan argues:

"...in the Chinese philosophical realm, there is no such idea of democracy. Democracy basically was imported from the West more than one hundred years ago. However, I think there should be no boundary of 'democracy' between the West and the East. I do not support the notion claiming that there is difference between the Eastern democracy and the Western democracy. In my view, democracy is democracy". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

In light of this assertion, it is clear then that Yan considers democracy a common right of mankind regardless of their nationalities. What Yan has contemplated is an overall perspective of social change, involving reforms in the political, economic, legal, and cultural realms, with fundamental changes in the political realm. An examination of his works can easily reveal that Yan advocates a socio-political transformation of China which inevitably touches all the realms of society; social, economic and political. He also mentioned in the interview that reforms in mainland China should not be only confined to the economic realm but must extend to the socio-political and socio-cultural realms (Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

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<sup>6</sup>Linguistically, the word 'democracy' simply means government by the people, but it leaves many unresolved problems. In our contemporary world, there is no government directly ruled by all people. At this point, democracy refers to government by some or by a few on behalf of the rest, as typified by the representative government in modern politics. As Pickles (1970) observes, democratic government in the nineteenth century was seen mainly in terms of equality of political and legal rights, of the right to vote, to express their own political views and form their political parties to represent their interests, and of the right to elect representatives to supervise or control the government. Democracy, then, is a system which basically rests on two principles, first, the people should have the guaranteed right to voice as accurately as possible their opinions on who shall be their representatives and how the country is to be ruled. This involves the practice of universal suffrage and a procedural rule in the government. Second, it has to make sure the electorate's interests and rights are well-protected, having guaranteed rights to change the government whenever they are dissatisfied with its performance. Aside from the institutional perspective of democracy, it can be interpreted as more a way of life, concerned with some general principles such as upholding social justice, equality and fraternity. However, it gives no guidance to government as to how societies can be organized. Therefore, the institutionalization of a more sophisticated system can put these principles into practice. A democratic system, from this point of view, is a mechanism to support a democratic way of life. Popper (1966) observes that democracy is only a mechanism to prevent making big human mistakes, providing a set of procedures to countercheck the process of policy-making. In this way, democracy cannot ensure a perfect leadership nor guarantee that the best people are being selected in the government. It can only offer a legitimate channel to replace the government, protecting the rights of the people by means of a system through which they can exercise their power to elect other representatives to work for them.

## Procedural Rule and Rule by the People

Yan's conception of power relationship between the people and the state can be summarized by the assertion that the state authority originates from the people. Yan maintains that people should have the right to change the government whenever they are dissatisfied with its performance (see, Yan, 1988).

"The lack of freedom of speech and freedom to get access to information shows us the absence of the foundation of democracy ... In my view, we have to guarantee freedom of speech and freedom of press; without them, there is no point in discussing democracy. It is also my conception that freedom of speech is fundamental to democracy. Without this, how can we talk about decision-making. People should have the freedom to express their views, to choose what to say according to their conscience (*niangxin*). In addition, they can either choose to express their own views or remain silent. In this way, their freedom of conscience is confirmed". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

In his "gongtong whnhua yinsu" (common cultural factors) Yan proclaimed the principles of humanism, democracy, and freedom as common to all people regardless of their races or countries (Yan, 1988: 64; see also interview 1, 1992: 4). All in all, it leaves his readers in no doubt that Yan faithfully adheres to the ideal of democracy. Yan agrees with Popper's suggestion that the heart of democracy is "procedural politics", (Yan, 1990: 49-51) accentuating the importance of the steps and rules in policy-making as well as the establishment of a proper mechanism to regulate the government.

Central to Yan's political thought is the necessity for links between political reform and the rule of law and the constitution. Consistent with the Weberian rational-legal model, Yan has been suggesting that rationality is the key for people to live harmoniously. In his early writing on "Three Courts for Judging Truth: Religion, Rationality & Practice", Yan began to develop his rational stand as the sole criterion for judging truth, implicitly attacking the personality cult and the despotic politics of the Cultural Revolution (Yan, 1988: 21-29; 115-138). Even after being forced to be a revolutionary exile in Paris, he still holds firmly the principles of "peace, rationality and non-violence" in struggling for democracy rather than to advocate terrorist and radical means to achieve his ends (*Contemporary*, 1989, 12: 45). He said, "I think it is wrong to enforce changes by political power or brute force" (Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

This writer concludes that Yan's adherence to rationality is the "product" of his

profound analysis and evaluation of the despotic rule.

### Incremental and Fundamental Approach to Changes: Democratization from the Micro to Macro Level

Acknowledging the strengths and limitations of a democratic system, Yan proposed an incremental and pragmatic approach to democratization. He has not proposed a vehement attack on the present regime, nor a transformation of China into a democratic state overnight.<sup>7</sup> He made this clear to me,

"I don't think that we have to turn China into a democratic state overnight, but at least, we have to begin developing our democratic system gradually". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

"I strongly believe that the transformation of society is a process heavily involving ideological changes in which education and transmission of new ideas and values become strategic". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

Even though Yan was elected as the President of the FDC, an organization which supported pro-democracy movement in mainland China, he did not proclaim that the FDC was going to overthrow the CCP. Unlike the China Alliance for Democracy (CAD) which was in favour of a "reform outside the system", the FDC aimed at "reform within the system", expecting that a moderate faction would ascend to power in Beijing which would eventually rehabilitate the democratic movement and gradually political pluriformity in China. As Chong (1989a: 3) observed, "the FDC has declared that it wants to terminate the one-party dictatorship, not by overthrowing the ruling CCP, but by preparing the way to a multi-party system". These recent statements indicate us that though Yan rejects the Li Peng Government, he is well aware of the structural and institutional constraints to overthrow the CCP overnight. Without any independent and autonomous social organization or political entity as such existing in mainland China, Yan and also the FDC leadership have to choose a relatively moderate strategy in dealing with the present situation. It is at this point we get the impression that the choice or strategy which these political activists adopt is closely related to the political opportunity structure to which they access.

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<sup>7</sup>I draw this line of argument from the interview with Yan (1992) and Bachman and Yang (1991).

Following the same logic, we argue that Yan made his critique and radicalism openly in the mid-eighties is also related to the change of his social location and the "resources" that he accessed. Living against a socio-political environment which was under restricted by the CCP, Yan had to not only observe the political climate but also calculate the costs and benefits after openly revealing his critique and attack on the CCP. It is therefore understandable that Yan should incrementally or gradually elicit his ideas. Yan's proposals for change were refined and carefully enunciated within the official constraints. His proposal on administrative reforms at a micro level preceding the institutional reforms at the macro level shows his political wisdom on the one hand and his pragmatic stand on democratization and transformation of China on the other hand. Contemplating democratization in China, Yan does not merely fall into empty slogans. Instead, he seriously maps out the framework for political reform in China. His notion of direct election starting from the county level, closely follows his advocacy of checks and balances in the political system. Yan has envisaged the long-range goal of political reform in China to improve the people's participation in government. The gradual democratization from the micro level, according to Yan, is both politically functional and educationally effective.

"In my opinion, the actualization of democratization should start with direct election practiced at the *xiangzhen* level, such as the election in small villages and small towns. If democratic elections are implemented successfully at this level, people can experience what democracy is. Democratization starting from the local level not only has educational function but also consolidates the local administration". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

The idea of direct election at the *xiangzhen* level also links with Yan's suggestion of the horizontal separation of power between the Party and the National People's Congress in order to consolidate constitutional rule in China (Yan, 1990: 107-115; 179-182).<sup>8</sup> His notion of the practice of election at the micro level is similar to that of Rousseau, John Stuart Mill and G.D.H. Cole, for they also stress the importance of direct experiences in election at the micro level such as small communities and factories

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<sup>8</sup>Yan also stressed this point to the author during the interview conducted in Paris, August 1992.



(Rousseau, 1913). The institutionalization of the rule of law and the establishment of the democratic system, in this regard, go hand in hand to realize the ultimate goal --- the development of an autonomous civil society where the state power is well-defined and limited (Bachman and Yang, 1991: xxviii).

#### Protection of Minority Rights: A New Element in Yan's Thought

Having now experienced life in a democratic society, Yan has further observations of the essence of democracy. From my interview with Yan, it is evident that the idea of "protecting the minority choice" has been added to Yan's democratic thoughts. In the winter of 1989, Yan delivered a lecture in Amsterdam during which he stated that the most important characteristic of democracy was "to follow the majority", and he did not mention the protection of minority choice.<sup>9</sup> If we investigate his early writings, we also see his emphasis on the collective rather than individuals. In his "Enlightenment from `Plymouth Rock'", Yan argues that democracy enhances the spirit of the collective, thus strengthening the cooperative functioning of society (Bachman & Yang, 1991: 141-145). In this way, the will of the majority is stressed but it ignores the views of individuals. Yang and Bachman point out the fact that Yan "pays scarce attention to discussing the possibility of the tyranny of the majority or the ideas of the protection of basic individual rights" (Bachman & Yang, 1991: xxix). Yan's former emphasis on the collective is intimately related to his personal experience of living under a Communist regime. His life in exile clearly has provided him the chance to realize the importance of individual rights, causing him to re-think the essence of democracy.

Yan's view on protection of the minority is consistent with his new concern with individual autonomy in thinking and expression, what he calls the "freedom of conscience" (*liangxin ziyou*). It seems that the respect of individual rights not only has been added to his conception of democracy but also has been internalized in his life. Despite his prominent position, Yan and his wife still believe that they are only ordinary people, and they do not take for granted the freedoms they now enjoy nor the help they

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<sup>9</sup>I draw this from W.L. Chong, the chief editor of *China Information*.

receive from others (*Contemporary*, 1989, 6: 31).<sup>10</sup>

Bachman and Yang argue that Yan also emphasizes the importance of the deeply rooted Chinese tradition --- social harmony (Bachman & Yang, 1991: xxix-xxx). But a reading of Yan's recent ideas reveals that Yan has changed his perception of social harmony. Though he earlier stressed social harmony, Yan now frankly acknowledges that it is normal to see differences among people.

"Our society is not a perfect society. Whenever and whatever problems we face, we should deal with them with an open attitude, allowing and accepting criticisms and comments from people". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

In his term as the chairman of the Front for Democratic China (FDC), Yan found it difficult to accommodate different opinions, but he still admitted that having divergent ways of thought and styles in doing things is a normal phenomenon (*Contemporary*, 1990: 16). His distaste for the Communist rule in China lies with the nature of its omnipotence and total control of people's lives.

#### Further Emphasis on People's Power

Yan prefers the role of educator, spreading and promoting the democratic ideas among the public. He would like to be elected as a legislator, speaking on behalf of the people.

"It is my personal interest to be elected as a councillor in the National Congress like the directly elected legislative councillors Li Zhuming and Situ Hua in H.K., playing the role of people's representative". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

Unlike the traditional elitist view of the literati who acted as the society's conscience, Yan posits the concept that the important relationship between the intellectuals and the mass is that the intellectuals are only part of the people, not a special class or social stratum (Interview 1, Paris, 1992). Acknowledging the alliance between the intellectuals and the people, Yan suggests that intellectuals should support any pro-democracy movement arising from the people, but they should not organize any movement which stands apart from the people. Yan said,

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<sup>10</sup>When I went to interview Yan Jiaqi, he came to pick me up in person, showing his sincerity and respect for others. I am also personally impressed by Yan's sincerity and warm reception during the interview. From my own experience, I hold that the notion of "individuality" is playing a more prominent role in Yan's political thought.

"[the intellectuals] are only part of the people, though a little more sophisticated about new ideas, playing the role as educator to spread the new thinking and ideology. It is why I argue that intellectuals support the same reforms as the ordinary people do". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

Thus Yan has seen the importance of support from the people especially after the massacre in 1989. His former elitist notion of intellectuals as a special minority to rule over the majority has changed (see, He Baogang, 1991: 41).

An intensive analysis of his recent reflections on democracy reveals that his thoughts have moved more markedly toward the Western conception of democracy. In my interview with Yan in August of 1992,<sup>11</sup> Yan explicitly asserted the principles of democracy. He said,

"The principle of democracy is to confirm that the people should have the final say in decision-making, that is, the authority of the government is in the hands of the people. Basically, democracy involves three main principles: first, respect the majority rule; second, protect the minority choice; and third, decision-making is based on formal procedures". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

Yan added,

"... democracy not only refers to a political system but also to a way of life in any organization ... democratic politics, in brief, can be characterized by 'procedural politics'". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

The internalization of Western democratic thought and the personal experience of democratic life have caused Yan to change his concept of democracy. It is also worth noting that his recent proposal to unify China in terms of a federal system reflect his evolving conception of democracy, in which individual rights and individual autonomy now have a place. In his "Third Republic", the principles of division of power and the checks and balances and thus of the interests of the people, will be realized and guaranteed (Yan, 1990b).

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<sup>11</sup>The following section is based on an interview in Paris in August 1992 with Yan, discussing his ideas on democracy, the future democratization in China and the evaluation of the pro-democracy movement in 1989.

## TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF YAN JIAQI'S SOCIAL-POLITICAL IDEAS

The scrutiny of Yan's social-political ideas should be viewed holistically, inasmuch as his ideas are not fragmented but well-related to each other. In particular, we must analyze Yan's ideas and approaches in the light of his unique socio-historical context. Confronted with the constraints which the Communist Party imposed on Yan's outspokenness, Yan had to observe the political climate when making open critique and criticism of the state.<sup>12</sup> It is, therefore, desirable for us to examine his ideas in relation to the socio-historical context which often forced him to follow the policy line of the Communist Party.

Having realized the deficiency of China's science and technology, the post-Mao leadership not only encouraged the development of science and technology but also revived social sciences for which were severely curtailed in the Mao era. During the Mao era, the social sciences had been incorporated into the Academy of Science but they were finally separated in the post-Mao period. In 1978, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) was established with many research institutes which were to become the think tanks and their members later became the advisors to the political reform leaders. Seeing social sciences as significant to China's reforms, a staff commentator of *Philosophy Research* made it clear that "Every branch of philosophy and social sciences, like natural sciences, deals with a specific subject and follows a rigid logic of reasoning ... [W]e must foster a general awareness among the people that it is necessary to draw a well-defined line between political issues and academic issues" (cited in Goldman, 1994: 31-32). Supporting a more democratic atmosphere for the development of social sciences, many Chinese intellectuals criticized the wrongdoing in the Cultural Revolution by labelling social sciences as bourgeois thought. Zhou Yang, a cultural czar of Mao's era, said that "Some comrades had some naive and mistaken idea in wanting to mark off

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<sup>12</sup>For the details of Communist Party's control over the Chinese society, see Schurman (1968); Rai (1991). Yan also conceded that the CCP's control was totalistic before 1989 (Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

a clear division between politics and academia" and he continued: "Without a lively democratic atmosphere they will not develop soundly" (cited in Goldman, 1994: 32). Against such a social atmosphere, a number of researchers at CASS openly proclaimed that "freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration and the freedom to strike" were stipulated by China's constitution, believing that these rights should not be infringed but be protected. As Goldman (1994: 35) suggested, the intellectual revival of post-Mao China "reclaimed not only the May Fourth movement's emphasis on science and experience but its call for democracy". It is also against such a unique socio-political and socio-cultural contexts that Yan's social-political ideas were formed.

His article "The Meaning of Democracy", published in 1979 shows Yan already held a relatively clear concept of democracy. Yan made a clear and unequivocal statement that democracy is about the relationship between the people and the state in which the state power originates from the people and provides a mechanism to protect the rights and the interests of the people. At this point Yan argued that the separation of power and the element of election are inherent in a democratic system. Defying the undemocratic nature of the traditional political structure, Yan pointed to the fact that "*minben*" is different from "*minzhu*".<sup>13</sup> Having discovered the essence of "*minzhu*", Yan asserted in the late 70's that the institutionalization of a democratic system was politically exigent. Furthermore, Yan's examination of different political systems around the world also moved him to point out the importance of separation of power into executive, legislative and judicial branches (Yan, 1980 published in Yang, 1990: 143-152). His idea of "separation of power" attracted the attention of most of the prominent social scientists. However, this idea was only shared and supported silently in the intellectual community but forbidden to be openly published in the late 70's (Yang, 1990: 14-15). It suffices that

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<sup>13</sup>According to Confucian thought, the ruler should make appropriate policies to safeguard people's interests. However, there is not the concept of 'people's rights' and 'rule by people' in Confucian thinking. Accordingly, the respect for people's interests is different from the concept of rights of people that which every person should possess regardless his/her racial and political background. Having such observations, Yan points out the traditional concept of *Minben* is different from the Western notion of democracy *Minzhu*.

without official support, Yan could not openly promote his ideas.

In another article entitled "The Question of Political System in Socialist Thought" (1979), Yan argued that Marx himself had also acknowledged the importance of procedural rule as practiced in the Paris commune. Echoing Marx, Yan sought to set out the framework of a democratic system, arguing that democracy is not only listening and responding promptly to the people but also institutionalizing a system of procedures in the government (Yan 1979). Without support from the state, the idea of democracy was not widely promoted in the early 1980's. At that time, Deng Xiaoping endorsed only reform in the administrative realm but did not approve structural reform, thus tempering the pace of political reform. Despite this, Yan did not stop thinking about democracy. Instead, he had studied different political systems, contrasting different political thoughts, and waiting for an opportunity once again to capture the tide to promote his ideas of reform. Here, Yan's moderate stance has to do with his socio-political circumstances. It is clear that without securing any support from political patrons, intellectuals should have found difficulty in making his political views openly. To be more specific, Yan's social and political proposals must have got Deng Xiaoping's endorsement. Without Deng's blessing, Yan only found himself vulnerable, not to say putting his ideas into effect. In the mid-eighties, riding the high tide of political reform, Yan took his position one step forward and suggested the institutionalization of a democratic system, involving fundamental changes in the political structure.

When the socio-political atmosphere once again relaxed in the late 80's, Yan again attempted to break the "political taboo" of discussing democracy. In his *Shou nao lun*, (On the Head of State and Government), Yan compared different forms of leadership and political system, highlighting the problems arising from the centralization of power, and pointed toward a system of "collective leadership" regulated by a procedural framework (Yan, 1986). Yan evaluated the leadership of Mao Zedong and made a sweeping conclusion that the heart of the problem lay in the life appointment. This system made power untransferable and left modern China trapped by its traditional regime of a non-

procedural form of politics which exaggerates the role of the individual leaders (Yan, 1987: 84-92; 1990: 83-89). He proposed as a solution the separation of power and the establishment of checks and balances in the government. To evoke the imperative of the institutionalization of a democratic system, Yan also published another book *Quanli yu Zhenli* (Power and Truth), containing a series of short essays on democracy, including his conception of power relationship between the state and the people, his studies of different political structures and his rational thought in judging truth. Like other Chinese intellectuals, Yan had to observe the political climate, deciding what was the right time to publish and release his political views. It again shows us how individual choice is structurally and institutionally constrained. Notwithstanding the social constraints imposed on individual choice in reacting to external threat or crisis, we must acknowledge the fact that individuals still retain a certain amount of autonomy in the choice of strategies responding to their unique environments. As intellectuals change from one social location to another their ideas change also. From this point of departure, we must not treat ideological change simply as an intellectual response to the context. Instead, it is a more complex, complicated and interactionist phenomenon. It would help if the relation of intellectuals to social groups is worked out especially as the ideas developed by an individual relates to the collective social forces at work within the "social location".

#### Social Location of Intellectuals and Ideological Formation

Putting the foregoing socio-political context into perspective, we argue that Yan Jiaqi was one of these social scientists who supported democracy and advocated freedom in academic world. With his connection to Yu Guangyuan, a vice president of the Academy of Social Sciences and a deputy director of the State Science and Technology Commission and also an advisor to Hu Yaobang in the late 1970s, Yan occupied a very strategic position as distinguished with his fellow colleagues.<sup>14</sup> Early in the 1980's, Yan

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<sup>14</sup>Yan was a research student of Yu and Yu had a very positive opinion of Yan. It is reported that it was Yu who discovered the special potential of Yan and therefore invited him to join his research institute. See my discussion under the heading of educational orientation and ideological formation in this chapter.

was only a research assistant of the Philosophy Research Institute of the CASS under the supervision of Yu. With his outstanding research ability and publications in his field (see the foregoing discussion in this chapter on his development of ideas), together with Yu's support, Yan succeeded in getting promoted as the director of the Institute of Political Science under CASS. In 1987, Yan was made more politically important when he was appointed one of four deputy directors in the Political Structure Reform Research Group of the Party Central Committee headed by Bao Tong, Zhao Ziyang's effective chief-of-staff. The Research Centre was the think tank serving Zhao. Before such an appointment, Yan was also invited to a Working Group for Reform of the Political System held between September 1986 and November 1987. This Working Group consisted of Zhao Ziyang, Hu Qili, Tian Jiyun, Peng Chong and Bo Yibo, and had been set up with the permission of Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian. This Working Group rendered an arena for the discussion of political reform in China on the basis of relevant speeches by Deng Xiaoping.

Yan's unique position in the political establishment must have shaped his value orientation as well as his political ideas to a considerable degree. The publication of his ideas, particularly his political thought, was screened by the Party and, we presume, was endorsed by senior leadership. An analysis of Yan's political ideas published in the 80's revealed that his thought closely conformed with that of the state. In the late 70's and early 80's, Deng Xiaoping also suggested reforms in the leadership and political structure, openly advocating a more open and responsive political system (Deng Xiaoping, 1983: 280-302). The 1982 constitution incorporated his proposal that cadres should have specified terms of office, and his idea of developing a civil service system was endorsed in the 1988 National People's Congress. It is also suggested by Bachman and Yang that Yan's ideas of administrative and political reforms were endorsed by Deng (Bachman & Yang, 1991: xxvi). In the high tide of reforms, Zhao Ziyang not only advocated economic reforms but also supported a deepening reform in the political system. A series of reform proposals on the political structure was initiated in the 13th Party Congress in



1987. To some extent, then, the political ideas of intellectuals have been "shaped" by their relationship with the state. Yan's role as both a member of the Party and an establishment intellectual, and especially his close association to the senior Party leader, Zhao Ziyang and Bao Tong, made Yan far from independent, particularly before the massacre (see, for example, Goldman, 1992).

Before the 1989 movement, Yan still regarded himself as a reformer working largely within the existing system.<sup>15</sup> With the blessings from his political patrons, Yan could advocate changes only at the margins. This obviously explains why Yan adopted a more moderate stand, hoping to assist the state to deepen its reforms. Besides, the intellectuals' preference to be moderate reformers instead of radical revolutionary is closely related to political reality. The moderate stand of some significant and influential reformer intellectuals has actually motivated political changes in Communist China.<sup>16</sup> Yan honestly admits that,

"The reformer intellectuals, including me, have supported Deng's reform programmes since we believe that the goal of reforms is also supported by the people. Being part of the people, intellectuals should also cast their support to it". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

Thus, Yan's social position was always tenuously linked with their political patrons. In the midst of a power struggle or factional politics, the political leaders may turn on their advisors as scapegoats in order to retain their positions.<sup>17</sup> Or worse still, the intellectuals may lose their political significance when their patrons no longer listen to them or "buy" their ideas.

Political and historical reality lay beyond Yan's understanding, when he lost political influence in the late 80's by Zhao Ziyang's rejection of most of his ideas on political reform (*The Nineties*, 1989, 2: 23). Yan lost a sense of reality as he lost political influence to the ruling elite. Yan also revealed to Li Xifen, a Hong Kong journalist, a

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<sup>15</sup>Yan told me during the interview in Paris 1992 that he is not a dissident but rather a reformer supporting economic and political reforms in China .

<sup>16</sup>Yan himself praises this group of intellectuals and says that they have made great contributions to the development of China. See (Interview 1, Paris, 1992) and also Bachman & Yang (1991, especially the introduction).

<sup>17</sup>Though Hu Yaobang, the former Party secretary, was regarded as the patron of the intellectuals, he had to criticize the intellectuals' capitalist thinking during the political struggle in 1986-87.

statement that he had failed to persuade Zhao to press for more comprehensive political reform (Li Xifen, 1989: 241).

"It has not been the style of Zhao Ziyang to have close association with any individuals, for he tends to be task-oriented. It is wrong, as the public believe, that I had a very close link with the Party secretary." (Li Xifen, 1989: 241, my translation)

"Zhao is not as enlightened as the media have portrayed him. He is a careful politician, tending not to anger the senior leaders superior to him. Viewed in that way, it is, therefore, easy to see that Zhao has given much weight to the senior revolutionaries especially paying great respect to Deng Xiaoping." (Ibid)

Yan also revealed that Zhao Ziyang's political position was weak since he had no coterie of personal supporters within the top leadership. Zhao, unlike the projected image as a brave and powerful reformer, he only executed what Deng ordered and avoided to go against him. Even though Yan regarded Zhao as a decent man, the FDC, as Yan claimed, did not pin its hope on his return. Considering Zhao not a man of democratic thought, Yan anticipated that Zhao would oppose a multi-party system (Korzec, 1989). His experience in the Research Group proved very frustrating for Yan since all of his ideas for political reform were rejected by Zhao Ziyang except for his suggestion of reform in the cadre system and the notion of separation of the Party and the state. Other ideas such as direct election to the National People's Congress and the local people's congress were renounced by the CCP. Without success in getting his democratic proposals accepted, Yan stated that "the Working Group only put forward views concerning aspects that were not addressed in them, and problems remained unresolved" (cited in Chong, 1989a: 18). The dubious results of these meetings were communicated to those actual engaged in research and planning of reform work, such as Bao Tong, Zhou Jie, and Yan himself afterwards but these ritual proceedings had never come to any concrete reform strategies and proposals for implementation.

In the same vein, Bachman and Yang also observe that Yan could advocate his political ideas only in the internal meetings of the "think tank", but he was forbidden to publish his ideas publicly (Bachman and Yang, 1991: xx). Having lost his position in the Research Centre in 1987, Yan felt frustrated that his political ideas were abandoned. In addition, Deng Xiaoping's vehement criticism of Yan's ideas of unification, condemning

Yan as even worse than Liu Binyan, (see, *The Nineties*, 1989, 2: 23) and his open confrontation with the massacre in 1989 led to the change of his social location and thus of his political orientation. These changes account for Yan's attack on Deng Xiaoping through what he called an "imaginary conversation between Deng and Mao Zedong". In this particular piece of work, Yan with his unusual directness criticizes Deng and his clique --- Li Peng and Yang Shangkun (Yan, Sep. 1989 collected in Yan, 1992). He also proclaimed that China was not a republic but an autocratic entity dominated by some dictators (Yan, July, 1989 collected in Yan 1992). Confronted with these socio-political circumstances, Yan began to realize the cold reality that his social position would be threatened without the "consent" of the senior leaders, especially when he lost the blessings from Deng Xiaoping. Having realized his position was shaken, Yan became more critical of the socialist praxis. In his dialogue with Wen Yuankai, a prominent scientist and reformer, Yan, assuming the social obligation of intellectuals, attacked the half-hearted measures of the government in political reform in the late 1980s (Yan, 1990: 9-23). In a Tokyo interview, Yan even boldly defied the Communist leadership by urging the abolition of the Politburo, which he regarded as another government over the formal government just before the Tiananmen massacre of 1989 (*Ming Bao*, Fed. 25, 1989: 1)

In his interview with Michel Korzec, a Dutch political scientist, Yan said that he had believed that it was only possible to work for change from within the Party until the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989. Yan began to realize that democratization under the Party was impossible after the massacre (Korzec, 1989). He also admitted that Fang Lizhi was quicker than himself, Liu Binyan, and Su Zhaozhi to recognize such a fact. Trusting Deng's as committed reformer, Yan, like other reformer intellectuals, offered their support to the CCP before 1989. Nevertheless, they were forced to change their view as their social location changed after the massacre of 1989. Yan explained,

"It seemed that Deng was on the other side. We then started, albeit in a cautious fashion, to attack Deng, but we still believed that all would be well within the Party if we could force Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng to resign in favour of Zhao Ziyang. In the past, we similarly supported 'reformer' Deng Xiaoping against 'conservatives' such as Chen Yun.

But this distinction between conservatives and liberals within the Party was a misconception, an illusion. Now that we know that China cannot make any progress as long as it remains a one-party state. It must become a multi-party system. That is the objective behind the establishment of the FDC." (Quoted from Chong, 1989a: 18)

It is in this light we argue that the change of intellectuals' social location should have significant impact on their ideological formation. Yan himself frankly admits that among Chinese liberal intellectuals, some do not believe in Marxism at all but simply dress themselves in a "Marxist coat". Under the control of the Communist Party, the liberal intellectuals (Yan being one of them) have to "uphold the Red Flag in order to oppose it", meaning using official slogans as a cover for the purpose of spreading dissident view (Hua Shiping, 1990). Their claim to be communists, seen in this way, is simply a strategy for dealing with the state. Goldman suggests that "most of the critical intellectuals justified their actions in Marxist terms, but their interpretations of Marxism drew on their Confucian heritage, the Western democratic concepts introduced into China in the early decades of the twentieth century, and Western Marxism" (Goldman, 1992: 210). Thus, these observations have revealed the fact that Chinese intellectuals are not immune to the constraints of their unique social location. Despite Yan's effort in developing autonomous values (field) in contrast with the dominant values (apparatus), he is not totally freed from the constraints of the context where he lives.

Even during his exile in Paris, Yan continues to use practical tactics in his allegiance with the other pro-reform leaders to exert external pressure to force changes in mainland China (Interview 1, Paris, 1992). Instead of clinging to the simplistic, dichotomous distinctions "hard-liners" and "soft-liners" in the midst of democratic transition,<sup>18</sup> Yan's political stance has been one of pragmatic compromise.

Since the massacre, Yan's democratic ideas have undergone some changes. He has become more critical and independent in thinking, criticizing not only the maladministration but also the political system and ideology as a whole. This change, in my opinion, is also closely associated with the change of Yan's social location. His direct

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<sup>18</sup>I base such dichotomous distinctions on Verba (1987); O'Donnell, Schmitter & Whitehead (1986). One point which must be stated here is that such a dichotomy, though insightful, still has limitation because there are many variations in the empirical world that make the categorization difficult.

experience and interaction with the state corrected his mythology and romanticization of the role as establishment intellectual. It likewise made Yan more conscious of the independent role of intellectuals. As Goldman (1992) suggested, the critical intellectuals have become more aware of their independent position after experiencing the dark age in the Cultural Revolution, realizing that even rights given to them by an enlightened leadership can be taken away (Goldman, 1992). These realities made Yan more critical, and moved him further toward the people and the realization that the intellectuals must speak on behalf of the people.

It is also suggested by some scholars that the reformer intellectuals had begun to reevaluate their role and relationship with the state after the anti-bourgeois campaign in 1986-87.<sup>19</sup> Their dream to reform the CCP from within was eventually broken. The gloomy future of political reform together with the realization of official mistrust of the intellectuals caused the intellectuals to assess their future role. Yan said,

"The situation has changed since the 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident. After the massacre, many intellectuals have begun to think about de-communism.<sup>20</sup> They have been thinking of how to abolish one-party rule by the Communists". (Interview 1, Paris, 1992)

It is against this background that the intellectuals from science and humanities and social sciences petitioned the state to release Wei Jingsheng. Their search for intellectual autonomy early in 1989, culminated in the pro-democracy movement in June of 1989.<sup>21</sup> The post-Mao intellectuals have acknowledged the problems of autocratic polity and demanded institutional and legal guarantees of civil rights and freedom. They question the economic and political system that allowed the tragedies of the Cultural Revolution and even query whether the leaders are accountable to, and upholding the interests of the people. They therefore call for fundamental changes in the system. Thus we see how Mannheim's notion of intellectuals' social location influences their political ideas.

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<sup>19</sup>The reformer intellectuals began to think about their relationship with the state after the purge of some of the outspoken intellectuals such as Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan and Wang Ruowang in the anti-bourgeois campaign in 1986-87. See, for example, Schell (1988); Kelly (1990) and Goldman (1992).

<sup>20</sup>De-communism means the abolition of one-party and the formation of a more democratic government, allowing freedom for the people.

<sup>21</sup>For details of the petition of the intellectual community to the state, see, for example, *Zheng Ming* (1989, 4: 18-20; 1989, 3: 22-38).

### Socio-Economic and Political Opportunities and Intellectual Radicalism

It is further evident that intellectual radicalism depends heavily on the resources that the activists can mobilize (Tilly, 1978 and Brym, 1980) and the political opportunity structure to which they have access (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991; and McAdam, 1982, 1988). In practical terms this means that the intellectuals must calculate their bargaining power in terms of the size of their community, their level of group organization and the resources that they have (Brym, 1980, 1987). They have to evaluate the political environment, not only their availability to powerful positions within the formal political actions (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991 and AcAdam, 1982, 1988). Prior to 1989, Yan played by the Party's rules. Like other establishment intellectuals, Yan had to decide what was the right time to speak out. Being both a party member and also part of the state apparatus, Yan learnt to be more cautious not to abuse the economic and political opportunities to which he had access. Without a strong basis either from any autonomous intellectual organization or from civil society in the earlier 1980's, Yan used to a relatively moderate approach to test whether the state could tolerate his liberal ideas. Nevertheless, the close association with the Stone, a privately-owned computer corporation which had close link with Zhao Ziyang, Yan's political opportunity structure thus changed in the late eighties. Wan Runnan, the former president of Stone, strongly believed that there was a definite relation between economic reform and political reform, he therefore established a research unit to study reform problems and lobby for change. As Chong (1989a: 8) suggested, "this unit became one of Zhao Ziyang's think tanks, like the Chinese Academy for Social Sceinces (CASS), to which Yan Jiaqi and Su Shaoshi formerly belonged." Cao Siyuan, one of Stone's top administrators, was also an advisor to Zhao Ziyang. It is reported that Stone had given much support to the pro-democracy movement of 1989 and it was thus one of the targets of attack by Li Peng. *The Guardian*, a newspaper published in England, reported that Stone had financed a democratic meeting held on 26 March 1989, coinciding with the NPC session, and convened secretly in the new National Library in Beijing. Stone was also said to have call on the CCP to

remove all mention of MaoZedong Thought and four cardinal principles from the State Constitution (*The Guardian*, 28 March 1989; see also, Chong, 1989b). In a conference organized by the FDC in Chicago, Wan Runnan revealed that Stone had rendered no less than RMB 40,000 per day in support of the pro-democracy movement. He also considered that the significant impact of modern electronic equipment on China's social-political change should not be under-estimated. He also regarded the availability of modern electronic equipment in China was the result of Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang, especially with their sympathetic attitude towards modern technology and liberal thinking (*Jiefang Yuebao*, August 1989). Having the support from Stone, the socio-economic opportunity of intellectuals must be enhanced. Black and Munro (1993) also argue along this line that the rise of relatively autonomous and private enterprises in mainland China not only gave additional sources to the Chinese intellectuals especially by supporting the activities of research institutes but also attributed to the expansion of civil society in post-Mao China (see also Bonnin and Chevrier, 1991). Having the connection to Stone and other research institutes, Yan could get access to more resources which eventually affected his political opportunity structure and also his coping strategies.

Yan's failure to get the consent of the state inevitably moved him to become a "critic" of the state. This new relationship with the state and the unprecedented outpouring of support from the people gave Yan and other critical intellectuals a golden opportunity to push for democratization in China. Now in exile in Paris, Yan is free from the immediate control of the CCP, therefore he is much bolder and more autonomous to express his views.<sup>22</sup> When Yan became the chairman of the FDC (1991-1992) immediately after the 1989 June Fourth movement, he became much more critical of the existing socialist rule in mainland China.<sup>23</sup>

Like Yan, Su Shaozhi, the former director of the Chinese Academy of Marxist

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<sup>22</sup>The most up-dated information about Yan is that he now lives in the United States as visiting research fellow. When this thesis was written, Yan was still in Paris.

<sup>23</sup>It is also note-worthy that because Yan has received financial support from the French government, his socio-economic and political opportunities have improved when in comparison with those of his counterparts in China. With such an improvement, the critical stand of Yan is thus enhanced. See, (Interview 1, Paris, 1992).

and Leninist Thought, after having been labeled by the party as a bourgeois liberalist, began to attack the CCP and urged further democratization in the political structure of China. His expulsion from the party made Su more radical and critical of the existing system. His exile in the United States and changes in social location have freed him to denounce the CCP (see, for example, Su Shaoshi, 1990).<sup>24</sup>

Chen Yizhi, a close associate and advisor to the former party secretary, Zhao Ziyang, also considers himself as a reformer rather than a dissident. Before his exile to the United States, Chen was one of the reformers supporting democratic and economic reforms in China. Chen Yizhi told me in an interview that he was a typical reform-minded intellectual who believed that the CCP could be improved. Seeing no other alternate party to replace the CCP, he therefore decided to work within the system in order to change it (Interview 2, Princeton, 1993). His expulsion from the party and his reflection upon the 1989 movement make him aware of the importance of intellectual independence. Chen openly declares that he will no longer attempt to reform the party as an insider (Ma, 1993).<sup>25</sup>

These scholars, originally establishment intellectuals working within the CCP, have now become intellectually autonomous and professionally independent. Their disillusionment with the existing regime has made them believe that intellectuals must be detached from political power and attached to the rights and powers of the people. Their changing social location has pushed them to develop a new set of strategies for working with the CCP. Unable to work inside the CCP, these intellectuals have decided to put pressure from the external world to impel change in China. The change of their social location and their exposure to a new set of socio-political environment, to a considerable extent, have forced them to change their approaches and strategies to deal with the CCP.

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<sup>24</sup>Su is one of the founders of the FDC, the organization supporting the pro-democracy movement in China. Because of his position, Su was denounced by the CCP as a dissident and counter-revolutionary.

<sup>25</sup>The notion of "insiders" and "outsiders", though insightful, still has limitation because it is difficult to apply in the empirical world. We may argue that some of the Chinese intellectuals who are establishment intellectuals, being part of the state; while some of them do not work within the state establishment as we can call them as "outsiders" or "non-establishment intellectuals". Given the particular Chinese context and special relationship between the state and intellectuals, it is extremely difficult and arbitrary to classify Chinese intellectuals categorically in terms of "insiders" and "outsiders". It is at this point we must use such a classification cautiously.



From the foregoing discussion we can see changes in the intellectuals' social location and in their access to socio-economic and political opportunities have great formative influences on the intellectual production.<sup>26</sup>

#### Educational Orientation, Occupational Ties and Political Orientations

In addition to social position as an influence on the intellectuals' production of ideas, the particular intellectual field must have exerted significant influence on their value orientation and conceptualization of democracy. Yan Jiaqi enrolled in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Electronic Computing at the Chinese University of Science and Technology in Beijing in 1960. Upon his graduation, Yan faced a series of philosophical debates on the general issue of the relationship between ideas and existence. The debates did influence Yan's thought as he also recalled in his autobiography (Yan, 1988: 8-14), directing him to the realm of philosophy. As Yan spelt out plainly, "deeply attracted by the ambiguous, conceptual thinking in the philosophical realm, abstract but stimulating, I finally decided to abandon the studies in basic particle physics, and moved into the impalpable and theoretical realm" (Yan, 1987: 347-348). The focus of the philosophical debate in the 60's concentrated on the question of whether "two combined into one" or "one divided into two".<sup>27</sup> Viewing the Maoist idea of constant struggle and flux through the eyes of his new philosophical orientation of dialectics, Yan felt compelled to rethink the orthodox ideas adopted by the Party.<sup>28</sup> In late 1963 and early 1964, Yan published two essays on dialectics and attracted the attention of the famous philosopher, Yu Guangyuan. Yu encouraged Yan to apply for postgraduate studies in the Philosophy and Social Sciences Division of the Academy of Science. Upon admission, Yan, with the close supervision of Yu and Gong Yuzhi, another prominent social scientist, directed his

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<sup>26</sup>Chen Yizhi and Su Shaoshi are now living in the United States. Su is a visiting scholar attached to Harvard University while Chen is the president of the Centre for Modern China.

<sup>27</sup>For details, see "New Polemic on the Philosophical Front", *Beijing Review* (No. 37, September 11, 1964).

<sup>28</sup>The biography of Yan, I adopt from Bachman & Yang (1991) and Yan (1988).

attention to the dialectics of nature. During the Cultural Revolution, Yan intensively read and critically analyzed the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong while engaging in editorial work. Bachman and Yang also note that from 1967 to 1971, Yan borrowed banned books from friends, reading widely in the fields of Western political theories, world history and biography and pre-1949 Chinese history (Bachman & Yang, 1991; xvi).

Since 1972, Yan has been studying the history of political thought and international political systems. In the late 70's and early 80's, with the institutionalization of the Institute of Political Science and the resurrection of various social science disciplines, Yan's work on comparative studies of political thought and political system was recognized. He published a paper "The Political System in a Socialist State" in which he discussed different political systems from a historical perspective, highlighting the importance of constitutional rule and the institutionalization of a proper system to realize the goal of the People's Republic, implying even then that the state is power originates from the people (Yan, 1979). What makes Yan's claim of the state's power originates from the people surprising is the way he formulates such an idea. The notion of "people's power" is common as stated in "democratic-centralism" which seems to be a "taken-for-granted" fact in socialist and marxist countries. Realizing the importance of "people's rights", Yan therefore considers the dictatorial leadership in the Cultural Revolution as wrong. Like other intellectuals, Yan originally trusted that the CCP would protect people's interests since it is the party representing the people. Having a deeper reflection of the Cultural Revolution, Yan realized that despotism could be found even in a socialist state as China was. Seeing the importance of institutionalized democratic procedures in government and politics, Yan pointed out that the essence of People's Republic lied with the protection of people's power. Without the dreadful experiences that Yan confronted in the Revolution, we doubt whether Yan would have had such a deeper analysis of people's power. At a meeting in 1979, his speech about the political system of socialist states drew the attention of most of China's prominent social scientists.

With the development of political studies and the establishment of the Institute of Political Science throughout the 1980's, Yan was elected the director of the Institute under the CASS, in charge of studying the international political system and translating Western political thought and ideas. This occupational affiliation further exposed Yan to different perspectives on political systems and ideas of democracy.

Yan's unique intellectual background in both philosophy and science and his access to different political thoughts and systems made him a unique political scientist. Yan adds, "it is not a crisis of science when the existing theories cannot explain the newly discovered phenomena, instead, it is a new beginning and starting point of interest in scientific exploration" (Yang, 1990: 14). Internalizing such an educational orientation, Yan always poses the question "why". His rational thinking and a questioning mind-set are products of his earlier training in philosophy and science. His personal experience in the Cultural Revolution, what he called "the empire of theology" (shenxue wangguo) typified by the transcendent nature of a god-like leader (Mao's cult), caused Yan to explore a new way for China. His contempt of the "theology empire" lies in the fact that faith and worship replace science and rational thinking. In his "Three Courts for Judging Truth: Religion, Rationality and Practice", he envisaged China's adherence to the principle of rationality for judging truth. In his "The Scientific World of Three-No's", Yan reiterates his openness and objectivity stating that "science should have no forbidden zone, no idols, and no principles" (Yan, 1986a).

In his "A Research Report of the Question of Democracy" (1979), an imaginative novel involving a journey through different countries from the 18th century to the future, Yan compared different political systems, contrasting the autocratic, monarchical constitutional and republican systems. The nub of this philosophical novel is the theme of procedural politics as typified in the republican system. The major emphases of the story are advocacy for a system of responsibility, the end of life tenure and the establishment of a better personnel system. It is at this point that Yan had begun to learn the Western model of democracy. The clearest pointer to his democratic thinking lies

with his ideas of procedural rule and checks and balances in politics. In order to avoid any political persecution, Yan tactically tested the response of the state by means of a novel implicitly to sound out his liberal democratic thought. Up to this point, we may see the close relationship between Yan's political orientation and his educational and occupational background.

The previous discussion has suggested Yan's knowledge production is closely related to his educational orientation. His training in science and philosophy, coupled with his position as the director of the Institute of Political Science, enhanced Yan to read widely and think deeply of what democracy is. In addition, his prominent role in the field of social sciences in general and political science in particular should have given Yan additional resources. His political position at the CASS and political affiliation to the state apparatus can be interpreted as another source to support Yan's radicalism. Our discussions of Yan's connections with the senior leadership and also his links with Stone, together with his influence and networks in his own intellectual field might have strengthened considerably his critical stance, creating a strong social force in support of his intellectual radicalism. Seeing many Chinese intellectuals' (from both social science and humanities) support of democracy and their strong demand for the release of Wei Jingsheng in early 1989 (for details, see, for example, Chong, 1989 and Bonnin & Chevrier, 1991), together with his shaken position after criticized by Deng personally, Yan captured the opportunity to change his coping strategy in dealing with the CPP. Putting different sources of support together, Yan could therefore choose various strategies in reacting to his socio-political situations.

#### Generational Location and Intellectual Radicalism

Mannheim has suggested the momentous impact of generation location on the ideas of intellectuals. It is particularly interesting to explore different generations of contemporary Chinese intellectuals. Differences in upbringing and treatment by the state would greatly influence their conceptualization of the world. In light of Li and Schwarcz's schematic form, I would regard Yan Jiaqi as a member of the fifth generation

of modern Chinese intellectuals.

The fifth generation is a liberation generation of the late 40's and early 50's (Li & Schwarcz, 1983-84). Yan was born in 1942 in Jiangsu Province. Although he lived through the liberation, Yan was still too young to remember or to be strongly influenced by the socialist construction which took place roughly from 1949 to 1955. When the Great Leap Forward was launched, Yan was probably mature enough (approximately sixteen years of age) to remember and think about such a historic movement. The disastrous years of the Leap must have marked Yan deeply, providing him a point of reference for contemplating the problems in Chinese politics. During the Cultural Revolution, Yan was about twenty-three. Having graduated from the Chinese University of Science and Technology in Beijing, he moved to the realm of philosophy. Regardless of his education, Yan was still dispatched to rural areas in Hubei and Beijing to participate in the ongoing campaigns in the countryside. At the end of May of 1966, Yan returned to Beijing and was assigned to assist editing the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. Yan himself noted that these years marked a move from the "kingdom of philosophy to the kingdom of theology" (i.e., the Mao cult)(Yan, 1988: 10-14). The years of the Cultural Revolution were a profoundly shaping experience for Yan and his countrymen. The direct confrontation with the Cultural Revolution and the examination of the thoughts of the Marxist leaders had forced Yan to question the established Maoist orthodoxies.

Li and Schwarcz argue that the fifth generation of intellectuals was more narrow in outlook and more limited in knowledge inasmuch as their faithful attitude is confined to the doctrine of Marxism. They welcomed the liberation sincerely, hoping that the Communist Party would make China strong. Having such a vision, the fifth generation tend to be enthusiastic and single-minded supporters of the liberation. Li and Schwarcz also regard the fifth generation of Chinese intellectuals as "rather timid, [having] had little opportunity to make original contributions of their own." However, such a view is questionable because people like Yan have demonstrated the ability to think

independently. Though it was difficult and dangerous, Yan still managed to expose himself to different sources of knowledge through which he made himself more cosmopolitan in thinking and more liberal toward plurality of thought. Maybe Yan is one of the exceptional cases as Li & Schwarcz suggest: "the best among them [some fifth generation of Chinese intellectuals], became more reflective in their thought. These few have been able to pose certain fundamental questions" (Li & Schwarcz, 1983-4: 44).

Part of the reason for Yan's consciousness may be related to his deeper reflection on the social and political turmoil during the dark age 1966-1976, which caused him to question the legitimacy of the CCP. Added to his suffering during the Cultural Revolution is Yan's unique exposure to the outside world, both of which probably had great impact on Yan's conceptualization of the external world.

From his call for the end of life tenure in the late 1970's, Yan went one step further in the eighties to suggest institutional changes in the political structure. His emphasis on procedural politics, specifying the power relationship between the state and the Party; demarcation between social organizations and decentralization of power; and the stress on the consolidation of the National People's Congress, strengthening the constitutional limits of the government, all reflect his conceptualization of democracy in response to his particular socio-historical context in general and the socio-cultural and socio-political problems in particular. Yan adopted the view of Hobbes that human nature is evil as the philosophical basis underlying his conviction that orderly society and government should rest on a coherent, institutional system rather than on the good-will and enlightened character of the leadership. Yan's direct exposure to the Cultural Revolution impelled him to speak out more persistently and boldly than he had before the Cultural Revolution. The cold reality of 1989 also forced Yan to recognize the importance of minority rights and respect for individual choice. Yan's unique social location and central position in the state apparatus, together with his prominent role in the field of social science enabled Yan to distinguish himself from his fellow colleagues. In addition, his recent change from an establishment intellectual to a exiled intellectual

inevitably causes change in his conceptualization of the external world. One point which must be addressed here is that even though the notion of generational location is insightful in the understanding of how people's ideas relate to their unique generational experiences, this conceptual tool still has its limitations because individual variations are common despite their similar generational location. As Li and Schwarcz (1983-4) observed, some exceptional case can be found within the same generation. This line of reasoning again suggests the relation between social structure and social agency is of dynamic and interactive nature. Yan, unlike other fifth generation of Chinese intellectuals, is more innovative in thinking. His unique social location and his prominence in his field may have affected his perceived role and also his coping strategies. Up to this point, we argue that Bourdieu's notion of "strategy" and "field" and Mannheim's idea of "social location" can enhance our understanding of the interactionist relationship between social structure, social location, political opportunity structure, and individual calculation and choice.

## **CONCLUSION**

The foregoing discussion has reviewed the democratic thought of Yan Jiaqi in light of the proposed theoretical framework. It is clear that the political ideas of modern Chinese intellectuals have been influenced by their social location, generational location, educational orientation and the intellectual field to which they belong. Through such an exercise, we can have a more comprehensive and dynamic picture of the relations between the ideas and the social structure, particularly of Yan Jiaqi.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE RADICAL REFORMER: FANG LIZHI AND HIS DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

Fang Lizhi, China's most prominent advocate for democracy and human rights, has repeatedly affirmed the significance of freedom and democratization in mainland China. His critical stand and boldness have received wide support from the university students. His persistent call for respect of human rights and democracy has made him a dissident widely recognized in the West. Fang has been regarded as China's AVOID Sakharov (*Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1988)<sup>1</sup> and "China's Tom Paine", (*Washington Post*, Nov. 1987) since the anti-bourgeois campaign in 1986-87. Fang believes people have a natural right to democracy, saying "democracy is not something to be 'bestowed as a favour' from the government". Fang also believes that the future of China lies in total reform in all aspects, requiring a complete opening (*quan fangwei kaifang*) to the outside world. As a necessary part of total reform, Fang advocates learning from, confronting and competing with those outside (Fang, 1989b: 106, 111, 114, 118, 128). Having these ideas in mind, Fang asks intellectuals to shoulder the responsibility of transforming society (Fang, 1989b: 1-3, 53-86, 245-249).

In this chapter, I am going to discuss Fang's democratic thought in light of the analytical framework of the present study. It is also the intent of this chapter to evaluate whether Fang Lizhi is a dissident as such, with particular attention given to the examination of his social location in Chinese society, and the extent and level of his intellectual radicalism. I hypothesize that when Fang was in mainland China, he was not immune to the impact of patronage. His dissidence and outspokenness was considerably influenced by his role as an insider and by the social and political opportunities to which

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<sup>1</sup> AVOID Sakharov was a prominent dissident intellectual in the former Soviet Union, who criticized the policies and exposed the social and political problems underlying the former Soviet system regardless of intense political pressure. His dissidence has earned him praise as one of the most independent and critical intellectuals in Russia. For details of Sakharov, see Bailey (1989).



he had access.

### **A Brief Discussion of the Democratic Thought of Fang Lizhi**

Seeing democracy as a universal right of all people, Fang's assertion of human rights and democracy inevitably moves him to denounce the autocratic rule of the CCP (Fang, 1989b: 9-11, 87-88, 246-249).

#### Crisis of Faith: Defying Communism as Universal Principle

In Mao's era, Fang trusted the Communist Party unreservedly.<sup>2</sup> Even though in the 1950's he was purged and severely criticized for having written a lengthy treatise on the need to reform China's educational system in which he urged the liberation of scientific research from the control of politics, Fang continued to believe in Communism.

"Even after I was expelled from the Party, I continued to have faith in Chairman Mao and believed that it must have been I who was wrong." (Schell, 1988: 124)

However, his faith in the Party and socialism was shaken in the Cultural Revolution. The year of imprisonment in a *niupeng* (cow shed) once more ran Fang afoul of politics. Confronted by the government's irrational acts and unreasonable treatment of intellectuals, Fang began to question Communism.

"Around the time of the Cultural Revolution, I began to notice a lot of things and to feel that perhaps Mao was not so good for the country. But because at the time we still believed in Communism, it left us with the difficult question, whom should we follow? There was, of course, no one else but Mao. He was supposed to be the embodiment of all idealism." (quoted from Schell, 1988: 125)

Like many intellectuals in his time, Fang was extremely frustrated by the personal cult and dictatorial rule of Mao. Fang added,

"It was only later, although my sense of things was still quite unclear, that I began feeling that the Party was not telling the truth. Then, after the Cultural Revolution started, everything became much clearer. I realized that they had in fact been deceiving people and that I should not believe them any more." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 125)

At this point, Fang began to criticize not only the despotic politics but also the socialist system. He sees Marxism as an orthodox thought but not as a science, saying

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<sup>2</sup>During my interview with Fang conducted in Arizona 1993, he told me that, like other young people in the 40's and 50's, he thought that Communism symbolized advancement. He also believed that freedom could be found in the "liberated" area controlled by the CCP. Being impressed by the CCP's call for a multi-party system and institutionalized state control of the army, Fang thus committed himself to Communism.

that "Marxism is the product of an age ... and cannot epitomize all the science of today. The essence of science is development, creation, constant self-transcendence, and Marxism is no exception" (Fang, 1992: 23). The second dismissal from the Party in 1987 made Fang even bolder to denounce the failure of Communism in the past four decades (Fang, 1989d: 1-4). He pinpointed the fundamental cause of failure and impending catastrophe to the socialist system and ideology (Ibid). Fang employed a parable to demonstrate that Marxism was outdated, "Marxism is like old clothes which should be thrown away because Marxism itself belonged to the cultural platform in the past which is now old-fashioned" (Fang, 1989d: 55).

Fang even outraged the top leaders by openly declaring the widespread belief that bureaucratic problems and impending crisis were caused by the leadership. Criticizing the monolithic and dictatorial rule of the feudalistic, despotic and deceptive politics under the Communist Party, he therefore denounced the applicability of state socialism practised in China and declared its death (Fang, 1989d: 1-4, 54-55; 117-9; see also Brugger & Kelly, 1990).<sup>3</sup>

What most irritated Fang was the emphasis of class contradiction. Fang explicitly states,

"Communism, of course, has proved to be a failure in both practice and theory. I have to make it clear that socialism is different from communism. They are two separate concepts. I still support the principal goal of socialism to eliminate social injustice and reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. If anyone calls me a socialist believer, I do accept such a label. However, I reject communism. The major reason for such a rejection lies with the core philosophy of communism --- class contradiction to which I most object. The adoption of class contradiction as the means to accomplish communist praxis has been proved to be a failure theoretically and practically (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

Socialism practiced in the Northern European countries gave Fang a reference point to evaluate the socialist regime in China. Fang praised the model of non-totalitarian socialism in Northern Europe. His observations in Sweden and Austria caused him to aspire to the humanistic goals of socialism under which democracy is realized (Fang, 1989b: 202-204) and to declare the socialist praxis in China a failure (*Zhengming*, July,

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<sup>3</sup>See also the interview conducted by Terzani in Barne & Miniford (1989: 329-340).

1987). Seen in this light, Fang has never opposed genuine socialism and socialist ideals as such. His defiance must be understood in light of his criticism against the dictatorial rule of state socialism and the orthodox ideology.<sup>4</sup>

What distinguishes Fang from other orthodox Marxists is that Fang treats socialism neither as universal truth nor as guiding principles. Far from seeing "guiding principles" as absolute truth, Fang conceives of principles as a necessary method or path to research (Fang, 1985). He suggests that "philosophy provides the guidance for scientific research" in terms of some effective methods or tools rather than as leading or supreme principles (Fang, 1985). Fang also criticizes those who blindly trust in some omnipotent "supreme" scientific methodology.

"The statement that 'Marxist philosophy is the supreme principle and methodology guiding scientific research' is itself inconsistent with Marxist principles. It is a form of blind faith and ignorance" (Fang, 1985, quoted from Fang, 1992: 23).

Fang extends his concept of the unique relationship between science and philosophy to the relationship between the people and the state. Fang's reading in politics and his travels abroad widened his horizons and stimulated his deeper analysis of democracy and human rights. In the post-Mao era, Fang spent much time visiting various countries, attending international conferences and academic meetings at the Vatican, Bogota in Colombia, Italy, England, Japan, Australia and the United States.<sup>5</sup> Fang frankly admitted that his observations and experiences abroad further caused him to realize the impasse of state socialism. These trips abroad were to profoundly influence the way Fang looked at the Chinese socialist system and the role of intellectuals within it. He said plainly during a speech to the Tongji students,

"the change in many people's outlook, including my own, came from seeing the outside world ... we discovered our backwardness and were enlightened." (Fang, 1989b: 231)

His speeches always involve comparisons between the Chinese conditions with those of the outside world. He declared that "the last 30 years in China have been a

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<sup>4</sup>I get this insight from Williams (1990), who suggests that Fang attacked the dictatorship of the CCP's pretext of ending exploitation while leading the country predominantly to backwardness and stagnation.

<sup>5</sup>His foreign academic roles included the following: Visiting Professor at the University of Rome as a visiting professor; Senior Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University Observatory; Visiting Professor at Kyoto University's Fundamental Physics Research Institute and Research Resident at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. See Schell (1988) and Williams (1992).

failure in essentially every aspect of economic and political life" (Fang, 1989d: 1-2). Fang attributes the failure to despotic state socialism (Fang, 1989b: 199), an opinion also shared privately among many in the leadership of the CCP (Ibid). Fang told the students that he had seen the Eastern German border guards at the Berlin Wall searching under his bus to see whether there were any escapees. Fang thus asked himself "if a society is good, why should it fear people trying to run away?" (Fang, 1989b: 198) Applying that question to China, Fang urged the Tongji students to acknowledge the existing problems and to solve them collectively (Ibid, 199).

### Democracy as a Human Rights

Fang conceives that there are broad and narrow views of democracy. The broad view of democracy concerns the political culture whereas the narrow one is about the political structure of a particular country. Most fundamental of all, democracy is to protect people's rights to have free choice. Even though Fang acknowledges that the origins of democracy were not in China but in Europe, he still holds that democracy, like human rights, is universal to all mankind. He said in the interview,

"Democracy and human rights have no racial and religious boundaries." (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993)

Fang maintains the view that "democracy is not something to be 'bestowed as a favour' but is the natural right of people" (Fang, 1989b: 106, 248). Fang speaks of the protection of human rights as the prerequisite for democracy.

"Without democracy there can be no development. Unless individual human rights are recognized there can be no true democracy. In China the very ABC's of democracy are unknown. We have to educate ourselves for democracy. We have to understand that democracy isn't something that our leaders can hand down to us. A democracy that comes from above is no democracy, it is nothing but a relaxation of control. The fight will be intense. But it cannot be avoided." (Quoted from Barme & Miniford, 1989: 329; see also Fang, 1989b: 245-249)

He also said, "democracy is not something given but something won by the people, because what is given can be taken back" (Fang, 1989b: 248). Fang held that since the socialist system claimed to have made the people the masters of their own country, the people should have the right to know what their leaders were up to (Fang,

1989b: 119-120). Knowing that the struggle for democracy is never easy but a long process, he therefore maintains that the future of China cannot rely solely on the resolution of its top leadership. He also believes that social stability and social development are determined by the success of democratization.

Seeing democracy as a natural right inherent within the people themselves, Fang thus concludes that it is the responsibility of government to recognize that right by constitutional sanction (Chin Chung, 1987: 93). Hence, Fang reiterates in his speeches that "democracy is something to be gained through persistent efforts, that there is nothing to be afraid of, and that criticizing government leaders is a symbol of democracy" (Fang, 1989b: 108, 120-21, 140, 248).

Unlike the notion of "democratic-centralism" adopted by the state, Fang distinguishes his conception of democracy from the official one.

"My interpretation of democracy is different from that of Mao Zedong, whose conception lies with a democratic style of doing things; that is, to listen to different opinions. Democracy is not simply a process of consultation but the realization of human rights. Though human rights and democracy are two different concepts, they are closely related to one another. That is to say, there must be guaranteed right to freedom of speech, freedom of thinking, freedom of press and freedom of travel and movement ... Without such guaranteed rights, it is meaningless to speak of democracy. The protection of these rights is the prerequisite for democracy." (Fang, 1989d: 152)

Fang told the students at Jiaotong university to fight for their natural rights. He argued "Liberty, equality, fraternity, democracy and human rights" are the great heritage of history that China should not be afraid of (Fang, 1987: 114-5).

Fang also speaks of accountability of government. Fang insists that the students that the government exists to serve the citizens and not the other way round (Fang, 1989b: 108, 119-20, 208). As a case in point, Fang maintains that the students have a right to opportunities for an education because their parents have really contributed to the state (Fang, 1989b: 108-109).

In addition, Fang points to the fact that science, democracy and reason are closely linked with each other. If there is no democracy, argued Fang, there are no guaranteed rights for people; without rights, it is hard to say that intellectual freedom is protected. Following the same logic, it is thus clear that there will be no real science without

intellectual freedom. For this reason, Fang has upheld the Enlightenment banner of "science, reason and democracy" since late 1979 during his visit in Rome (Williams, 1988:27). Advancing his position further, Fang suggests another four principles, namely, "science, democracy, creativity and independence" instead of the Four Cardinal Principles.

Fang moved beyond speaking about democracy and became involved in democratic reforms at Kenan University with the support of his colleagues. In order to create an atmosphere for freedom of speech and press, they initiated an open academic and political environment at Kenan University by allowing students to adhere to a diversity of views and adopt different stances. It was their conviction that anyone should be able to put up a hand bill and hold an event on campus without having to seek prior approval from the superior administrative branch. Fang not only supported freedom of speech among students' activities in the academic realm but also espoused the use of demonstration for democracy. Fang declared that the existing political structure should be reformed for the sake of democracy and freedom. Though Fang feels that making China more democratic is urgent, he also realizes the road to democratize China is a long one (Williams, 1990: 476; Kraus, 1989: 298).<sup>6</sup> In order to actualize the goal of democracy, Fang has pinned his hope on the intellectuals, seeing them as the leading force in the "war of position".

I must point out here that Fang's notion of democracy, unlike that of Yan Jiaqi, does not intensively rely on any Western political theories. Instead, his conception of democracy rests merely on his scientific mentality. The scrutiny of his ideas also indicates that he has not suggested a detailed program or concrete political platform in democratization. This is highly suggestive that Fang's democratic thought is linked with his faith in science and universal laws rather than any sophisticated political theories (see Kraus, 1989 and Cheek, 1992 and the following discussion).

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<sup>6</sup>Fang also recognizes that democratization in China will be a gradual process. He therefore sees that the institutionalization of proper channels for the people to voice their opinions is the most fundamental feature of democracy (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

## The Role of Intellectuals

Fang views intellectuals as the nation's elite, whose efforts are indispensable for building a prosperous state. Contending that the backwardness and disintegration of the existing regime is due in part to the lack of respect for intellectuals, Fang offered as a theoretical response to the socio-political reality a strengthening of the intellectuals' consciousness, urging them to fulfill their responsibilities toward society (Fang, 1989b: 138). In an era filled with impending crises and turmoil, Fang urged the youth to be bold enough to face the crises and shoulder their responsibilities to resolve them (Fang, 1989b: 138; see also *Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986). In the interview with Ding Qing, Fang explicitly stated the special role that he hoped scientists as intellectuals would play in the development of modern China.

"almost invariably, it has been the natural scientists who have been the first to become conscious of the emergence of each social crisis." (*Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986, quoted from Schell, 1988: 127)

Following Einstein, Fang invoked the spirit of social consciousness.

"Scientists must express their feelings about all aspects of society, especially when unreasonable, wrong, or evil things emerge. If they do otherwise, they will be considered accomplices." (*Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986, quoted from Schell, 1988: 127)

Fang believes that intellectuals should not be limited to technological matters but should also embrace a sense of responsibility for making a contribution to social progress (Fang, 1989b: 99-103, see also Fang, 1989b: 53-86). Moreover he has repeatedly praised the potential of younger intellectuals and students, seeing them as a force for democratic advancement. Besides, Fang pinned his hope on the young intellectuals and students because he saw them as more independent, having a strong wish to take their destiny into their own hands. Fang observed, "as intellectuals, we are obligated to work for the improvement of society ... this requires that we break the bonds of social restraint when necessary" (Schell, 1988: 131). Fang felt that the failure of intellectuals to exert a significant influence on society is a sign of backwardness because intellectuals not only possess information and knowledge but also create them, a factor which allows them to become an actively productive force in society. The intellectuals should utilize their

knowledge and "intellectual consciousness" to strive for a right direction in social reform (Fang, 1989b: 27, 109). Wrote Fang,

"Of course, our goal should be the improvement of society, but our goal shouldn't just be some utopian dream that can only be realized a million years down the road ... what is much more important is to identify problems that exist now and to try to solve them."  
(Quoted from Schell, 1988: 131-132)

According to Fang, intellectuals' sense of responsibility to society should extend even to the degree of sacrificing their own lives. They also have complaints and grievances, but these concern the advancement of society, not their own personal interests (*Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986). In order to reform the closed society, Fang believed the intellectuals should speak up to create a more open society where differences are allowed, making room for the great varieties of excellence that have found expression in human civilization (Schell, 1988: 134). The future of China lies with the successful realization of democracy, while the realization of democracy itself lies with the struggle of the people. Fang urged that intellectuals be independent and form a powerful group to check the Party and to uphold democracy and the sanctity of human rights (Fang, 1989b: 138-39). He told the *World Economic Herald* that it was time for Chinese intellectuals to "straighten their bent backs" and assume their social responsibility. The most significant task, according to Fang, is to manifest a democratic spirit, starting with the struggle for their own rights (*Shijie Jingji daobao*, 24 Nov. 1986).<sup>7</sup>

His stress on the unique social role of intellectuals is also related to his conception of education. Fang blames the state for causing the backwardness of education in China. He not only found fault with the past policies toward intellectuals but also condemned the state for ignoring education (Fang 1989b: 175-194). Central to his message, Fang puts exceeding emphasis on developing a particular kind of intellectual consciousness, which is characterized by critical thinking and boldness to tell the truth (Fang, 1989b: 185, see also 1989b: 101-106). Yan Xun, writing in the *World Economic Herald*, quoted Fang's

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<sup>7</sup>When asked to evaluate whether Chinese intellectuals are critical and independent enough, Fang forthrightly told me that he observed that more intellectuals in mainland China had become more critical in thinking, particularly comparing the situation of the 1990's with that of the late eighties. However, Fang also pointed out that even though Chinese intellectuals had become more critical in their thinking, they were still inactive to voice their critical stand. When asked about the reason for such a scenario Fang replied that they might be constrained by their particular context, especially restricted by their vested interests (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).



lament that Chinese intellectuals have lacked an independent mentality. This mainly causes them to yield to power, which in turn links their futures to an official career (*World Economic Herald*, 24 Nov. 1986). With this profound concern, Fang thereby reaffirms the importance of "independent mentality".

Fang's consciousness of independence rests not merely on empty words but on his own willingness to put his ideas into practice. In early March 1989, he wrote an open letter to the CCP leaders to depict the main concerns of intellectuals as "the trend toward corruption, the rampant speculation by bureaucrats, price rises, the fact that people become lax in spirit, and the serious crisis faced in the educational, scientific, and cultural fields" (*Ming Bao*, 7 Mar. 1989). These concerns reflected the sincere patriotic feelings of the intellectuals. Among them, Fang Avowed advocated political democratization, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, economic development and elimination of corruption.<sup>8</sup> Having realized the backwardness and intense crises of China, Fang called for a complete opening of China to the external world.<sup>9</sup>

#### Idea of Total Westernization

Fang has declared that the Party is inept, seeing 'state-socialism' meaningless and impractical to China. He is of opinion that Chinese culture has been petrified for which reason China should learn from the West in many aspects (*Zhengming*, July, 1987: 51 and March, 1987: 38-41). He therefore advocated opening up to the outside world because he thought the transformation of social ideas and elevation of spiritual civilization should depend on outside forces (Yen Hsun, 1986).<sup>10</sup> His visits to Europe, Japan, Australia and the United States had helped Fang to disentangle the truth from the falsehood of socialism. The comparisons between the Chinese conditions and those in the United States and Western European countries inevitably reveals the backwardness of China. His call for the complete opening to the Western world essentially touched the heart of

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<sup>8</sup>For details of crises in the post-Mao era, see Li Ming (1989); He Pochuan (1989) and Nathan (1990).

<sup>9</sup>Although Fang is now in exile, but he still hopes that he shall return to mainland China. He also perceives himself as an independent intellectual, and he is intent upon keeping such a role and upon spreading the idea of democracy in China (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

<sup>10</sup>What Fang suggests here is that China should not only learn from the West merely in the realm of technology and economy but also in the non-economic realms: culture, ideology, and ethics. From this point of departure, we can see that Fang's notion of westernization simply means to learn from the West in every aspect.

the problem, a need to transform China not only technologically and economically, but also culturally and politically. The present problems confronting China, according to Fang, had to do with the cultural system, specifically, problems with state socialism. In order to reform China, Fang told the students to "show a little humility" to learn from others (Fang, 1989b: 201). Fang does not consider the essence of total westernization to be "the big noses are more beautiful". Instead, he believes that frequent contacts with the external world will hopefully enable China to pick up a "democratic and scientific mentality" (see Williams, 1990: 477).

Based on these observations, we therefore conclude that the central theme of Fang Lizhi is to struggle against the monopolistic rule of Communist China, advocating the elimination of such an out-dated and inflexible ideology. Differing from his forerunners, Fang sharply denounced the credibility of Communism. He went so far as to allude to a total crisis in socialism and to urge the intellectuals to bear their responsibilities in saving the Chinese society.

## **TOWARDS A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF IDEOLOGICAL FORMATION**

After a general discussion of Fang Lizhi's social-political ideas, the following part will analyze Fang's ideas in terms of the proposed analytic framework. Opposing to Weber's cultural relativism and sceptical sociology, Mannheim suggests an historicist solution, examining knowledge production in relation to the unique socio-historical context in which ideas evolve. The mid-eighties can be characterized as a period of relative freedom of expression and autonomous organizations in Chinese society coincided with a continuing drop in income and resources for intellectuals (for details, see, for example, Bonnin and Chevrier, 1991 and Black and Munro, 1993). Against a relaxed socio-political and socio-cultural contexts in the post-Mao era as we have documented in chapter 3 and 4 (see also Goldman et al. 1993 and Brugger and Reglar, 1994: 247-258), Fang Lizhi, like other Chinese reformer intellectuals, has tried to assert his professional independence and intellectual autonomy. Dissatisfied with the declining socio-economic opportunities of intellectuals, many of them have become more critical,

voicing their grievances and even adopted a relatively radical approach to fight for their justice.

It is our contention that Fang's unique social location, his prominent role in the natural science field, together with the support from the senior leaders, have rendered Fang with abundant "capitals" to differentiate himself from other intellectuals. More importantly, Fang's popularity in the world media also makes him unique among his colleagues. Even though Fang was not totally freed from political and social constraints when he was in mainland China, the political opportunity structure which Fang had access enhanced him to adopt different strategies in dealing with the suppression or threats imposed by the CCP. Besides, Fang gradually broke the conventional boundary to develop his own field (autonomy of values) in contrast with apparatus (dominant values). Starting from these considerations, let us now turn to how Fang's unique social location has affected his fate and also his strategies in response to the external constraints.

#### Social Location and the Ideological Formation

Fang's radicalism and critical outlook were influenced by his unique social location as well as his role perception. Fang had been playing the role as establishment intellectual since the 1950s. It is my contention that Fang remained as part of the state apparatus until the 80's despite the fact that he had become more critical. I observe that his dissidence and radicalism are closely related to the support from his political patrons though he did not openly admit it.<sup>11</sup> When asked whether he had *houtai* to support his critical stand while he was in mainland China, Fang forthrightly replied,

"No, certainly not. I have definitely no relationship with any leaders" (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

Nevertheless, Fang also acknowledges that intellectual radicalism is bound by the particular socio-political environment where intellectuals live. He also maintains that intellectuals have to select the right kind of strategies, avoiding saying something which may arouse the state's repression of intellectual activities. Under the CCP, Fang suggests

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<sup>11</sup>Though Fang did not openly admit the impact of patronage on him, he did imply such influences in his speeches and interviews. See my following discussion and also Cheek (1988: 47-49); *The Nineties* (Oct. 1988:71).

that people have learnt the appropriate way, right time and circumstance to speak out (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

The coping strategies that Fang adopted is greatly affected by the "capitals" that he had access from the support of the senior leaders in the CCP. Hu Yaobang, differed from his colleagues, was sympathetic towards intellectuals. After his mentor Deng's return to the political power in 1973, Hu was made a vice president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and he was in charge of reviving its academic activities. Realizing that many intellectuals were treated unfairly in the Cultural Revolution, Hu was determined to rehabilitate all of them, not only out of fairness but also to heal the wounds of the past and to get their cooperation to carry out modernization programmes. Goldman (1994: 29) observes that Hu "was the only one who believed that it was necessary to undertake not merely administrative reform, such as separating the party from the government, but also fundamental political reform." Having a relatively liberal view on politics, Hu made use of his connections and position in the CCP to publish articles expressing the need to modernize China's political system in terms of democratic procedures (for details, see, Goldman, 1994: chapter 2). With the blessings of Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang and his associates repudiated the anti-intellectual policies adopted in the Mao era and they proposed a relatively moderate policy towards intellectuals. Getting the support from the elders in the party, Hu could then elicit his view that "Marxist philosophy cannot replace natural science" published in the *People's Daily*. Soon after Deng's return to power, Hu, with the support of Deng, began to take steps to redress the damage done during the Mao years not only to science, technology and professionalism but also to the whole Chinese intellectual community. It is suggested that Deng's speech at the National Conference on Science on March 18, 1978 to address intellectuals, emphasizing the important role of them, and urged for due respect for intellectuals was in line of Hu's 1975 report of the CAS (Goldman, 1994: 30). In addition to openly recognize the significant role of intellectuals, Hu also initiated democratic procedures in the selection of director and deputy director of the CAS.

Seeing such a reform in the field of science, a *People's Daily* contributing commentator article declared that:

"The scientific spirit and the democratic spirit are inseparable in the struggle to build a modern and powerful socialist country ... Raising the scientific and cultural level of the whole Chinese nation must therefore be closely linked with expanding the scope of the nation's democratic life." (quoted from Goldman, 1994: 31)

At a conference at the Institute of Law, Yu Guangyuan, a vice president of the Academy of Social Science (CASS), a deputy director of the State Science and Technology Commission, and also an advisor to Hu Yaobang, told the participants that "without democracy there can be no modernization". This view was echoed in an editorial in the *People's Daily* on January 1979. As Goldman suggested, such an intellectual revival reclaimed not only the May Fourth movement's stress on science and technology but also its call for democracy (Goldman, 1994: 34-5). Argued along the same line, Brugger and Reglar (1994) also consider Hu together with Zhao Ziyang as supportive to the Chinese intellectual circles, promoting and encouraging a large number of intellectual reformers not only in the field of science but also in social science and humanities. Thus, the support rendered from Hu and Zhao and their associates should have imbued natural scientists in general and Fang Lizhi in particular with courage to chart a new course for their own field.

Fang's boldness and enthusiasm do not grow only out of his own interest and courage. In fact, the promotion of democratic reforms at Keda (*minzhu banxue*) was initiated and encouraged by the Central Committee. Early in 1984, a Ministry of education report entitled "The Reform of China's Educational Structure" had already sparked the light for dramatic changes in the country's university system. The Ministry of Education initiated changes in the election of administrators to top positions by committees of academics rather than their appointment by the Party (Schell, 1988: 128). In addition to this, the reforms practised at Keda were supported by Hu Yaobang, the former Party secretary and some senior Party leaders, Wen Li and Hu Qili (see Gin, 1987; *The Nineties*, Oct. 1988: 70-71). *Renmin ribao*, an official newspaper, had a series of reports on the success of reforms at Keda, which revealed to the intellectuals the

approving attitude of the Party leaders (*Remin ribao*, 22, 26, 31 Oct. 1986; 4, 14, Nov. 1986). In addition, *Guangming ribao*, a pro-intellectual newspaper, reported in details an interview between Fang and Dai Qing, indicating warm support for democratic reforms at Keda (*Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986).

Gin Xiang, a post-graduate student at Anhui University argued that democratic reforms at Keda had been approved by the Party and initially supported by Wen Li (Gin, 1987: 242). Wen is regarded as the liberal reformer who was responsible for the rectification of intellectuals after the Cultural Revolution. This new environment encouraged the intellectual community to speak out. Reportedly, Wen Li told his subordinates to respect the intellectuals and establish a good relationship with them for he regarded them as the loyal remonstrators to the state (Gin, 1987: 242). Gin also highlighted Wen's great respect the four elites (*sidai caizi*): Fang; Guan Weiyan, the President of Keda and also a reform supporter; Wen Yuankai, another reformer intellectual and associate professor at Keda; and Yang Jike, also famous for his outspoken and critical ways (*sidai caizi*) (Gin, 1987: 242-3). Another reformer official, Hu Qili, visited Anhui to hold discussions with the prominent intellectuals, encouraging them to express their views freely. He also promised them that there would be no more repression and purges and assured them of continued reforms (Gin, 1987: 244). It is evident then the reforms taken at Keda were consistent with the will of the Party. With support from the Party, Fang became bold enough to advocate democratic reforms.

The reforms at Keda and dissident speeches of Fang were not without some opposition at all, however. Some conservative leaders in the Party such as Bao Yibo and Hu Qiaomu, openly denounced Fang, criticizing his speeches as damaging to the socialist system (*The Nineties*, Oct. 1988:71). They attacked Fang's critique of Engels in an article entitled "Dialectics of Nature" published in May 1986. Some Party members threatened to expel him while others demanded his self-criticism. However, Fang was defended by some intellectuals in public. Xu Liangying, Head of the History Research Institute of the Academy of Social Sciences supported Fang and even threatened to organize a letter of

protest if Fang were purged (*Zhengming*, Sep. 1986: 9).

After Fang named and criticized Zheng Baifa, the vice-Mayor of Beijing, for wasting public funds to travel abroad, he experienced trouble in gaining a visa to go to the United States for his sabbatical leave (Fang, 1989b: 77ff). Hu Qili's intervention in the midst of this crisis clearly demonstrated the support of Fang's political patron (Gin, 1987: 246). Even though the political platform of Fang had made some Party leaders angry, Wen Li backed Fang in public. Under pressure from the conservatives, Wen Li arranged a discussion with the leading intellectuals at Hefei in November 1986. Instead of putting pressure on them, Wen reaffirmed his support of developments at Keda, but he also urged the intellectuals to be disciplined. This line probably was intended to alert Fang not to be out of control and to draw his attention to the need to respect the principle of "democratic-centralism" (Gin, 1987: 248-249). Despite the intense debate between Wen and Fang, they came to the agreement that democracy and freedom are embodied in the state constitution (Gin, 1987: 249). After the discussion, Wen reassured Fang about his support of reforms, especially after Fang assured him that Keda did not go against the Party's rule (*Ibid*). The foregoing facts make it clear that the dissident and critical stand of Fang is characterized by patronage and intellectual paternalism. Put precisely, Fang's dissidence is far from independent and critical when compared with his Eastern European counterparts. Putting these observations together, I suggest that before 1989 Fang Lizhi was only a "radical reformer" rather than a dissident.<sup>12</sup> Before his dismissal from the Party in 1987, Fang openly supported reforms in the Party. He also encouraged students to join the Party in order to reform it from within (Fang, 1989b). The difference between Fang and other reformer intellectuals lay only in their approaches and pace to transforming the country. In my interview of Fang, I asked him why he encouraged students to join the CCP when he was in China. He replied that at that time he believed that it was the only way to initiate change within the party because the CCP was still in

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<sup>12</sup>In the same interview, when I asked Fang whether his reforms implemented in Keda were supported by Hu Qili, he said that he had no connection with any leaders. Administrative reforms were initiated in Keda against a relatively relaxed socio-political environment. The years 1984-1986 were regarded by Fang as the most favourable time for reforms in China. Liu Binyan also expressed a similar idea during my interview in Princeton (see Interview 3, Arizona, 1993 and Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

power. Since his exile in the United States, Fang recognized that such a view is not comprehensive enough. Instead, he asserts that the CCP should allow oppositional forces in China (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). In this, Fang's idea is similar to Yan's as documented in chapter 5. It again shows us that Chinese intellectuals are contextually bound and constrained by the particular socio-political structure where they live.

Although Fang seems to have maintained his moral integrity, he certainly did not think or act independently. Fang himself also implicitly indicated his connection with a political patron. In his famous speech to the students of Jiaotong university, he noted that the State Education Commission distributed his speeches in 1985 as negative examples and stated that nothing had come of it. Nevertheless we observe that with the support of his political patrons such views were no longer forbidden in 1986 (*Washington Post*, Nov. 19, 1987). In an interview, he echoed at least three times Hu Yaobang's view to persuade intellectuals to conform to the Party line, showing that Fang approved Hu's soft line toward the critical intellectuals. In addition, in Hu Qili's discussion with Fang at Anhui, he bowed to pressure from the top and, instead of asking Fang to resign from the Party, he asked him to be disciplined (*The Nineties*, Oct. 1988: 71). It is also suggested that Deng Xiaoping initially encouraged reformist criticism in June 1986, but his change in attitude inescapably led to the suppression of it in January 1987 (see Wu An-chia, 1987). As a result of all this, Fang believes that intellectuals in China should find strategic ways to express their views (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).<sup>13</sup> Because Fang was one of the intellectuals subject to patronage, the fall of his political patron inevitably caused him trouble.<sup>14</sup> Despite the fact that Fang was constrained by the socio-political context where he lived, he still could differentiate himself from other natural scientists in the field. With direct support from Wan Li, Hu Qili and Hu Yaobang, it is certain that Fang had better position and he was fortified from unnecessarily attacks and criticisms. Given the same circumstances but without direct and immediate support from the senior leaders, I really doubt whether Fang could maintain the same coping strategy. It is at this

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<sup>13</sup>Such observations may hint why Fang considers intellectuals should adopt strategic ways to express their views as necessary in mainland China (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

<sup>14</sup>For the internal criticisms of Fang's views issued by the Party, see Zeng (1989).



point we can see Bourdieu's notion of "strategising" is illuminative to our understanding of the dynamic between structure and individual choice.

In addition, official tolerance of his vehement criticism may also be intimately linked with his role as a scientist. Scholars suggest that professional such as scientists and technical intelligentsia have received better treatment than the intellectuals in humanities and social science (see, Rai, 1991: 127; White III, 1990). Fang's outstanding performance and academic achievement, coupling with his extensive international support and his high reputation in science, had fortified him from earlier attack and persecution (Williams, 1992). Other than Fang's prominence in the field of natural science, it is note-worthy that the reforms in science and technology in the post-Mao era has also created the arena for the rise of natural scientists. Saich (1989) observes the efforts to reduce the stifling effects of Soviet-style centralized control by devolving resources and authority to lower levels. More important, there has been the reemergence of universities as centres not only for education but also for research and development (Orleans, 1989). Well aware of the deficiency of China's science and technology when compared with the outside world, the post-Mao leadership persistently stress the importance of science research and technology. Multifaceted reforms --- decentralization of research, introduction of the market, increased personnel mobility, and greater interaction with the international world --- have inevitably opened China not only to the technological and scientific realms but also to the cultural and ideological realms. Exchanges conducted through bilateral agreements signed between China and the respective industrialized countries therefore provide China not only a means for cooperative research activities and projects; and the reciprocal movement of scientific and technological data and literature between China and other countries but also different value systems and plurality of thought. Most important of all, such changes have also engendered a fundamental structural change in the Chinese political system, which probably undermines the supreme control of the CCP over scientific and technological activities. Once scientists are allowed to have more autonomy in their field, it is difficult

to restrict their activities again. It is also against such a more relaxed socio-political environment that Fang's critique and dissidence were more readily accepted. It also suffices to us that being a natural scientist, Fang is enhanced to develop better coping strategies than his counterparts in other fields.

The differences among the post-Mao intellectuals, those in Mao era, and the traditional literati rest only with their professional roles. The rise of autonomous professions to a considerable extent enhances the relative independence of the intellectuals in post-Mao China. It has already been pointed out that Fang received better treatment from the state because of his profession; however, it is wrong to overstate the independence of the technical intelligentsia. Their intellectual independence is still subject to the approval of the Party. This means then that the so-called dissident intellectuals, such as Fang, are still establishment intellectuals. Their level of critique and dissidence may be more intense, but it is wrong to conclude that they have become socially independent. Their professional position has given them relative autonomy, but their independence is still fragile and unsteady because of the restrictions from the state. Even though their connection with the international world has enhanced their "bargaining power" with the state, the scientists are well aware that the threat to the non-scientist intellectuals may eventually affect their fate as well. That explains why both scientists and non-scientists had allied together as a united front to counteract the repression from the state (see Goldman, 1992). It also explains why Cheek urges "Chinese intellectuals ... to conceptualize their separation from the state, the end of their mandarin role. They must articulate, and then fight to protect, their autonomy from political direction" (Cheek, 1992: 140).

It is also observed that the ideas of Fang Lizhi have suggested an intellectual elitism. He repeatedly maintains the significant role of intellectuals, thinking of them as the most productive force in the development of society. He also openly advocates ranking intellectuals at the top of the social ladder and he supports the notion that

knowledge is power (Fang, 1989b: 131-173).<sup>15</sup> When asked about his feeling toward the comment that he is too elitist, Fang replied to me,

"I do not know how people define 'elite' ... It seems to me that intellectuals are always 'elitist' since they are the vanguard having the first contact with the outside world and introducing new things to their fellow countrymen ... I think intellectuals were the first group who got to know Western science in modern China. In my opinion, only when people are educated do they recognize the advancement of science in the modern world. If people regard such a role as 'elitist', I think it is quite a normal historical development." (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

With a strong sense of intellectual superiority, Fang urges his fellow colleagues and students to strengthen their independent stand as the leading force in society and to shoulder the responsibility of developing China by their expertise and knowledge (Fang, 1989b: 21-28).

"Physicists' methods of pursuing truth make them extremely sensitive while their courage in seeking it enables them to accomplish something ... major social problems are often unclear to those without a scientific background ... scientists ... should consider themselves responsible to the entire society." (*Beijing Review*, 29, no 50 Dec. 15, 1986: 17)

This line of reasoning reveals that Fang has also internalized the mentality of the literati, being responsible for initiating changes in society even though he did not have traditional literati training (see, Cheek, 1988: 48). Fang also said to me that he may have been affected by the literati tradition (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). Therefore, a strong sense of "for the people" underlies his notion of intellectual elitism. It is worth noting that his conception of "speaking for the people" is distinguishable from the traditional literati because, although he cares about other groups in society, he lets them speak for themselves. This kind of paternalistic elitism is new among Chinese intellectuals. Cheek also argues that "this is a form of democratization new among Chinese intellectuals who have, otherwise, continued the traditional Confucian pretence to minister to and speak for the 'people'" (Cheek, 1992: 139).

The examination of Fang's ideas indicates that he has attempted to break the taboo in the political realm by discussing the issues from a scientific perspective, in which

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<sup>15</sup>It is even suggested that Fang's elitism merely a reflection of his personal interest, especially when he upholds intellectuals as the vanguard of the proletariat. He is thus seen as a spokesman for a group of intellectuals rather than a genuine advocate of democracy, see Kraus (1989).

process he enjoyed a degree of autonomy. His assertion on the leading role of intellectuals can be interpreted as his strong belief that intellectuals should first speak out since they have occupied a privileged position. This argument is also related to Fang's conception of professional knowledge. Fang sees himself as a professional scientist rather than a government official or politician.<sup>16</sup> His persistent call for the respect of human rights is always in his capacity as a citizen rather than a political leader. Thus I conclude that the intellectual elitism of Fang Lizhi is intimately linked with his notion of the professional role and social responsibility of natural scientists. Again, Fang's perceived role of intellectuals reveals what Bourdieu claims that ideas of people are affected by the habitus, having the dispositions of some fundamental cultural and social values in earlier age. Whether Fang consciously or unconsciously transforms his thinking in terms of science and rationality, he is still deeply affected by the habitus (Confucianism).

#### Social and Political Opportunities and Intellectual Radicalism

It is also our contention that the intellectuals have become more radical and critical because of their poor treatment and economic insecurity (See chapter 4). The political opportunity structure to which the intellectuals have access greatly determines their political radicalism (Tarrow, 1989; Brockett, 1991).<sup>17</sup> Fang's radical stance is also related to his perception of the deprived position of intellectuals and their limited social and political opportunities.

In a period of declining respect for intellectuals, Fang has sought greater respect. Fang lamented the deprived position of intellectuals as indicated by their declining wages and poor living conditions. He also lodged complaints against the state's lack of emphasis on education (Fang, 1989b: 66-67; 241-244). He claimed that the backwardness of China today is caused by mistrust of intellectuals.(Fang, 1985; see also

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<sup>16</sup>Fang made this point explicit during his interview with Tiziano Terzani, see Barne & Miniford (1989: 329). In my interview with Su Xiaokang (1993), he also indicated that there is a strong relationship between Fang's radicalism and his profession. Being a natural scientist, Fang speaks only about things which fall into his jurisdiction. Su commented that Fang had never spoken something in ignorance. Fang's consciousness of the role of natural scientists and his profound experience enable him to speak for human rights and democracy in terms of the language of science (Interview 2, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>17</sup>The elite theories also argue in the same vein that intellectual unrest is closely related to the lack of job opportunity. See Michels (1982).

chapter 4). When asked whether his "life chance" in mainland China had determined the level of his critique and dissidence, Fang told me that there was a close relationship between intellectuals' life chance and their intellectual radicalism (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). This also sheds light on the protests organized by Chinese intellectuals in Beijing for better treatment of intellectuals. Accordingly, we may thus conclude that there is a positive relation between their deprived social position and their participation in the June-Fourth Incident of 1989 (see, Chong, 1989 and chapter 4).

Thus we see that one additional reason the intellectuals in post-Mao China become more radical and critical is that the CCP had failed to provide satisfactory living conditions and intellectual environment for them. Besides, the CCP had restricted their freedom of speech and expression and also had failed to integrate them politically. Therefore, the intellectuals not only speak for the people but also air their own grievance as fellow sufferers. These conditions contribute to the growing vehemence of intellectual dissidence in post-Mao China. Putting the foregoing observations together, Fang adopted critical stand and relatively radical approach in response to the socio-historical situations that he confronted in mainland China is closely related with the unique social location that he occupied. Coupling with his better position as natural scientist and access to more socio-political opportunities, Fang could differentiate himself from his colleagues. It is interesting that even though many of natural scientists were living against a similar socio-political context as Fang did, not many of them adopted the same approach as Fang to deal with the state. Putting the foregoing discussion in context, we can argue that Fang's unique social location and political opportunity structure might have made Fang distinctive from his colleagues. Added with his popularity among Chinese university students and his prominence created by the world media, Fang was enhanced to choose strategies which differed from his counterparts in the same field. It is at this point we see Mannheim's "social location" and Bourdieu's "strategy" are insightful to demonstrate why individual variations so happen even though people are confronted with similar socio-historical circumstances. In addition, Fang's distinctive position is also related to his post

in the Chinese University of Science and Technology and his educational orientation.

### Educational Orientation, Intellectual Field and Ideological Formation

The above discussion of Fang's ideas has already indicated the close relationship between his democratic thought and his training in natural science. Having internalized the value of science and rationality, Fang believes that "the tradition of the field of physics is to have intervention in society" (Fang, 1989b: 14). In the foreword to his physics textbook published in 1981, Fang had already developed this view.

"Einstein was a great spokesman for science, reason and democracy. He said 'Only in devoting ourselves to the good of society will we find meaning in this fleeting and dangerous life.' To him it was an outrage to submit to power or to fail, out of timidity, to act like a scientist." (Fang, 1981, quoted from Fang, 1992: 13)

What he tries to describe here is the scientific spirit, the living soul that makes science what it is. In order to have a real transformation of China, Fang hopes to transplant this spirit into China (Fang, 1981, collected in Fang 1992). He also told Dai Qing, a reporter for *Guangming ribao*, that "being a physicist who should aspire to the perfect, harmonious and united natural world requires me to ask how the scientist can tolerate and accept the unreasonable and inharmonious situation in society" (*Guangming ribao*, 22 Sep. 1986). Natural science is not only Fang's way of thinking; it is his religion. He told Terzani,

"The natural sciences are my religion. Einstein once said something of the sort. Previously I did not understand him. Now I know: we scientists have a belief and an aim, we have an obligation towards society. If we discover a truth and society does not accept it, this weighs on us. This is what happened to Galileo. This is when, as scientists, we have to intervene. With this mission I step into society." (Quoted from Barne & Miniford, 1989: 329)<sup>18</sup>

Fang first received training in physics at the undergraduate level. Political repression during the Cultural Revolution moved Fang from the realm of solid physics to cosmology. Fang said "I had one book with me, the Soviet physicist Landau's *Theory of Fields*. For six months I did nothing but read this book over and over again. It was this curious happenstance alone that caused me to switch fields from solid state physics to cosmology (Schell, 1988: 124). His research of the "big bang" model of cosmological

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<sup>18</sup>When asked whether he would convert to Christianity some day, Fang frankly told me that he already had science as his religion, considering it abundant to satisfy himself (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993).

origins gained general acceptance among academics and led Fang to derive universal laws in the natural world. Thereafter, Fang, and his colleagues pursued this topic, taboo in China. They came to the conclusion that the spirit of science and rationality is the guiding principle in the realms of both scientific research and the social world. Not surprisingly, such an idea was attacked by the Party and Fang was accused of adhering to a naively empiricist and "undialectical" theory of the universe. Of course, his uncompromising attitude toward science was viewed as a flawed product of "subjective idealism", resulting in another political purge (Zha Ruqiang, 1987 and Lin, 1986). He was thus condemned for opposing Marxist philosophy by challenging its guiding role over natural science (Buckley, 1991: 6). Fang's faith in science has never been shaken even though he was attacked and persecuted several times (Fang, 1992: 289). Fang also said that "science is my career or my interest, if you like. Science advocates freedom of research and thinking, allowing people to have free circulation of ideas which characteristics are forbidden in Communism. Thus my professional ethics are in conflict with Communism." (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). This observation indicates how rationality and science have influenced Fang. The impact of Fang's educational orientation on his ideological formation is much more than a mode of thinking; it is rather a style of life, philosophy of life, and religious faith to him.

The laws of science, to Fang, are universal, and thus there are no "Chinese characteristics" when it comes to scientific laws. Such universal laws as Fang envisaged apply not only to scientific research but also to the social world.

"the basic principles and standards of modernization and democratization are like those of science --- universally applicable. In this regard there's no Eastern or Western standard, only the difference between 'backward' and 'advanced', between 'correct' and 'mistaken'". (Fang, 1992: 42)

"the chief obstacle to the modernization and democratization of Chinese culture lies in the same erroneous idea that kept science out of China for so many years: the theory of China's 'unique characteristics', in all its variations." (Ibid)

Buckley (1991) also observes that Fang's political beliefs have centred on his particular understanding of science but maintains that such interaction between the realm of natural science and wider social and political realms is not a new agenda in Chinese

intellectual history.<sup>19</sup> Based upon the foregoing observations, we confirm our hypothesis that Fang's educational orientation must have exerted significant influence on his ideological formation.

His adherence to scientific principles makes him believe that the progress of science and the general progress of society are inextricably bound together. Imbued with such a spirit, Fang has committed himself to truth in all affairs, rejecting any supreme principles guiding scientific research including the superior leading role of socialism. His faith in science has also shaped his conception of the intellectual role, motivating him to support independent thinking not only in scientific matters but also in social and political affairs at large.

In addition, Fang's conception of rights has consistently provided him a basis for declaring that people should have the right to know what their leaders were doing since the socialist system claimed to have made the people the masters of the state. Fang did not wait for his ideas to be applied to the society at large but realized them in part in the democratic reforms at Keda, where he with the support of his colleagues implemented a series of democratic reforms. Fang strongly believes that if universities are to be centres of ideas, students and staff must be provided a free environment to exchange different views (Fang, 1989b: 9-51, 175-194). In order to actualize his ideals of democracy in the university, Fang proposed the concept of "parliamentary politics", characterized by a free atmosphere and accepted procedure for free expression and criticism. Such ideas led Fang to allow free speech for the students and faculty, liberating them from any subtle and crippling forms of ideological repression. He also said to Schell, "I am determined to create intellectual and academic freedom. This will be my top priority" (Schell, 1988: 130).

As I pointed out in the previous part, even Fang has internalized the value of science and rationality, he is not totally immune to the impact of Confucianism. In my interview with him, Fang told me that his strong sense of social responsibility of

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<sup>19</sup>For details of this theme, see D.W.Y. Kwok (1965) and Gu Xin (1990).



intellectuals was considerably influenced by the ideas of Confucianism (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). It is thus clear that the habitus (Confucianism) still exerts certain impact on Fang's ideological production. It is wrong to posit that Fang has really undergone a total transformation of values or ideas, which has no relation with his deposited cultural values as inherited from Confucianism.

In addition to the impact of educational orientation on his ideological formation, the unique intellectual field from which he comes also plays a significant role in guiding his democratic thought. Being the Vice-President of the University of Science and Technology, Fang implemented democratic reforms in the university. With support from other professors, all of whom had difficulties during the Anti-Rightist Campaign, Fang and his colleague Guan proposed a radical horizontal redistribution of power at the university. They decentralized authority to special committees and the departments themselves, allowing more autonomy from below to control research funds, degree giving, and faculty promotions (Fang, 1988: 151-164). Furthermore, they also established the rights of faculty and staff to audit all administrative meetings. Fang strongly believed the concept of equal rights in expressing views, and supported freedom in speech and thinking (Fang, 1989b: 11).

The democratic reforms implemented at Keda proved successful and received encouraging response from the intellectual community. Dai Qing's interview with Fang, published on 22 September 1986, highly praised and recognized Fang's work. Wu Guosheng, a Beijing University philosopher, also sketched a biography of Fang entitled "Fang Lizhi: The Republic Needs This Kind of Scholar" with a high appraisal of his life and democratic thought (Wu Guosheng, 1986). I have also pointed out in the preceding part that the official newspaper *Remin ribao* also ran a series of five articles in October and November of 1986 to report the reforms at Keda in detail. Lu Fang, the reporter for *Renmin ribao*, said he was impressed by what he had seen at Keda, describing Fang and Guan in the most adulatory way. Lu Fang, unable to control his enthusiasm, exulted "at Keda, everywhere I breathed the air of democracy" (Lu Fang, 1986). In addition, Fang's

ideas had an electrifying effect on the university students. The students echoed the messages delivered by Fang in their slogans "Respect human Right" and "Return Democracy and Freedom to Students" throughout the demonstrations in 1986-87 as well as the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989. For this reason the CCP accused Fang as a conspirator behind the scene (see, Chong, 1989 and my discussion in chapter 4).

The formulation and implementation of democratic reforms in university can be seen as the product of the intellectual force at Keda. The scientists' and the colleagues' support of Fang's reformist ideas at Keda created a force for change. Guan Weiyan, the President of Keda, had been well-known for his open-minded attitude toward university education. He did not intervene and deter Fang from speaking up for democracy even though he was pressured to sanction Fang. Guan also believed that "monopolization of power invariably leads to corruption. As soon as power comes into the hands of any one individual, it signifies a loss of democratic rights for the people" (Schell, 1988: 129).

Wen Yuankai, another reformer intellectual, also supported Fang's notion that freedom of speech and intellectual freedom are prerequisites for scientific research. He also approved of the student demonstrations in 1986-87, arguing that communication with the students was essential to solve the immediate problems and crisis (*Xinbao*, 1 Jan. 1987). Wen proposed reforms not only in the economic realm but also in the social, political, cultural and ideological realms, closely paralleling Fang's total reforms in China (*Shenzhen Qingninbao*, 3 June, 1986).

Yang Jike, another colleague of Fang, also supported Fang's proposed reforms. Yang had been famous for his outspokenness in criticizing the malpractice of the cadres and the wrong doing of the gang of four (Gin, 1987: 237-242). Seeing freedom of speech as a fundamental human right, Yang also stood on Fang's side.

The cohesiveness of this intellectual field, coupled with wide support for the reforms at Keda, had already created a strong force to implement democratic reforms in the university. Such an intellectual force likewise suggests that the intellectual community should have acted as an agent of change in society. As Bourdieu and Ringer

have suggested, the intellectual community can be seen as an intellectual force through which social changes can be realized. The intellectuals' commitment to the same ideals, accompanied by their similar intellectual identity, had further strengthened the force to reform (see Mannheim, 1952). The connection between Fang, Guan, Yang and other intellectuals again demonstrates the network of relationships among intellectuals in the educational institution. This network can have tremendous impact upon the construction of ideology. These observations point toward not only the relational and positional attributes of ideas but also autonomy of values (field) which has evolved in contrast to state dominated values (apparatus).

Apart from that, the intellectual milieu of the Beijing University also significantly influenced Fang's ideological formation. During the interview with Fang, he repeatedly said that he had already formed his democratic thought in the 50's when he was a student in Beijing University. Fang said that the strong May Fourth tradition in Beijing University had positive formative influences on his ideology and there had been no radical change in his democratic thinking since the 50's (Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). All these facts, thus, confirm our hypothesis regarding the formative influences of the intellectual field on Fang's ideas. One point which needs to be stressed here is that the incidence of such a relaxed intellectual context was not unique to Keda. We are sure that the same situation also happened in other higher education and research establishments. What made Keda different from its counterparts, in our opinion, should have to do with the cohesion and strong bond among the Faculty members. We have pointed it out the reform at Keda was not only welcomed by students but also received support from the senior management. Receiving direct support from the CCP leaders and its strategic position among other universities, coupled with its central location in the Capital and prominence in the external academic community, Keda could therefore distinguish itself from other universities. Being the vice-president of the University, Fang thus made use of his unique position and political opportunity structure to have different strategies to assert the autonomy of values in his field in contrast with the dominant values.

## Generational Location and Intellectual Radicalism

In light of the schematic form of generational location set out in chapter one, I consider Fang Lizhi as a part of the fourth and fifth generations of modern Chinese intellectuals. Fang represents the generation of intellectuals who experienced various anti-intellectual campaigns causing their faith and loyalty in socialism to be shaken. Their change from loyalty to dissidence toward the Party is highly indicative of the understanding of the relationship between the state and intellectuals in contemporary China.

The generation is the liberation period of the late 1940's and early 1950's (Li & Schwarcz, 1983/84). Fang was born in 1936 into the family of a postal clerk from Hangzhou.<sup>20</sup> During the years of the anti-Japanese War, Fang was still a very young child. Although we may presume that the war years had no great impact on Fang, but the year of liberation should have had significant influence upon him because he was mature enough to understand what happened around him. In 1952, Fang began his university education at Beijing University (Beida) majoring in theoretical and nuclear physics. His academic performance was excellent since he earned straight A's. It was while he studied at Beida that he met his future wife, Li Shuxian, a fellow student in the department of physics. Upon his graduation, Fang was assigned work at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Modern Physics Research. In response to Mao Zedong's appeal to "let a hundred flowers bloom", Fang submitted a lengthy essay calling for educational reform and autonomy in scientific research. As a consequence, Fang was labeled an "ultra-rightist". Like many other intellectuals at that time, Fang was purged, criticized and finally expelled from the Party. This experience did not make him disillusioned with the socialist ideals. He still recalled the incident when he was asked in a 1989 interview if he had ever believed in Marxism,

"I certainly have! Immediately after Liberation [1949] and in the 1950's I firmly believed in Marxism. In 1955, when I joined the Party, I was convinced that Marxism would lead the way in every field and that the Communist Party was thoroughly good." (Quoted from Barme & Miniford, 1989: 330)

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<sup>20</sup>Fang's biological details come from Schell (1988) and Fang (1992).

Like other intellectuals in this age, Fang trusted Marxism unreservedly at the beginning of the liberation and even remained loyal during the 50's. His genuine faith in socialism is closely related to his particular generational location. Li and Schwarcz have pointed out that the fifth generation of intellectuals sincerely welcomed the liberation to actualize the socialist ideals, and they trusted that socialism would save China. But their loyalty was to the socialist ideals and not to the entrenched and despotic communist rulers. It was that very loyalty which led them to criticize the government during the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1959. And it was that openly expressed loyalty which brought them to grief. During the Cultural Revolution, Fang was again branded a "counter-revolutionary" and a "bourgeois enemy" and subsequently sent to labour reform.

Fang Lizhi, in my view, is one of the typical outspoken intellectuals in his age. He remained loyal and faithful to the Party through the 50's; however, the cold reality of the Cultural Revolution made Fang depressingly frustrated. The ten-year catastrophe and different tides of anti-intellectual movements inevitably pointed to what Fang believed to be the undeniable fact that there must be something wrong with the socialist system. The agony and failure in the socialist praxis had created a "broken mirror" to Fang Avowed. The tides of political purge finally forced Fang to end his contract with the Party. After the 1987 incident, he then openly announced that he no longer wished to be a member of the Party (Fang, 1989d: 155-165).

"Now the Party has expelled me a second time, but this time I know that I was not in the wrong. Therefore I have refused to make a self-criticism." (Quoted from Barme & Miniford, 1989: 330)

The experiences of several campaigns against the intellectuals caused Fang and other intellectuals to feel "cheated" by the socialist myth. His open declaration of the death of socialism and the call for total transformation of the country clearly indicated his profound sense of ideological crisis. As I analyze his idea of socialism, I observe a deep internal conflict in the mind of Fang. On the one hand, he criticized socialism and even renounced its applicability. On the other hand, he approvingly supported the practice of socialism in Northern Europe. This cognitive dissonance drove Fang to explain his view

of the confrontation between the socialist ideal on the one hand and Western democracy on the other. We can then conclude that Fang had attempted to grapple with human rights and democracy because he lost faith in the orthodox line of ideology. The only way out for him was to reconstruct a new faith to resolve the impending cognitive dissonance. Through democracy, he hopes to reconstruct a new identity. Fang Lizhi typifies many people and intellectuals who originally trusted Communism but now have lost faith in it. Thinking through the predicaments in faith, he has strived for democracy and human rights to reestablish his own "identity".

It is only in light of Fang's unique generational location that we can get a better understanding of his iconoclastic totalism. Rejecting totally state socialism, Fang thereby supported Western ideas and resorted to Western ideologies and methodologies to rescue China. His consistent emphasis on rationality and science can be understood as his diagnosis of the present impasse. Making science his religion, Fang attempted to fill the ideological void and save China from immediate collapse by science and democracy (Barne & Miniford, 1989: 329). Notwithstanding that Fang has attempted to internalize rationality and science as his new value system, he is not totally free from the impact of Confucianism as it is the habitus which still influences his ideological production. The discussion of how generational location has affected people's knowledge production, though insightful, still has some limitations. In order to resolve the problems of classification of intellectuals into different generations and the reason why individual variations occur even they are from the same generation, we must draw light from "strategising" and "political opportunity structure" to examine the dynamic and interaction between social structure and individual response.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, we have discussed the democratic thought of Fang Lizhi, the outstanding radical reformer in China. His political thought and his particular relationship with the state is indispensable for our understanding of the relationship between the state and intellectuals in post-Mao China.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE MOUTHPIECE OF THE PEOPLE : LIU BINYAN AND HIS DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

Liu Binyan is one of the most prominent intellectuals to expose the problems of Chinese bureaucracy. Undoubtedly mainland China's most outstanding exponent of reportage literature, Liu Binyan has some keen observations on the labyrinth of social and political crises. Through his writings, he has attempted to expose the contradictions and conflicts in mainland Chinese society from the vantage point of the crisis inherent in state socialism.

By the early 1950's when Liu began his reportage writings, he already understood the real threat that bureaucracy, the personality cult, and hidebound thinking posed to the socialist cause (*Zhengming*, March, 1987: 79-81). An examination of the reportage writings of Liu Binyan enhances our understanding not only of the social and political crises in China but also of the conceptualization of democracy among Chinese journalists.

The earlier writings of Liu exposed bureaucratism and malpractice in the Party and state without touching on the state structure and system directly, but his later writings became a close inspection on the structure itself. In his post-Mao writings, Liu has described the root of the problems as socialist commandism.<sup>1</sup> In the first part of this chapter, I am going to examine the difference between Liu's earlier and later works, hoping to highlight his ideas of democracy. The remainder of the chapter will analyze his ideas in light of the proposed theoretical framework.

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<sup>1</sup>State commandism is characterized by Lenin-Stalinism built on traditional feudalism, in which the state is omnipresent, dominating every aspect of the people's life. Su Shaozhi, a reform Marxist scholar describes the political system in mainland China as a united "Party-state-military-economic-ideological" complex. In the same vein, Yan Jiaqi also regards the rule of the CCP before the Tiananmen massacre as totalism. See also Tang Tsou (1968); Vogel (1969); Xiao and Su (1990) and my discussion in chapter 4.

## **LIU BINYAN AND HIS REPORTAGE LITERATURE**

### Early Writings - The Attack on the Communist Bureaucracy

In his early years, Liu wrote journalistic reports to expose unhealthy tendencies among Chinese Communist bureaucrats. In 1956, he criticized the CCP for its poor work style after the establishment of the regime. In his "On the Bridge Construction Site", Liu described the wastefulness and inefficiency he witnessed during the construction of a bridge across the Yellow River. The waste, according to Liu's investigation, was caused mainly by the inefficient administration of the bureaucrats. Argued Liu, less than 60 percent of the machinery was being used. Each year at least 30 percent of the manpower was wasted due to lack of preparation or poor organization of workers (Liu, 1956, reprinted in Liu 1988: 442-48). Liu also found that individual initiative was completely stifled. One of the characters in this reportage, Lo Lizheng, the head of the construction brigade, changed from a dynamic youth to a conservative leader. Liu describes Lo as enthusiastic and idealistic when he was young. Lo could "shoulder a heavy burden of luggage as, day and night, he trudged along the Beijing-Hankow railway line" (Ibid, 26). However, when he was promoted, he became excessively conservative and inflexible, failing to recognize precise decisions, instructions, regulations and systems issued by the Bureau. He would not accept others' opinions. Lo began to see himself as standing high above the masses, divorcing himself from reality and from the masses. Liu argued that a dozen or so years in the Party had turned an idealistic revolutionary into a passive, unadventurous yes-man. Though Liu did not blame explicitly the Party structure and system, his condemnation of the bureaucratic acts of Lo was a veiled criticism of the system.

Liu also spent time in recounting the conflict between Lo, the conservative and Cheng Gong, the innovative and dynamic worker. According to Liu's description, Cheng did everything according to scientific calculations and experience, favoured technical innovation and demanded that the construction material quotas be reduced (Ibid, 9). It is therefore natural that Cheng and Lo would end in a conflict, especially when Cheng is



"daring", which to Lo means rash, arrogant and irresponsible. Cheng's reward for risking his life to save state property is to be transferred off the site. To Lo, Cheng's penalty is justified because of his pride, self-satisfaction, and insubordination to his superiors. Liu considered that Lo's victory represents the triumph of conservatism and bureaucratism in the Communist Party. It is clear that Liu's hidden message is to expose not only the misconduct of individual cadres but also to highlight the fact that the system itself deters innovative people from developing good performance while safeguarding the position of the conservatives. For Liu, Lo represents the common type of bureaucrats; he is conservative, indulging in empty talk, sticking to a rigid way of thinking, being hidebound by convention, irresponsible and dilatory, and vindictively attacking others.

"Our Paper's Inside Story" published in *Renmin minxue* (1956), also gave a similar message that bureaucratism and conservative culture in the Party and state apparatus have suffocated the creative incentives of dynamic and energetic people. The two young reporters in "Our Paper's Inside Story" represent the journalistic ideal of Liu. To Liu, news reporters need to have special qualities, the most important of which is a strong feeling. Liu said, "when they see the dark side of things, they should feel angry, and should brace themselves and speak out. When they come across a good person, they should be enthusiastic and praise him to the skies (Yeh & Chou, 1989). Liu upholds the idea of "Qin Wen", the undifferentiated masses of the people, for whom and to whom the 'scout' or patriotic intellectual must speak. To Liu, the news reporters should listen to the voice of the people because they act as the social conscience and mouth of the people (Wagner, 1987: 197-220). The two young reporters in "Our Paper's Inside Story" demonstrated their enthusiastic and energetic working attitude, yet did not rely on these qualities alone in their work. They also tried to find out the reasons behind the news stories. They represent what is the ideal news reporter for Liu, the journalist whose role is that of a social investigator and spokesman for popular grievances. However, in the story Liu showed us that the independent journalist's attitude was in conflict with the conservative one in the older generation. As expected, the two generations of reporters

finally came into sharp conflict. Consequently, a conservative, arbitrary leadership dominated a younger generation full of initiative and enthusiasm. This story depicts the inevitable and unresolved conflict between these dedicated journalists and the conservative bureaucrats of the CCP.

Liu pictures the old generation as too rigid in its thinking and patriarchal in its way of dealing with its work. The news reporters should break through such a rigid and bureaucratic style of work. According to Liu, the journalist should become independent and gain the people as trust through honesty and courage. Moreover, writers should assume the role of a moral and socialist scout of the people (Wagner, 1987: 215-17).<sup>2</sup>

The early writings of Liu directed his sharp criticism to the bureaucratic practice of the Party, its subjectivism, factionalism and dogmatism. Though he did not explicitly point out that the crisis has its origin in the socialist system, such a message is implicit in his reportage literature. Uncovering the dark side of the socialist regime of China inevitably led to repression as Liu was accused of 'besmearing the glorious socialism' and labeled an 'anti-party, anti-socialism, bourgeois rightist element'. Consequently, he was deprived of the right to write and publish for more than 20 years. Despite this, Liu has never abandoned his determination to reveal the social reality.

#### Later Writings - The Attack on the Socialist System

After his formal rehabilitation following the Cultural Revolution, Liu was determined to discover social injustice and speak out for the people in his capacity as a reporter for *People's Daily*. In "People or Monsters", Liu reveals how a single Party-branch secretary came to power in Bin County and fashioned an illegal empire through influence, bribery, and corruption. The character Wang Shouxin rode roughshod over the people. Wang, who had started off as a low-ranking cashier in a fuel company, had been promoted during the Cultural Revolution to be the company's manager. After that, Wang became the Party branch secretary and then the deputy chairman of Bin County Commercial Revolutionary Committee. From then on, Wang became involved in illegal

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<sup>2</sup>For details of Liu's view of writers, see Liu (1979a & b); (1985a) & (1988a).

exchanges of goods and favours with superior officials up to provincial level. To Liu, it was one of the most notorious corruption cases of its time, with over 500,000 yuan changing hands. In the end, ten people were arrested, all of them members of the Communist Party. As Liu wrote in "People or Monsters", "Party cadres themselves gradually became transformed into parasites who devoured the people's flesh and blood and who blighted the socialist system like an infestation of cankerworms" (quoted from Schell, 1988: 150; see also Liu, 1979). This reportage shocked the readers in general, not only because of the serious crime of corruption discovered in Bin County, but also because of his revelation that such activities were practised for years without anyone in the Party paying attention to them. Liu claimed that the Party had regulated and intervened in every aspect of life, including military conscription, family planning, criminal sentences, and sowing plans, but ignored corruption in its own ranks (Liu, 1979).

It should be noted that hardly any mention is made of the problems of the Party itself. In Liu's words, "the Communist Party regulated everything, but it would not regulate the Communist Party" (Schell, 1988: 150). After closing the case of Wang Shouxin, Liu wonders how many of the social conditions that gave rise to this case have really changed, concluding that the corruption of Wang is not an isolated case. This case reveals the fact that the socialist system has its internal weaknesses and flaws, allowing for the possibility that many situations similar to that of Wang might exist in China. Liu questions why the ideal socialist state has allowed such malpractice to exist for years.

#### Critical Loyalty and Sense of Mission

Having internalized his role as the social conscience, Liu criticizes the rule of Communism with his critically loyal attitude. In "A Second Kind of Loyalty" (1985), Liu has suggested three kinds of loyalty. The first kind of loyalty requires that people should be diligent and conscientious, work hard without complaint, taking orders obediently and never disagreeing with their superiors just like the glorious model set

forth by the Communist Party in the case of Lei Feng.<sup>3</sup> The second kind of loyalty is typified by Ni Yuxian and Chen Shizhong, who even risked their lives to speak out for people, to expose the Party's dark side in an effort to correct the faults of the CCP. Liu realized that this second kind of loyalty, **critical loyalty**, is opposed by the CCP. It is nevertheless significant to note that Liu puts emphasis on the second kind of loyalty. The third kind of loyalty, argued Liu, requires that people should flatter and heap praises on the Party. In the mind of Liu, the CCP only accepts the first and third kinds of loyalty but abandons the second kind (Liu, 1988: 113-156).

In "A Second Kind of Loyalty", both Chen and Ni had consistently admonished the Party's Central Committee at the risk of their lives for more than 20 years. Chen was an ordinary non-Party intellectual.<sup>4</sup> After his return to China from studying mechanical engineering in the Soviet Union, he became disillusioned with what he encountered in his country. Chen wrote to Mao and requested that he quickly rectify his previous mistakes. Chen also asked Mao to change domestic and foreign policies.<sup>5</sup> By doing so, Chen broke the taboo against criticizing the Chinese Communists' foreign policy (Ni Yusien, April, 1986: 23; see also Liu, 1988: 113-127). A second letter of this kind earned Chen a jail sentence as a counter-revolutionary. Chen deeply believed that his move to offer Mao such advice was motivated by his devotion to Chairman Mao and to the Party. His deep regard for the Party and his patriotism induced him to give frank expression to his political opinions. After his jail term, Chen never changed his attitude, continuing to criticize Lei Feng's first kind of loyalty. He called upon Mao to reconsider the so-called "anti-Party acts" as the most genuine expressions of love for the Party (Liu, 1988: 113-127; see also *Zhengming*, Dec. 1985: 30-31). What appealed to Liu was not just Chen's willingness to point up Party errors without regard to personal risks but "his

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<sup>3</sup>Lei Feng was a CCP member regarded as the 'ideal type' that the people should follow. Lei was famous for his spirit of self-sacrifice, serving people without any self-interest, and he was loyal & obedient to the Party's rule. After the June Fourth Incident of 1989, the CCP leaders repeatedly stressed the importance of Party discipline and called again for the learning of Lei Feng.

<sup>4</sup>For the biography of Chen, see *Zhengming* (Dec. 1985: 24-27; 29-30).

<sup>5</sup>For details of the letter, see Liu (1988: 120-21).

concern with the integrity of the Party itself, whose leading role he was criticizing" (Schell, 1988: 156). Perhaps Liu saw Chen as a man like himself, having a second kind of loyalty.

Another protagonist is Ni Yuxian, a PLA soldier who not only dared to question the disastrous leftist agricultural policies of the Party in the 1950's and 1960's but also risked writing to Mao. The more he read selected works of Marx, Lenin, Engels, Stalin and Mao, the more he began to realize that the Marxism in the books was not consistent with the real practice in mainland China. The natural disasters and economic failure in the 50's and 60's had aroused Ni's concern. He finally concluded that the fault was related to the extreme leftist agricultural policies with their high production quotas, excessive crop regulations, and over-collectivization which turned a prosperous farming area into a wilderness of starvation. As a result, people's incentive to work was destroyed and agricultural and industrial production plummeted (Liu, 1988: 127-137). According to the State Statistics Bureau, in the three years of 1958, 1959 and 1960, drought affected 24%, 31% and 43% respectively of mainland China's arable land (State Statistics Bureau, 1981: 18). This brought agriculture to the brink of collapse. In order to conceal the real state of affairs from their superiors, rural cadres resorted to reporting inflated production figures (Wei Wu, 1984: 110). Ni mentioned similar figures in the case of his studies. In the Cultural Revolution, the fanatical move of the Gang of Four, a full-scale movement to cleanse class ranks, swept through mainland China. To Ni, this kind of movement was not compatible with the ideas of Lenin and Marx, with those works was familiar. Thereafter, Ni eventually stood on the side of the people who were being persecuted. He even wrote a 100,000-word letter to the Party's Central Committee and Chairman Mao urging them to correct their erroneous policies and save the country from danger. However, the critical loyalty of Ni did not appeal to the Party (Liu, 1988: 152-156).

In this piece of work, Liu describes more than two young protagonists who suffered because of the first kind and third kind of loyalty. To Liu, the loyalty of Lei Feng has serious, even fatal defects because he knows only how to follow orders from

above and he does not know how to make decisions on his own that would enable him to resist the mistakes of the authorities (Ibid, 143; 154-56). The second kind of loyalty as demonstrated by both Chen and Ni is scientific, correct and critical enough to help the leaders to have better administration. The second kind of loyalty, said Liu, is not very popular; and you may have to pay for it with your freedom, your happiness, or even your life (Liu, 1988: 156).<sup>6</sup>

On my reading, the scope of Liu's later work, unlike his earlier work, calls attention to the fundamental flaws and weaknesses of the socialist system. Thus Liu urges a critical loyalty rather than blind obedience to the Party. For Liu, it is a wonderful means to help the Party see its mistakes while there is room for improvement. Liu also encourages people "to take a look, let everyone get a little nervous, get a little more active, and have a little more sense of urgency" (Schell, 1988: 160) to point out the impending crisis of the state. The reason behind Liu's move is to correct the stubborn tradition of the Communist state which is fearful of admitting difficulties. In Liu's eyes, such fears are unhealthy. Through a critical discourse and comments to the state administration, Liu hoped to help the Party correct its mistakes. It is in this way that Liu has hit officialdom's tenderest nerve. The above examination of his works reveals that Liu really touched on the structural crisis in socialist China. Liu had discovered unsatisfactory conditions in socialism, causing him to define the root of the problems to be the feudal, patriarchal style of leadership, characteristic of the authoritarian rule of state commandism in Communist China.

### From Loyalty to Critics

Liu, after the June-Fourth Incident, denounced the leadership of Mao, arguing that Mao had deceived the people with a false interpretation of socialism. Right after the June Fourth Incident, Liu even openly predicted the collapse of the CCP within two years' time. He also anticipated that there would be many more uprisings in China.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>His work "The second Kind of Loyalty" aroused huge response from the intellectual community, see, for example, *Zhengming* (Dec. 1985: 21-32); *The Nineties* (Oct. 1985: 92-94).

<sup>7</sup>I questioned Liu in person regarding the validity of such a claim. Liu explained to me that he had mistaken the whole situation.

Having been loyal Party member for 40 years, Liu said that it is now extremely difficult for him to continue a good relationship with the Party. After the 1989 incident, most intellectuals became conscious of their need for professional autonomy and independence, believing that they had been deceived by the Party (*Zhengming*, Mar. 1990: 87-88). Liu also explained to me that his notion of "critical loyalty", properly stated, was not 'loyalty' at all. Underlying his idea of "critical loyalty" was exactly "disloyalty" but Liu himself could not spell it out directly because of political danger. Now that he is now living abroad, Liu has become much more bold in his attack on the CCP.<sup>8</sup> He not only pointed out its mistakes but also denounced the regime still controlled by the CCP (*Minzhu Zhongguo*, vol. 3, 1990: 7-11; vol. 7, 1991: 12-15). This move has indicated changes not only in his political thought but also in his social location. Thus, Liu believes it is necessary to collaborate with the liberal reformers in the Party and opposition forces must continue to exert pressure from abroad in order to mobilize change in China (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

Unlike Yan Jiaqi, the political scientist whose conception of democracy is based on Western political theories, Liu's conception of democracy is closely related to his perceived role of intellectuals in general and journalists in particular. When asked about his definition of democracy, Liu honestly told me that he never detailed researched on this subject. Having no detailed understanding of democracy, Liu only singles out some general principles associated with democracy such as freedom of speech, freedom of expression and right to choice. Thus, I presume that Liu's ideas of democracy merely rests only on his concern for the rights of writers and journalists instead of a profound analysis of political theories of democracy (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993). It also gives us the impression that he has said or written less on Chinese democracy than he was. The

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His former prediction rested on the assumption that the reforms in China would become regressive. Without further reforms, the CCP would be doomed to a total downfall. However, the CCP continued its reform programme and even openly initiated and supported market reforms in China. More importantly, the collapse of the communist bloc in the Eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union also imposed pressure on China. Because of these developments that Liu has modified his former view, seeing the confirmation of economic reforms in mainland China as positive (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>8</sup>Before the June-Fourth Incident of 1989, Liu went to the United States as a visiting scholar. During his stay in the States and his visit to Hong Kong, Liu openly denounced the CCP.

scrutiny of Liu's speeches and writings, one may discover most of them are reportage literature exposing the real life of the people. It might shed light on why Liu is not so sophisticated in the conceptualization of democracy.

Having internalized the value of literary intellectuals and journalists, Liu believes the principal goals of journalists are to reveal social reality and speak for the people. These goals influence why he interprets democracy primarily in terms of people's rights. After the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989, Liu reflected upon the relationship between the people and the state and upon the role of intellectuals. In an interview, Liu even associated the vulnerable position of intellectuals with the Chinese tradition of *literati* and emphasized the need to establish an independent status for Chinese intellectuals (Liu, 1993).<sup>9</sup>

Liu blames the people for causing despotic rule in China. Criticizing the "spiritual crisis" in China similar to that experienced by the people of Eastern Europe, Liu asks the Chinese people to be active in creating their own civil society. He cites the work of Havel in his call for everyone to have his/her own ideas. The role of intellectuals, then, must be critical enough to arouse public attention to what is happening and independent enough to point out about the existing predicaments in society (*Minzhu Zhongguo*, Aug. 1990: 7-11). Realizing the importance of an independent civil society, Liu urges the people to organize a united social force to assert their autonomy. Though Liu realizes that the overthrow of the CCP will not be easy, he believes that the recent socio-political changes in China may have contributed to the development of a civil society (Liu, 1993). Liu particularly points toward the impact of mass media on the public, indicating that more than 103 million Chinese owned TVs in 1987. Having been exposed to "true" information received from external channels such as Voice of America and British Broadcasting Corporation, Chinese people living in the mainland are more informed of current developments in the outside world, broadening their perspectives in

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<sup>9</sup> Liu is among the sixth generation of Chinese intellectuals (red guard intellectuals) who are more critical and independent in thinking. For details, see my discussion in chapter 9 and Liu (1993).



evaluating the existing socialist practices (Liu, 1990a). Based upon these observations, Liu proclaims that every Chinese must reflect deeply and examine himself in order to transform China and resolve the intense "spiritual crisis" (Liu, 1990: 14-17).<sup>10</sup>

## **TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF LIU BINYAN'S SOCIAL-POLITICAL IDEAS**

Having discussed Liu Binyan's social-political ideas, we are going to analyze Liu's ideas in the light of our proposed analytic framework. It is our contention that knowledge can be understood sociologically as partially determined by the social configuration in which it develops. Thus, the content and form of knowledge can be analyzed in relation to its social context. At the same time, we must also explore how different individuals react or respond to their external forces or threats. Their access to different socio-economic and socio-political opportunities should have great impact on what strategies that they adopt in coping with the "external stimuli" that they are confronting.

Our discussion in previous chapters has indicated us that the post-Mao era can be characterized by a relaxed socio-political and socio-cultural contexts. It is also observed that the CCP's control over the socio-cultural and socio-ideological realms was loosened. Against such a background, Chinese intellectuals have attempted to expand their influence on public sphere in order that they can assert their intellectual independence and eventually redefine a new relationship with the state (for details, see, chapter 4 and Bonin and Chevrier, 1991). It is also against such a socio-cultural and socio-political contexts that Liu Binyan's ideas were formed. According to Mannheim, the sociology of knowledge is a perspective or style of thought which reflects the various world-views as contingent on the experience and interests of particular groups. It is thus intellectually stimulating to investigate how Liu's social location has affected his production of knowledge.

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<sup>10</sup>Such a view is similar to that of Liu Xiaobo. Liu Binyan told me that his recent reading of Liu Xiaobo's works revealed that both of them had similar ideas though they seemed to be very different in the past. Liu added that Xiaobo changed his view toward the CCP after his imprisonment toward the importance of cooperation with the liberal wing of the CCP (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

## Social Location and the Ideological Formation

It is our hypothesis that the social location of Liu has influenced his ideological formation. Like Fang and Yan, Liu Binyan was a member of the CCP and an establishment intellectual, working as a reporter in the state-owned news agency since the 1950s. His role as establishment intellectual considerably constrained his radicalism in his earlier works. It is my contention that Liu was subject to political patronage when he was in China. His reportage was praised and supported at some times while being criticized and attacked at other times, oscillating whenever the political climate changed. Such oscillations indicate the limited autonomy and independence of Chinese journalists and writers.

Like many other intellectuals in China, Liu had to skillfully and tactically observe the "political climate" while his publications depended greatly on the "political capital" of his patron.<sup>11</sup> Under political pressure, Liu had to write something which would please the state. He made it explicit that his work on Zhu Boru (*Renmin ribao*, 28 July, 1983) and Zhang Haidi<sup>12</sup> published in *Liaoning Qingnian* (vol.4 1983), praising the good qualities of Party members, was a compromise in the midst of a "cold wind" in the literary realm (see Liu, 1983, 1984).<sup>13</sup> Liu also told me that journalists and writers in mainland China should be cautious of the changing "political environment" so as to detect the right time to speak out. He also admitted that he accepted criticism on some occasions because it was necessary if he was to maintain his official capacity. Such responses, according to Liu, are strategic and appropriate (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Liu said in an interview that he had to write indirectly to attack state socialism in the early 80s. Like the traditional literati, Liu adopted indirect means to criticize the malpractice of rulers instead of direct condemnation. His example highlights the vulnerable role of Chinese establishment intellectuals. See *The Seventies* (Dec. 1982). This observation confirms what Goldman (1981) has argued that no matter how critical intellectuals are, they are still restrained by a self-censored approach. See also Cheng (1990: 67-96). MacKinnon (1992) argues along the same lines that journalists in mainland China are not immune from the patron-client relations. He cites the case of An Gang who had a direct line to Party Secretary Hu Yaobang. With such a *houtai*, An Gang could have a more free hand to express his views. He even headed a team working for the TV series *Hexiang*. However, An Gang was mysteriously attacked in the newspaper *Jinji ribao* (Economic daily), of which he had been one of the editors-in-chief with the downfall of Hu.

<sup>12</sup>Zhu and Zhang were regarded by the Party as good and loyal CCP members.

<sup>13</sup>In his self-criticism, Liu also defended himself and said that he not only discovered the "dark" side of the CCP but also wrote good things of the Party. See *Zhengming* (Oct. 1987: 70-74).

<sup>14</sup>In my interview with Liu, he made it plain that the status of writers and journalists is very different from that of natural scientists

The authoritarian rule of state-commandism scrupulously controls the ideological realm and civil society. Within such a political system, mass media has been a means to represent the will of the state and the Party rather than of the people. As Gramsci (1971) suggested, the hegemonic control of the state is not merely by means of coercion or violence but by creating a "total institution"<sup>15</sup> through the imposition of ideological hegemony on the civil society. Griffith (1973) also highlights the point that the success of state socialism in China rests on a myth of unanimity, which is actualized by suppressing dissent and indoctrinating the officially interpreted ideology. Mass media, in this way, have been the "*ex post facto* justification" of the state and the Party (Lee Chin-chuan, 1990: 5). Journalists, working in the state-controlled mass media, are trying to balance the state authority and the public interest. Conventionally, journalists have been part of the state apparatus, serving the Party as "tools" to transmit the will of the Party to the people by what Schudson (1989) calls "hegemonic communication" in which the rulers address the ruled.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, they are also supposed to act as the "mouthpiece, ears and eyes" of the people, through which "petitionary communication" is realized because the people can address the leaders through the media. The particular social location of journalists has made them vulnerable because they serve two masters with a dual mission, especially when the interests of the two parties are diverse (Polumbaum, 1990: 45).<sup>17</sup> Thus, journalists in mainland China are "riding the horse between the leaders and the masses, afraid of displeasing both" (Ibid). The extent to which they are open in their critique and dissidence greatly depends on support from their

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,whose works could be very critical because it had been the CCP's practice to treat natural scientists better simply because the party was in great need of them to help modernize China. Writers and journalists had to be indirect in their criticism. Liu also told me that one of the reasons for his indirect and moderate approach was to ensure his official capacity. Liu believed that it was more significant for writers and journalists to keep their posts so that they may continue to speak out. (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>15</sup>I adopt this term from Goffman (1961), which is appropriate to describe political control in the Mao era. The term implies a place of residence and work where people are put into a similar situation and cut off from the outside world. With such isolation the people's actions and even their thinking can be manipulated.

<sup>16</sup>I get the insight from Polumbaum (1990), who has a detailed discussion of the changing role of journalists in the post-Mao era. See also Liu's own discussion of the role of journalists in China at *Shenzheng Qingnian bao*, 2 Sep. 1986.

<sup>17</sup>When he was working as a journalist, Liu also openly proclaimed that he had found two opposing truths, the incongruence between the reality and socialist theory. See Schell (1988: 147).

political patrons. Like other writers, journalists have to get approval from their political supporters before publishing their views. This situation confirms Link's observation.

"Typically a high official (someone in a key position --- sometimes a publisher or editor), a backstage supporter may be interested in serving as *houtai* because a writer can publish a viewpoint that the official approves but would find 'inconvenient' to express publicly himself." (Link, 1986: 90)

Journalists in mainland China, unlike their counterparts in the former Soviet Union who could publish their viewpoints in the underground publications and enjoyed a relatively independent position, have to rely on the Party state. Though the state control of the mass media has been liberated, allowing more freedom in public discourse since 1978, journalistic autonomy continues to oscillate between the cycle of *shou* (restriction) and *fan* (liberation).<sup>18</sup> Lee Chin-chuan suggests,

"The Party's withdrawal from some aspects of the social arena has permitted the emergence of more differentiated and pluralistic semi-autonomous groups that have gradually sought to articulate their self-interests within the system. These specialized interests and constituencies have been served, *within limits*, by a proliferated number of media outlets and diversified content *within given media*." (Lee Chin-chuan, 1990: 5; emphasis added)

The diversity and ideological laxity tolerated in the post-Mao era, in this regard, cannot be interpreted as a real liberation of the press. Even though the foregoing discussion has suggested a changing relationship between establishment intellectuals and the state, we must not overstate the independence of intellectuals whatsoever. Even though Liu Binyan has striven for his own autonomy and professional independence, speaking out for the people and offering critical loyalty instead of blind faith, his fortune and work were still restricted by the state. Liu himself also acknowledges that is the cold reality confronted by journalists in mainland China. He writes,

"For nearly 30 years, up until the late 1970s, the Communist Party successfully exercised absolute control over the Chinese media. What people learned from the media were phrases like 'the great achievements of socialism' and 'the great contribution of the Party leadership'... The facts of such a monstrous disaster were completely covered up by the Party so successfully that up until now few people in China know about it." (Liu, 1990a: 7)<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>I adopt this concept from Gold (1990) to portray the general relationship between the intellectuals and the state in China. This concept is also appropriate to describe the social position of journalists in mainland China.

<sup>19</sup>State control of the media forced most journalists to be observant of the political climate. In discussing his work "The Second Kind of Loyalty", Liu told me that he had to find the right time to get it published. Of course, much difficulty would be expected

In addition, Liu had been under the influence of patronage when he was in China.<sup>20</sup> Though Liu denied the support of Hu Yaobang in 1986, he later admitted that Hu had been supporting him. Liu, with a strong sense of gratitude to Hu, states that "without his [Hu's] protection, my pen would have been stopped long ago" (Liu, 1990: 252). His denial of Hu's support had to do with the fragile patronage relation. In 1985-86, observing the precarious political position of Hu, Liu alluded thus to the rumours circulating in Beijing.<sup>21</sup>

"Some people have said that so-and-so is my protector. But I don't have any protector."  
(Quoted from Schell, 1988: 154)

"I haven't seen Comrade Hu Yaobang for at least eight years. The last time I really saw him was in 1958 ... At the final banquet of the Fourth National Congress of Literary and Art Workers, we went over and toasted him. I suppose that also counts as seeing him. But I've never seen him since then. I believe that *my greatest protector, my reliable protector, is simply the Chinese people.*" (Ibid, emphasis added)

When he went to the United States and thus his social location changed, Liu then admitted his relations with Hu Yaobang, telling his readers that he intentionally avoided the association with Hu in public even though he well recognized that Hu had been trying to help him.

"The later development in the political situation set the pattern for my relations with Hu: I was increasingly resented by people in high places, considered a 'liberalist' element, while Hu Yaobang's position also became increasing precarious. I therefore avoided all personal contact with him." (Liu, 1990: 242)

Understanding Liu's delicate but vulnerable relation with Hu, a friend of Liu warned him not to say anything which would eventually damage the political career of Hu, especially when Hu's position was unstable at that time. (Ibid)

Liu, in his autobiography, rehearsed Hu's on-going support to him since the 1950's. Once in a regular working meeting of the Propaganda Department, some Party members complained that Liu had denounced socialism publicly. Hu showed his

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(Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>20</sup>Liu devotes a chapter in his autobiography to discuss his relation with his political patron Hu Yaobang, see Liu (1990: 237-252).

<sup>21</sup>Some rumours suggested that Liu and Wang Ruoshui, the deputy editor-in-chief of *People's Daily*, had a special permit, i.e. a particular reporter ID, which permitted them easily to get information and visit places they wanted. (Lee Yi, 1990: 112-3) Their "rumoured" privilege is an indicator of political support from the senior Party members.

approving attitude toward Liu's work. In summarizing the meeting, Hu said,

"I know of Liu Binyan. In 1957, when he was labelled a rightist, I had my reservations. Last year, I gave my full support to his rehabilitation. Of course he has his faults." (Liu, 1990: 142)

These words may be interpreted not simply as protection but as condemnation of those who attacked Liu.

"I don't see much wrong with Liu. I supported him twenty-two years ago, as I do now. If he has his faults, they are certainly no greater than those of you are attacking him. This was the first time that Hu Yaobang had spoken more or less openly in support of me. Later on, he again mentioned me under different circumstances in more or less the same terms, with slight modifications." (Ibid: 143)

Liu repeatedly points toward the critical and radical stance in his reportage which was tolerated because of the "favourable political climate in Beijing and Hu Yaobang's stable position and positive influence." (Ibid: 155) Making his position clear, Liu states that there is a need to observe the "political climate", especially when a country has no legal framework and procedural rule to protect freedom of speech (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993). Goldman (1994) also reports in the same vein that Hu Yaobang protected Liu Binyan who was one of his followers writing for *China Youth News*. With sympathetic attitude towards Chinese intellectuals, Hu was willing to withstand the pressure to participate actively in various anti-intellectual campaigns to support intellectuals. During the Anti-Rightist Campaign, Hu convened a meeting to assure his subordinates in the Youth League when they were condemned as rightists that the League would welcome them back from the countryside and factories. In addition, Hu also insisted to rehabilitate all "victims" of the Cultural Revolution. Differed from those of the leadership, Hu's sympathetic attitude towards intellectuals had gained him deep respect from the Chinese intellectual circles.<sup>22</sup> In response to the sudden death of Hu in 1989, some articles were published in newspapers such as an article entitled "He Had Deep Love for His Comrades --- Comrade Yaobang as I Understand Him" in *Zhongguo qingnianbao*. It also explains why many Chinese intellectuals mourned for the death of Hu Yaobang.

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<sup>22</sup>For details of Hu's intellectual network, see, Goldman (1994) .

The changing political climate in China has had significant impact on Chinese literature. The spring of 1984 was relatively "warm" for the writers. At the beginning of 1984, Hu sent down his directive,

"The Party rectification program must settle down to the job in all seriousness. In the coming three years of the Party rectification program, the *People's Daily* should publish ten thousand examples for emulation and expose three thousand for criticism." (Liu, 1990: 177, emphasis added)

Hu's directive set the "green light" to reporting social evils and criticism, allowing more autonomy for intellectuals and encouraging creative writing. Liu also supported democratic election in the Writer's Association (Hu & Zhang, 1989: 8). In the same year, Hu Qili, the minister who was in charge of ideological work at that time, also supported Hu's ideological front (Ibid, 6-8). Having heard these positive words, Liu, like other journalists, was greatly encouraged to produce many stories to uncover the social reality of the people in 1984-85. Liu told me directly without such support from both of them, the publication of his works would have encountered insurmountable difficulties (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

In addition to the support from Hu Yaobang, I also observe that other senior leaders openly supported Liu. Liu also frankly acknowledges,

"But it is also largely due to the moral courage of editor-in-chief in Beijing Hu Jiwei and his deputy, the philosopher Wang Ruoshui, and their loyal staff." (Liu, 1990: 155)

As Goldman (1994) suggested, Hu Jiwei, the former editor-in-chief of the *People's Daily*, and Wang Ruoshui, the philosopher and deputy editor of the Theory Department of the same paper allied with Hu Yaobang in the past. Because of their support, Chinese intellectuals were imbued with courage to speak out.

Wan Li, the reform-minded Vice-Premier, also approved the work of Liu openly. Wan had been a supporter of Hu's ideological front and it was he and Hu who effectively stalled the campaign against spiritual pollution in 1983 (Ibid, 219). Wan praised the kind of loyalty about which Liu wrote in "The second Kind of Loyalty". Speaking at the National Symposium of Soft Science Research in the summer 1986, Wan Li said that "the reforms currently under way in China require not only the first kind of loyalty

epitomized by Lei Feng, but also the 'second kind of loyalty' demonstrated by Chen Shizhong" (Schell, 1988: 159). At a meeting Wan greeted Liu and said,

"What we need is precisely the second kind of loyalty you wrote of... A party is doomed if it doesn't tolerate differing views." (Liu, 1990: 219)

On the same occasion, Wan also encouraged Liu to write something on Wu Han and Deng Tuo who were loyal intellectuals denounced by Mao in the midst of a power struggle. Uncertain about the political climate, Liu asked Wan directly whether his work "The Second Kind of Loyalty" could be published. Wan told Liu with confidence that his work would soon be approved by Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang, the expression of which made Liu feel safe (Liu, 1990: 220).

"News of Wan Li's talk with me and his words on 'Another Kind of Loyalty' spread far and wide. Some local papers printed the news. This, and the appearance of Wan Li's speech in the pages of the *People's Daily*, were taken as sure signs of good weather and the intellectuals gained heart." (Ibid, 220)

Securing political approval, Liu became more confident to speak out for the people and was particularly productive in 1984-86.<sup>23</sup> This evidence reinforces the idea that the outlets of intellectual radicalism and diversified content of journalists in mainland China must be within limits and within given media (C.C. Lee, 1990: 5).

Within the patron-client network,<sup>24</sup> the personal fate of Liu went hand in hand with Hu, his political patron. When Hu was regarded as "the protective screen for all 'liberalist elements'" by the conservatives in the Party, he lost his position eventually (Liu, 1990: 242). Liu laments the similar fortunes of Hu and himself.

"It is rare for two persons as far apart as Hu Yaobang and I to be joined by the same fate, rare indeed." (Liu, 1990: 237)

The personal fate of Liu indicates that people under such a patrimonial rulership will ultimately lose their autonomy and independence. Working within such a political structure, individual interest, free will and personal choice have to be sacrificed. Hu's downfall clearly demonstrates the vulnerability of insiders. Even though Hu himself did

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<sup>23</sup>For the details of his works during this period, see the bibliography compiled by Hu and Zhang (1989: 232-237).

<sup>24</sup>Some scholars also argue that the political system of socialist China is characterized by "patron-client networks", in which party-state penetration is realized. See McCormick (1990); Warder (1986).



not want to restrict intellectual freedom, he had to say something contrary to his will in the midst of political crisis. He had to spell out the party line, stating that the Party's journalism is the Party's mouthpiece, and naturally it is the mouthpiece of the people's government, which is led by the Party, and also the mouthpiece of the people themselves.

Under intense political pressure, Hu was forced to sacrifice his free will. Early in 1984, he condemned Liu's work on "Right and Wrong in Thirty-three Years", a work discussing the fault of the CCP in the past (Liu, 1984). When his position in the Party was again threatened in 1987, Hu had to criticize Liu's "liberalist elements".

"Liu Binyan had worked at the Youth League Central. He has written several letters to me, but I did not see him. He has never moved from his 'rightist' position. I have on several occasions suggested to the *People's Daily* that he is not suitable as a reporter." (Liu, 1990: 248)

However, Hu felt that his public denunciation of Liu was the most regrettable thing that he had done in his life. For this reason, he asked his relatives to apologize to Liu in person; and he also told his friends that he had not willingly condemned Liu in such way (Liu, 1990: 248-252).

Realizing the fragile and vulnerable position of establishment intellectuals, some intellectuals began to strive for their independence. The fall of Hu Yaobang in the late 1980's and the anti-bourgeois campaign again uncovered the mask of the CCP's promises of better treatment toward intellectuals. Realizing the vulnerable position after the 1989 movement, Liu began to note that they must be independent from the political structure, asserting their professional autonomy and attempting to expand their influence to the public sphere (*Min zhu Zhongguo*, vol. 3, 1990; vol. 7, 1991). Up to this point, we can see how Liu's location as "establishment intellectual" has affected his intellectual radicalism. Occupying such a social location, Liu's position was strengthened when his patron was in power and vice versa. Most important of all, Liu's unique social location also affects his choice of strategies in response to political pressure in particular and political climate in general. Assessing his political opportunity structure, Liu therefore adopted either more radical or moderate approach to tackle what he encountered. The

study of Liu's choice of different strategies in reaction to his unique socio-political circumstances has indicated Bourdieu's notion of strategy and strategising is enlightening in revealing the dynamic nature of knowledge production.

### Social & Political Opportunities and Intellectual Radicalism

Liu's intellectual radicalism is also closely linked with his support from the masses. After the publication of "People or Monsters", Liu received many letters asking him to continue investigation of maladministration in other regions. Schell reports that,

"sackfuls of letters began to pour into his office at the People's Daily and into his home. Most detailed similar cases of corruption elsewhere in China that the supplicants desperately hoped Liu, 'the good official', would help rectify with the power of his pen..... often they [the letters] are about the dark side and negative things." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 151)

One reader wrote to Liu and said,

"I read your 'People or Monsters' to the fourteen workers on our shift with feelings of enormous excitement. Among them were women who were exhausted and should have been resting. But not one of them got up and left during the entire three-hour reading. In fact, they called other people to come over and join us. That is how much they wanted to listen." (Ibid, 152)

This reader not only described the enthusiastic responses from the listeners but also expressed the hope "that our comrade Liu Binyan will continue to speak the truth on our behalf. We do not wish to hear any more lies and deception" (Ibid).<sup>25</sup>

In the same way, after publishing the "Second Kind of Loyalty", Liu received further praises and support from the masses. The *Guangxi Daily* spoke reverently about the way Chen's loyalty was "characterized by independent thinking, a sense of social responsibility, and a sense of the responsibility of the individual to society and history" (Ibid, 159). The article went on, "as we reform our political system, build a democratic society, and create a harmonious social atmosphere, we must not ignore or abandon the

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<sup>25</sup>Liu (1990a) says that the work "People or Monsters" had a circulation of 1.48 million. He claimed that "almost every copy in print was read and passed along to others." This work was also reprinted by different newspapers and broadcast by several provincial radio stations. Because his work became very popular among the people, Liu was imbued with far more confidence.

concept of a 'second kind of loyalty'" (Ibid).<sup>26</sup>

After receiving warm support and care from the people, Liu replied, "for me the message from this experience was that what I was doing was needed by the Party and the people" (Ibid, 152 and *Minyi bao*, vol. 11, 12, 1979). Imbued with such a 'social force', Liu was determined to speak out for the people, to act as the conscience of society, to answer the people's questions. Amidst an age of general disillusionment, Liu stressed the urgency to supervise the Communist system, saying, "without the supervision of the people, a good person will turn bad and an honest official will turn corrupt" (Schell, 1988: 152; see also Liu, 1988b: 19-48).

So we can see that the genuine support from the masses was the life blood of Liu's intellectual radicalism. Encouraged by support from his patrons and the intellectual community, Liu became critical and bold enough to speak out.

#### Educational Orientation, Intellectual Field and Ideological Formation

In addition to the social location, we must also investigate how Liu's educational orientation has affected his political ideas. Unlike Fang and Yan, Liu did not receive formal education up to university level, but he eagerly learned different foreign languages and read Marxist theory and anti-Japanese magazines. His reading of these works markedly influenced his political thoughts.<sup>27</sup>

I observe that his "love for the people" is related closely to his journalist orientation. Repeatedly, Liu Binyan has stressed that journalists should be responsible for discovering social injustice and evils, speaking on behalf of the people rather than acting as tools of the state (Lee Yi, 1990: 104-08).<sup>28</sup> His perceived role as a journalist has been clearly revealed in his work "Our Inside Story" published in the early 1950s.

"literature is a mirror. When the mirror shows us things in life that are not very pretty or fall short of our ideals, it is wrong to blame the mirror. Instead we should root out

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<sup>26</sup>Liu also claims that such a work markedly impressed the people in China, suggesting that most people have forgotten most of Liu's other works but only remember his "The Second Kind of Loyalty" (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>27</sup>Liu acknowledged in an interview that the learning of foreign languages very much affected his future development. See Lee Yi (1990: 87).

<sup>28</sup>For his ideas on journalism, see, for example, the collection of his journalist works, Liu (1985b and 1986).

and destroy those conditions that disappoint us. Mirrors show us the true appearance of things, and literary mirrors speed the progress of society. Smashing a mirror is no way to make an ugly person beautiful, nor is it a way to make a problem evaporate." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 149)

In the Fourth National Congress of Literary and Art Workers, he made a speech entitled "Concerning the Freedom of Creative Writing", distinctly stating his perceived role as a writer. He pledged support for making literature and creative writing the conscience of society. He also emphasized the importance of the *supervision of the government by the people* (Liu, 1985).

"There are only two ways in which the feudal, patriarchal style of leadership supports and extends itself: one is by coercion and command; the other is by attack and retaliation." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 152; see also Liu, 1985)

Against the powerful force of despotism, Liu used the only resources at his disposal. Having exposed the poverty and suffering of the people, Liu was determined to commit his life as a writer to politics and to the people. He boldly proclaimed,

"We [intellectuals] must answer the people's questions. We have no right to be auditors in the courtroom of history. The people are the judges, as well as the plaintiffs. We must help supply them with scripts. But before we offer answers, we must first learn." (Quoted from Schell, 1989: 151)

He also believes that intellectuals should be critical, willing to participate in social affairs, and must consciously expose social injustice and inequalities (Liu, 1985). His conviction is not merely empty words or slogans. He puts his words into action through his reportage to reveal the real life of people. When confronted with the competing interests of the Party and the people, Liu even takes risks to uphold the people's interests in the post-Mao era. He always reminds himself not to be divorced from the people.

"Although now my position is good and my life is good, I have not been cut off from these common peasants, the workers, and the intellectuals." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 151)

"Writers should face life squarely and listen carefully to the voice of the people... When faced with two kinds of truth ... We writers must maintain strong sense of responsibility to the people in reaching our conclusions." (Ibid: 153)

Putting these observations together, we therefore conclude that Liu's boldness and critical stance are consistent with his perceived mission of the writer and journalist,

deeply rooted in Chinese literati tradition.<sup>29</sup> His strong conviction inevitably moved him to clash with the state.

Further, I also observe that Liu's assertion of professional independence was influenced by his exposure to the outside world. His trips to the former Soviet Union, West Germany, Japan and the United States made him realize that journalists and writers should not act as the tool for propaganda.<sup>30</sup> These trips abroad further reinforced his notion of journalism's responsibility to report crises and powerful adversaries of the country.

"the tradition of our Party, for who knows what reason, is that of being very fearful of letting anyone see our difficulties... Our newspapers and news broadcasts put out only hypnotic lullabies." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 160)<sup>31</sup>

Realizing the essence of journalism, Liu no longer accepted news and literature only a tool to propagandize for the Party. His reportage published since 1978 has spoken of the impasse of the country, pointing toward the problem of state commandism itself. Demanding press freedom, respect for the people and a self-regulation for journalists, Liu declared that the state's repressive measures had proved counterproductive (Liu, 1990a).

In addition to the impact of his internalized role of writer and journalist, Liu's knowledge production is also significantly influenced by the unique social field that he belongs. From 1978 onwards journalists have attempted to realize "journalism reform" (*xinwen gaige*) in which they raise significant questions which require answers (Yu Xu and Starck, 1988). Their ideas and actions have formulated a strong force for change. Like other intellectuals, journalists have organized themselves into a united front to fight for freedom of the press and professional autonomy. During the pro-democracy movement of 1989, many journalists, including some Party members, even tried to break

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<sup>29</sup>Interpreting intellectuals as the spokesmen of the people, Liu therefore persistently maintains his will to be the "social conscience" and "mouthpiece" for the people.

<sup>30</sup>Liu was also influenced by the spirit of journalism in the East European countries, encouraged to be more critical and politically conscious. His speech to Heidai indicated that his ideas on journalism were influenced by the West and East European countries, see Lee Yi (1990: 90-91) and Liu (1984a, 1986).

<sup>31</sup>Early in the 1950s, Liu began to think that the CCP was wrong to condemn the critical literary writings such as his reportage and the work of Wang Meng "A New Young Comer to the Disciplinary Department".

their propagandist conventions (Polumbaum, 1990: 37). They voiced their demands and asked for passage of a comprehensive press law specifying both the responsibilities and rights of the media.<sup>32</sup> Despite the fact that they are closely inspected and censored by the state apparatus, the journalists have repeatedly attempted to expand their influence to the public sphere in order to report the "truth". Liu regards the state's strict control as an indicator of fear of the people. Liu also proclaims that no matter how difficult the circumstance, the journalists have never abandoned their hope to speak out. Rather, they have become more skillful in reporting, adopting different strategies to spell out the "truth". For instance, right after the June Fourth Incident, The *People's Daily* duly reported the visit of Yang Shangkun (one of the leaders who was responsible for the Tiananmen massacre) and published his picture. In an ironic and ridiculous move, an editor placed the story about some Palestinians killed by Israeli soldiers with a heading "Murderers must be punished" under the picture. Such an act, though trivial, reflects the anger of the journalists and demonstrates the subtle methods which they have used to fight the system.<sup>33</sup>

In a 1986 national forum of chief editors of provincial newspapers, Teng Teng, deputy head of the Propaganda Department, supported greater editorial independence and maintained that "newspapers should not carry stories without news value" (*People's Daily*, 20 August, 1986:3) In 1988, Hu Jiwei, the former editor-in-chief of *People's Daily*, argued that journalism was no longer the tool of the Party. He also asserted that the press should owe its first loyalty to the people. In addition, Zhao Ziyang, the former Party secretary put forth the idea of "supervision by public opinion", highlighting the role of the press to report the facts and reflect the debate on important issues in the 13th Party Congress. Encouraged by Zhao's words, journalists discussed intensively how to actualize such a spirit. In a meeting sponsored by the Propaganda Department, most of

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<sup>32</sup>For details of their participation in the 1989 Tiananmen Incident, see Polumbaum (1990) and Editorial Board of 64 reporters (1989: 316-339).

<sup>33</sup>This insight is drawn from the interview with Liu in July, 1993 at Princeton, see also Liu (1990a).

the journalists agreed that the responsibility of the media was to expose and criticize official malpractice and corruption (Polumbaum, 1990).

Not surprisingly, the relaxed socio-political environment since the 13th Party Congress created another 'warm climate' for both journalists and writers in China. One survey conducted prior to the pro-democracy movement of 1989 reported that most of the journalists were prepared to assert their rights and their professional autonomy. Most of them (65%) agreed that journalists should be "people-oriented" (*renminxing*) (Ibid, 46). When facing contradictory interests between the Party and the people, most of them indicated that they ought to "lean to the side of the public" (Ibid: 47). They also considered the essence of socialist journalism as representing the people's views (see table 1). One respondent said,

"In a socialist society, the news organs belong to the public. The people are the masters. So journalism should express their views." (Ibid)

Chinese journalists regard themselves not only as the mouthpiece of the people but also as professionals and experts. They trust that they are able to judge what has news value. Some respondents added,

"We should use our own judgement, even if we see things one way and officials see things another." (Ibid: 48)

The strong urge for professional independence had brought them to the movement of 1989, ready to support such slogans as "Break the Party's monopoly", "Allow different forms of ownership", and "Allow newspapers representing different interest groups" (Ibid, 50).

	Total Mentions	Percentage
Autonomy:		
Within Framework of Party leadership	3	1%
With legal qualifications	103	26
Unqualified	150	38
Responsiveness to public	144	37
Media criticism and "supervision"	88	22
Training, occupational concerns	78	20
"Truth", accuracy, objectivity	65	17
Diversity of media ownership or content	56	14
Journalist initiative	18	5
Other	99	25

Table 1. Journalists' Priorities for Journalism Reform<sup>34</sup>

(Source: Adopted from Polumbaum, 1990: 63)

The foregoing discussion has indicated the emergence of a semi-independent press in post-Mao China. The popularity of *World Economic Herald* in the mid-eighties, a newspaper regarded as the battlefield for journalist autonomy, confirms such a development (see, Liu, 1990a; Hsiao Ching-chang & Yang Mei-rong, 1990; and Lee Chin-chuan, 1990). Even though journalists have not been free from political constraints, they have striven for legal guarantees to ensure their professional independence (Polumbaum, 1990: 63). This act seems to me a genuine indicator of the awareness of independence within a newly arisen autonomous intellectual community in China. In order to differentiate themselves from apparatus (state-defined ideology), many Chinese journalists have painstakingly struggled for the development of their own "field". Being not only a journalist but also a writer in the field, Liu has tried to expand the public sphere as defined by the Chinese civil society. It inevitably leads him to the direct confrontation with the state. Even though Bourdieu's notion of field may not abundantly describe the Chinese reality, it makes more sense to us how Liu has attempted to break the conventional boundary to report what he believes and sees in mainland China. It is also at this point that we appreciate the struggle during the "war of position" as what

<sup>34</sup>According to Polumbaum (1990: 63), "[t]his table displays responses to the open-ended question "What do you consider the most important aspects of journalism reform?" It represents results from 395 respondents who completed this question out of a total of 505 who returned questionnaires. Many respondents gave multiple answers (up to four were coded for each), so proportions add up to more than 100%."



Gramsci has suggested. Despite the fact that Gramsci's notion of "war of position" is not directly applicable to socialist China, it suffices to us that the strength/force of field that intellectuals belong should have acted as their "capitals" or "resources" in control of the hegemony. Besides, the fact that such autonomy could exist contributes to our understanding of the relationship between the state and intellectuals. We must caution, however, that the struggle for professional autonomy among journalists cannot be interpreted as the total liberation of the press. Their autonomy and relative independence should be understood in light of the relaxed political context where pluralistic thoughts and diversity of ideas are relatively tolerated. In fact, Chinese journalists are still far from **total** liberation from state control.

#### Generational Location and the Intellectual Radicalism

In addition to the influence from his social location and the social force of field, I also suggest that Liu's generational location affected his world view. Unlike Fang and Yan, Liu Binyan experienced the most turbulent period in modern China. He was born in the age of war and crisis. Liu directly experienced the invasion of China by Japanese troops. Social and political crises seem to have been an integral part of his life. Liu said that he recalls being treated as a normal human being only for a very few months of his childhood (Liu, 1990: 6). In addition to his earlier war experiences, Liu confronted various repressive movements toward intellectuals and countless social and political crises.

In light of the schematic form of generational location, I suggest that Liu Binyan can be regarded as one of the fourth generation of modern Chinese intellectuals. The fourth generation was a turbulent period during the Anti-Japanese War and civil war between the Communist Party (CCP) and Kuomintang (KMT) (Li & Schwarcz, 1983-4).

In the midst of national crisis, these intellectuals sought to reconstruct the political order. The conflicts among the warlords exposed the undeniable weakness and intense crisis in the Republican government led by the KMT. Seeing the success of the

revolution in Russia, the Chinese intellectual community was challenged both intellectually and politically. Marxism, to most of them, seemed to be another alternative to restoring the political order and integrating society. At this point, many intellectuals accepted Marxism instead of Liberalism, joining the Communist Party, and thereby deepening and broadening the influence of Marxism.<sup>35</sup> Trusting that Marxism could bring new light to modern China, the fourth generation of intellectuals, like the fifth one, wholeheartedly welcomed the liberation. Offering themselves devoutly to the socialist transformation, they believed that communist ideals would one day be actualized in their motherland. Liu Binyan is one of those intellectuals who accepted Marxism when he was only a teenager. Like many of his age, Liu's hope was pinned on the Communist Party because "the Communists seemed China's best hope for overcoming Japanese aggression" (Liu, 1990: 15). However, unceasing political purges of intellectuals and direct confrontation with social injustice eventually forced Liu to think about the fundamental causes of the problems. His change from "loyal supporter and faithful believer" of the Party to "critic and non-believer" of state-socialism is highly instructive for the understanding of the relationship between intellectuals and the state in modern China.<sup>36</sup>

Liu was born in 1925 into a middle-class family in Changchun, Manchuria.<sup>37</sup> Liu was still a child when the Japanese invasion of Manchuria was launched in 1931. Liu's personal fate went hand in hand with the history of modern China. The socio-political context in which he lived had significant impact on his ideological production.

Japanese occupation of Manchuria affected Liu's life. His father was an interpreter for the Manchurian Railway which was originally operated by Russia. The invasion of Japan brought the end of his job and thus affected Liu's family life, causing

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<sup>35</sup>For the details of such change in adopting Marxism and the psychology of intellectuals at this time, see chapter 2 and also Johnson (1973).

<sup>36</sup>Liu made it clear that he formerly believed the CCP would transform itself from within but such that a vision was broken in 1984. Seeing the existing socialist praxis as not genuine Marxism, Liu therefore denounced it with unusual directness (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>37</sup>The biography of Liu Binyan is based on his own autobiography (1990) and Schell (1988), and his interview with Lee Yi (1990: 81-116), the editor-in-chief of *The Nineties*.

financial difficulties and interrupting his formal schooling.<sup>38</sup> But, the financial hardship also had a positive effect on Liu, exposing him to the social reality of the grassroots. Becoming aware of the poverty and suffering of the people, Liu's unique kind of social and political consciousness was induced in the midst of social and political crises.

"The broken-down condition of my country and the penurious state of my family both conspired to accelerate my awareness of the acute social contradictions around me ... And so, a sense of nationalism developed side by side with a sense of dissatisfaction over the inequalities I saw in society." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 141-2)

In his childhood, Liu's attention was captured by the question of living and dying. He wrote in his autobiography that "death then seemed everywhere" (Liu, 1990: 5). The endless fighting and military conflict between Chinese and Japanese soldiers made Liu realize the intensity of social inequalities and political crisis. This exposure marked his style of reportage.

Liu's social conscience and sympathetic mind were also shaped in part by his parents.<sup>39</sup> Despite financial difficulties in his family, his parents were willing to share with others. Liu recalled that his mother once made dumplings for the family. She was eager to give some to their poor neighbours even though she realized that Liu loved eating them so much. When Liu and his sister responded like normal children by protesting, his mother taught them not to think only of themselves. These words marked Liu deeply, making him more sensitive to the poverty and needs of the people (Liu, 1990: 8).

In addition, Liu was greatly influenced by one of his teachers, Mr. Li, a man with a strong social conscience. Mr. Li reminded Liu of the national heritage of China and urged him to serve the country to the utmost. Even though Liu said that he found his middle school lessons boring, he had unintentionally internalized some of the Confucian principles (Liu, 1990: 9-10).

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<sup>38</sup>Liu (1990: 6) cited an example to show his declining family fortunes. He states that he used to travel a lot. At first, he rode in a well-furnished second-class sleeping car, then in ordinary third-class cars and later on open cars for transporting cattle and goods. The deteriorating modes of transportation revealed Liu's declining living condition.

<sup>39</sup>Liu was greatly influenced by his father, a person with great compassion, who saw poverty and social injustice as evils. See Lee Yi (1990: 83).

His reading of many banned publications such as anti-Japanese books and magazines stirred Liu's feeling of nationalism (Lee Yi, 1990: 84). Moreover, his interest in reading the literature of the May Fourth Movement and the writings of Pushkin and Tolstoy in the original language also provided him clues to the future development of China (Schell, 1988: 142; Lee Yi, 1990: 86).

In his childhood, Liu had begun his interest in Marxism. His father, having worked in Russia, told him stories about Lenin and the Russian Revolution. Liu's admiration of Russia was stirred by his father's own strong affection. To the young mind of Liu, Russia was a dream land in which there was neither rich nor poor. The projected utopia of Russia directly answered the question growing in Liu's mind regarding injustice in life (Liu, 1990: 10) to which he was exposed as a child in Harbin.. The ideas of "freedom", "liberalism" and "justice" began to be instilled into Liu from his early childhood through the liberalism of the former Soviet Union. He said in an interview that Harbin was a place with a liberal atmosphere, and innovative and pioneering spirit, where he was progressively influenced by Russian culture and Marxist thought (Lee Yi, 1990: 84-85). Liu joined a study group, affiliated with the CCP, where he was introduced to Marxist theory. And his contact with Guan Muonan, a young writer and friend of his, led him to a more intensive study of Marxist thought. On his reading of Marxist theory, Liu concluded that he should serve the people wholeheartedly. Like other youth in his turbulent time, Liu's commitment to his country was morally boosted by the work of Ba Jin's trilogy *Family, Spring, and Autumn* (Liu, 1990: 12-13).<sup>40</sup>

The internalization of Marxist thought subsequently moved Liu to join the liberated area under the Communists in 1943 to fight the Japanese. In the Federation of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, Liu was taught to repent of the "original sin" of individualism. He was also told to keep his distance from "bourgeois sentiments" (Ibid, 19). Liu said that even though he did not understand some decisions made by the Party, he still trusted that the Party was right.

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<sup>40</sup>Ba Jin was a famous writer whose thought and writings had tremendous impact on the Chinese revolution in the 1940s.

"I laid down a rule for myself: save your love and sympathy for the entire working class, rather than wasting it on individual suffering; beware of the words of any individual, but have absolute faith in the Party." (Liu, 1990: 19)

This iron law had made Liu, a loyal supporter and well-disciplined member in the Party. He reminded himself not to be alienated from the dictatorship of the proletariat. Upon his admission to the Party, Liu was most deeply impressed in the induction ceremony by the words "*Never Betray the Party*" (Liu, 1990: 20). Hoping to be a good Party member, Liu worked exceedingly hard to spread the idea of revolution. He worked hard for the Party in the Northeast Youth League during the civil war. The success of the liberation was finally realized in 1949, but Liu was not so exhilarated. He believed that the liberation was not yet complete because individual freedom was lacking. Thus, Liu could not be overexcited about the emergence of New China (*Zhengming*, Mar. 1990: 87).

Well before the liberation of China, Liu began to question the Soviet Union's invasion of Finland and partition of Poland (Liu, 1990: 10). Under the rule of the CCP, Liu discovered that people seemed to have lost their individuality. It seemed to Liu the state had scrupulously controlled everything, suffocating any individual freedom and autonomy.<sup>41</sup> Several incidents had already made Liu doubtful about the ideal of Communism. One of his close associates working in the Federation, Comrade G, was asked to leave their ranks when he fell in love with Comrade Jiang. Comrade G was also condemned for violation of Party discipline and was accused of having slept with Jiang. Liu felt that such a decision was too harsh. According to Liu, even though premarital sex was immoral, there was no written rule explicitly forbidding underground members to fall in love and marry. Liu's astonishment became greater when his happiness at seeing Comrade G again in the Taihang Mountains cursed by the group leader. This incident had caused Liu to wonder why the Party treated a comrade just like an enemy (Liu, 1990: 18-19).

On another occasion after he was promoted in the Party, Liu also saw the

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<sup>41</sup>Liu began to discover the internal contradiction of socialist practice of the CCP in the early 1950s. See Lee Yi (1990: 92-94).

inconsistency between the theory and practice of socialism. When Liu went to see a film in Shenyang, he discovered the consciousness of status and rank that pervaded the Party. There he saw some VIP enter the cinema with security men guarding the way and trying to keep others out. This occasion made Liu uneasy. During the dinner that night, Liu further discovered the importance of seniority in the Party for the dining hall was divided into three different zones --- a small zone for the top cadres, where the food was specially prepared, a middle zone and a lower one. Such rankings caused him to become sceptical of the socialist ideals (Ibid: 26-27).

"Seniority meant too much --- and still does to the present day. I felt then that some cadres should live better; that this was justified by their ability to work better. But should this have implied a difference in human value --- if someone was of lower status, was he or she somehow not as good a person, or suspect?" (Liu, 1990: 27)

The critical mind and rational thinking of Liu have earned him not only the feeling of ambivalence toward the socialist praxis in mainland China but also unceasing persecution. His works were criticized by the Party during various anti-intellectual campaigns. In the anti-rightist campaign, Liu's works "On the Bridge Construction Site" and "The Inside Story" were regarded as "poisonous weeds", with a hideous anti-Party message exposing the dark side of socialism.<sup>42</sup> As a result he was deprived of the right to write or publish for the next 22 years. During the Great Leap Forward, Liu was even labelled as a class enemy and sent down to work in remote areas of Shanxi and Shandong. His exposure to the real life of the people made Liu realize the myth created by the Party, forcing him to rethink his socialist ideals. Such reflection inevitably moved Liu to the side of the people. In 1966, Liu was considered by the party to be rehabilitated. Unluckily, the "warm wind" was just a short breeze to Liu. Several months after his rehabilitation, Liu was again labelled as rightist and counter-revolutionary in the Cultural Revolution. He was first imprisoned in complete isolation for two years, then sent to the May Seventh Cadre School, a rural camp to re-educate the intellectuals through manual labour. Life in this camp damaged Liu not only physically

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<sup>42</sup>For details of his experience in the anti-rightist campaign, see Liu (1990: 54-91); Lee Yi (1990: 95-100).

but also emotionally and socially. He was prevented from speaking to his wife even though they were housed in the same camp.

"When my children came to visit, they were not allowed to speak to me. During the day we worked in the fields, and sometimes we worked through the night as well. When the weather was bad, when the wind blew and the rain fell, the 'good' people [those who were accused of ordinary rather than political crimes] were allowed to do political study, but we had to do double work." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 148)

This suffocating experience really caused Liu to think of himself as something less than human, tempting him to commit suicide (Lee Yi, 1990: 100).

"The distinguishing characteristic of this ultra-leftist line was the belittling of human beings, the trampling down of human beings, and the humiliation and suspicion of human beings." (Quoted from Schell, 1988: 148)

Though Liu was repressed in an extraordinarily inhumane way, he swore that he did not regret the stance he had taken in the past. He said with satisfaction that "no matter how I now ponder it, I think that the best thing was to have been a rightist" (Ibid). This line indicates his consistent belief in marxist ideals but not state socialism. Liu also said the label of "rightist" provided him the opportunity to know the life of the grassroots and provided the bridge between himself and the people.<sup>43</sup>

Seeing his colleagues being rehabilitated after the Cultural Revolution, Liu was frustrated by his particularly long time to be "set free". Though he was allowed to work after the revolution, it was not until 1978 that his label of rightist was formally cleared.<sup>44</sup> After his formal rehabilitation, he was offered a post working as a reporter in *Renmin ribao*. In this capacity, Liu was determined to uncover social injustice and evils through his reportage literature. Liu's level of critique and intensity of dissidence became more intense as he tried to unravel the problems inherent in state commandism. Inevitably, Liu's boldness caused him further political persecution as he was condemned, attacked and finally expelled from the Party again under the tide of the anti-bourgeois campaign in

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<sup>43</sup>Liu also told me that there were diverse interpretations of Marxism. In his opinion, the essence of Marxism is good, promoting real emancipation and freedom. However, the existing "Marxist praxis" is typically a distorted picture of Marxism that Liu rejects (Interview 4, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>44</sup>He was assigned to work in *China Youth News* collecting foreign information for the news but his label was not removed. On many occasions, Liu found himself very embarrassed in the work place, which was a painful experience to him. See Lee Yi (1990: 110) and Hu & Zhang (1989).

1987. Liu's biography indicated that his political thought has been influenced by the historical and existential situation that he confronted.<sup>45</sup> One point which deserves attention here is that though the notion of generational location enhances our better understanding of how the unique socio-context in which intellectuals live has affected their conceptualization of social reality, the concept fails to explain why different intellectuals have diverse even conflicting interpretations in relation of their social contexts. Moreover, it is again difficult to locate intellectuals into different generations. From this point of departure, we must use this analytic tool cautiously. To solve this problem, we have to come back to Bourdieu's concept of "strategy" and "strategising", that is, we have to appreciate the dynamic nature of knowledge production. Living against similar socio-political or socio-cultural contexts does not necessarily mean that people should have the same interpretation of their external stimuli. Bourdieu is right to suggest that the interactive process of habitus and field should not be ignored, stressing that people have autonomy to adopt different approaches or strategies in response to their historical situations.

The deep level of Liu's critique of socialist China and Liu's radicalism after the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989 is a complicated phenomenon. With his unique social location, having the direct support and connection with the senior leaders of the CCP, together with the popularity of Liu in the Chinese journalist and literary world, have provided Liu with abundant "capitals" to adopt a relatively critical or even radical approach to deal with the state. His personal experiences and personality, to a certain extent, also contribute to his choice of strategy. Such discussions highlight not only the dynamic nature of production of knowledge but also the tension between social structure and social agency.

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<sup>45</sup>By "existential situation" we mean the typical situations of human life everywhere, such as death, suffering, and love. Being brought up within a turbulent environment, Liu experienced many "dimensions" in his life and which must have influenced his ideological production.



## **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, we have discussed the democratic thought of Liu Binyan in light of the theoretical framework. We reach the conclusion that even though Liu defied state commandism, he still genuinely trusted Marxist ideals. Realizing the political reality that the goal of democratization could not be achieved overnight, he advocated cooperation with the reformers inside the Party to bring about changes in China.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CULTURAL ICONOCLAST: LIU XIAOBO AND HIS DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

"We decide to hunger strike! We have to protest! We have to appeal! We have to repent!" These are the slogans of the June 2 *Declaration of Hunger Strike*. Liu Xiaobo, a young cultural critic joined the hunger strike and supported the pro-democracy movement of 1989. Liu became prominent in the mid-eighties for his exceedingly critical stance and vehement attack on Chinese tradition and the socialist regime. Because of his critical acts, he was regarded as a cultural nihilist. Compared with the previously discussed intellectuals, Liu Xiaobo is unique in his social location because he was never an establishment intellectual as Fang Lizhi, Yan Jiaqi and Liu Binyan did.. His critique goes beyond attacking the CCP to attacking other intellectuals, officials, the general public and even himself. His critical stance made him a solitary figure in Chinese intellectual circles. In this chapter, I am going to discuss Liu's political thought, especially his idea of democracy, in light of the analytical framework of the present research.

#### CRISIS OF FAITH AND CULTURAL ICONOCLASM

Like the May Fourth scholars, the post-Mao intellectuals have been experiencing an intense cultural crisis. By cultural crisis I mean the loss of cultural meaning in terms of both values and party ideology as perceived by intellectuals. The disjuncture between the promise and the performance of the state begets legitimation difficulties, which have turned into a legitimation crisis as well as a crisis of identity for intellectuals.<sup>1</sup> The deep crisis of identity was explained through the works of root-seeking literature (*xungen*

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<sup>1</sup>For details of socialist China's legitimation crisis, see, for example, White (1993), Mok (1991) and Brugger (1989).

*minxue*);<sup>2</sup> the popularity of wound-literature in the post-Mao era;<sup>3</sup> and the discussion of cultural crisis in the post-Mao era.<sup>4</sup>

With a strong sense of desperation, Liu Xiaobo blamed backwardness and poverty on traditional culture and sought a total transformation by learning from the West. Unlike other cultural critics whose criticisms tended indirectly to attack the present system,<sup>5</sup> Liu directly pointed out the problems inherent in the socialist system. He believed that the CCP had inherited a system based upon outdated Chinese traditions (Liu, 1990a and *Jiefang Yuebo*, July, 1989: 64-66). In the past, he trusted the socialist ideas and followed Mao's thought closely. The ideal Socialism of Mao guided the people's behaviour, regulating social standards and structures; but social adversity during the Cultural Revolution exposed the myth of socialism. This demystification, similar to that of the May Fourth era, led to the disintegration of both social and political orders. Having observed this broken mechanism, Chinese intellectuals began to realize the cold reality that it was impossible to save China by relying only on Mao Zedong thought. Thus a strong sense of cultural crisis emerged, accompanied with an ideological void and identity crisis among intellectuals.

#### Root of Despotic Politics: Attack on the Political and Cultural Structure

Liu Xiaobo's critique is not confined to attacking Chinese despotic politics, the dictators and the corrupt bureaucracy alone; rather, his criticism is extended to the authoritarian political-cultural structure which he considers as the fundamental hurdle to democratization. Put precisely, Liu believes that the main cause of China's present despotic politics has grown from the feudalistic cultural mentality and stubbornly

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<sup>2</sup>Liu Xiaobo criticized writers like Ah Cheng, Han Shaogong, and Jia Pingwa for their attempt to revive traditional values. For details of root-seeking literature, see Liu (1986) published in *Shenzhen qingnianbao* (3 Oct. 1986) and Liu (1988) in *Baijia* (no.1 1988: 12-26).

<sup>3</sup>For details of wound-literature, see, for example, Goldman (1987) and Sylvia Chan (1989).

<sup>4</sup>The heated debate on cultural crisis is clearly shown in the television series *Hexiang*. See, Bodman and Pin P. Wan (1991). For details of the debate, see, for example, Hua (1989) and Cui (1988).

<sup>5</sup>The authors of *Hexiang* criticized the Chinese socialist regime indirectly. It seemed on the surface to attack Chinese tradition. Actually, *Hexiang* intended not only to unfold the intense crises confronting China but also to condemn the existing socialist praxis. Su Xiaokang, one of the authors of the series, explained the real objectives of the series during an interview in Holland 1989 (see Su, 1989).

sustained autocratic political structure traditioned in China (*Jiefang Yuebao*, Nov. 1988). He criticized those people who just attacked corrupt officials and autocratic rulers but never found the root in feudalism and authoritarian systems (Liu, 1990a: 1-9 and *Jiefang Yuebao*, Nov. 1988). Liu declares that the breeding ground for authoritarianism is elitist culture under which the Confucian scholarly class was formed. Confucianism believes that the rulership should rest in the hands of men with higher levels of morality. In this way, elitist rule is constituted but the spirit of democracy is suffocated (see chapter 2). Subsequently, the intimate relationship between Confucian elitism and authoritarian political structure has consolidated the autocratic state in China. Urging democratization, Liu denounces both authoritarianism and Confucian elitism and pushes for fundamental change (Liu, 1989b in *Min Bao Yue Kan*, Aug. 1989: 36-7).

#### Critique of Marxism and Attack on Oriental Despotism

When he was in his childhood, Liu trusted Marxism faithfully, seeing Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought as the ultimate solution for modern China. His direct experiences in the Cultural Revolution alerted Liu to the myth of socialist ideals. Analyzing the impact of Marxism, Liu frankly admits that no matter how frustrated he feels about Marxism, its impact is significant and pervasive. Either in the occidental or oriental societies, Marxism has been one of the most popular topics of public discourse. Liu makes it plain that Marxism, to many people, is not only an ideology or logic of thought but also a faith and even a powerful religious-moral force. Evaluating the impact of Marxism on himself, Liu acknowledges the fact that he was deceived by Marxism but he now is well aware of the myth of Marxism. He cites Einstein's words, "it is seen to be without conscience when people do not trust Marxism when they are young. However, it is without wisdom to have faith in Marxism in their middle-age" (Liu, 1989c: 14). Liu still believes himself to have been foolish for his choice to believe, and even worship Marxism. He even suggests that it is the foolishness, ignorance and mental blindness of mankind that made Marxism like a religion. In regard to this, Liu urges people to repent, correcting their wrongdoing and equipping themselves with critical minds. According to

Liu, heightened consciousness is the most fundamental element of rational thinking with which people can be more critical of Marxism.

When investigating different "treatments" of Marxism in occidental and oriental societies, Liu discovered that people in the occidental world have tried to critically evaluate Marxism no matter how much they support Marxism. They tend not to copy Marxism directly but abstract what is useful from Marxism to construct their own system. In contrast, Liu believes that the people in the oriental world tend to copy Marxism directly without further and deeper analysis. Suggesting there is close relationship between oriental despotism and Marxism, Liu concludes that Marxism has fitted into the autocratic political structure and feudalistic cultural order of those oriental societies.<sup>6</sup> With such observations, Liu therefore asks his fellow countrymen to make a fundamental change in their values. Instead of looking upto enlightened leaders, they must institutionalize a democratic system (Liu, 1989c).

#### Critique of the National Character of Chinese People

Along with his critique of Marxism, Liu has persistently argued throughout his works that the Confucian conception of man as good in nature is wrong. According to Confucian doctrine, man can realize self-perfection through an inner process of rectification and sanctification (*xiushen*).<sup>7</sup> Though the CCP attacked Confucianism, it reinforced the same logic as Confucianism, trusting and resting hope upon enlightened leaders. Internalizing traditional cultural values, Chinese people have looked for enlightened leaders as their "universal king" to administer social and political affairs for them. They have never independently searched for their own way. It seems clear that Liu considers this kind of thought as arrogant and unrealistic because it simply ignores the weaknesses and limitations of man. Having been released from prison, Liu evaluated

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<sup>6</sup>Alongside this line of reasoning, some other scholars also suggest that Marxism could easily take root and be more acceptable to the Chinese society because the central notion of Marxism was similar to that of traditional Chinese thought. For instance, the utopian ideal of Marxism is similar to that of the Confucian state of harmonious relationship and peaceful state of mind. Besides, it is also observed that the autocratic political structure of Chinese society laid the ground work for the rise of Marxism. For details, see, for example, Jin and Liu (1990); Pye (1985) and Li Zehou (1990a).

<sup>7</sup>For details of Confucian thought, see, for example, Fung (1948); He Zhaowu (1991) and Watson et al. (1960).

the pro-democracy movement critically, concluding that most of the student leaders such as Kaixi, Chai Ling and other intellectuals were not genuinely democratic. He complains that most of them merely spoke of democracy but they had never put the principles of democracy into action. He repeatedly points out undemocratic acts of these student leaders. He even frankly advised Kaixi to correct his arrogant attitude and abandon the autocratic way of doing things. Liu recalls the dialogue with Kaixi several times, criticizing Kaixi for regarding himself as the most important person in China and the greatest hero throughout the movement. Complaining of the intense power struggle among the student leaders, Liu urges the student leaders to adopt democratic procedures (Liu, 1992). Having a strong belief that China is no longer in need of so-called "enlightened but autocratic leaders", Liu persistently reminds people not to look up to the famous, thereby saving themselves the trouble of thinking. This line of reasoning explains Liu's attack on the Chinese intellectual community's commemoration of Hu Yaobang and also his criticisms of the development of a new personality cult around student leaders of the movement. His critique, therefore, is not confined merely to political leaders and systems, but also extends to the national character of the Chinese people (Liu, 1990a: 11-30). He pointed out the inertia of the people in an interview as follow:

"The inertia of the old is so great, the roots of the past so deep ... One of the crucial aspects of our national inertia is that the Chinese are always wanting people to show them a way, to create a new system of values for them. This is an extremely traditional way of looking at history and man: the belief that there is a model way along which man develops, and that the nature of the relationship between people is unchanging. In fact, it's still very hard to say just where we're all going." (Liu, 1986, quoted from Barme & Minford, 1989: 397)

These observations led Liu to lay the responsibility for despotic politics in Chinese history upon every Chinese. He thus believes the success of Mao's dictatorial rule is the result not only of the unique charismatic leadership inherent in Mao himself but also of the socio-cultural context under which stubborn, foolish, vulnerable and reliant people and autocratic political structure were formed (Liu, 1988).

After experiencing the Cultural Revolution, Liu argued that the blind faith and

loyalty of the people in Chairman Mao had made Mao a dictator. Therefore, Liu directs his dissidence not only to the system but also to the cultural mentality of the Chinese people.

"I'm quite opposed to the belief that China's backwardness is the fault of a few egomaniac rulers. It is the doing of every Chinese. That's because the system is the product of the people. All of China's tragedies are authored, directed, performed and appreciated by the Chinese themselves. There's no need to blame anyone else. Anti-traditionalism and renewal must be undertaken by every individual, starting with themselves ... [ever since] the fall of the Gang of Four, everyone has become a victim, or a hero who struggled against the Gang. Bullshit! What were they all doing in the Cultural Revolution? Those intellectuals produced the best big-character posters of all. Without the right environment, Mao Tse-tung [Mao Zedong] could never have done what he did." (Liu, 1986, quoted from Barne & Minford, 1989: 397)

Liu turned to Western philosophical thought and pointed out the lack of self-reflection and self-examination among Chinese people (*Ming Bao Yue Kan*, Aug. 1989: 34-34). Liu has persistently called on the self-consciousness of the people, asking them to repent of their little-peasant mentality (*xiaonong jingji*) (Liu, 1990a). Liu argues that the negation of tradition and self-repentance are necessary to give a new birth to Chinese people as a whole (Liu, 1988). Liu's understanding of human nature caused him to urge his fellow countrymen to critically evaluate themselves and not to look for the solution within the authoritarian system. Instead they must institutionalize a democratic system (Liu 1989b in *Ming Bao Yue Kan*, Aug. 1989: 37).

#### Call for the Institutionalization of Democracy

The intellectual radicalism of Liu Xiaobo has resulted not in empty words but in concrete proposals for a democratic political system as the only alternative to replace despotic politics. Without the guarantee of democratic system, according to Liu, anyone working in the authoritarian system may someday become an autocratic ruler. In his mind, authoritarian system is authoritarian no matter how enlightened the leaders are. It is impossible that enlightened leaders can turn an authoritarian system into a democratic one (Liu, 1988).

With an intense sense of crisis, Liu has sought a wholesale transformation of values and spirit to those of Western thinking and technology. Like the May Fourth

scholars, Liu adheres to the belief that "an intellectual and cultural revolution which requires a total rejection of the Chinese past is the fundamental prerequisite for modern social and political change" (Lin, 1979: 9). Liu is regarded as the latest in the line of "wholesale Westernizers" and cultural iconoclasts for his adherence to the dichotomy between traditional and modern; and progressive and backward (Kelly, 1991a). In an interview, Liu boldly said that he thought it might be a good thing for China to be colonized after seeing the prosperous development in Hong Kong under the British rule. Of course, these words were cited as evidence of Liu's betrayal of, and incitement to overthrow socialist China. A closer scrutiny of these words reveals that Liu wished for a real transformation to a strong and prosperous China (Jin Zhong, 1989).<sup>8</sup>

Unlike the unclear and fragmentary conception of democracy expounded by the students, Liu's notion of democracy tends to be much more thorough and complete.<sup>9</sup> The spirit of democracy clearly underlies his speeches and works, in which he has set down the basic principles of "participatory democracy". When discussing the traditional idea of *Minben* (for the people), he argues that traditional Chinese thought has only the concepts of livelihood of the people (*minsheng*) and people's share (*minxiang*) but no "right of people" (*minquan*).

In his view, the hope of democratization does not rest in reforming the authoritarian system from within or relying on any enlightened leaders alone. On the contrary, democracy is to uphold the principles of "equality, human rights, and freedom" in order to replace "universal kingship, hierarchy and autocratic system". Liu considers constitutional rule based on the legal system as fundamental to democracy, supporting also the establishment of private economy and free market to replace centrally-planned economy and public ownership. In the ideological and cultural realms, Liu advocates plurality of thoughts rather than ideological monopoly (Liu, 1990a: 17 see also *Ming Bao*

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<sup>8</sup>Liu (1992) understands that his notion of "colonization" was misinterpreted and cited as evidence to accuse him of invoking anti-nationalistic feeling and of betraying of socialist China. As Liu expected, his statement was used as evidence to denounce him during the movement.

<sup>9</sup>Reflecting upon the pro-democracy movement of 1989, Liu holds a very low opinion of the student participants particularly feeling dissatisfied with their understanding of democracy and their acts, see Liu (1992).



*Yue Kan*, Aug. 1989: 34-37).<sup>10</sup>

Like Western political theorists, Liu also acknowledges human weaknesses and limitations (Liu, 1990a: 33). For this reason, the institutionalization of a democratic system is necessary. He considers Marx too idealistic, for he saw man as a perfect being. Liu's realization that the establishment of a democratic system includes sub-systems for checking the wrongdoing of mankind (Liu, 1990: 6) became a life commitment for him. Having internalized such a belief, Liu evaluated the pro-democracy movement of 1989 and pointed out the wrongdoing of both the government and the students (Liu, 1989). Even though he supported the pro-democracy movement organized by students, he also made incisive criticisms of the weaknesses of the students.

"The students' mistakes are mainly manifested in the internal chaos of their organization and the lack of efficient and democratic procedures. Although their goal is democracy, their means and procedures for achieving democracy are not democratic. Their theories call for democracy, but their handling of specific problems is not democratic." (Liu, 1989, quoted from Han, 1990: 352)<sup>11</sup>

Having criticized the students, Liu showed them a personal example by leading a democratic way of life throughout the movement. He not only taught his students that the realization of democracy in China should start with themselves but also put these words into practice by active participation in the movement (Liu, 1989c: 5). Some scholars also suggest that Liu was one of the only advocates of a practical application of democratic procedures during the final weeks of the pro-democracy movement (Barne, 1990: 68). His call for a hunger strike clearly demonstrates his conception of democracy. He openly declared that what China needed today was not a perfect god or any enlightened leader but a sound democratic system characterized by procedural rules and "checks and balances". He said in an interview during the 1989 movement that the basic

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<sup>10</sup>In his work *Sixiangzhimi yu renleizhimeng* (The Mystery of Thought and the Dream of Mankind), Liu discusses the importance of plurality of thought, arguing that monolithic philosophical thought is a sign of autocracy. He rejects any ideological monopoly and points out the false intention of *Xiin'ershangxue* (philosophy) to develop a unified thought. Liu also criticizes the monolithic ideology shaped by Mao to sustain his dictatorial rule. He argues that such a monopoly over the ideological and cultural realm will suffocate the creative thinking of the people. See Liu (1990) and *Jiefang Yuebao* (July, 1990: 64-66).

<sup>11</sup>For details of the student leaders' undemocratic acts and thinking, see Liu's description in his work published in 1992. Some commentators believe that Liu's criticisms were intended to attack others in order to lay the ground work for a light penalty for his conviction.

principles of democracy are "checks and balances, rational thought and peaceful action" (Liu, 1989).

"We must use a democratic spirit of tolerance and cooperation to begin the construction of democracy in China. For democratic politics is a politics without enemies and without a mentality of hatred, a politics of consultation, discussion, and decision by vote, based on mutual respect, mutual tolerance, and mutual accommodation." (Liu, 1989, quoted from Han, 1990: 350)

Even though he condemned the Li Peng government for its autocratic rule, Liu still persistently maintained the democratic principles in which he believed. He asked Premier Li Peng to resign according to democratic processes and did not regard Li Peng as the enemy of the people. He declared that after Li Peng resigned, he could "still enjoy the rights that citizens should have, even the right to adhere to his mistaken beliefs" (Ibid).

At the beginning of his June Fourth declaration, Liu made his position explicit that democracy is based on rationality and peaceful means.

"We advocate the use of peaceful means to further democratization in China and to oppose any form of violence. Yet we do not fear brute force; through peaceful means, we will demonstrate the resilience of the democratic strength of the people, and smash the undemocratic order held together by bayonets and lies ..." (Quoted from Han, 1990: 350)

Laying down the democratic principles in the struggle for democracy, Liu said,

"Rationality and order, calmness and moderation must be the rulers of our struggle for democracy; hatred must be avoided at all costs. Popular resentment towards authoritarianism in China can never lead us to wisdom, only to an identical form of blind ignorance, for hatred corrupts wisdom." (Liu, 1989a, quoted from Barne, 1990: 62)

Liu stressed that only the power of the people could make use of the peaceful and rational ways of democracy.<sup>12</sup> He considers as fundamental to democracy the notion that state power originates from the people (Jin Zhong, 1989: 316-323). He criticizes those rulers who are concerned only with getting political power but have no respect for the

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<sup>12</sup>Liu (1992) reports that he actively engaged himself in persuading people to forsake the use of arms to fight against the PLA. He recalls one incident in which he even knelt down to beg the people not to use force or coercion to gain democracy. Liu told them that the student movement's rational and peaceful spirit would be spoiled if coercion was used. Those people listened to Liu and finally agreed to stop arming themselves. After that, they cried together. This act was also cited by the CCP as Liu's "positive contribution" to the movement. With such a "contribution", he received a lighter penalty and was eventually released.

right and freedom of the people.<sup>13</sup> He also identifies the central problem of despotism as the lack of proper procedures to facilitate social development (Liu, 1990a: 14), creating a power vacuum which can be filled only by the people's power in the civil society. He says ,

"(1) all [sectors of] society should establish lawful, autonomous citizens' organizations, and gradually develop these organizations into citizens' organizations, that will act to check government policy making, for the quintessence of democracy is the curbing and balancing of power. We would rather have ten monsters that are mutually restrained than one angel of absolute power; (2) by impeaching leaders who have committed serious errors, [we should] gradually establish a sound system for the impeachment of officials. Whoever rises and whoever falls is not important; what is important is how one ascends to, or *appointment and dismissal can only result in dictatorship.*" (Quoted from Han, 1990: 351, emphasis added).

In addition, Liu also suggests that the Chinese people's struggle for democracy has mainly remained at the level of popularizing ideas and slogans. They have indulged in mere talk of goals but lacked operational means, procedures and processes. He makes it clear that, though he supports the spirit of the movement, he still criticizes the immaturity of student participants in terms of their acts and ideas (Liu, 1992).<sup>14</sup> Liu (1992: 163-4) even reveals the fact that some student participants were as autocratic as the CCP. Having adapted to the "socialist" way of doing things, their slogans, tactics, and even names of organizations were typically shadowed by the CCP culture.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, Liu has tried to awaken the people to change from the enlightenment of democratic consciousness to the construction of operational procedures (Liu, 1989).

Taking his position a step further, Liu emphasizes the notion that Chinese people should bear social responsibility and involve themselves into a deeper level of self-examination and repentance. As Barne (1990: 70) suggested, "concepts of freedom,

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<sup>13</sup>It is note-worthy that after deeper reflection on the spirit of democracy, Liu admits that he was wrong in attempting to dominate public discourse by means of interruption in a "loud" voice. Seeing "mutual respect" as essential to democratic life, Liu has become conscious of paying attention and respect to others during discussion.

<sup>14</sup>Liu recalls many incidents to illustrate the student participants' immature concept of democracy . He remembered that some female students had asked him to give them money to buy some contraceptives. He viewed some students' use of this serious movement as an opportunity for self-gratification as ridiculous. Liu also reportedly stated that the student leaders were arrogant, driving for self-interest and fame instead of fighting for public interest or higher goals (See example, Liu, 1992: 141-44; 156, 160-63).

<sup>15</sup>Liu cites many cases to show that Chinese people have indulged in telling lies. As Barne (1990) suggested, China is typically an autocratic and monolithic system except for its pluralistic nature of telling lies. Liu (1992: 76) also admits that he himself was not immune to such a "political culture" when he was in China.

responsibility, and repentance form a major element of Liu Xiaobo's writings". On Liu's declaration of a hunger strike, he frankly told his fellow countrymen that because running a democratic country was new to every Chinese, it was urgent for them to act as beginners, trying hard to adopt an open attitude toward mistakes, maintaining that people should see mistakes positively, and urged them to admit, correct and learn from them (Liu, 1989). He also called for the birth of a new political culture and pleaded for a public consciousness of political responsibility.

"We appeal to all Chinese, from those in the government down to every ordinary citizen, to give up the old political culture and begin a new one ... We appeal to all [members] of [Chinese] society gradually to drop the attitude of being onlookers and simply expressing sympathy. We appeal to you to acquire a sense of citizen consciousness." (Quoted from Han, 1990: 350-351)

Instead of making democracy an abstract concept, Liu pins it down to the daily life of the people. He suggests,

"At the same time as staging mass political demonstrations within the wider political sphere, people have to engage in detailed, down-to-earth and constructive actions in the immediate environment. For example, democratization can start within a student group, an independent student organization, a non-official publication, or even the family. We can also carry out studies of the non-democratic way we live in China, or consciously attempt to put democratic ideals into practice in our own personal relationships (between teachers and students, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, and between friends)." (Quoted from Barne, 1990: 76)

Issuing a position paper on 7th May 1989, Liu stated his notion of democracy clearly. In the first part of the paper, Liu analyzed the causes for undemocratic practices in China and suggested that there had been a lack of procedural rules in China's political system. Without a sophisticated system of rules, people have tended to rely on relationships, doing things by means of the "back-door" policy. Liu also added that Chinese people were not realistic enough, always setting idealistic and unattainable goals which only discouraged people to continue the fight for democracy. More fundamentally, Liu suggested that the root of the problems is in the petty peasant mentality, of contradiction and hatred in human relationships. Such a mentality had created an impossible hurdle for institutionalizing a system of procedural rule which requires mutual trust (Liu, 1992: 94-6). Liu therefore initiated attempts to create an open and democratic atmosphere in academic discourse, mobilizing changes in university

administration and even calling for more student participation in dialogue and daily administration (Liu, 1992: 97). Adhering to the principle of democracy, Liu repeatedly emphasizes that the praxis of democracy is to create the ground for dialogue and communication, striving for compromise and conflict resolution instead of violence and hatred (Liu, 1992: 111-2).

With regard to his conception of democracy, we can see that Liu puts forward both responsibility and rights. He not only asserts human rights but also urges people to be conscious of social and political responsibility. He sees tolerance as fundamental to Western democracy.

#### Independent Role of Intellectuals

Liu's self-examination led to a felt need for repentance which shaped his conclusion that Chinese intellectuals must acquire independence which is based not on political power but on the accumulation of knowledge. Criticizing the traditional literati notion which sees the ultimate goal of intellectuals as royal advisors and remonstrators within the bureaucracy, Liu urges Chinese intellectuals to have a fundamental change in value. Liu suggests that the weakness and vulnerability of intellectuals in their traditional role is the result of "bureaucratization of intellectuals", which inevitably causes them to become the "tool" or "instrument" of the state apparatus. With such a social location, they could hardly escape from being dependent upon the establishment. Thus, it is not surprising that they have become the spokesmen of the state (Liu, 1990a: 5). Besides, Liu condemns intellectuals for perceiving themselves as national saviours and arrogantly over-rating their positions.

In his essay "On Solitude" published in 1988, Liu also emphasized that Chinese intellectuals needed to 'negate' themselves, 'for only in such a negation' would they find the key to the negation of traditional culture (Liu, 1988). This message is repeatedly stressed in his November, 1988, interview with Jin Zhong, the editor of *Jiefang Yuebao* (*Jiefang Yuebao*, July, 1989). It is also observed that Liu and Zhu Dake, a good friend of Liu and controversial Shanghai critic, suggested that the lack of God as the source of

ultimate values is the most tragic aspect of Chinese tradition (*Mingbao Yuekan*, Aug. 1989: 34-37).

In addition to "bureaucratization of intellectuals", Liu suggests that "politicization of intellectuals" and "politicization of knowledge" are marked characteristics of the Chinese intellectual establishment.

"Intellectuals with politicized personality have never valued knowledge creation, transmission of knowledge and achievement in scholarly research as their ultimate goal in life. Rather, they have made use of knowledge to get political power, seeing it as means rather than ends". (Liu, 1990a: 3, my translation)

Having such observations, Liu points toward the problem of devaluating the essence of knowledge which confronts the Chinese intellectual circles (Liu, 1990a: 2-3).

"If only intellectuals lose their social conscience [a strong sense of critique], it may probably lead to the greatest catastrophe to society --- politicized and authorized knowledge." (Ibid: 4, my translation)

Such a politicized knowledge worries Liu very much and he therefore considers critical thinking as essential and fundamental to intellectuals. With a strong conviction that intellectuals should uphold the mission of knowledge transmission, Liu calls intellectuals to be critical and conscious about social issues, to be aware of their detached relationship with the political power, and to form an independent intellectual group (Ibid).

Adhering to Western conceptions of intellectuals, Liu therefore suggests that "knowledge is power" and that "intellectuals should possess knowledge as cultural capital to form a new class".<sup>16</sup> However, most Chinese intellectuals' practice of reliance on the political establishment and devaluation of knowledge inevitably creates an insurmountable hurdle to the development of Chinese intellectuals into a "new class" with a "collective consciousness" (Liu, 1990a: 2).

In addition, Liu also criticizes the intellectuals' "blind faith" and "loyalty" to rulers or political authority. Such allegiance and loyalty, according to Liu, is not only unnecessary but foolish, contributing to the dependent role of intellectuals. Thus, Liu

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<sup>16</sup>For details of the new class formulated by intellectuals, see, for example, Gouldner (1979) and Konrad & Szelenyi (1979 and 1991); see also my discussion in the next chapter.

criticizes Liu Binyan's notion of "loyalty" and condemns also the idea of Neo-Authoritarianism.<sup>17</sup> Liu explains clearly his view,

"After the Cultural Revolution, many intellectuals have not examined their relationship with the state even being purged and executed in the Revolution. Many of them have still had hope in the existing system. They may well recognize the problems existing in the present system, feeling disappointed in the leaders and social reality but they have not lost hope totally in the present system (The Four Cardinal Principles). The advocacy of "Neo-Authoritarianism" is the consequence of their frustration with present leaders. Therefore, the critique and criticisms from the people unnecessarily mean that a new system is undertaking." (Liu, 1990a: 36, my translation)

Going a step further, Liu maintains that it is the complicated psychology of many Chinese intellectuals that causes their vulnerable position. Many intellectuals had hoped that the Party would one day recognize their loyalty and genuine faith. Liu cites the case of Liu Binyan, who had been purged and expelled from the Party twice. Feeling frustrated, Liu Binyan still hoped his position might be recognized again by the Party. Liu Xiaobo rejects such a "critical loyalty", suggesting that intellectuals should be loyal to the state constitution, laying the foundation of faith on knowledge rather than on any political patrons (Liu, 1990a: 23-4; 32-4; 36-8).

To expound his ideas, Liu says that the obstacle to the development of collective consciousness and of an independent intellectual community is resistance not only from the autocratic ruling class and the stubborn and foolish public but also from the intellectuals themselves. This observation leads Liu to call the intellectuals to self-repentance, rethinking their role and striving for independence which will enable them really to emancipate themselves. In order to realize the goal of intellectual autonomy, Liu suggests some sort of division of labour among Chinese intellectuals. First, some intellectuals must concentrate on developing theories and on actively participating in the movement of anti-authoritarianism. Second, some members of the intellectual community have to improve the economic position of intellectuals and make them economically independent. Third, the most significant of all is that intellectuals have to

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<sup>17</sup>Neo-Authoritarianism stresses the need to have an enlightened leader to strengthen one's country. Such believers also believe that economic reforms should be prior to political ones, suggesting social stability is the pre-condition for economic development. For this reason, they support an enlightened leader in consultation with a strong think tank, to initiate changes in the economic realm in the first place, followed by political reform after the success of economic reform. For details, see, for example, Deng Ziqiang (1989); Wu Jiaxiang (1989) and Zhou Wenzhang (1989).

accumulate, develop and consolidate knowledge. He warns that those playing this third role must bear loneliness, isolation and relative deprivation; but such work is fundamental and necessary. Without knowledge as capital, Liu argues that Chinese intellectuals can never free themselves from the "iron-cage" of patron-client networks (Ibid, 8).

In short, he criticizes intellectuals for being silent for years toward the despotic rule, and he therefore urges them to confess their mistakes (1989). Liu believes that Chinese intellectuals have failed to make self-examination, paying little attention to individuality, rights and freedom of mankind. They have been concerned only with "national revival" to the exclusion of the "emancipation of man" (Liu, 1990a: 12; see also Liu, 1986). Having such a conviction, Liu has urged redemption through independence leading to a new relationship with the state (Liu 1989).

His reflection on the role of intellectuals has made Liu conscious of his own position in the Chinese intellectual community. Seeing the importance of independence in social location, Liu has consciously distanced himself from other intellectuals. During the pro-democracy movement of 1989, Liu criticized those so-called "elite" intellectuals for their reluctance in joining the movement. He not only condemned those intellectuals whose role as honorary advisors to students. Locating themselves in a privileged position, these intellectuals had fallen into empty words without actual participation. Liu openly denounced the acts of Yan Jiaqi and other leading intellectuals for their short-sighted vision. Disagreeing with the stand held by most intellectuals that students should offer their support to Zhao Ziyang's liberal wing, Liu therefore organized his own hunger strike to ally himself with students (Liu, 1992: 155).<sup>18</sup> Recalling his discussion with Barne, Liu criticizes Chinese intellectuals for pretending to be the greatest national heroes, the saviours of the people while failing to commit themselves to carry out the mission. Without courage and the sense of self-sacrifice, most intellectuals have never

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<sup>18</sup>Liu (1992) also recalls a dialogue with Wang Juntao, in which he disagreed with Wang. The fundamental difference between them is their attitude toward westernization. Liu Xiaobo advocates total westernization while Wang maintains that China has its own characteristics. For this reason, Wang believes what is really needed in China is to establish a system with Chinese characteristics. Unlike Liu, Wang adopts a more pragmatic approach to work with the liberal wing of the CCP in order that reforms can be deepened.



shouldered the "penalty of the cross" as Jesus did. Their half-hearted efforts pay only lip-service to the pro-democracy movement (Liu, 1992: 54).

### Self-Repentance: A Higher Kind of Intellectual Consciousness

After examining Liu's ideas, I observe that even though Liu had sought to reveal all the tradition as the cause of backwardness and weakness; he did not himself abandon traditional beliefs altogether. Despite the fact that Liu condemned most Chinese people for ethnocentrism, he also admitted that he himself is not immune to the feeling of "Chineseness".<sup>19</sup> After his trip to the United States, Liu realized his isolation from the outside world and acknowledged his narrow mind. He said that his anti-traditionalism had not reflected any concern for humanity as a whole nor transcendental concern for the self-fulfilment of individuals. He said that "there may be some merit in my anti-traditionalism, but only if it is considered within the context of China or with a view toward transforming China" (Liu, 1990b: 13, quoted from Barne, 1991: 115). Before his trip to the United States, Liu thought that his anti-traditionalism was up to international standards, but the stay in the West unsettled Liu deeply. He found himself deluded by arrogance and realized that his theories were completely meaningless when viewed from the fate of mankind (Liu, 1990b: 21). The failings of his theories are "narrow nationalism and a blind fawning before the West" (Barne, 1991: 115). Liu rejected the accusation that he is an advocate of "total Westernization" and a "cultural nihilist" since he intended to strengthen and transform China by means of his critique. He also regretted that his critical re-evaluation was not based on a commitment to "knowledge for its own sake". Liu found that he himself failed to meet the minimum requirement of "Westernization" since real westernization criticizes not only Chinese culture but also Western culture, concerning the fate of the whole of mankind and the needs of the unfulfilled individuals (Liu, 1990b). He criticized himself for neglecting the interest of humanity and knowledge accumulation, regarding himself too utilitarian, too practical;

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<sup>19</sup>His participation in the pro-democracy movement of 1989 revealed his strong nationalistic feeling as he sought to save his mother country from bankruptcy and he also saw himself as a great national hero. He also said that he thought he should enjoy a prestige that of other great heroes in Chinese history. He even equated himself with Chen Tianhua, a great hero who drowned himself to awaken other people for saving the mother country. It is thus evident that Liu is not immune to ethnocentrism. For details, see (Liu, 1992).

being caught up in the vulgar concerns of the problems of Chinese reality (Barne, 1991).

Like Lu Xun in his later years, Liu found himself unable to free himself from the old problem of Chinese intellectuals. The strong traditional utilitarianism of Chinese literati seems pervasive in his thought.

"Chinese intellectuals lack the motivation to transcend themselves as well as the spirit that motivates individuals to pit themselves against society as a whole; they lack the internal fortitude required to cope with solitude and the courage and curiosity to face an unfamiliar and unknown world. Chinese intellectuals can only survive in their own, familiar surroundings, bathed in the limelight and applause provided by the ignorant masses... This 'China-fixation' is virtually inescapable; its most outstanding feature is the absence of real individuality". (Liu, 1990b, quoted from Barne, 1991: 116)

His visit to the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York woke Liu up suddenly and thoroughly. The exposure to the Western world further vanquished him. Liu frankly admitted that he had overlooked, and purposefully attempted to avoid mentioning the weaknesses of Western culture, merely hoping to transform China in terms of Western standards. Liu found that he himself was strongly affected by traditional utilitarianism since he was solely concerned with China's future instead of future of the whole mankind. Having pervasive influence of utilitarian individualism, Liu found in himself failed to address the issues from an international standard, nor could he dialogue with the upper strata of the international intellectual community. As he criticized those who ingratiated themselves with political power, Liu found all he could do was to "ingratiate himself" with Western culture, seeing Western culture as the messiah of China. Liu thereafter stated that he thus acknowledged the limitations of China when it was compared with the West. Following the same logic, when he compared Western culture with the whole of mankind, the West thus became very small; when comparing mankind with the universe, he inevitably found the limitations of mankind. Taking these observations together, Liu concluded that mankind is very limited in its attempt to solve the intense crises confronting the modern world today.

"The gradual disappearance of [the sense of] original sin has set man loose from his moorings; today's decadence represents a second fall from grace." (Liu, 1990 quoted from Barne, 1991: 118)

The only way to save mankind from such a fall is a genuine redemption and the acknowledgement of personal guilt. Therefore, Liu openly confessed his arrogance and foolishness. It was this spirit which motivated him to join the pro-democracy movement. Instead of joining the intellectual community in praising the petitions demanding the release of Wei Jingsheng and other political prisoners, Liu urged them not to indulge in slogans but to act independently (Liu, 1990a). Liu told his friend Chen Jun before he went back to China to join the movement that "either you go back and take part in the student movement or you should stop talking about it" (Chen Jun, 1989: 63). The consistency between his acts and his thought is thus clearly shown throughout his participation in the pro-democracy movement. After his visits to the outside world, Liu (1992) admitted his past wrongdoing, his arrogance, his ignorance, his attempts to show himself off by means of excessive critique and his efforts to dominate the intellectual discourse by his "loud" voice. Without giving respect to others, he provoked waves of debate and irritated others in public discourse. Nowadays, Liu considers such acts as unacceptable behaviour which contradicts the rules of democracy. Only after such self-reflection did Liu advise Kaizi to correct his arrogant attitude and learn to be humble, paying respect to others.<sup>20</sup>

The foregoing discussion of Liu's self-examination has demonstrated two significant points in understanding the evolution of his political thoughts. First, I observe that Liu had fallen into a logical-emotional difficulty which is similar to that of the May Fourth scholars, who advocated westernization and heaped scorn on Chinese traditional culture. It is my contention that Liu Xiaobo's adherence to occidental ideals was only an "instrumental" one, for he hoped the borrowing of Western ideas and technology would strengthen China immediately.<sup>21</sup> The unmitigated scorn for Chinese culture and

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<sup>20</sup>During a dialogue with Wang Juntao, Liu discovered that Wang was too dominating in the whole discourse, repeatedly interrupted when other people were speaking. Liu also found Kaizi to be too autocratic and arrogant. Having seen that, Liu realized that Wang was only a mirror image of what he himself had been (Liu, 1992).

<sup>21</sup>Other studies confirm the conclusion that the May Fourth scholars adopted instrumental view of democracy and science, wishing to make use of them to save the country. See Zhou Y.S. (1989: 445-457) and Lin (1989: 215-240).

unthinking enthusiasm for all aspects of Western civilization reflect his feelings of national inferiority and idolatry for a foreign culture. His vehement attack on traditional culture seems to be the result of his frustration and desperation. As Liu confronted the "broken mirror"<sup>22</sup>, his rejection of traditional ideas is immediate and self-explanatory.<sup>23</sup> Like the May Fourth scholars, Liu did not forsake his emotion for his mother-land. Tu Weiming argues that the May Fourth scholars could not really abandon their traditional values.

"the deliberate effort to forget and abandon the Chinese tradition was never fully realized, conscious rejection and unconscious identification with traditional symbols and values were pervasive among the most influential figures in Chinese intellectual life." (Tu, 1987: 79)

In summary, Liu was emotionally attached to China's past and intellectually committed to Western values. His complicated psychology is similar to that of the May Fourth scholars. No matter how critical his view on Chinese tradition, his nationalistic feeling was clearly demonstrated in his speeches and acts during the pro-democracy movement of 1989.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the May Fourth scholars whose organismic objection to tradition not only failed to save the country but also created crises of meaning and consciousness for the scholars themselves, Liu adopted both Western technology and ideologies to transform China. He suggested that China should transform not only economically but also socially, politically and culturally with reference to the West. Unlike the May Fourth scholars, Liu has resolved the internal conflict between practice and theory, setting his goals not only on national survival but also on the welfare of the whole of mankind. Most important of all, Liu practiced what he preached while the May Fourth scholars didn't. It is in this light that Liu really made some advancement in both

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<sup>22</sup>"Broken mirror" refers to the myth portraying a holistic view of social transformation, coupled with ultimate national unification and harmony as promised by the socialist ideals. The post-Mao intellectuals felt "cheated", and a strong sense of despair developed among them.

<sup>23</sup>Like the post-Mao intellectuals, one of the most prominent intellectuals of the May Fourth era, Chen Duxiu who openly declared that "Chinese thought is a thousand years behind Western thought" and advocated a total rejection of the past and faith in progress, democracy and sciences, confidence in the limitless potential of human reason, etc. --- in short, reflecting the optimistic expectations of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe. See Chow (1960) and Lin (1979).

<sup>24</sup>In his reflection on the pro-democracy movement of 1989, we observe that Liu had a strong moralistic and nationalistic feeling. Like some of the student participants, Liu was not immune to the particular atmosphere of the movement.

theory and practice of Chinese democracy movement.

The second element necessary for understanding the evolution of Liu's political thoughts is his distinctiveness from the May Fourth scholars as well as other contemporary intellectuals, which rests in his deep sense of repentance. This view has moved Liu to establish a new relationship with the state. Many intellectuals of the generation of Red Guards have also followed Liu's path apparently leading to the emergence of a real awakening among the younger generation of intellectuals.

Before going into the contextual analysis of Liu's social-political ideas, one point which deserves attention is that no matter how radical Liu seemed to be, his ideas of democracy which detailed in his hunger-strike statement and his work published in 1992 have not shown more radical substantially than Yan Jiaqi's or Liu Binyan's and even Fang Lizhi's advocacy of a culture of democracy. Compared Liu Xiaobo's democratic ideas with Yan's, we discover that both of them adhere to a similar notion of democracy, stressing rationality and peaceful means as fundamental elements. What makes Liu Xiaobo distinguished from other scholars is the approach or strategy that he adopted in response to the external crisis or threat. In addition, Liu also contrasted himself with other three intellectuals by direct participation in the pro-democracy movement. Unlike other intellectuals, Liu practised what he preached.<sup>25</sup>

## **TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF LIU XIAOBO'S SOCIAL-POLITICAL IDEAS**

Compared Liu Xiaobo with other selected case studies in this research we may find that Liu is very different from the other three scholars in terms of his social location, generational location and political opportunity structure to which he has access. Being the youngest generation among the foregoing discussed intellectuals, Liu has unique personal experiences. Without any official position either in the party or in the state apparatus, Liu distinguishes himself from his fellow colleagues in the Chinese intellectual

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<sup>25</sup>I want to give thanks to Dr. Stephen Feuchtwang, Reader of Sociology, City University, London, for this idea was drawn from his critical comments.

circles. The following part will analyze how Liu's social location and political opportunity structure has affected his choice of strategies in response to the socio-historical context where he lives.

### Social Location, Economic-Political Opportunities and Intellectual Radicalism

Unlike other intellectuals, Liu Xiaobo has been a solitary figure in the Chinese circles for he has never been accepted and welcomed in the Chinese intellectual establishment even though he received wide support from the university students when he was lecturing in China. Having had no direct connection with any political patron, Liu could retain a certain amount of autonomy to criticize the state policies and political structure; but such autonomy was fragile especially when Liu was under attack by both officials and other intellectuals. Liu was thus at a disadvantage without *houtai*. Inevitably, his works were denounced by the state and also rejected by the intellectual circles.

Liu first came to national prominence in May 1986 when attending an international conference on Chinese literature in Shanghai. He lashed out boldly at current Chinese writing as backward, unimaginative, being controlled by the Party. After this occasion, he began to attract huge audiences. Criticizing the whole intellectual community of the post-Mao era for being satisfied with their works, Liu directly and forthrightly pointed out the problems in contemporary Chinese literary works.

"from the nostalgia for the 1950s and affirmation of the early years of Liberation, back further to a longing for the period of the Democratic Revolution (1930s and 1940s), moving gradually from that onwards a renewed affirmation of the educated youth in the countryside and those undergoing labour reform. Finally, one arrives at the celebration of traditional classical culture and a return to it" (Liu, 1986, quoted from Barme, 1990: 55)

Liu pointed out the activist roots of contemporary literature confronting the intellectual community which Liu identified not only as reactionary, retreating into traditionalism, but also suffocating to the creative spirit in literature. Liu emphasizes that the life blood of writers is the ability to produce creative writing.

"the wisdom of the age, the soul of a nation, the fortune-tellers of the human race. Their most important, indeed their sole destiny ... is to enunciate thoughts that are ahead

of their times. The vision of the intellectual must stretch beyond the range of accepted ideas and concepts of order; he must be adventurous, a lonely forerunner; only after he has moved on far ahead do others discover his worth ... he can discern the portents of disaster at a time of approaching obliteration". (Liu, 1988, quoted from Barne, 1990: 56)

With this conception of intellectual creativity, Liu openly criticized many intellectuals regardless of their seniority and prominence. In his work "Crisis of Literature", he directly pointed toward the problems of root-seeking literature and wound-literature (Liu, 1986). Besides, he also attacked *Heshang* for the reason that *Heshang* presents a message proclaiming China the strongest nation in the world. In Liu's eyes, this idea is typically arrogant, the expression of which reveals the Chinese people's under-estimation of its own weaknesses (Liu, 1990a: 55-56). To distinguish his position from other intellectuals, Liu comments,

"I can sum up what's wrong with Chinese writers in one sentence: They can't create themselves, they simply don't have the ability, because their very lives don't belong to them". (Quoted from Barne, 1990: 397)

The critical stance of Liu angered many intellectuals. He openly denounced the view of Liu Zaifu, the new godfather of literary theory, who in 1986 had praised the literary works of the post-Mao era. Liu also wrote a book debating with Li Zehou, a prominent Chinese philosopher. In this work, Liu pointed out problems in Li's proposal for the revival of tradition in order to save the country. To Liu, Li's ideas are a reactionary and dangerous retreat into tradition. Disagreeing with the view of Li Zehou that Chinese people cannot negate their own tradition without negating themselves, Liu emphasized self-examination and self-negation as a means for creating a new mind and independent thinking in the people. In contrast to Li Zehou's ideas, Liu Xiaobo conceived of a future China which rests upon a total transformation and opening to the outside world (Liu, 1988a).<sup>26</sup>

In addition to his critique of the Chinese literary realm, Liu also extends his criticisms to individual intellectuals. Liu attacked not only Liu Binyan personally for his

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<sup>26</sup>Liu stresses from time to time the importance of intellectual autonomy and professional independence which he considers as fundamental to intellectuals. Thus he rejected cooperation with other intellectuals in China and disassociated himself from the party leaders.

notion of "critical loyalty" but also criticized Fang Lizhi's reluctance to join the June Fourth Demonstrations. He also rejected openly what the so-called "elite" intellectuals had proposed during the pro-democracy movement of 1989 (see, Liu, 1992: 155). Dissatisfied with intellectuals' impotence and unwillingness to confront the autocratic rulers directly, Liu then took part in a hunger strike to emphasize his message that intellectuals should not rest on empty critique but should actively participate in social movements (Liu, 1992: 199-200). His concern for modernity and progress has directed Liu's thoughts to Western democracy. Having a strong conviction that theory and action must be an integral whole, Liu went back to China from the United States to participate in the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989. He was not only an active participant but also one of the "engineers" of the movement.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, he also condemned the response of the intellectual community to the death of Hu Yaobang. Defying other intellectuals' mourning of the dead "enlightened leaders" such as Hu and Zhou Enlai, the prime minister in Mao's era, Liu argued that it is not necessary to mourn those leaders since their destiny was determined by their passivity and reluctance to oppose repressive rulers. Liu maintained that if these "enlightened leaders" were independent, they could have stood to counteract those autocratic rulers. Arguing against the common view of Zhou Enlai as a good leader, Liu questioned the integrity of Zhou. Liu believed that if Zhou had been willing to restrict Mao, the dictatorial rule of Mao could have been curbed. Liu added that many of the so-called enlightened leaders of China were only playing roles as royal remonstrators, who had contributed to despotic politics in Chinese history (Liu, 1990a).

"do the Chinese constantly repeat the same tragedy (one starting with Qu Yuan's drowning in the Miluo River)? Why do the Chinese mourn people like Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, and Hu Yaobang as tragic heroes, while they forgetting such tragic figures as Wei Jingsheng?" (Liu, 1989)

Liu also condemned the egregious "cronyism" of the literati with his usual

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<sup>27</sup>It is suggested that the democratic thought and political ideas of Liu had significant impact on the student leaders during the movement. See Barne (1990) and Chong (1990) and my discussion on chapter 4. Liu (1992) also states clearly his personal contacts with the student leaders as their advisor.



directness.

"The famous in China are much taken with acting as benefactors of others who care for and suckle the unknown. They use a type of tenderness which is almost feminine to possess, co-opt, and finally asphyxiate you. This is one of the peculiarities of Chinese culture ... Some people have the talent to excel, but shying from the dangers of doing it alone, they instead seek out a cover (*Be Le*). They look for support, for security, so they can sleep easy; lunging into the bosom of some grand authority or other, and doze off in their warm embrace". (Liu, 1988, quoted from Barne, 1990: 81)

His intellectual radicalism and vehement critique of both the literary realm and individual intellectuals inevitably led to Liu's rejection by the Chinese intellectual establishment. Without any support from political patrons and without acceptance from the intellectual community, Liu became vulnerable and lonely and found himself rejected by the literary field. Wang Meng, the Party novelist and the Minister of Culture once commented on Liu (though he did not name Liu directly) that "[Liu] would lose his popularity as quickly as he gained it" (*Zhongguo wenhuabao*, 26 Nov, 1989). Liu Zaifu and Li Zehou, when discussing Liu Xiaobo's criticisms of his own ideas, made his rejection of Liu very clear even though Li did not state it openly.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Liu was condemned for his "extreme individualism" and criticized for his rude attitudes toward other intellectuals. Liu was attacked by the other intellectuals for his lack of regard for seniority general lack of respect for other intellectuals. They regarded Liu's open challenge to the leading intellectuals as a way to make himself more popular, a "dirty trick" perpetrated by an arrogant young man. I was also told by Su Xiaokang and Liu Binyan that the extremely critical outlook of Liu Xiaobo reflects the mentality of the younger generation of Chinese intellectuals. To a certain extent, Liu's popularity among university students also points out the fact that the Chinese youth nowadays no longer easily submit themselves to any authorities. Instead, they subject everything to questions, and are more concerned about their own interests rather than those of the collective whole. This line of reasoning is also consistent with the findings of Rosen's (1989, 1992)

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<sup>28</sup> Liu Xiaobo was criticized by different intellectuals in China after his critique of the root-seeking literature and some prominent Chinese intellectuals like Liu Binyan and Liu Zehou was published. Even though the above-mentioned scholars did not name Liu Xiaobo directly, their criticisms clearly pointed to Liu. For details, see Li Zehou's interview in Lin (1989: 259-262).

study of the recent value change of Chinese youth (see also chapter 4).<sup>29</sup>

By far the most harsh criticisms of Liu Xiaobo, have been from the cultural critics. Liu was condemned as a "cultural nihilist". He Xin, a 'cultural conservative' attacked Liu:

"I would like to remind my compatriots that behind the crises of radical anti-traditionalists and iconoclasts so popular today there is a hidden agenda which calls for another Cultural Revolution ... Amidst the miasma of cultural nihilism, radical-anti-traditionalism, as well as among the wrapped attitudes and extremism of some young intellectuals, if we sit back and consider things calmly and rationally we can discern in their proclamations many familiar shadows of the past. The difference is that the anti-traditionalism and cultural nihilism of those years marched under the banner of Marx and Mao Tse-tung [Zedong]; today it is hidden under the cloak of Freud and Nietzsche. The thing [the two currents of thought] have in common is their zealotry, their absurd theoretical framework, and their wrong-headed and distorted analysis of Eastern and Western culture. (It is here in particular that I suggest people examine and re-evaluate Liu Xiaobo's theories.)" (He Xin, 1988: 12, quoted from Barne, 1990: 83)

In the 1989 pro-democracy movement, Liu was further denounced by the state as the chief instigator of unorthodox thinking and the leader behind the scenes of the student demonstrations. His critical speeches and unique ideas earned him condemnation and imprisonment.<sup>30</sup> Even though Liu was well-received by university students, he was restricted by having no "background". Even earlier Liu had given open lectures at Beijing University on the eve of the student demonstrations in 1986-87 attended by large numbers of students. However, Liu got into trouble with the authorities because of the lectures and he had to stay out of the public scene for the next several months. This incident indicates to us that Liu was constrained by his "anti-establishment" position. Equally important, we also observe that Liu was conscious of his disadvantaged position in China. In his work (1992), Liu said that he thought for a about his personal security before he went back to China because he had published some articles critical of the

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<sup>29</sup>Su Xiaokang told me in an interview that he regarded Liu Xiaobo's anti-traditionalism as a challenge to the existing establishment. He also sees Liu's extreme position as typical of the utilitarian-individualism which has become popular among the Chinese youth though Liu definitely has more knowledge and a higher level of education than most other youths. Analyzing Liu's ideas, Su suggests that Liu's extreme political stand is the "product" of the cultural crisis in mainland China. The direct confrontation of ideological crisis, compounded by a deep-seated identity crisis, the Chinese people have therefore turned to the quest for individual interests. According to Su, the Liu Xiaobo phenomenon reflects the deep-down spiritual crisis or crisis of morality that is challenging China today (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>30</sup>For details of the condemnation of Liu Xiaobo from the CCP, see *Jiefang Yuebao*, (July, 1989: 67-68).

Chinese leaders and of the system.<sup>31</sup> Liu publicly admitted that he was frightened by the repressive rule of the CCP. Having been involved in the student protests of 1986-87, Liu was well-informed about his dangerous position. Condemned as the instigator of the anti-revolutionary movement, Liu felt insecure and considered leaving China in the midst of the crisis. He later expressed regret for not having done so (1992: 252). Arrested and convicted of anti-revolutionary acts, Liu was imprisoned by the CCP. During his imprisonment, Liu felt excessive pressure from his family and from society. During a visit in prison, Liu's father cried and begged him not to be stubborn, asking him to admit that he had done wrong in order to be released from prison. When he considered his wife and his small child, Liu concluded that he was acting irresponsibly, so he finally gave in and agreed to write a statement of repentance declaring that he had witnessed no massacre on the Tiananmen Square on June Fourth 1989. As one might anticipate, Liu's statement was criticized and he was condemned as a "big liar", "polluting" the noble nature of the movement; and he was labelled a traitor of democracy (Liu, 1992). Under strong social pressure, meant Liu had to rationalize what he had done in order to restore his public image.<sup>32</sup> Thus, it is clear that Liu is not really free from the particular context in which he lives. No matter how popular he was among university students partly because of his connections with an underground literary 'salon', Liu was eventually subject to external constraints. In spite of Liu's previous critical outlook and outspokenness, he has had to pay a heavy "cost" to remain as critical and even radical against the state. Having lost support, Liu therefore wrote to explain the impasse that he was confronting. He rationalized what he did, saying that what he has reported is genuine. He openly denounced the undemocratic acts of students, condemning also other intellectuals. He further subjected himself to scrutiny, admitting that he was in fear of repression and death.

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<sup>31</sup>For details of these articles, see the collected essays of Liu published in Liu, (1989c: 3-84).

<sup>32</sup>For details of his rationalization, see Liu (1992: 26-27). Such ideas can be easily found within the lines of his self-explanation in this work. Liu also plainly states his ambivalent feeling and his fears of losing public support and disgracing his public image for having written the statement of conviction. Because his conviction was under public scrutiny, he was condemned for telling lies. Under such circumstance, Liu therefore wrote to explain his position.

Liu's reflection (1992) reveals the difficult choice of Chinese intellectuals. On the one hand, he criticizes himself vehemently for his impotence and insufficient persistence to stand firm for what he really believes, feeling extremely guilty when he compares himself with Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming who are still imprisoned. On the other hand, he justifies his action by asserting that the protection of one's freedom has utmost importance. Feeling that his public image was being destroyed because of his statement of conviction, Liu uses the appeal that he was under the threat of death if he failed to cooperate with the CCP (Liu, 1992).<sup>33</sup> At this point, we can see that without any direct connections to political patrons and losing support from the Chinese academic establishment, Liu was isolated and found himself vulnerable. Despite his strategy in making himself popular and famous in the Chinese intellectual community, especially his strong appeal to the university students by means of attacking other scholars, Liu only found himself alienated from other intellectuals without any recognition from them. Adopting a relatively radical approach could suddenly render Liu with fame but he also paid the cost for being isolated from the establishment. This case study again suggests our hypothesis that Chinese intellectuals have not been free from the constraints imposed by their particular socio-political environment and their social locations. Alongside this, the hypothesis that intellectuals' access to socio-economic and political resources have, to some extent, shaped their intellectual radicalism is validated.

#### Educational Orientation, Intellectual Field and Intellectual Radicalism

The intellectual critique of Liu Xiaobo has been strongly influenced by his unique educational orientation. His exposure to works of major Western philosophers such as Rousseau, Nietzsche and St. Augustine shaped his world view. In his work *Sixiang zhimi yu renleizhimeng*, (The Mystery of Thought and the Dream of Mankind), he revises and evaluated the works of different philosophers, pointing out the limitations of mankind

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<sup>33</sup>Su Xiaokang commented that Liu Xiaobo was extremely individualistic. In order to justify himself, Liu has attempted in his 1992 book to cast aspersions on others as undemocratic (interview 1, Princeton, 1993).

and asking for repentance (Liu, 1990b: 43, 46-7). The main thrust of this work stresses the individuality and creativity of mankind. In addition, Liu also highlighted the fact that death makes people more realistic in viewing themselves. He cited the works of St. Augustine and Rousseau with particular emphasis on their repentance (Liu, 1990b: 1-58; 121-134; and 231-40), praising Augustine's deeper level of repentance. The *Confessions* are written in the form of a prayer in which Augustine perpetually gives praise and thanks to God. Recognizing his limitations and origin of sins inherent in mankind, Augustine offers his thanks and gratitude to the Almighty God. In *The City of God*, Augustine identifies the sins of mankind, arguing that the only hope of mankind rests in offering a faithful heart to God. It is, therefore, necessary, that men confess their sins and repent.<sup>34</sup> After reading Augustine's works, Liu stressed the importance of repentance.

"The tragedy of man rests neither in fate nor society or other external factors. The tragedy of man rests solely in man himself. We must admit the original sins in our life; original sin is disaster; whilst our life is the process of disaster." (Liu, 1990b: 128, my translation)

Liu admiringly echoed the ideas of Augustine that self-doubt is necessary. He approvingly adopted the stance of Augustine's genuine, honest attitude and his spirit of self-criticism.

In addition, Liu is very much influenced by Nietzsche, particularly his view of tragedy and solitude. Liu admires the uncompromising attitudes and boldness of the German philosopher. The influence of Nietzsche's thought upon Chinese intellectuals is not new but dates back to the May Fourth era as indicated in chapter two. In the late 1980s, there was a great intellectual debate over culture, the *wenhuare* (cultural fever) in mainland China. In this debate, significant prominence was given to Nietzsche scholarship. The Academy of Chinese Culture, the first non-official institution, was established in 1986 and published a paper discussing the affinities of Zhuang Zi and Nietzsche by the Taiwanese philosopher Chen Guying (Chen Guying, 1986). In addition,

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<sup>34</sup>For details of the works of Augustine, see, for example, Liu (1990: 121-133).

Zhang Rulun from the Chinese Academy of Social Science and An Yanming of Fudan University also criticized China's contemporary moral crisis in light of Nietzsche's ideas (Zhang Rulun, 1985 & An Yanming, 1987) As Bloom, Stauth, Turner, and others note, the impact of Nietzsche on Western Marxists, particularly "critical theorists" such as Marcuse and Adorno has been pervasive. The people living in mainland China also have been exposed to Western or neo-Marxist thought, including Nietzsche (see, An Yanming, 1985) I have also pointed out in the preceding discussion (chapters 3 and 4), that since 1978 Chinese students and intellectuals have been exposed to different Western thinkers like Karl Popper, Rousseau, Freud and Nietzsche, especially their ideas on nihilism and individualism (see, Kelly, 1991a; Chong, 1990; Rosen, 1990). Such exposure has influenced the whole intellectual community. Even *Liaowang*, the official weekly admitted the pervasive influence of the West on the Chinese intellectual community. One article, which divided the reform program in the post-Mao era into four stages, highlights the stage of the "Will to Power" under which students felt disillusioned with the reforms especially when confronting "unhealthy trends" within the CCP.

"In their pondering, some students turned negative ... Even more pondered on a number of irrational phenomena and attributed them all to a single notion, expressed in the word 'power'. Power was the one thing necessary, the one thing you could not do without, if you wanted to realize the value of human life. For this reason Nietzsche's theory of the 'Will to Power' rapidly gained popularity among the students. A 'Nietzsche' fever developed. The works of Nietzsche became best sellers. Such sayings as 'become yourself', 'don't follow me', 'the reevaluation of all values', 'the superman' became favourite slogans often heard on their lips." (*Liaowang Zhoukan*, May 1989: 18-20, trans. in *Inside China Mainland*, July 1989: 23-25)

The official acknowledgement of the impact of Nietzsche indicates that the situation had become so acute that the official press could no longer ignore it. A Marxist critic also observed that many young people had been keen on western philosophy and referred to themselves as "Freud fans", "Schopenhauer fans" and "Nietzsche fans" (*Banyuetan*, 12 Dec. 1987, trans in *Inside China Mainland*, Nov. 1987: 6-7).

Liu Xiaobo's democratic thought was formulated in this socio-cultural environment. Liu, modelling after Nietzsche, internalized the notion of "individualism as moral revolt" (Kelly, 1991a), deepening his critique and dissidence. Like Lu Xun, Liu

very much admired the thought of Nietzsche, and was particularly captured by his notion of "superior individualism"; Liu praises Lu's critical attitude toward the feudalistic and autocratic rule in traditional society. Liu consciously attacks this tradition,

"... we can then see why Lu Xun so glorified Nietzsche, the theory of evolution, and Symbols of Suffering. Nietzsche was the smasher of idols, the symbol of individual freedom; the theory of evolution is the replacement of the old by the new, the symbol of free competition; and Symbols of Suffering is sensual life, the symbol of subconscious distress and the tragedy of existence...In contemporary China Lu Xun-style extremism and ruthlessness is especially needed, especially in dialogue with traditional culture ..."  
(Quoted from Kelly, 1991a: 19)<sup>35</sup>

Seeing the different nature of anti-traditionalism between the post-Mao intellectuals and the May Fourth scholars, Liu praises the spirit of critique throughout the May Fourth era.<sup>36</sup> He also sees the need to revive such a spirit.

"Summing up the experience of the May Fourth Movement, the result reached should not be an attitude of compromise with the traditional culture, but the start of a long term, thorough-going anti-feudal enlightenment movement ... The anti-tradition stemming from Lu Xun must be able profoundly and broadly to transcend the "May Fourth" New Culture movement by Lu Xun." (Quoted from Kelly, 1991a: 19)

This invocation of Lu Xun imbued Liu with courage to criticize the Chinese people in general and the intellectuals in particular. His internalized belief in Lu and Nietzsche had also forced Liu to condemn the Chinese traditional values, especially attacking anti-democratic populism (*minbenzhuyi*), the Confucian personality (*Kong-Yan renye*), and the harmony of Heaven and Man (*tianrenheyi*) which is embedded in Confucianism (Liu, 1990a; see also Kelly, 1991a).

Unlike the other three scholars, Liu was isolated from the intellectual circles. Without support from other intellectuals, Liu could not benefit from any "social force" or "intellectual force" created within the intellectual field except his appeal to the university students. It suffices to us that social location and field that intellectuals occupy or belong should have significant impact on their coping strategies.

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<sup>35</sup>For details of Lu Xun's anti-traditionalism, see, for example, Goldman (1977) and Lin (1979).

<sup>36</sup>Liu argues that the post-Mao intellectuals have not really abandoned out-dated Chinese tradition. In his eyes, the post-Mao intellectuals have tried to establish another autocratic regime in terms of traditional political thought. See Liu (1990a: 1-54) and see also Liu (1986).

## Generational Location and Intellectual Radicalism

In addition to his social location, the iconoclastic totalism of Liu Xiaobo has been greatly influenced by his particular generational location. Compared with Yan Jiaqi, Fang Lizhi and Liu Binyan, Liu is the youngest scholar, having been born in 1955 in northeast China.<sup>37</sup> His youth was spent mainly in Changchun with a three-year stint from 1970-73 in Inner Mongolia, during two years of which he was an "educated youth" because of his having completed middle school. In 1976-77, Liu was employed by the Changchun Construction Company. In light of the generational location scheme, Liu belongs to the sixth generation, the Cultural Revolution generation. During that Revolution, Liu was an energetic and active participant who upheld Mao Zedong Thought. Being one of the generation of Red Guards, Liu was involved in the movement attacking intellectuals, the "class enemy" and the so-called "counter-revolutionary". Liu personally experienced the prolonged struggle in the oppressive atmosphere during the Cultural Revolution.

"In the high tide of the Cultural Revolution, I was only eleven years of age. Aside from those revolutions that I was too small to attend, I was eager to participate in whatever kinds of activities. Up to now, I still deeply remember the rhythm, melody and dancing steps of 'Loyalty Dance' (*Zhongzimu*). Not only can I frequently speak of the poetry and speeches of Chairman Mao but also remember clearly almost all of the slogans of the revolution. My brother was a red guard, involved in a series of struggles and fights; my parents also joined the Revolution and they represented two opposing groups. I still remember they always debated at home. Some children, similar to my age, and I attacked the rich, the rightists and the bourgeois element. Once, I made an old guard of the former Kuomintang (KMT) kneel down before me, begging for my forgiveness, and crying for 'learning from the young red guards' and 'salute to the young red guards'". (Liu, 1990a: 60, my translation)

Speaking of the nature of the Revolution, Liu highlights,

"The Cultural Revolution was full of class struggle. The intellectuals were not only attacked and purged by the workers, peasants and army but also attacked by other intellectuals". (Ibid)

Within such a socio-political context Liu's youth was devoted to tides of class struggle. Like other youth of his age, Liu believed that China's future rested in the realization of what Chairman Mao had said. Liu makes it abundantly clear that the

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<sup>37</sup>I base the biography of Liu on the material from the work of Barne, (1990).



experiences in childhood had tremendous impact on his development. He said that the "big blow" in childhood had made a physical and emotional impression on him. His pessimistic world view is probably the result of this "big blow" (Liu, 1990b: 4).

In the midst of the Revolution, Liu was very glad because it gave him freedom to do whatever he pleased. He said in an interview that he felt really emancipated during the Revolution since he was free from the formal educational process. Besides, he was extremely grateful to the Revolution because it exposed him not only to Marx's work but also to the works of the major Western philosophers.<sup>38</sup> Liu's direct confrontation with an intense ideological crisis had made his psychology exceedingly complicated, involving a mixed feeling having been "cheated" coupled with an intense feeling of guilt. As Li and Schwarcz (1983-4) suggested, the sixth generation of Chinese intellectuals was suddenly and thoroughly awakened after having weathered interruptions in their lives and having experienced every conceivable kind of hardship. Accordingly, Liu is definitely one of them.

"Politically outraged, emotionally wounded, intellectually doubt-ridden, they are reflective, full of feeling in their approach to the contemporary situation. They may be pessimistic, hesitant about the future, unable to grasp any prospect with certainty". (Li & Schwarcz, 1983-4: 52)

Despite the dreadful experiences in the Cultural Revolution, Liu found some positive impact on him; that is, the Revolution had forced him to search for a way out. Thereafter, Liu subjected everything to doubt, leading him to have a deep self-reflection and self-consciousness.

"The quest for democracy in the post-Mao era is the direct consequence of the Cultural Revolution. Because the Cultural Revolution has unmasked the myth of personal dictatorship and personality cult, it has shaken the fundamental hope for a national saviour. Without the extremely autocratic politics in the Revolution, there would not be the consciousness of democracy of today; without the absolute and monolithic ideological control during the Revolution, there would not be the quest for emancipation of thought of today; without the blind faith, there would not be today's general doubt and scepticism. The Cultural Revolution speeds the demolition of the feudalistic cultural tradition and facilitates the self-consciousness of today". (Liu, 1990b: 52-3, my translation)

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<sup>38</sup>For details of how Liu described the evolution of his thought, see his interview with Jin Zhong in *Emancipation Monthly* (Dec. 1988: 59, 60, 64) and Liu's work in *Press Freedom Herald* (no. 11, 30 Sep. 1989).

Concerning the implications of the Revolution, Liu asks people to be alert to the revival of feudalism and to take individual responsibility for the dehumanized life of the past (Ibid, 53).

When describing his philosophy of life, Liu adopts a positive view toward a pessimistic life (*Jiefang Yuebao*, July, 1989: 62). Liu frankly said in an interview that "I am pessimistic toward the whole of mankind, but I do not intend to escape from this reality. Even though I am confronted by series of tragedies, I remain to struggle, to counteract" (Ibid, 61). Realizing his youth had been lost, Liu studied hard to compensate for his "deficiency". He enrolled in the Chinese Department of Jilin University and graduated in 1982. Upon his graduation, he was admitted to the Beijing Normal University where he taught and undertook his postgraduate studies. In 1988, Liu completed his studies and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. During the post-Mao years, Liu learned major works of Western Philosophers, adopting different intellectual ideas from the outside world. Liu also adopted Western standards to attack Chinese tradition. Like many intellectuals of his generation, Liu is not only particularly critical of the cultural system but also extremely radical against the existing social and political structure.

According to Li and Schwarcz (1983-4), the sixth generation of intellectuals in modern China regains the courage and independence the former generation lost. They are more critical, vehemently attacking the feudalistic state-socialism. Like the second generation, the sixth generation of intellectuals subjects every thing to doubt, trying to reevaluate rather than accept matters unquestioningly. Their works demonstrate strong concern for human values and stress the importance of individuality. They adhere to liberalism and have tried to set the course for the development of China. They are exploring new patterns, trying to be the model-builders, and welcoming ideas from the outside world. Being one of these intellectuals, Liu has attempted to experiment with truth after commemorating the sorrows of his lost youth. He has tried to develop himself as an independent intellectual. Chen Jun, one of Liu's good friends, argues that Liu and

the Red Guard intellectuals are different from the former generations because they have become really independent and free from the influence of the CCP (Chen Jun, 1989: 63). Liu Binyan, in spite of some disagreement with Liu Xiaobo, also pins his hope on these sixth-generation intellectuals, considering them as distinguished from the former generations. Having experienced the prolonged dark age, these intellectuals are more knowledgeable about social reality in China (Liu Binyan, 1990a). Having the characteristics of the Red Guard generation, Liu's intellectual radicalism and political thought is closely associated with his particular generational location.

Again, we have to point out that even though most of the sixth generation of Chinese intellectuals were brought up against a similar socio-historical context, they may have adopted different strategies or approaches to cope with their environments. As the coming chapter is going to discuss how the sixth generation Chinese intellectuals react differently to their socio-political circumstances, individual variations and interpretations can be analyzed in the light of Bourdieu's notion of strategy. Unlike Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao, two prominent Sixth Generation intellectuals, who adopted moderate approach to expand their influence over the public sphere by establishing independent social research institutes to influence the state policy on the one hand; and gained cooperation from the reformers in the Party without making themselves totally detached from the establishment on the other (for details, see, Black & Munro, 1993), Liu Xiaobo chose a different path by means of radical strategy to make himself well-known in China. Having fame and "name" in the Chinese intellectual circles Liu hoped to develop his own field in contrast with the dominant values. Seen from this light, the complicated nature of sociology of knowledge is demonstrated, revealing the dynamic between social structure and social agency. In conclusion, even though people are structurally and institutionally bound, they still retain certain level of autonomy to choose what kinds of strategies or approaches in response to the external stimuli or threats. Without appreciating such an interactive and dynamic process, we cannot develop a fuller picture of what sociology of knowledge is about.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE INTELLECTUALS IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

Currently, it has been suggested that intellectuals have played the most fundamental role in the transformation of state socialist societies; such as Hungary in 1989-1990, the former USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia (see, Konrad & Szelenyi, 1991). With the erosion of bureaucratic domination and the decline of the old elite, scholars have decided that intellectuals are the only viable candidates for the new ruling class. The emergence of intellectuals as a "New Class" has been a controversial issue in the sociology of intellectuals.<sup>1</sup> Even though it is not the focus of this research to examine whether the post-Mao intellectuals have emerged as a new class, some of the central issues raised in the New Class debate are relevant here<sup>2</sup> insofar as they involve the structural position of intellectuals in social reproduction and how they emerge as a New Class dominating politics and society. Szelenyi (1979) proposed his idea of New Class in the late 70's to depict the rise of the intelligentsia in the Eastern European socialist countries. He argued that a new dominant class of intelligentsia was in the process of formation. In state socialist societies, according to Szelenyi, redistribution is the main

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<sup>1</sup>Discussions on new class date back to the 1870. Michail Bakunin coined the term "New Class" around 1870 in his book *The Knoto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution*. When discussing the scenario of Marxist socialism, he pointed out the reign of scientific intelligence and Bakunin's ideas of "New Class" was reprinted in Krimerman & Perry (1966). The Russian-Polish radical Jan Makhaisky also propounded the concept that a new class, represented by a group of "white hands" with their "intellectual capital", had arisen to exploit manual labour through socialism. M. Djilas (1957), a former close lieutenant of Marshall Tito, recognized in a similar vein the rise of a ruling class which was dominated by the bureaucrats. Gouldner (1979) distinguished by the "critical" educated strata in scientific, cultural and social employment from the old-style managers. Szelenyi (1979) believed that a new class was based on teleological knowledge known as "redistributor" had arisen. The redistributor of state socialism claims to operate within the framework of "substantive rationality", the new society is one in which *teleos* dominates *techne*, where an "intelligentsia" occupies a dominant position in the social structure. There have been diverse interpretations of the new class. For details, see, for example, Podhoretz (1972); Bruce-Briggs (1979); Szelenyi (1979; 1991); Held (1986); Bell (1979) and Frenzel-Zagorska & K. Zagorski (1989).

<sup>2</sup>Szelenyi (1988/89) suggests that there are three waves of New Class theories. (I) The first wave of theorizing fundamentally touched on the question of agency, asking who acted to form the New Class (see, Krimerman & Perry, 1966). (II) The second generation of New Class theories concentrated attention on the question of structural position, for example what positions New Class agents occupy in the system of social reproduction so as to qualify as a new dominant class (see, Szelenyi, 1980; Djilas, 1957 and Cliff, 1979). (III) The third wave mainly investigated the changing nature of knowledge, arguing that a new type of knowledge has emerged to influence politics and society in general. It can be regarded as a "teleocratic project" since the "knowledge dimension" is stressed (see, Gouldner, 1979; Bell, 1979).

mechanism which guarantees expropriation. When people control the mechanism of redistribution, they thus become a dominant class. New Class is emerging because those who are producers have little control of the products while the redistributors control the redistribution of the products. Thus, an antagonistic relationship is provoked when the position of intellectuals is on the rise, especially in state socialism which is characterized by rational redistribution. In Szelenyi's view, the more rational the redistribution becomes, the more significant the intelligentsia will be because more professional, technical and teleological knowledge is required (Szelenyi, 1979). In his later writings, Szelenyi pointed out forthrightly some mistakes that he made in his early New Class theory. The socio-structural changes in the East European countries did not fulfil Szelenyi's early anticipation. Neither his predicted scenario that the intelligentsia would unite with the bureaucrats to form a new ruling class nor the united front between the intelligentsia and the public had formed. Therefore, he had to modify his thesis, admitting that he failed to paint an all-encompassing picture and decided to narrow the focus to a critical (or reflexive) sociology of intellectuals (Szelenyi, 1991).

Such a change has led Szelenyi to ask (1) Do intellectuals have power aspirations? If yes, in what ways can they use knowledge to attain power of their own? and (2) To what extent do self-interests and, specifically, power aspirations of intellectuals affect --- if they affect at all --- the nature of knowledge that is being produced, processed, and disseminated by intellectuals?<sup>3</sup> Szelenyi's later assertion is similar to that of Gouldner (1979), pointing out the interaction between the manipulation of cultural capital and domination. His main hypothesis is that "knowledge class theories or other radically self-reflexive theories of knowledge-power were theoretical reflections of such 'projects' of intellectuals to promote their power aspirations; these theories were falsified by history because these projects were defeated in the West and in Eastern Europe" (quoted from Szelenyi, 1991: 363). However, the recent development in the post-communist countries such as the disintegration of the political order, the decline of the state's economic

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<sup>3</sup>These questions are cited in Szelenyi (1991: 362).

monopoly and the rise of a bourgeoisie proper have inevitably caused radical change in both political and social structure (for details, see, Szelenyi, 1991). Because Szelenyi believes that intellectuals will play a crucial role in the era of post-communism, he has turned his attention to the exploration of the relationship between knowledge and power or knowledge and interest in order to derive a clearer picture of intelligentsia in post-communist transformation.<sup>4</sup>

Using the foregoing assumptions as analytic tools, this chapter is going to examine the changing relationship between the state and the post-Mao intellectuals. In particular, special attention is concentrated on investigating whether the socio-structural transformation in post-Mao society has facilitated these intellectuals' rise to power. We will examine the three major dimensions in class formation. First, one needs "agents" who are able and willing to occupy a new class position. Second, new socio-economic positions must be possessed by these agents. Third, a new kind of consciousness must be developed in order to consolidate the new class position.<sup>5</sup> We are going to examine whether the post-Mao intellectuals have fulfilled these criteria to expand their control on the public sphere and to assert their intellectual autonomy in light of these dimensions.

### **A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS**

The growth of intellectual dissidence has indicated a new kind of consciousness shared by the post-Mao intellectuals marked by a growing awareness of the importance of enlightenment, intellectual autonomy and professional status. There has been a revival of the May Fourth ideal of "*qimeng*" (enlightenment) in the post-Mao era (Cheng, 1990; Goldman, 1987).<sup>6</sup> Fang Lizhi, Yan Jiaqi and Liu Binyan continue to question the prejudices and superstitions of their bureaucratic superiors. Though they have been condemned as "unpatriotic" by the Communist state, their own notion of criticism can be designated as critical patriotism or critical loyalty. Nowadays, they try to employ both

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<sup>4</sup>Habermas (1971) argues in the same vein that there is a strong relationship between knowledge and interest.

<sup>5</sup>I get this insight from Szelenyi (1988/89).

<sup>6</sup>For a fuller discussion of the May Fourth Movement as a Chinese Enlightenment, see Schwarcz (1986).

Chinese values and non-Chinese methods to highlight China's backwardness in the modern world and to point out the Party's share of responsibility for its predicament. They drew from the experiences of the Northern European countries (Fang), Eastern European countries (Liu) and Western countries (Yan) to condemn the authoritarian regime of Communist China. More importantly, they have no longer confined their attention and activities to their campuses but directed their attention to national affairs. These critical patriots refuse to see their homeland as unique in the world. Rather, they realize that the advancement of the Western world and Japan can bring them some experience and teach them good lessons applicable to their own modernization. As Schwarcz suggested,

"[the contemporary intellectuals] believe that the gain of technological modernization will not be secured unless and until the enlightenment movement is allowed finally to challenge the tenacity of feudal habits of mind" (Schwarcz, 1986a:253).

The critique and dissidence of these intellectuals has been significant to contemporary Chinese politics and society. Their independent thinking is revealed through their intellectual radicalism. Unlike their predecessors, they not only criticize policies of their country but also denounce official ideology. In the Mao era, they identified with the Marxist ideals; but nowadays, they talk only of the myth of a Communist utopia. They have begun to look for a new identity. Moreover, Fang Lizhi, Liu Binyan, and Yan Jiaqi point out different types of crisis in post-Mao China and advocate autonomy for intellectuals and freedom for the people. With an intense sense of ideological crisis, these intellectuals have turned to the outside world looking for an alternate path for China (see foregoing chapters; see also Rubin, 1987; Wager, 1987; T. Gold, 1990; Calhoun, 1991; Tang Tsou, 1991; and Cheek, 1992).

These post-Mao intellectuals revive questions of national identity and national survival which go back to the Westernization Movement and the Reforms of the late 19th century. Their questions no longer deal with how to transform China technologically; but more significantly, they raise the fundamental question of how to modernize people's minds. I also find that the critique and dissidence of the contemporary Chinese

intellectuals differ from those of the traditional literati. The traditional literati rarely attacked the administrative apparatus and political structure (Chang Hao, 1989: chapter 1-3) while the post-Mao critical intellectuals have broken with the old tradition by going beyond the permitted boundary. They have touched on the taboo area by attacking socialist ideals and system.

Su Shaozhi, a former Director of the Marxism-Leninism Institute at the Chinese Academy of Social Science, denounced the orthodox interpretation of Marxism and claimed that Marxism should be interpreted with special reference to the particular socio-historical context of China. He also asked for a more scientific and flexible interpretation of Marxism (Brugger & Kelly, 1990).<sup>7</sup>

Wang Ruowang (one of the intellectuals denounced during the anti-spiritual pollution campaign)<sup>8</sup> publicly exposed the fact that socialist alienation existed in Communist China and exhorted people to study the capitalist system (Rubin, 1987). Wang Ruoshui, a leading reformist theoretician, confronted the 'abyss' of the regime's moral bankruptcy and sought gradually to redevelop the Marxist edifice (Brugger & Kelly, 1990). As Liu Binyan began to see the myth of the socialist ideals, he turned to condemn the Chinese Communist Party (*The Nineties*, July, 1991: 66-70; *Zhengming*, March, 1990: 87-88; June, 1991:64-66). The above-mentioned intellectuals have maintained a marxist position to criticize state socialism practised in mainland China, pointing out the discrepancy between socialist ideals and the existing "model" implemented in mainland China. They have never taken off their marxist glasses in their conceptualization of social reality.

In contrast, the younger generation of Chinese intellectuals (such as the red Guard intellectuals) have adopted a non-marxist approach in seeing things. Having experienced

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<sup>7</sup>Su's open support of the student demonstrations in 1989 inevitably made him one of the targets attacked by the CCP. Now in the United States, he continues to reevaluate Marxism and to press for democratization in China. For details of Su's ideas, see, Su (1988; 1992).

<sup>8</sup>Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign is one of the anti-intellectual campaigns in the post-Mao era in which intellectuals like Bai Hua, Wang Ruoshui and Wang Ruowang were attacked because of their open proclamation of alienation in socialist China. Their expression of genuine feeling and critical evaluation of the Cultural Revolution made them the victims of the campaign. For details, see, for example, Goldman (1987).



dreadful Cultural Revolution with all its hardships, these intellectuals are consumed by a search for a new vision of the world and of the self. According to Li & Schwarcz (1983/84), this generation of intellectuals not only commemorates the sorrows of their lost youth but also quest for freedom to experiment with truth. The distinctiveness of these intellectuals lies with their deeper sense of reflection on their social role. Not limiting their horizon to their mother country, these intellectuals show their concern for the outside world, seeking a higher kind of knowledge and aspiring to higher goals for mankind.

Wu Jian, an intellectual who is living in mainland China, published an article overseas arguing that Chinese intellectuals should assert their rights to express their ideas since the nobility of intellectuals is to act as social conscience. Unlike the literati, Wu interprets the foundation of such a conscience as based on individuality and rationality of intellectuals. Rejecting the role as remonstrators, Wu conceives the role of intellectuals as distinct from others because intellectuals are independent and critical, not relating themselves to any political party. Unlike politicians, the fate of intellectuals should not be linked with success or failure of political struggle. Preserving their social conscience, Wu believes that Chinese intellectuals can be free from the dilemma: whether to support or reject the political authority (Wu Jian, 1993: 72-74). To make his ideas more explicit, Wu Jian has also supported an internal transformation of Chinese intellectuals, converting from the literati tradition to the formation of independent personality through which they can really retain their autonomy. In the same vein, Ruan Ming (the former secretary of Hu Yaobang and one of the intellectuals who has been in exile since the 1989 Incident) suggests that intellectuals who are willing to sacrifice their souls can get political life; if they are unwilling to surrender their souls, they must be prepared to sacrifice their political interests and even their life (Ruan Ming, 1992, cited in Su Wei, 1993: 34). Although the younger generation of Chinese intellectuals believe they must be critical and independent, they have become more cautious of intellectual autonomy. Liu Binyan told me that he believes the dependent and reliant role of intellectuals is a function of

their lack of economic independence. Unlike the younger generation, Liu and the older intellectuals were more careful to observe the political climate for appropriate times to speak their minds (Interview 4, Princeton, 1994). In addition to their concern for the relationship between the state and intellectuals, these intellectuals have also aspired to a higher level of goals concerning the whole of mankind.

### **READY AND WILLING AGENTS**

Sixth Generation of Chinese intellectuals possess the qualities necessary to become the agents for development of the "New Class". Highly intelligent and well educated, they have been exposed to social, cultural, and political philosophies and theories from all parts of the world. They are willing to evaluate the Chinese culture and political system in light of more than the restricted perspective of officially sanctioned ideas. They possess the boldness necessary to criticize the political establishment. Most importantly, they are willing to fill the role of "New Class" leadership both in intellectual production and in the assumption of administrative duties. Some of these Sixth Generation intellectuals have been discussed in earlier chapters. Others will be discussed here.

#### Wang Juntao

Wang Juntao, the editor of *Beijing Spring* during the Democracy Wall Movement and one of the supporters of the pro-democracy movement of 1989, was accused of instigating the 1989 student demonstrations and sentenced to imprisonment. Evaluating the social position of Chinese intellectuals, particularly the relationship with the state, Wang strongly stresses the importance of intellectual independence. Even though Wang had access to better social and economic opportunities because his father was in the Party, he turned away from such a patron-client network and decided to work independently. His wife, Hua Xiaotin, said that Wang preferred a life of poverty to rely on *Guanxi* (network) and *Houtai* (patron) (Hua, 1992) because of his perception of the social role of intellectuals. Right after the Cultural Revolution, Wang began to conceive that Chinese intellectuals should not only be independent of any political patron in order

to be intellectually autonomous. To achieve this goal intellectuals must live by their own means. Wang, with his close friend Chen Zhiming (also accused of inciting the students during the June Fourth Incident), supports the view that Chinese intellectuals should strive to have economic independence in order to maintain their intellectual autonomy and professional independence.

Wang has paid more than lip-service to his convictions. From 1984 onwards, he, Jiang Hong, Li Shengping and Chen Zhiming established the first independent social science research organization in China. The ultimate goal of this a storehouse of thought was to produce real thinkers, not merely designers (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992). With the formation of their research group, Wang and Chen successfully organized nation-wide opinion polls and other research on Chinese people's social and political values.<sup>9</sup> Well before the June-Fourth Incident, Chen and Wang finished conducting research on the views of the Beijing people toward the student demonstrations of 1989 and of the present regime (see, chapter 4 and *Contemporary*, 30 Dec, 1989). Moreover, Wang and Chen also involved themselves in the publication of *Storehouse of Twentieth-Century Writing and Translations of the Works of Famous Foreign Thinkers*<sup>10</sup> through which they introduced plurality of ideas. Believing that genuine intellectuals should develop a solid knowledge base and uphold their conscience for serving the people, Chen and Wang thus put their belief into practice.<sup>11</sup>

Since the late 70's, Wang has consistently supported democracy and protection of human rights. In the 1980 election of the People's Congress in Beijing's Haiding district,

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<sup>9</sup>The proper name of Wang's research group is the Beijing Social and Economic Sciences Research Institute. Their research projects include "Investigation into Chinese political culture and political psychology"; nationwide samplings for the *Economic Daily*, and creation of the human resources evaluation and testing centre, developing a system to improve civil service in China, organizing academic conferences, and conducting other independent research activities in mainland China. The work of this Institute received critical praise from scholars both inside China and abroad. For details, see, for example, *Asia Watch* (June 10, 1992).

<sup>10</sup>These publications had tremendous influence on the intellectual community in mainland China, especially the discussion of "cultural crisis", by providing intellectuals with new insights in seeing things.

<sup>11</sup>All Sixth Generation intellectuals believe, to some extent, that it is necessary to assert an independent position by means of developing their "cultural capital" is important. Chen Zhiming and Wang Juntao recognized the importance of professional autonomy in the early eighties when they engaged in the publication of *Beijing Spring*. Chen stated "since we considered that our most important contributions to the future were in research, planning and construction; that we needed to continue to enrich our scholarship" (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992).

Wang expressed aspirations for political freedom, a better political system and democratic rights. In a speech he pointed out the importance of restructuring the relationship between the Party and the state, emphasized that people's voices should be heard and insisted that proper measures should be established to protect people's civic rights. The basic political attitude of Wang can be exemplified by his slogans: "The past decade is the decade to be criticized, while the decade to come will be a time of construction" (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992: 5).<sup>12</sup> In particular, Wang believes that China's political reforms should include universal suffrage, checks and balances, public participation and consolidation of the legal system; but he also believes that the overturn of the CCP would do more harm than good to China. Even though Wang and Chen criticized dictatorial rule and bureaucratic practice in the Mao era, they still supported the reform programme initiated by Deng Xiaoping. In order to create a favourable environment for deepening reforms in China, they consider stability as the pre-requisite.<sup>13</sup> Their willingness to cooperate with the state does not imply that they fall into the same trap again that their forerunners did. Because they see the monolithic rule of the CCP as the only existing socio-political reality in China, they regard the most appropriate way to initiate immediate change in China is to work within the present system. Setting themselves apart from other "established intellectuals", Wang and Chen have persistently asserted the significance of intellectual independence. Chen Zhiming makes his position crystal clear:

"I believe that the relationship between the government and the stratum of intellectuals needs to be radically changed. The two must develop independently, recognize the common areas in their goals, each shoulder their particular responsibilities, each accord the other sufficient respect, contend but not clash and cooperate but remain independent of each other." (Quoted from *Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992: 7)

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<sup>12</sup>Wang's close collaborator, Chen, suggested that Wang had put forward several dozen constructive ideas for political and economic reform in the early eighties. Since then, 70-80% of Wang's ideas were adopted or were in the process of implementation while the remaining 20-30% would certainly be put into practice during the nineties (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992: 5). If we scrutinize Zhao Zhiyang's proposal for reforms addressed in the 13th National Congress of the CCP, we can observe that many ideas of Zhao are similar to those of Wang. See Zhao Zhiyang (1987).

<sup>13</sup>Early in the eighties, Chen Zhiming held the belief that what China needed was deepening reform. Offering his support to reforms in China, Chen hoped that reform programmes could consolidate the centre's reformist direction and could train a generation of new political talent. He also believed that reforms could help liberate people's thinking and it could strengthen the National People's Congress system.

From 1987 onwards, Wang and Chen encouraged other intellectuals to work within the existing system.<sup>14</sup>

However, their adherence to a more pragmatic approach, especially stressing that "intellectuals should combine passion for reform with steady progress, adopting a rational, well-intentioned, cautious and responsible attitude", was criticized by other intellectuals as "neo-conservative" or "fundamental conservatism".

With a conciliatory attitude toward the CCP, the response of Chen and Wang to the student demonstrations of 1989 is note-worthy. Wang and Chen asked the students to make national stability their highest priority, and they prevented the people working with them from getting directly involved in the movement. They believed that there was an acute need for the intellectuals to stand forward and speak in a rational voice in order that stability could be maintained, and they encouraged the students to get compromise with the state instead of engaging in direct confrontation through hunger strike (For details, see, Chen Zhiming, 1992: 361-442).

#### Peng Rongchong

Peng Rongchong, one of the intellectuals was exiled after the June-Fourth Incident of 1989, suggests that Chinese intellectuals should establish a close link with the people in the civil society in order to realize the goal of intellectual autonomy. Comparing the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989 with some of the pro-democracy movements in Eastern Europe, Peng observes that Chinese intellectuals have had little practical experience in organizing and mobilizing the masses. He also points out that the fundamental problem facing the Chinese intellectual community today is their naively keeping the literati traditional role of royal remonstrators rather than to adopt critical and independent role like that assumed by their counterparts in the West or in Eastern Europe. They should take the initiative to establish an independent organization to mobilize various social forces in order to gain a better bargaining position in negotiating with the

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<sup>14</sup>Chen Zhiming, in his statement of defense, stated clearly that "making full use of the existing political system, employing, digesting and perfecting it. We opposed the blind pursuit of a new system and the creation of a completely new structure" and he also considered "political order and stability" as significant to the further development of China (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992 : 9).

state (Peng, 1990: 42-43).<sup>15</sup>

### Su Wei

The same kind of self-awareness is also revealed from writings of Su Wei, one of the intellectuals who signed the petition for the release of Wei Jingsheng and who supported the pro-democracy movement in 1989. Su suggests that the fundamental cause for the vulnerable position of Chinese intellectuals is their subordination to the state. Su points out that Chinese intellectuals must transform themselves in terms of their social position and their role perception. Su criticizes those intellectuals who are living in mainland China for their greed for political power and reliance on political patrons and he condemns their support of Deng Xiaoping's advocacy for further economic reform before the 14th Communist Party Congress, considering such allegiance as blind loyalty. Questioning such "loyalty", Su points out the fact that Deng Xiaoping broke party regulations<sup>16</sup> and his own promises of "rule by law", "doing things according to democratic procedures" and "clearing the way for the younger generation" (Su Wei, 1993: 32). In response to Deng's move, Su denounces the saying that "the words of Deng Xiaoping are right" supported by mainland Chinese intellectuals and declares that those intellectuals have trapped themselves into the same tragic cycle as their predecessors during the Mao era. Though Su acknowledges that these intellectuals are constrained by their social location under the rule of the CCP, he still regards such submissive acts as unnecessarily foolish. He expresses the hope that these intellectuals can find sufficient resources to avoid making themselves "tools" of the political establishment. Su adds,

"After the June-Fourth Incident of 1989, there was a period of deeper reflection in the Chinese intellectual community: we [the intellectuals in mainland China] began to realize that we had made Mao a 'god' during the Cultural Revolution. Such myth-making finally caused intense national crises. Despite this experience, we failed to

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<sup>15</sup>Peng Rongchong (1990) also discusses other blind spots of Chinese intellectuals in conceptualizing democratization in mainland China. Peng's reasoning is similar to that of Chen Zhiming and Wang Juntao in the view that intellectuals should strive to maintain economic independence in order to retain their intellectual autonomy and to find appropriate points for social intervention. After seeing the successful case of Chen Zhiming and Wang Juntao, this scholar supports the notion that Chinese intellectuals should pay more attention to the life of the civil society and strengthen their professional knowledge to do some more concrete work for the people.

<sup>16</sup>Deng is only an ordinary member, supposedly, who has no formal position in the party. However, his words become party policy, overriding formal party procedures.

learn the lesson. We again made Deng a 'god' during the past reform era, which inevitably led to the tragedy of the June-Fourth Incident. We are responsible for such tragedies." (Su, 1993: 33, my translation)

Anticipating a gloomy future for Chinese intellectuals, Su asks them not to sacrifice their dignity and right of life in exchange for a brief period of peace (Su, *Ibid*). He calls on those intellectuals who are in exile to work hard to make far-reaching contributions to Chinese culture. Having been influenced by the tradition of the dissidents of Eastern Europe whose critical and creative works have great formative influences on their mother countries, Su suggests that Chinese "dissidents" who are now living abroad should endeavour to expand their knowledge domain, accumulating more "cultural capital" to add significant content to Chinese culture.<sup>17</sup>

After important influence on Su was Havel's conception of "good taste" in politics,<sup>18</sup> Su Wei suggests that Chinese intellectuals aspire to higher goals, which serve the whole mankind. Havel's "living for the truth" and "politics of anti-politics" led Su to suggest that Chinese intellectuals consider "aesthetics" [good taste] in politics by implementing two concepts: first, aesthetics is independent of pragmatism, as truth and knowledge are free from pragmatism (Su, 1993a: 2); and second, aesthetics represents freedom, because it sustains an internal harmony and order. From this vantage point, "good taste" or "aesthetics" and politics are integral. Formulating political ideals different from both Oriental despotism and Western utilitarianism, Havel has charted a new course for politics which upholds the fundamental goals of mankind and returns politics to the most primitive but purest form. Su thinks that only this kind of politics can protect the conscientious, honest and humble nature of human beings (Su, 1993a: 3). He says real emancipation has to do with the protection of human dignity and individual

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<sup>17</sup>Su considers most so-called Chinese dissidents not to be dissident enough. He criticizes Fang Lizhi for regarding his dissidence as an individual force while Dai Qing eagerly isolated herself from other dissidents. Su considers such a phenomenon unhealthy, urging the whole intellectual community to work together as a unified force to control the hegemony of China. In this context that Su calls for rethinking the role of overseas Chinese intellectuals. See Su (1993).

<sup>18</sup>Havel is now the ex-president of Czechoslovakia whose political ideology is distinctly different from other Western political philosophy. Having been ruled by the former Communist regime, Havel realizes the socialist myth and suggests "good taste" in politics by which he means one has to aspire to honesty, humility, wisdom, and responsibility as higher goals in political life. Even though Havel's assertion is regarded by some as too idealistic and unrealistic, he persistently maintains his position, striving to put these principles into practice. For details, see, for example, *Minzhu Zhongguo*, (Oct, 1993: 57-58) and Havel's article on "The Power of the Powerless" in Keane (1985).

independence and autonomy.<sup>19</sup> This new concern for the welfare of mankind indicates that some of the post-Mao intellectuals have new and different level of critical consciousness.

In addition, Su denounces the reliance on support of political patrons and asks them to change from "utilitarianism" to "democracy", calling on them to evaluate their role and relationship with the state. Having reviewed the role of Chinese intellectuals in the twentieth century, Su stresses the need for Chinese intellectuals to be free from any group or party interests.<sup>20</sup> He anticipates that, if they fail to make themselves independent of political conflicts, they will be doomed to endless political purges and persecution. Su suggests, "the loss of independent personality of intellectuals, coupled with their surrendering of professional knowledge, and rationality and becoming political instruments, are contradictory to the logic of modern civilization" (Su, 1993: 34). He says that the so-called reformers' adoption of the same strategy as the leftist intellectuals in their fight for hegemonic control is undemocratic and foolish (Su, 1993: 35).

### Wei Jingsheng

Wei Jingsheng, after fourteen and a half years of imprisonment, was released in 1993. During an interview, Wei said that he did not regret what he had done during the Democracy Wall Movement, proclaiming that he would continue to express his critical unchanged political views. He stated openly that he was prepared to be imprisoned again, fighting for democracy and human rights in the future. Wei realizes that the liberation from what he considers a despotic political system should be a gradual process.

Wei said,

"democracy should be implemented step by step, the success of democratization merely lies with people's consciousness and continuous struggle.... The power of the government should be decentralized and returned to the people." (Wei, 1993: 25, my translation)

After imprisonment, Wei seems to be more realistic in acknowledging the

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<sup>19</sup>As we have discussed in chapter 8, Liu Xiaobo is also concerned with such higher goals of the mankind.

<sup>20</sup>This line of thought is similar to Liu Xiaobo, see (chapter 8).



difficulties of the on-going struggle to democratize China. He believes that rationality and peaceful demonstration are essential to democracy. When asked to comment on Deng Xiaoping, Wei says,

"I would support him [Deng] if he does some good and right things even though we have some disagreement with each other. If someone does something wrong, I would disagree with him even though he is my friend." (Wei, 1993: 27, my translation)

He also asserts that those who fight for democratization of China should adopt non-violent means to achieve their ends. Tolerance and cooperation are essential elements in resolving conflicts according to Wei. He also claims that when people are too suspicious and sceptical about each other, they hinder the development of China (Wei, 1993: 27). Wei's tolerance for the views of others while consistently fighting for democracy is indicative of the growing stature of critical intellectuals in the post-Mao era.

#### Heightened Self-Consciousness: Strong Sense of Repentance

It is worth noting that the Sixth Generation of Chinese intellectuals have also developed a strong sense of repentance. By repentance we mean that Chinese intellectuals have a deeper level of self-evaluation of their role of intellectuals and reexamine their relationship with the state. Going beyond such a reflection, some of these Sixth Generation even convert themselves into Christianity, believing that the fundamental problems of China today have to do with the nature of man.

Many Chinese intellectuals believe that their dependence on political power and their insufficient attention to the consolidation of the knowledge base were wrong. The case of Liu Xiaobo illustrates the emergence of a deeper level of reflection in relation to the role of intellectuals. Liu admitted openly that Chinese intellectuals were responsible for causing the Cultural Revolution since they had supported Mao. Unlike the traditional literati or the intellectuals during the Mao era, who perceived their role as remonstrators, Liu declared that not only intellectuals but also every Chinese person should repent and evaluate their role as "royal" supporters. Having grown disillusioned toward the authoritarian regime because of the Cultural Revolution, Liu declared that such a despotic

rule was the result of the people's reliance upon strong leaders instead of asserting their independence. His critique is no longer limited to the autocratic system but levelled against the national character of the Chinese people. He, therefore, called for the use of Western and humanitarian standards to evaluate Chinese culture and politics.

Another Sixth Generation intellectual who calls for national and individual repentance is Su Xiaokang, one of the chief authors of *Heshang*. When he was living in China, he felt dissatisfied with the existing out-dated system, and said that it should be totally discarded. The purpose of *Heshang*,<sup>21</sup> according to Su, was to deal with the strong feeling of anxiety which has permeated Chinese society in post-Mao China, especially the mentality of crisis which has emerged from the stagnation of the reforms (Chong, 1989-90: 52). A closer scrutiny of *Heshang* reveals that, beyond its treatment of the cultural crisis as such, it subtly proclaims the message that the people living in Communist China are still ruled by a feudal system shadowed by its "cultural legacy". So, the central theme of *Heshang* is really an attack upon the rule of the Communist Party by using the 'parable' of cultural crisis. In an open lecture in Leiden, Su Xiaokang explained why *Heshang* did not attempt to examine the political problems, which in fact most of the intellectuals had already identified as the most fundamental problem or the root of China's existing predicaments. They focused on cultural problems for the fear of the CCP.<sup>22</sup> Having fled China after the June Fourth Incident, Su explicitly said that "the origin of the stagnation of the reforms is not Chinese culture, but the CCP's one-party dictatorship and the socialist system of state-ownership (Chong, 1989-90: 44). Having resided overseas for several years, Su has begun to realize that both the critics of Chinese tradition and calls for learning from the West were not comprehensive enough. Su indulged in self-criticism by admitting that he had failed to grasp a holistic view of the West, without which he thus misinterpreted reality and made wrong proposals for

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<sup>21</sup>*Heshang* was a television series, discussing the cultural crisis of China. The authors of the series criticized not only out-dated Chinese tradition but also condemned the existing political system. Denouncing autocratic and feudalistic political-cultural order, the authors therefore called on people to open their eyes and to learn from the West. For details, see, Wan and Bodman (1991).

<sup>22</sup>For details of the debate on *Heshang*, see, for example, *Heshang* (1989); Wan (1991); see also my unpublished Master's thesis submitted to the Chinese University of Hong Kong (1991), particularly the chapter on cultural crisis.

modernizing China (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993). Recognizing the fact that there are many social problems in the so-called democratic societies in the West, Su admits that his former analysis was one-sided. He told me during an interview that:

"I merely believed that to learn from the Western model would be a breakthrough for China when I was in mainland China. Over-romanticizing the West inevitably led me to a misconception. For this reason, I had wrongly analyzed the Chinese reality, over-generalizing the goodness of West and therefore made wrong suggestions. Having direct and personal experiences living in the United states, I begin to realize that my criticism of Chinese tradition was not totally right." (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993).

To put his position a step further, Su states clearly that the Sixth Generation of Chinese intellectuals are different from the earlier generations in terms of their analytic framework. Su suggests that most of the older generations of intellectuals such as Liu Binyan still maintain a marxist position whereas the sixth generation of intellectuals have abandoned Marxism in favour of a widened social reality (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993).<sup>23</sup> Criticizing those intellectuals who have been eagerly playing the integral roles as remonstrators for the state, Su also condemns those intellectuals who have tried to attach themselves to the masses. Su points out sharply that without a distinguished social location of Chinese intellectuals, the intellectual autonomy and professional independence will certainly be limited. He plainly states that intellectuals cannot represent other people but only themselves. Therefore, Su urges Chinese intellectuals to develop themselves as a distinct social stratum by means of accumulation of knowledge. He also believes that only when intellectuals respect knowledge do they begin to consolidate their base of autonomy. Most important of all, Su suggests a fundamental change in intellectuals' mode of thinking, calling them to develop new perspectives in order that they no longer fall into the orthodox marxist approach. He cites Fang Lizhi as an example of intellectual independence because Fang's professional knowledge protects his intellectual autonomy to a certain extent. In view of this, Su willingly commits himself to research and academic work and aspires to a higher level of intellectual autonomy. He does not believe, however, that intellectuals should involve themselves

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<sup>23</sup>This line of thought is also supported by Liu Binyan as he himself pins hope on the sixth generation of Chinese intellectuals (Liu, 1990a).

either in the struggle for political power or aspire to political office. Considering the Chinese intellectual tradition already outdated, Su asks intellectuals to forsake the role as mouthpiece and social conscience of the people. Like Liu Xiaobo, Su believes that intellectuals should speak for what they really know, the specialized knowledge that they possess (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993).

Having a guilt-feeling for their wrongdoing in the past, some of the Sixth Generation of Chinese intellectuals believe openly that the fundamental problem which the Chinese intellectuals face is the very nature of man that it is man's sinful nature which contributes to the past and existing problems of China. Some of them have come to the conclusion that there is a strong relationship between democracy and faith in Christianity. Yuan Zhiming, one of the authors of the TV series *Heshang*, criticized Chinese authoritarian politics and spoke of intense cultural crisis. Now that he has lived in the United States and has been exposed to the reality of the West, Yuan admits that *Heshang* is only a broken dream. His romanticized notions of the West have been shattered by his exposure in the United States to such problems as crime, suicide, alienation and immorality, causing him not only to think about the crisis of this world but also to ponder the actual meaning of life. Once he got to know a group of Christians in Princeton, Yuan was very impressed by their genuine and enthusiastic attitude toward life. Thereafter he began to read the Bible and finally converted to Christianity.

Yuan once attended the President's morning prayer in the United States and observed different members of two parties joined together in prayer for their country. Deeply moved by this occasion, Yuan was amazed that these people with divergent political stands could join in praying and worshipping God together. Yuan reiterated the words of the Vice-President, saying:

"Authoritarianism and disorder of this world have their roots in the corruption of our spiritual life; that is, people are unwilling to admit their limitations and their sins. We can easily find that authoritarian regimes are founded on the trust of any political leader, ideology or party." (Yuan, 1992: 41, my translation)

Having heard this speech, Yuan began to correlate the fundamental problem of

despotic rule with the arrogant nature of man. Thereafter, Yuan turned limited in wisdom, life expectancy and morality toward Christianity. Yuan says,

"the root of authoritarianism which has to do with the ignorance and the sinful nature of mankind, lies in the spiritual dimension; admission of the sinful nature and limitation of man is the origin of democracy." (Ibid)

Having such an experience, Yuan reflected deeply the case of China and declared,

"It is my first time to see clearly that the essence of democracy closely related to repentance toward God." (Ibid)

Yuan realized that there is a question that we must deal with: "where is the ultimate source of authority?" In that connection Yuan recalled a chat with a pastor who serves in the Congress of the United States. The pastor told Yuan that when he had visited China in the 40's, he met a girl on a boat who asked him to sing her a song. In response to her request, this pastor sang her a hymn praising the Lord. Thereafter, the pastor asked the girl to sing him a song in return; however, the girl, nodded her head and said that she had no song to sing at all. This incident had marked him deeply. This pastor told Yuan that,

"The freedom enjoyed by the citizens of the United States is derived from God. God's presence in the hearts of the people safeguards their freedom." (Yuan, 1992: 41)

This pastor continued to say that,

"Our 'Declaration of Independence' and the 'Constitution' guarantee the human rights of the people including the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness because we believe that all these rights are derived from God. The rights of people are not given by the government. Therefore, the government has no authority to intrude upon people's rights. If our rights are infringed, we can rise up to fight against it and even change the government." (Yuan, 1992: 41-42)

The chat with this pastor made Yuan further recognize the essence of democracy. Christian faith has laid the foundation for democracy, human rights and equality in this world. Yuan thus realizes two sides of human nature. On the one hand, the essence of human nature is good since he is created according to the image of God; on the other hand, man is sinful because man is not immune from the origin of sin (Yuan, Ibid). Such a reflection corresponds to what Chang Hao's (1989) suggestion, that the sinful nature of man has made the institutionalization of democracy necessary. Yuan also compares

Chinese culture with Christian thought, suggesting that equality and genuine love are stressed in Christian belief whereas the traditional Chinese thought has emphasized hierarchial love and ranks. According to Yuan, it is such a traditional cultural mentality which makes China a despotic state. Yuan maintained,

"If there is no faith in Christianity as the foundation of Chinese democracy, the leader of the pro-democracy movement may one day become a dictator." (Yuan, 1992: 43)

The genuine belief in Christianity and a real reconciliation of the relationship with the eternal God, according to Yuan, is fundamental to guarantee the implementation of democracy. He criticizes people for their selfishness despite their noble and righteous slogans. The fundamental problem of this, as Yuan suggested, is that these people have not reflected upon themselves, especially their relationship with God. Yuan also believes democracy is not merely a system nor an ideology but a deep structure of faith (for details, see, Yuan, 1993). Yuan concluded his speech in the President's morning prayer by saying "the distance which Chinese people are away from God is the distance which democratization must travel to be actualized in China" (Yuan, 1992: 43).<sup>24</sup>

Like Yuan Zhiming, Yan Jiaqi also maintained that people should answer the call of conscience, which is a response to the call of God. Even though Yan said that he had no religion, he believed there must be a God external to this world. Adopting "this world" view, Yan chose to work according to the call from his conscience (Yan, 1990).<sup>25</sup> It is my opinion that the idea of "conscience" is similar to the interpretation of "spirit" in Christian thought. Though not all Chinese intellectuals openly declare that they have converted to Christianity as Yuan Zhiming did, these intellectuals have somehow trusted

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<sup>24</sup>When discussing the relationship between Christianity and democracy, Su Xiaokang told me that many Chinese intellectuals who are now in exile in the United States have converted to Christianity. He also commented on Yuan Zhiming's ideas about the tie between democracy and Christian thought, seeing Yuan's conversion to Christianity merely as a function of his immediate need for a god to fill his ideological void. Su added that Yuan's switch from supporting democracy to neo-authoritarianism and later to Christian faith indicated his deeper psychological need for one who is superior to him who is able to maintain the social and political order. Su also said to me that Yuan's original family in mainland China had had some contact with Christianity which made it was easier for him to adopt Christian thought. For details, see (Interview 1, 1993, New York; Yuan, 1992).

<sup>25</sup>Yan's attitude is similar to the attitude of Confucius who also believed there is a God around. However, Confucius concentrated the need on solving the immediate problems in this world rather than dealing with the spiritual matters in the other world. For details, see, for example, Fung (1948); Schurmann and Schell (1967).

that there is a God external to them.<sup>26</sup> And the sins of which they must repent are against this God as much as they are against people.

Zhou Dao (1993), in his article "In Defence of Religion", suggests that many Chinese intellectuals have rejected religion without serious thinking or analysis. Having been exposed to the Christian faith, Zhou began to appreciate the essence of Christianity because of its emphasis on genuine love toward one another. Zhou points out the fact that many Chinese intellectuals have become devout Christians while studying abroad.<sup>27</sup> However, these believers are attacked and criticized by other Chinese intellectuals who are non-believers. Seeing this, Zhou attempted to write a defense of religion because he thinks that those non-believers may have misconceptions of religion.<sup>28</sup> According to Zhou, Chinese people have confused religious faith with superstition. In order to differentiate them clearly, Zhou suggests that people should look for the substantive part of religion rather than the rituals which are practised. Zhou admits that he had rejected religion when he was in China, seeing it as the opium of the people. Having got the chance to attend a Christmas service in the United States, Zhou was greatly impressed by the spiritual atmosphere under which all people bowed down before God. After the service, one question crowded his mind. "Why are the general public and even the top class intellectuals in the West still devout believers of Christianity?"<sup>29</sup> This experience forced Zhou to look carefully at religion.

Zhou thereafter looks into the theology of Christianity and supports the view that sin is inherent in human nature. He points out that the predicaments which people are confronting today are related to their arrogance and disobedience. Zhou cites David

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<sup>26</sup>In my interview with Liu Binyan, Fang Lizhi and Su Wei, they also support the essence of Christianity, see it as good for human nature. However, when asked whether they would convert to Christianity, they said they respected such a religion but did not practice it. In their minds, Christianity is good, especially to help correct the notion of extreme individualism.

<sup>27</sup>In interviewing Su Xiaokang, he told me that an American missionary reported that the estimated number of Christians in mainland China was about 70 million in 1993 (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993).

<sup>28</sup>When Zhou calls religion here, he refers to Christianity only since he just discusses the Christian faith in his article.

<sup>29</sup>This question is similar to that of Yuan Zhiming. Fang Lizhi, too, had a similar question when he attended a Christian service abroad and saw many well-educated people, even scientists, worshipping God together. After this occasion, he wrote an article titled "After praising the Lord" to express his feeling, see Fang (1988).

Ehrenfeld's work "The Arrogance of Humanism" in describing human beings' attempts to assert independence from God, believing themselves to be as powerful as God. After reading this book, Zhou repented and began to feel guilty for what he had done in the past. Having been influenced by Christian thought, Zhou reevaluated Karl Marx's ideas and suggested that Marx was arrogant since he made himself a god. He also contends that the central problem of Marx is the assertion of the unlimited strength of man and the condemnation of God. Denouncing Marxism, Zhou points out that it is anti-democratic and anti-humanistic, claiming what Marx created was a bad religion. Zhou suggests that the "party culture" shaped by Marxism has caused the people to disregard regulation, become dishonest and irresponsible. He also says that Chinese people have little sense of aesthetics, being uneducated and uncivilized (*Xinwenziyou Daobao*, 22 Jan, 1993). Having been influenced by such a "party culture", the Chinese people have become nihilist in terms of having no baseline for morality, no regulation in playing political games, and no distinction of right or wrong (Ibid).

Because Zhou believes that a plurality of ideas must be allowed in modern society, he condemns Marxism for obstructing freedom of thought. Zhou says that he accepts religion on the condition that it does not contradict the principles of democracy, freedom and humanistic goals. He is looking forward to a better world in which the ultimate value of mankind can be realized. Zhou is greatly impressed by the Christian faith since its particular doctrine is to love one another by contrast with Marxism which rests on hatred. Without love but hatred, dictatorship is inevitable. In order to actualize the essence of democracy, Zhou asks people to repent and think deeply about the essence of religion. Along with his support of the doctrine of love in Christianity, Zhou also suggests that church as a social organization through which intimate relationships can be developed is what China needs because such a force not only unites people together but also strengthens the civil society. Zhou also compares Confucian thought with Christian thought, arguing that the limitation of Confucianism is its emphasis on reciprocity in human relationship and hierarchical love. Adhering to Christianity's love regardless of



people's background and status, Zhou supports the view that,

"The essence of Christianity is the will to love which is derived from God. Christianity stresses a self-sacrificing love. If love is self-centred, it is not a real love since one can choose whether to love or not. A God-centred love is the most absolute and purest kind of love". (Wang, cited in Zhou, 1993: 49, my translation)

The Sixth Generation intellectuals discussed above believe that there is a close relationship between Western liberalism and the Christian civilization. But China must not adopt an instrumental view, treating religious faith only as an immediate solution to their deep-seated emotional crisis while ignoring the cultural foundation of religious practice. Su Xiaokang maintains that China has to learn the cultural foundation of Christianity (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993). Moreover, the uniqueness of these Sixth Generation intellectuals, as compared with the traditional literati and intellectuals in the Mao era, lies in their awareness of the need for repentance and their assertion of human rights.<sup>30</sup> They realize that human dignity, autonomy and nobility should not be restricted by political power but are in-born. In spite of their deeper level of reflection and strong sense of repentance, we must not over-generalize that all the Six Generation of Chinese intellectuals have converted to Christianity. The previous discussion indicates that only some of these intellectuals have become Christians but many others have not committed themselves into such a religion. Although some of them like Su Xiaokang and Fang Lizhi who support the belief of Christianity, they declare that they are not the believers (Interview 1, Princeton, 1993 and Interview 3, Arizona, 1993). Again, the differences among these intellectuals reveal the fact that even though they share similar features and live against a similar socio-political context, individual intellectuals still have autonomy to choose different approaches or strategies in response to their "historical situations". It is at this point we can see the tension between individual strategizing and external constraints. Acknowledging that ideological formation is structurally and historically

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<sup>30</sup>Even though most Chinese intellectuals have a general agreement that Christianity has laid a good foundation for Western democracy, not all of them have converted themselves to Christianity. In my interviews with these intellectuals, many of them said that they respected the faith of Christianity but neither did they believe nor convict to Christianity. Thus we cannot simply posit that many Chinese intellectuals have become Christians. Rather, some of them have been aware of different cultural foundation which has significant formative influence on democratization.

bound, we must also realize the fact that people can react differently to their environments.

Despite the fact that the Sixth Generation intellectuals have developed a new consciousness which is prerequisite to the development of the New Class, there remain some important questions. (1) Have the intellectuals retained the unique ruling position formerly enjoyed by their forerunners, the literati? (2) Is the growth in critique and dissidence sufficient to argue that the post-Mao intellectuals have emerged as another type of intellectuals? (3) Have they diverged from the traditional mantle of moralist-bearers? (4) Do these intellectuals have aspirations to seize political power? (5) Have they possessed a new socio-economic position to dominate politics?

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE SIXTH GENERATION**

Also like the literati, the Sixth Generation lack economic independence makes and must continue to rely on political patrons. Chen Yizhi explained to me that Chinese intellectuals are not independent enough, and they have never been a distinctly autonomous social class but have always functioned as appendages to the ruling class. Being part of the state apparatus, their fate is therefore determined by whoever is in power (Interview 2, Princeton, 1993).

Different from the mentality of both the independent intellectuals and those who follow the literati tradition, a new intellectual mentality has emerged in the post-Mao era, typified by a *New Docility Dissecting*,<sup>31</sup> which characterized the intellectuals as so frightened by the repression and oppression of the government that they have lost their courage to criticize maladministration or point out social injustice. They prefer to lead a silent life, with abundant subsistence and peaceful environment, by avoiding what many believe to be the essence of intellectual critique. Instead of serving either in the traditional role of royal remonstrator, or the critical role of the New Class, these

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<sup>31</sup>This idea is adapted from a common saying about those Chinese people who sacrificed their dignity and autonomy by serving the Japanese in order to lead a better life under the repressive rule of Japan during its invasion in the Second World War. For details, see *Minzhu Zhongguo* (Feb. 1992).

intellectuals are satisfied with gaining political benefits through patron-client networks (see Su Wei, 1993 & 1993a and Wu Jian, 1993). Such 'instrumentalism' characterizes those intellectuals who have forsaken noble deeds and critical outlook to protect their own interests while these characteristics are not true of all intellectuals, they do depict a recent development in the habitat of the mainland Chinese intellectuals, a conclusion verified by some intellectuals' continual support of Deng's reforms. These servile intellectuals who ride over the "wind" attacking the opposing group of intellectuals have demonstrated clearly the "unchanged" mentality of class contradiction deeply-seated in them (see, *The Nineties*, Sep. & Oct., 1992; *Minzhu Zhongguo*, Fed. & April., 1993). Wang Runsheng and Zhang Lun (two young intellectuals and active participants of the 1989 pro-democracy movement who are in exile in Paris) criticize those post-Mao intellectuals who have lost courage and boldness, having neither a critical stand nor altruistic mentality as inherited from the traditional literati (*Zhengming*, May, 1990). Such observations have revealed again the influence of *inhabitus* on intellectuals' conceptualization of the social world. Though they are conscious of developing new ideas, they are not totally immune to the impact of their cultural tradition. Cheek (1992) suggested that some of the intellectuals, even after the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, still hoped to renew their social contract with the state. Through their faithful service to the state these intellectuals who are neither dissidents nor literati hope to improve their livelihoods or get the chance to study abroad.

## **UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS OF CHINESE INTELLIGENTSIA**

### **(1) Sixth Generation Intellectuals and the Literati**

We believe the relaxed socio-political and socio-cultural contexts in China since the late 1970s have created a pre-condition for liberating intellectuals from repression, but it does not necessarily mean that they are free from all kinds of constraints. On the contrary, those intellectuals who are more critical constitute a small segment of the whole intelligentsia in China. The foregoing discussion has indicated that intellectual radicalism

is greatly constrained by the intellectuals' social location, and their access to different social-economic-political opportunities.

The present study has concentrated on the analysis of these intellectuals who have been the activists in the pro-democracy movement and whose critique and dissidence have received much attention because of their prominence. The media's focus on their dissident nature seems to project the emergence of a new class of Chinese intellectuals. However, upon closer scrutiny of their particular socio-political context, we may discover that intellectuals are not really socially independent because of their restrictive social and economic conditions. Nowadays, most of the intellectuals discussed above are in exile either in the United States or in Paris where they have freedom of speech and freedom of expression. As important as freedom from constraints and restrictions is freedom from deprivation; and the intellectuals in exile are supported by good jobs or by donations from overseas Chinese and American people. Fang Lizhi is employed by the University of Arizona. Su Xiaokang, Su Wei and Liu Binyan are current members of the China Institute attached to the University of Princeton. Chen Yizhi, the president of the Centre for Modern China, is also supported financially by funds raised in the United States. Yan Jiaqi is now residing in Paris and also receiving financial support from the French government in the form of a scholarship. Thus it appears that only those intellectuals who have acquired the "liberation" of exile have become free enough and bold enough to be really critical.<sup>32</sup>

In contrast, those intellectuals who remain in mainland China are confronted with a moral dilemma associated with supporting the party line because they have to weigh professional autonomy against life security in every decision. One may ask why Chinese intellectuals still engage in "a dangerous game of cooperation".<sup>33</sup> The answer to this question may be found not only in examining their unique social locations but also in

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<sup>32</sup>This line of reasoning supports Fang Lizhi's contention that the critical dissidence of intellectuals in mainland China are determined by their particular social locations. It also explains the pragmatic approach adopted by Wang Juntao and Chen Zhiming in dealing with the state.

<sup>33</sup>This question was raised by Ma (1993) in his recent article.

realizing the traditional sense of mission in most Chinese intellectuals who continue to assume roles as standard-bearers of morality, critics of the authorities, and spokesmen and protectors of the public (see chapter 4). Our fore-going case studies again confirm that these post-Mao intellectuals have inherited the tradition of the literati, perceiving themselves as the mouthpieces of the people. Israel (1986) makes it succinctly clear,

"the Party recruits intellectuals, seeking to control them, broaden its own base, and restore weakened legitimacy. Intellectuals play a still risky game by entering the Party, hoping to advance their own interests and to transform the establishment from within." (Israel, 1986: xii)

Chen Yizhi, one of the former members of Zhao Zhiyang's think tank, comments that:

"Chinese intellectuals have a strong sense of mission, assuming that they have to take care of other walks of life. Having such internalized value, intellectuals have tended to seek immediate solutions for the problems which they are confronting." (Interview 2, 1993, New York)

No matter how critical Chen Zhiming and Wang Juntao are, they still maintain that intellectuals have the responsibility to serve the public<sup>34</sup> and to transform the state. Thus Chinese intellectuals have engaged themselves in cooperation with the state regardless the danger associated with such a game.

## (2) Diversification and New Class Development

One hurdle for uniting Chinese intellectuals as a New Class is the diversification among them. They are a heterogeneous group with different generations, different educational backgrounds, different personalities, and different political orientations. Compounding the situation, the CCP's has practised a 'divide-and-rule' policy of deferential treatment towards the intellectuals of the natural sciences and technical fields. As Rai points out, "the Chinese state in its turn, while willing to give enough space to the technical intelligentsia, denied the same right to the critical social science intellectuals" (Rai, 1991:127).<sup>35</sup> In chapter 4, I pointed out the fact the CCP has regarded intellectuals

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<sup>34</sup>Chen Zhiming states succinctly in his statement of defense that "the intellectuals should not be envious of their superiors and should not flatter the masses, but should work hard to make themselves into the bridge between the government and the people" (*Asia Watch*, June 10, 1992: 9).

<sup>35</sup>For other related discussion, see White III with C. Li (1990) and Zhou Fangniang (1989).

as appendages to the working class rather than as a well-defined class. The Party intends only to make use of the intellectuals in support of their modernization programme in an effort to consolidate its legitimacy. Pye has observed that the ruling class of socialist China has denied "government and influence to members of the educated classes" as a common feature of their "aggressive treatment of intellectuals" (1968). Deng's pragmatism made it possible for him to exploit the skills of educated people while and at the same time excluding their values. According to Kenneth Jowitt's notion of development,<sup>36</sup> China has entered the inclusion phase "marked by the *methodical* consideration and management of tasks" instead of "controlled or elite-directed *disruption*", requiring the involvement of intellectuals to help with modernization. However, the success of such inclusion depends greatly on whether the ruling elite is willing "to expand membership in the regime in a way that allows politically co-opted social elites or activists to maintain their social-occupational identity" (Jowitt, 1975: 69). The Communist government of China has found a way to use intellectuals as tools without giving them corresponding status in society by keeping them divided against each other. It seems evident, then, that we must answer the second question by saying that the growth in dissidence has not been sufficient to warrant the conclusion that a New Class of intellectuals has emerged.

The Party's cadre system places further constraints on intellectuals as they are working within the establishment. There are basically two kinds of cadre: Party and non-Party. In Communist China, most cadres are constrained by the Party organization regardless of whether they are Party or non-Party members. As Pye suggested, "under no condition would a cadre question policies or discount the goals of the revolution" (Pye, 1984: 184). In fact, he is expected to work with endless vigour and complete self-sacrifice for the goals of the revolution. Pye says that a cadre is supposedly a professional revolutionary working "for promotion and is aware that he is part of a

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<sup>36</sup>According to Jowitt (1975), there are three stages of development in Leninist regimes, namely, transformation of the old society, consolidation of the revolutionary regime, and inclusion.

system that recognizes seniority and provides a career ladder" (Pye, 1984: 185). In this sense, cadres are perfect "organization men". Because most of the intellectuals are party members, they are therefore restricted by the party. The dependent nature of the intellectuals is similar to what Szelenyi describes in the case of East European intellectuals, "not every member belongs to the ruling elite; not even every intellectual who belongs to the party can belong to the state. But it is clear that no one can be a member of the elite who is not both a party member and an intellectual" (Szelenyi, 1979: 191).

Recent research has shown that, even though the more Chinese intellectuals occupy higher posts and are more influential, they are not free from control by the state (Huang Ping, 1991). In their eyes, the total rejection of the socialist system may result in a total disintegration of socio-cultural and socio-political order. Most of the intellectuals therefore still adhere to the Marxist path, hoping to transform the socialist system from within. Such a belief may have contributed to the intellectuals' support of Deng Xiaoping's reform during the 14th CCP Congress. In Cheek's words, "one goal these different groups of intellectuals shared: to revise the deal between intellectuals and the state, not to reject it" (Cheek, 1992: 129).

The concurrent development of an independent research institute "outside state control" (Goldman, 1991: 16) by Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming is insufficient evidence to assert that a "popular consciousness" is widely shared by the intellectual community. Chamberlain (1993) notes that,

"intellectuals' vision of civil society, in other words, is not so much 'counterstructure' as it is 'alternate structure' - a way of organizing and staffing the state apparatus differently, rather than challenging it altogether." (Chamberlain, 1993: 203)

### (3) Sixth Generation Intellectuals and Moral Bearing

The Twentieth Century Chinese intellectuals have been compared with the traditional literati in many other parts of this study. Such a comparison is made in this chapter under the section entitled Sixth Generation Intellectuals and the Literati. Further comparisons of the roles of modern intellectuals and the literati can be formed in the

section entitled Sixth Generation Intellectuals and Political Aspirations in this chapter. It is clear that those who are truly dissident have been forced into exile, but some remain to work as insiders to transform the political system. However, it appears that the vast majority of Sixth Generation intellectuals have forsaken both the literati and the dissident roles to pursue their self-interest in relative safety and comfort. Thus the answer to the third question appears to be yes, the modern intellectuals have diverged from the traditional expectations for intellectuals.

#### (4) Sixth Generation Intellectuals and Political Aspirations

In this research, I have observed that the "dissident" tradition of Chinese intellectuals is unlike that of their Russian and Eastern European counterparts. The mental framework of the Russian intelligentsia has been shaped since Peter the Great by official encouragement to learn from Western Europe. Peter the Great introduced secular education into Russia, sending young men abroad to learn military, naval and industrial skills. Under Elizabeth and Catherine II, Western learning was supported, and French social graces became popular at the Russian court. With the growing popularity of Western learning in St. Petersburg and Moscow, there was also a spread of Western radicalism among Russian pupils by the end of the 18th Century (Seton-Watson, 1960).

The Russian intellectuals soon became aware that higher education would not necessarily improve their social position particularly when the political opportunity structure remained unchanged. The "free professions" which grew as a result of more opportunities for education found themselves isolated not only from the ruling class but also from the masses. And "if he [the intellectual] was himself of plebeian origin, he was more painfully aware of the contrast than if he was a son of the nobility" (Seton-Watson, 1960: 43). Accordingly, the Russian intelligentsia, oppositional by its nature, has developed a critical and dissident tradition which distinguishes them from other classes.<sup>37</sup> Aware of their limitations and potential, the Russian intellectuals determined to assert

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<sup>37</sup>For details of Russian intelligentsia, see, for example, Seton-Watson (1960); Shatz (1980); Cohen (1982); Pipes (1961, 1982); Lipset & Dobson (1973).



themselves through dissidence and through revolutionary activity.

Unlike the Russian intelligentsia, Chinese intellectuals have not been encouraged from the "top" to transform themselves into a critical class. In all of Chinese history, intellectuals have always functioned under political constraints. The literati class formed over a long period of time growing out of a general education for laymen. It was not a hereditary or exclusive group, for entry to it was by public competitive examination (Weber, 1951). Lin Tongji, a sinologist in Taiwan, points out the fact that the literati (Shi) originally was a group of people of noble rank who possessed special skills and techniques in fighting and held high military rank (*Wushi*). With the collapse of the ancient feudal system and national unification in the Qin dynasty, the Shi lost their privileged position and became either appendages to the ruling class or scholars engaged in teaching students (Lin, 1987). Thus the literati have long been a dependent group.<sup>38</sup>

Under the reign of the CCP, the intellectuals have been treated as "tools". Being seen as appendages to the working class, the social position of intellectuals was further lowered. Without any initiative to improve intellectuals' social position from the top, it has been difficult for Chinese intellectuals to reform themselves especially when they are reliant on the party establishment. In addition, unlike the Russian intelligentsia, Chinese intellectuals have never been familiar with Christian theology emphasizing human dignity and freedom. As I presented in the preceding part, some of the Sixth Generation intellectuals have called for repentance because of their guilt feelings for what they did during the Cultural Revolution. This phenomenon is similar to that of the former Soviet intelligentsia during the period of de-Stalinization in the reign of Khrushchev (Shatz, 1982). The recent reflection among Chinese intellectuals hints that a small segment of Chinese intelligentsia has become really critical and dissident. It is a sign of a small but growing group of critical intelligentsia in the post-Mao era. There is still a long way to

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<sup>38</sup>The literati did have tremendous power under the emperors who delegated the implementation of policies to these bureaucrats. In addition, the emperors normally maintained a good relationship with the literati for the reason that the literati had been their close advisors and even teachers when they were young. With the exception of the Yuan and Ming dynasties, such a relationship between the state and the literati was maintained (Tu, 1991). In Yuan and Ming dynasties, the ruling strata were suspicious of the literati. Therefore, the literati were purged and harshly treated. For details, see Tu (1991); Yu (1987) and Wang (1966).

go for the real transformation of Chinese intelligentsia.

Unlike their former Soviet and Eastern European counterparts, the Chinese "dissident" intellectuals were driven from their homeland. The "exile" has freed them from the constraints imposed by the Communist state and therefore they become much more critical outside China.<sup>39</sup> This observation echoes the view that intellectual radicalism is greatly influenced by the context where intellectuals live. As Swingewood (1987) suggested, the root of the conservative English culture and the lack of an autonomous intelligentsia in Britain lies in the particular historical and social context to which English intellectuals belong. Historically, the English intelligentsia formed a small, compact group which had close ties of occupation, education, and family. The peculiarities of English society and culture have constrained the emergence of a classic intelligentsia. In addition, professional associations, together with the market, condition not only intellectual occupations but also the supply of intellectuals.<sup>40</sup> Without independent socio-economic position, it thus constrains their rise to a ruling class.<sup>41</sup> The constraints that they are facing not only limit their socio-economic base but also discourage their aspirations to seize political power.

##### (5) Sixth Generation's Economic Dependence

This topic has been discussed extensively in other parts of this study, including the section on Socio-Economic Position of the Sixth Generation in this chapter. It is

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<sup>39</sup>As Hirschman (1970) suggested, people will adopt different strategies according to changing social and political contexts. Once when the constraints were lessened, people might prefer to "exit" and thus they would withdraw their "loyalty" and became more critical and bold enough to "voice" out their grievances. Ma Shu-yun (1993) and Lee Wei-chin (1992) also adopt Hirschman's framework to discuss the exiled Chinese intellectuals which deserves attention.

<sup>40</sup>Wilford (1993) also argues along the same lines that the New York intellectuals in the late 1940's were not immune from the constraints of their particular context. The social location, economic and political opportunities to which they had access also restricted their intellectual activities. The economic conditions of the 1930's, combined with the contagion of professionalization, and the assimilationist pressure exerted by the dominant ethnic culture on an ethnic minority, greatly restricted the autonomous activities of these New York intellectuals. It is against such background that the New York intellectuals were institutionalized.

<sup>41</sup>Some Chinese intellectuals maintain that even though Chinese intellectuals have succeeded in improving their economic position by means of doing business (*Jumping to the sea*), they are still far from being socially independent. Su Xiaokang believes that whenever intellectuals engage in doing business, they are no longer intellectuals as such but become businessmen. One scholar of Beijing University has a similar opinion that intellectuals should be conscious of their role especially when they are engaging in doing business. He points out the fact that it is a danger for intellectuals to surrender their ideals and creation to make their work more popular and acceptable to the people. Such a commercialization of intellectual work undermines not only intellectuals' autonomy but also devalues the work of intellectuals. In this light, intellectuals in mainland China are really in the cross-road, choosing between economic betterment or retaining professional autonomy. For details, see, (Interview 1, 1993, Princeton; *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly*, Feb 15, 1993).

sufficient here to say that the fifth question must be answered in the negative; the intellectuals do not possess the socio-economic resources to dominate the Chinese political system.

## CONCLUSION

The fore-going discussion provides more light on the formation of discursive practices among Chinese intellectuals as they are influenced by political and social constraints. Some scholarly works suggest the Chinese intellectuals have established three distinctly different kinds of relationships with the state. First, there are the "establishment intellectuals" who are still working within the establishment as part of the state apparatus. Second, some intellectuals have become "non-establishment intellectuals" who try to develop an independent force in the civil society not only to enhance their social status but also to become a strong force for social change. Although these intellectuals have no intention of overthrowing the present regime, they are eager to change the practices of the present state. The third group of Chinese intellectuals are "anti-establishment" intellectuals. It is note-worthy that some of these intellectuals like Liu Binyan, Fang Lizhi and Yan Jiaqi were originally establishment intellectuals who tried to transform the state from within, they shifted their role from establishment intellectuals to anti-establishment intellectuals when these efforts failed.<sup>42</sup> Notwithstanding some insights can be drawn from such a classification, these categories are far from satisfactory. When classifying Chinese intellectuals in terms of these categories, one probably encounters the difficulty in locating Chinese intellectuals especially they are so diverse as a group. From this point of departure, we must be cautious in employing such categories in locating Chinese intellectuals. Our previous discussion has further indicated that even though intellectuals are of the Sixth Generation, they adopt diverse strategies or approaches in response to their socio-historical situations. With different interpretations of the social reality, together with varied socio-political

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<sup>42</sup>For details of such a classification of Chinese intellectuals, see, for example, Cheek (1986) and Huang Ping (1993).

opportunities, these intellectuals behave and react differently. Thus, we conclude that, though intellectuals are greatly influenced by their unique social location and the political opportunity structure that they face, their individual response to these forces belies the assertion that the forces are omnipotent or inexorable. Social and political influences are extremely important in determining the thought processes of intellectuals, but they are not all-important. Such findings indicate that ideological production of intellectuals is a complicated process which is determined in part by socio-cultural and socio-political influences.

This chapter set out to examine the Sixth Generation intellectuals of China in light of Szelenyi's three major dimensions of class formation. The evidence indicates, first, that although some such intellectuals are able and willing to occupy the New Class, the majority certainly do not meet this criteria. Second, while those intellectuals who are in exile may possess the economic resources to become independent, they do not have the socio-political influence to effect social change; and those who remain in China have no financial resources whether or not they have any socio-political opportunities. Third, we discovered that three distinctly different ways of viewing reality have emerged, influenced largely by social location and political opportunity structure. So it is safe to conclude that Chinese intellectuals have failed to fulfil all Szelenyi's dimensions for forming a New Class.

## **CONCLUSION**

The first task of the conclusion will be to remind the reader of the limitations of this study. Second, we shall discuss both the extent to which these research hypotheses may be validated and the answer to some questions posed at the beginning of this study. Finally, I shall suggest some areas for further study arising from or depending upon the current study.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Because of the vast number of intellectuals living and working in China, this study was consciously and purposefully limited to a select few dissident intellectuals. It was precisely because these intellectuals were outspoken and had gained some notoriety that they were chosen. For this same reason, we may presume that they are not representative of the whole. They stand out from among their compatriots. At the same time, it may be argued that these selected individuals might represent far more of the intellectuals than one might expect. Given the same set of environmental factors, including especially social and political opportunity, other intellectuals might have acted in the same way as those who were selected for this study.

This study has suggested that Chinese intellectuals have become more critical and more sensitive to the need for developing a new relationship with the state to provide greater autonomy for intellectuals. It is clear that this observation cannot be generalized to include all Chinese intellectuals. Nor can we conclude that the intellectuals have developed into a newly emerged autonomous and unified group or a New Class because they remain a widely diverse group. But our discussion has pointed out clearly that socio-political context in general and social location in particular have affected the ideological formation of certain intellectuals. While the selected case studies cannot represent all Chinese intellectuals, they do demonstrate how these intellectuals have reacted to their unique environments.

Furthermore, this present study is not a history of ideas. Instead we have attempted to analyze certain intellectuals' ideological formation from a sociological perspective. Limited both in scope and purpose, this research cannot offer a coherent and comprehensive framework for

examining the evolution of Chinese ideas of democracy.

## **HYPOTHESES AND QUESTIONS**

The first hypothesis stated that there is *a strong relationship between intellectual radicalism and the socioeconomic and political opportunity to which the intellectuals have access.*

Among the selected individuals chosen for this study, most have become more critical, more radical in pursuing what they believe. They have expressed the need for intellectual autonomy and professional independence. Our examination has indicated that several factors have led to this conclusion. First, all of those who have been more dissident have had the kind of social location and/or educational orientation that have fostered their development. Second, as a group they have had the kind of access to socioeconomic and socio-political opportunities which empowered their dissidence. Third, the particular political, historical and intellectual contexts have exerted great influence in their ideological formation. We have observed that not only the social movements themselves but also the assertions made during the democracy movements have been socially and culturally bound. Finally, we have also observed that the intellectuals' secondary socialization such as their educational orientations and occupational and political ties also have influenced their ideological production.

Based upon the observations above, we can conclude with Gramsci, Bourdieu and Mannheim that ideological formation is closely related to the social location of intellectuals. We further conclude that the extent and level of intellectuals' dissidence and critique are closely related to their unique socio-political circumstances and opportunities. We thus conditionally confirm the first hypothesis. The limitations of the study stated above prevent an unconditional confirmation; but we can with reasonable confidence suggest that other intellectuals exposed to similar influences and given the same opportunities would very likely respond in similar ways.

## Influence of the Intellectuals

The second hypothesis was that *post-Mao intellectuals deepened consciousness has exerted significant impact both on the general public and on the hegemony of mainland China.*

The Chinese intellectuals selected for this study were leaders in widespread attempts to restructure their relationship with the state in the post-Mao era. In spite of continued suppression, the critical intellectuals have shown more courage in lodging their complaints and raising their questions against the policies of the present regime, even to the extent of denouncing the socialist system itself. Their intellectual radicalism has pointed to the breakdown of the Chinese tradition of intellectuals as 'obedient and loyal remonstrators'. Our study discovered numerous illustrations of the growing independence from the influence of the state, including open letters to plead for the rights of the demonstrating students (Chong, 1989; Tang Tsou, 1991), the development of democracy salons and open seminars (Strand, 1990; Unger, 1991; Saich, 1990), and even the establishment of an independent body for research and advocacy.

Younger generations of Chinese intellectuals, especially the sixth generation, have become more critical of the existing socio-political structure. With a new kind of autonomy they have tried to redefine the state/public/private relations. Unlike their previous generations, the younger intellectuals have somehow distanced themselves from the establishment either by establishing their own businesses or research institutes to avoid becoming appendages of the state. Such efforts require financial independence as well as independence in thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Although the degree to which they have influenced the public cannot be assessed with certainty and the changes in the actual hegemony of China are all but invisible, still the findings of the present research again point to a qualified confirmation of the second hypothesis.

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 9. Among the young intellectuals who have launched business in order to gain financial independence from the state is Wang Xizhe, one of those who fought for democracy in the Democracy Wall Movement in the late 70s. When asked by a reporter in Guangzhou whether he had abandoned his idealistic goals for the establishment of democracy in China, Wang replied, "it doesn't mean I have given up, I feel it is only right that I follow for so many years. I have lost touch with the people ... Since everyone is now in business, I feel it is only right that I follow the trend of the society and join the business world." Accumulating more money, Wang hopes to open a book store and plans to write a book on the democracy movement in Guangzhou (South China Morning Post, Feb. 3, 1994: 8).

### Generational Location and Ideological Formation

One of the questions posed in this study involved the influence of generational location on ideological formation. This present study has traced the development of the concept of "human rights" among the various generations of Chinese intellectuals from the 1919 May Fourth Movement through the June Fourth Movement in 1989 as one means of approaching an answer to that question. Traditional Chinese wisdom has always placed the collective good above any consideration of individual rights. But the concept of "human rights" has evolved from the interpretation of "liberation from autocratic rule" among the May Fourth intellectuals to "respect human beings" and "freedom of individual choice" in the post-Mao era. The sixth generation of Chinese intellectuals have moved cautiously in their assertion of human rights, tempering their ideas with thoughts of duty and responsibility. But the seventh generation, possessing an unclear concept of "human rights", have gone so far as to speak only of rights to the neglect of duty, an approach which we have labeled "utilitarian individualism". It seems perfectly clear, then, that the generational locations of different intellectuals have played great roles in shaping their world views in general and their ideological concepts in particular.

### Chinese Concepts of Democracy

A second question of interest concerns the development of the concept of democracy among Chinese intellectuals. It is clear that the concept of democracy has not been a consistent one through the history of this century. Among the May Fourth scholars, democracy was thought to be a quick and simple solution to the socio-politico-economic problems which they faced. The more recent intellectuals realize that democracy is about political institutions and even a way of life.

Although the post-Mao intellectuals have a much clearer idea of democracy and its implications for social and political institutions, the findings of this study indicate that even the June Fourth activists had not developed a clear concept of democracy. More importantly, their behaviour did not confirm to any normal understanding of democracy. They have certainly more



aware of the importance of freedom, speaking of emancipation in terms of liberation from unlimited and authoritarian state control. They view such control as an excessive interference in their private sphere.

The findings of this research suggest that Chinese intellectuals have grasped the general principles of democracy, stressing "people's power", "checks and balances", and "procedural rule" as fundamental to democracy. Although the intellectuals have presented no concrete proposals for development of democracy in China, the present study indicates that their understanding of democracy has advanced.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA**

Our observation of the relatively independent and critical stand of the post-Mao intellectuals indicates an expansion of intellectuals' influence upon the public sphere. Scholars of China are in general agreement regarding the success of the socialist state in its control of every aspect of the people's lives through influence exerted vertically and horizontally by means of party and non-party organizations (see, for example, Schurmann, 1968; Vogel, 1969; Soloman, 1971 and Townsend, 1969). After Mao's death, both the socio-political order and the moral-cultural order started to disintegrate (White, 1993). In response to this legitimation crisis, the post-Mao leaders have placed modernization and economic reforms at the top of their political agenda in order to restore the credibility of the CCP. Further study is indicated of (1) the relationship between the legitimation crisis and the methods and means of implementation of modernization and (2) the effectiveness of economic reform in achieving the CCP's goal of restoring confidence in the socialist leadership.

### **Economic Reform and Social Reform**

During the post-Mao era, economic development and economic reforms have led to the growth of a market economy. Millions of Chinese have started their own business (see Rosen, 1987/88) and the southeastern coast and most Chinese cities have been opened up to foreign

investment and trade. The urban private sector has mushroomed from a base of 140,000 registered enterprises in 1978 to more than 3,000,000 units by the late 80's (Gold, 1991). University students, intellectuals, reformers and ordinary workers have also engaged in legal but unregistered & untaxed economic activity (*Shehui*, I 1, 1988). Thus the people of China now say that "the whole country is doing business".

In order to promote technological advance, initiative and entrepreneurship, the reformers have acknowledged the need for a more liberal intellectual atmosphere, greater physical and social mobility, individual initiative and stronger horizontal links between enterprises, occupational groups and individuals. This has inevitably softened the boundaries between state and society and has encouraged a more fluid, dynamic and entrepreneurial society for the promotion of a market economy. At the same time, these socioeconomic changes have rendered the old social organizations of control inappropriate. For example, increased mobility has given rise to a floating population of at least 16 million who lie outside the scope of neighbourhood committees and work units and who therefore effectively lie outside state control (Solinger, 1991). It seems clear then that the development of a market economy to some extent has liberated China not only in the economic realm but also in the social and political realms.

The questions which remain open for further study are (1) does the economic reform so urgently desired by the CCP dictate new social organizations as well as new laws and regulations; (2) can economic reforms continue if social and political reforms are withheld; and (3) are the economic reforms advocated by the CCP and the already evident social changes in China precursors of sweeping changes in the social and political structure, perhaps the total demise of the socialist state?

### Protest and Social Reform

Some have argued that new social organizations have emerged in China since the late 70's. Walder (1992b) observes some grass-roots organizations sprang up spontaneously and flourished during the June Fourth Movement of 1989. He identified four specific types of organizations, the

most striking feature of which was the participation of all sections of the urban population. Some scholars similarly argue that a new civil society has been emerging especially since the Tiananmen Massacre (Tang Tsou, 1991; Calhoun, 1991; Saich, 1990; Sullivan, 1990; Strand, 1990; Unger, 1991; Gold, 1990; Nathan, 1990; and Wasserstrom, 1992; White 1993, 1994 and Whyte, 1992). Unger declares that "what the urban populace of China was demanding, in short, was no less and no more than 'civil society...' (Unger, 1991). Barne (1991) also finds the appearance of the concept of *shimin*, cityfolk, taking on the meaning of 'civilian' among the populace's own way of describing themselves. China scholars have generally agreed that there has been the emergence of some social forces within Chinese society which indicate some sort of restructuring of power relations between the state and the society (see, for example, White, 1992; McCormick et al., 1992 and Sun, 1993). Waves of debate (see, for example, *Chinese Social Sciences Quarterly*, Feb. 15, 1993) and numerous academic studies on the development of civil society with the Chinese intellectual community have been provoked (see, for example, *Modern China*, April, 1993 and Liu and Wang, 1993). Economic, social, and political forces have formed inside and outside China, so that Wang Ruowang anticipates great changes after the death of Deng Xiaoping (*Zhengming*, Feb, 1991: 62-3). Liu Binyan describes Chinese society as an eggshell within which a chicken growing (Liu, 1990: 17); and Nathan says that although "the apparatus of totalistic political control still exists, but inwardly an independent society is developing" (Nathan, 1990:120).

Consistent with the raging debates and studies already being conducted, this writer suggests that the emerging society presents a huge area for continuing study.

### Chinese and Western Culture

Notwithstanding the general agreement of the emergence of civil society/public sphere in the post-Mao era, we must be cautious about the applicability of such concepts in the study of China. Against the popular tide of employing concepts from the Western social sciences to discuss the recent development of China, historians of China study have suggested that the

dichotomy between public and private as commonly used in the West may not be adequate to describe the Chinese reality. Rankin (1986) proposed that there is one intermediate level (communal level) between the state and the private sphere. Other scholars also suggest that we can conceptualize the societal development of Chinese society in light of "state (*guan*), collective (*gong*) and private (*si*). And King (1994) suggests that the Chinese concept of "private" (*si*) and "public" (*gong*) are different from their Western counterparts, hinting that we have to analyze the ideas of private/public in context. Some historical works also report that Chinese society has retained a communal level as a buffer between the state and society since the late Qing period (see, for example, Rowe, 1989; Strand, 1989; Schoppa, 1989 and Kuhn, 1976). More recently Huang (1993) identifies a "third realm" between state and society in addition to the "public sphere" or "civil society" identified by Western scholars.

What remains for scholarly inquiry is the development of a uniquely Chinese system for describing and exploring societal development within China, which we may call a contextualized sociology.

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